

## ***Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program***



### **2009 Nominee Profile**

- Nominee:** Lasqueti Internet Access Society, Lasqueti Island
- Category:** Organization/Group
- Project:** Communications network development and access to communications technologies
- Nominator(s):** Joseph Fall

**Letters of Support:** N/A

**Project Description:** Lasqueti Island Access Society (LIAS) is a community-based volunteer network working to improve the communications network and access to communications technologies on Lasqueti Island. LIAS has achieved three significant milestones: 1) Opening of an Internet Centre offering community members access to computing/communications equipment, high-speed internet connection, and help from volunteer staff or a paid youth intern; 2) Development of an interactive community website serving as a communications hub for coordinating island activities, and; 3) Implementation of a broadband network operating almost exclusively on renewable energy that provides high-speed wireless internet for residents on most of Lasqueti and parts of Texada.

LIAS supports economic sustainability and social networking on Lasqueti and serves as a model for community-based communications. Internet access makes it feasible for people to live and work on Lasqueti, reversing a trend towards part-time and vacation homes. The community website allows artists and food producers to make their work/produce more accessible to a wider audience while the site's virtual Farmers' Market allows local food producers to connect with local consumers at nearly zero cost. Both the Internet Centre and community website are widely used -- there are currently 250 registered users who contribute and post/edit content on the site, and the Centre is nearly always busy during operating hours.