



Blueridge Community News

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TUESDAY, MAY 12 AT 7:00PM!!

What is a community association?

On May 12 the Blueridge Community Association (BCA) will host its yearly annual general meeting. As the Chair of the BCA I strongly urge you to join us that night. How convenient for you: the meeting will be held at the Blueridge School Library which means that you can join us as soon as you have voted at the Provincial election in the gym!

The community association can only be as good as its members make it. Initially founded in the late 80's due to the fear of a Hyannis Connector the BCA has over the years progressed to cover a vast number of issues. We continue to take positions – based on the feedback from our members – on issues (including development) in our neighbourhood, but other activities include co-hosting All Candidates' meetings before EVERY single municipal, provincial and federal election and our local claim to fame may be the yearly Blueridge Good Neighbour Day that so many of our residents help us put together and attend. Many of our members represent us on different DNV committees. Our meetings are held five times a year: in September, November, January, March and May. At most meetings we have presentations from very different groups, e.g. the North Shore Emergency Management Office, biking, the Metro Vancouver (about the water utility projects), Save Our Shores, the North Vancouver Rec Commission and at our AGM we will have the Deep Cove Heritage Society. Please join us for our AGM and come and listen to what would appear to be an interesting presentation by the Deep Cove Heritage Society. You can contact the BCA via our e-mail (Blueridge@shaw.ca) or visit our website (<http://members.shaw.ca/blueridgeca/>)

By Eric Andersen

Block Watch Statistics

Since our newsletter of October 2008 the two following residential break and enters were reported in the Blueridge/Seymour Heights area through the end of March, 2009:

| | |
|-------|----------------------------|
| 10/28 | 2400 Berkley Avenue |
| 01/21 | 3100 Mount Seymour Parkway |

'It's not even 5%...'

As many of our residents will already have heard the residential municipal taxes for 2009 will go up by 4.50%. Over the last five years the tax increases have been 4.95%, 3.75%, 4.35%, 4.5% and 4.5% respectively and they are now going up by 4.5% again.

Whereas it is interesting to see how the entire Council quickly agreed to the increase this year one should consider that these increases are not sustainable in the long run. Based on residential taxes of \$4,650 in 2009 an increase of 'only' 5% will result in taxes of \$10,150 in 2025 (only 16 years away) and \$20,097 in 2039 (in 30 years). Sure, your house will hopefully be worth a lot more than it is now, but does that help if you are house-rich, but cash-poor?

The obvious solution is to start deferring your taxes which is now possible as of age 55. Please keep in mind that you still have to pay simple interest on the deferred taxes. This may be a good solution for couples with no kids or couples with no intentions of leaving a little nest-egg for their kids, but for others this may not be ideal. There is no evident solution to this problem – particularly when so few residents take the time to let Council know that the repeated increases (mostly exceeding the rate of inflation) are not working in the long run. Only a minority will be able to pay such taxes when they are retired and live on a fixed income.

Ironically the ever-increasing taxes may prove to be much more of a deterrent to bring young families to the North Shore than escalating house prices.

At some point we will HAVE to make choices and cuts in services will be unavoidable, but till then... accept your annual tax increase – 'it's not even 5%...'

By Eric Andersen

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

Since moving to Sechelt Drive in October 2003, we have noticed a significant increase in the speed in which vehicles travel Sechelt Drive. The speed limit, like all local roads, is 50 km/h.

On too many occasions to count, we have watched vehicles race down Sechelt, exceeding speeds of 60 km/h and often much higher. We have regularly seen (and heard) vehicles under full acceleration during the night, come upon two accidents where in one instance a vehicle left the road, and witnessed a motorcycle that lost control while trying to make the turn onto Sechelt too fast. We have also noticed instances of vehicles passing other vehicles that are traveling within the speed limit. A wide, straight road like Sechelt provides people with a false sense of security, which naturally increases the tendency to speed and attempt passes.

Our neighbourhood is changing for the better. More and more young families are moving in and we see parents walking their children to Blueridge School every day. They must cross at Derbyshire and Sechelt (both ends) and with the speed of traffic we are concerned for their safety. Vehicles tend to pick up speed westbound on Sechelt where the road widens and is straight as an arrow. Just around the bend is Derbyshire where children cross to access Blueridge Elementary school. The combination of speed and limited visibility at the bend in the road will make it very difficult for a car to stop in time. Cars also pick up speed in the other direction. We do not have children at home, but if we did, we would be very worried. We know many of our neighbours share our concern.

Is there something that can be done to address this safety issue?

Absolutely—if it's the will of the neighbourhood. We can approach the District of North Vancouver to request a traffic-calming study to determine if we have a problem.

What is a traffic-calming study?

A traffic-calming study is something district staff conduct (through the Engineering department) to determine if a neighbourhood is experiencing negative impacts from traffic. According to the District's traffic-calming policy, *"a traffic-calming study can be requested from residents who perceive traffic is negatively impacting the quality of life in their neighborhood. The traffic calming process involves public participation and group decision making to find solutions."*

What is traffic-calming?

Traffic-calming is mainly made up of physical actions that help reduce speed, improve driver behaviour and improve conditions for pedestrians. The following list of traffic-calming measures is provided for information only and would be considered only for the sections of Sechelt where excessive speed is deemed a problem.

- Vertical changes in the street (speed cushions, humps, raised intersections)
- Lateral changes in the street (chicanes, traffic circles)
- Constrictions (islands, parking)
- Narrow pavement width
- Entrance features (signs, pavement surfaces)
- Route changes (closures, turn restrictions)
- Textured crosswalk
- Raised Median Island

Speed cushions are rapidly becoming a popular traffic-calming device because they slow cars without affecting emergency vehicles and are acceptable for bus routes. Speed cushions are several small [speed humps](#) installed across the width of the road with spaces between them. They are generally installed in a series across a roadway resembling a split speed hump. The design of speed cushions forces cars to slow down as they ride with one or both wheels on the humps. However, the wider axle of emergency vehicles such as fire engines and ambulances allows them to straddle the cushions without slowing down or increasing response times.

How do we request a traffic-calming study?

Requesting a traffic-calming study is as easy as filling out the questionnaire attached to the district's policy. Whether a study is approved, largely depends on the community's desire to have one conducted in the first place.

Recognizing that approaching the district is a neighbourhood decision we are writing to ask if this is something that would interest you as a resident. A coordinated, unified approach would obviously be the most beneficial. However, we need to understand if you share our view that the speed on Sechelt Drive must be slowed down.

The Blueridge Community Association has already indicated a willingness to complete the questionnaire to request a study on behalf of the community. However, the more information and feedback we can include from our neighbours, the stronger the case we have for a study and possible solutions.

One last note: Some may be concerned about the cost of the study. There is no cost. Funding for any

recommended traffic-calming devices can come from two sources: district council or residents (through local improvement cost-sharing bylaw). Although that's getting ahead of ourselves at this point, we thought it should be pointed out. Other than sending us your thoughts on the questions below and any other ideas you have, we want you to be assured of this: Before any kind of traffic-calming measure study is launched, a survey would be sent to all households in the study area by the District to verify there is sufficient support for a traffic-calming study in the first place. At least 50 per cent of the surveys must be returned and a majority of the responses must support the study. We hope this gives you some reassurance that collaboration and consultation is the name of the game. In our opinion, the speed of traffic is too fast. And we're tired of being just being furious...we want to see if we can make a real change for the benefit of the quality of life in our neighbourhood.

Please e-mail your answers to these questions and any other comments you have about neighbourhood traffic to blueridgetraffic@gmail.com

1. Are the prevailing speeds above the posted speed limit on Sechelt Drive?
2. Who is speeding down Sechelt Drive?
3. Do you have any views on the cause of excessive speed on Sechelt Drive?
4. Can our problem be solved with signs and paint?
5. Are you in favour of a traffic-calming study?
6. Do you have any thoughts on appropriate traffic-calming measures?

By Jody Robertson & Ken Plaskett

IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY you'll find something good is happening for black bears. Wednesday April 8 2009 Barry Penner, *Minister for the Environment* made an announcement at the Critter Care Wildlife Society in Langley, a rehabilitation centre that rescues many different mammals from outside the Metro/Vancouver area. Gail Martin, executive director and caretaker has rescued fifty-seven orphaned black bears over the last 4 years.

Premier Gordon Campbell has set aside \$400,000.00 from his own government funding to build a facility that will hold orphaned bear cubs until they are ready for release in the wild. Dr. Ken Macquisten, veterinarian/ managing director of the Grouse Mountain Refuge for Endangered Wildlife was asked to come up with a plan. Ken is ready and able to bring the best plan for bears anywhere onto the North Shore and into the District of North Vancouver.

A few weeks ago Gail rescued two (2lb.each) brother and sister baby bears that were found on a railway track in Boston Bar. Their mother may have abandoned them or been hurt in some way. No one will ever know. Gail is their new mom and bottle-feeds them until they can leave the nursery and join older cubs in the large green enclosure that houses forest material that will allow bears to climb and play.

She named them Hunter and Zoe. They will be the 1st orphaned black bears to arrive at the new intermediary care facility that will be built on Fromme Mountain in the fall of 2009. The location will be monitored remotely with cameras and will be able to hold up to 25 orphaned black bears at a time while they mature and gain experience before release back into the wild.

Fairytale stuff, eh? The Premier and the Ministry of Environment have taken a huge leap forward towards in the care of orphaned bear cubs that will resonate around the world. These may be the 1st animals that are not designated "endangered" to receive this kind of attention from the government. Personally, while I support endangered wildlife I was always wondering why these black bears from my childhood were discarded like trash. Recently the *Federation of BC Naturalists* has made my North Shore Urban Bear group an FBCN club. Louise Williams, a long time bear educator will be attending the *BC Nature Spring Conference and AGM* for me...while I will be in downtown Vancouver doing jury duty. So along with the 1st bear article for their magazine BC Nature (should appear in the summer issue), bears are now the 1st FBCN sponsored club and will be represented at an FBCN conference for the 1st time.

When I began Blueridge Bear Initiative in 1998 I could not have imagined all this would happen. I'd like to thank Blueridge residents who supported my efforts over the years. It takes a village to raise a bear and you have always been up for the job. Some of my best bear stories come from Blueridge residents and I continue to tell them.

Submitted by Betty Carrington, North Shore Urban Bear Club

Volunteers will be needed to monitor the bears remotely from a trailer at the base of the mountain. Please call me if you're interested at 604 924.9281

BLUERIDGE GOOD NEIGHBOUR DAY 2009 !
THE DATE HAS BEEN SET! BLUERIDGE GOOD NEIGHBOUR DAY
WILL TAKE PLACE ON:

SUNDAY, JUNE 14TH 2009!

10 AM – 2 PM

Come and join in the festivities as we celebrate our community!

The theme this year is showing our **“Olympic”** spirit!

A parade starts things off at **10:00 am** at the top of Berkley and winds its way to Blueridge School where all the fun begins!

Back by popular demand:

Tim Horton’s Community Cruiser

Super Silent Auction

Kids Carnival

Belly Buttons the Clown

Yukon Dan

Laughing Stock Pony Rides

Mad Science Experiments

Inflatable Activities

And of course, ...Great Food and Fabulous Entertainment!!!

So don’t miss out! ...mark this date on your calendar and Come on out to support your community!!

Don’t forget to show your “Olympic” spirit to win PRIZES in the PARADE!!!

Volunteers are welcome !

If you are interested in volunteering on our committee, **OR** if you are able to help out on the day of the event, please contact

Sandra Hastings at 604-929-1784

RECIPE CORNER!

By Sonia McLeod

Here is a very popular cake that my kids can’t get enough of....even the adults sneak an extra piece! It’s especially asked for on their birthdays...so don’t be afraid to use 2 round cake pans...

Melt in your mouth Blueridge Yellow Cake with Chocolate Icing....it’s even low fat!

Cake:

Cooking Spray

1 Tablespoon all-purpose flour

½ cup butter, melted

1 (8 oz.) carton fat-free sour cream

1-1/2 cups granulated sugar

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

½ cup egg substitute

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon salt

¾ cup low-fat buttermilk

Frosting:

½ cup (4 oz.) block style fat-free cream cheese, softened

¼ cup butter, softened

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup unsweetened cocoa

1 to 2 tablespoons evaporated fat-free milk

1/8 teaspoon salt

3 cups powdered sugar, divide

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

1. To prepare cake, coat bottom of a 13 x 9 inch baking pan with cooking spray (do not coat sides of pan), line bottom of pan with wax paper. Coat wax paper with cooking spray, dust with 1 tablespoon flour. Set aside.
2. Combine ½ of cup butter and sour cream in large bowl, stirring with a whisk until well blended. Add granulated sugar and 2 teaspoons vanilla. Beat with a mixer at medium speed 3 minutes or until well blended. Add egg substitute; beat 2 minutes or until well blended.
3. Lightly spoon 2 cups flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Combine 2 cups flour, baking soda, and ½ teaspoon salt, stirring well with a whisk. Add flour mixture and buttermilk alternately to sugar mixture; beginning and ending with flour mixture; mix after each addition. Pour batter into prepared pan. Sharply tap pan once on counter to remove air bubbles. Bake at 350 for 30 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in centre comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes on a wire rack; remove from pan. Carefully peel off wax paper; cool completely on wire rack.
4. To prepare frosting, place the cream cheese, ¼ cup butter, and 1 teaspoon vanilla in a large bowl; beat with a mixer at high speed until fluffy. Add cocoa, milk, and 1/8 teaspoon salt, beat at a low speed until well blended. Gradually add 1-1/2 cups powdered sugar. Place cake on a serving platter. Spread frosting over top and sides of cake. Store cake loosely covered in the refrigerator.....Enjoy!

Calories per serving: Cal: 291, Fat: 8.1g, Protein: 4.3g, Carbs: 51.6g, Fiber 0.9g, Sodium: 285g