

## Confessions of a Home Renovation Reality Show Superstar

Written by: Dave Pires

I was at work late one Friday night, when I got a call from a co-worker from our Boston office. She was watching one of those home renovation show on TV and our family was on it...

How did this happen? Well, last year our family found ourselves on Love It or List it Vancouver. We had been slowly (really slowly...) renovating our house and were caught in a cycle of starting projects and not finishing them. My wife EI had been watching the Toronto version of Love It or List It and would say "why can't they come to Vancouver - our house is made for that show". She did this every time the show was on. Seriously, every single time. Then one day we saw an ad for a new show. Love It or List It was coming to Vancouver. So we downloaded the application, filled out the forms, and before we knew it the cameras were rolling.

While we couldn't get everything we wanted within the budget and time constraints, the Love It or List It team really transformed our house and changed our lives.

The adorable Jillian Harris (designer), possibly even more adorable Todd Talbot (realtor), and all of the crew were great. They're all fun to be around and did a great job of making it as easy as possible for us. We've always considered ourselves pretty private, so going on TV and showing the world the disaster we lived in was a bit of a stretch for us. It's definitely a different kind of experience.

Is this for you?

If you're a control freak, an interior designer, you love to shop, love looking at color swatches and picking paint, love the mind numbing tasks associated with driving around to countless furniture, lighting, appliance stores, love the thought of living in a renovation for 4 to 8 months, and especially love the thought of arguing with your partner/spouse about all of the above – then this is probably not for you.

If you like the style of the renos they do, wouldn't mind getting a pretty major renovation done in a little over a month, all while letting other people take care of every last detail down to the carpets, family photos, furniture, and even the plates on the table - you might want to consider it. Liking surprises also helps...

There is one important drawback and that is you might hate it in the end. What they did for us is totally different than what we would have done on our own. The good news is - its way better. We love what they did and we're staying. Like any renovation, there were some bumps along the way and 100% completion may take a little longer than you'd like. For me, there is no better way to renovate and there really is very little we've changed. We still even have a flock of flamingos in our bathroom.

Overall it was excellent adventure for all of us and a really memorable experience.

While I was pretty confident that this would lead to future roles in television and even pitched some show ideas to the director, we're still waiting...

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Tuesday, November 10 at 7:00 PM** - Blueridge Community Association Meeting (Page 4)  
at Blueridge Elementary School

**Wednesday, November 18 at 7:30** – Seymour Salmonid Society's Annual General Meeting (Page 4)

**Saturday, November 21 at 1:30 PM** – Local Trail Walks (Page 7)

**Saturday, November 28** - Seymour Salmonid Society's Event (Page 4)

**Sunday, December 20 at 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM** – Carolling in the Garden (Page 3)

**Monday, January 12 at 7:00 PM** – Blueridge Community Association Meeting (Page 4)  
at Blueridge Elementary School

**Saturday, January 23 at 7:30 PM** – Blueridge Wine Tasting (Page 4)

## Sharing Garden Grows Vegetables and a Healthy Community

Written by: Donna Sacuta

The Blueridge Sharing Garden, a collaboration between the Blueridge Community Association, Cultivate Projects and the District of North Vancouver became a reality this spring. Hundreds of volunteer hours have gone into the garden, located on District land south of Carnation Street across from Seymour Heights Elementary.

Despite a late start, we were able to grow a considerable amount of fresh vegetables. We offered some of the produce to neighbours, but also were able to supply vegetables such as tomatoes, kale, chard, beans and zucchini to the Senior's Lunch at Parkgate Community Centre. The Parkgate Seniors in turn shared some of the veggies with the Parkgate preschool, youth centre and after school program.

The North Shore Neighbourhood House Saturday Lunch has also received a donation of tomatoes from the garden. As well, tomatoes went to the Lookout Recovery Centre in Lynn Valley.

We have been blessed with a fantastic group of volunteers. We are also constantly amazed and exceedingly grateful to local businesses who have stepped forward to donate goods and services to the garden.



Stop by and take a pinch of herbs, trade in a book at the Little Free Library or enjoy the benches in the garden.

We are already planning for spring! The best way to keep up to date with events in the garden is to become a member of our Facebook Group (Blueridge Sharing Garden). Not into Facebook? We also send out an e-newsletter once or twice a month with upcoming events and news. Email us at [garden@blueridgeca.org](mailto:garden@blueridgeca.org) to subscribe.

## Blueridge Community Association Scholarship Award.

Written by: Lesley Brooks

For the first time we have awarded a scholarship of \$500 to a North Vancouver high school student living in the Blueridge area who has shown exceptional involvement in our community through volunteer services.

We are delighted to announce that our first recipient is Courtney Whittred, a graduate of Windsor Secondary School who has been accepted as a student at Capilano University.

Courtney has coached with North Shore Girls Soccer, helped coach younger kids in the sports program at her school, participated in environmental issues by being a member of the Green Team at her high school and has volunteered at Kiwanis Care Centre working with seniors. She has a very strong feeling of involvement in her community.

Her teachers, who were her references, describe Courtney as being energetic, enthusiastic with younger kids, independent, respectful, reliable and an outstanding student.

Congratulations Courtney! We are so proud to have you as part of our Blueridge community.

### The Syrian Refugee Crisis: What can we do?

Written by: Angela Duso

Starting in September of this year the news has been full of heartbreaking stories of the desperate plight of refugees fleeing from the civil war from Syria. Aid organizations have called on community groups, churches, businesses and individuals to sponsor refugee families and assist them in coming to Canada. This is something that Canadians have done in the past during previous refugee crises. Our neighbourhood is full of talented, community-minded people who have shown that we can work together to achieve common goals - like the Sharing Garden. Wouldn't it be great if we could work together to sponsor a family? We wouldn't have to go it alone - the BCA would partner with other organizations in order to do this. In fact, we've already been talking to other groups on the North Shore. We'll need more than just money to do this, it will take time and expertise as well. If you think that this is a project you'd like to be part of please send an email to [info@blueridgeca.org](mailto:info@blueridgeca.org). And stay tuned for more info as we contact other groups and look at ways to move forward.

## A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR GENEROUS DONORS WHO KINDLY DONATED TO OUR BLUERIDGE GOOD NEIGHBOUR DAY!!!

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*Come Join in the Festive Fun!*

**Carolling at the Garden!**

**5:00 – 6:00 pm**

**Sunday, December 20**



Come and join us at the Blueridge Sharing Garden for some Christmas carols!  
Join us rain, snow or shine!

Please bring any treats such as apple cider or Christmas cookies. We will have tables and a shelter.  
Contact: Lauren: [gorgounisfam@gmail.com](mailto:gorgounisfam@gmail.com) or Brian: [brian.gardiner@gmail.com](mailto:brian.gardiner@gmail.com)

**The Blueridge Community Association  
is proud to present the  
second annual  
Blueridge Community Wine Tasting.**

Whether you are new to Blueridge/Seymour Heights or have lived here for a long time, come out and learn more about wines from fellow Blueridge neighbour (our resident wine expert) Domenic

Carlucci (<http://bottle2glass.blogspot.com/>), and make some new friends.

Need a babysitter? Why not try someone out from our

Babysitter's Directory <<http://blueridgeca.org/what-we-do/babysitter-directory/>>.

\* When: Saturday, January 23, at 7.30 PM

\* Where: 2589 Derbyshire Way

\* Cost: \$35 per person (by cheque payable to the Blueridge Community Association or pay by Visa). Must be prepaid by Saturday, January 16.

\* How do I sign up: Please contact us: [info@blueridgeca.org](mailto:info@blueridgeca.org) to reserve your spot.

\* What to expect: Domenic will present a variety of wines for tasting, along with tips on tasting.

\* Some snacks will be provided, but please note this event will not include dinner.

\* IMPORTANT: Book early. Space is limited to 20 people. Due to space restrictions, this event is open only to Blueridge/Seymour Heights residents.

\* Please don't drink and drive! Walk, or if you have to drive, please take a cab home.

**SEYMOUR RIVER ROCKSLIDE  
SALMON RECOVERY PROJECT**

*Written by: Sharree Dobowits*



Sharee Dobowits, Volunteer Coordinator for the Seymour Salmonid Society will be the guest speaker at our November 10 meeting. The Society has worked to promote fisheries enhancement on the North Shore since 1987. It operates the Seymour River Fish Hatchery and Education Centre. Sharee's presentation will concentrate on the challenges being faced by the Seymour River rockslide which occurred last December. Work continues to recover fish from the Lower Seymour River before they become trapped below the rockslide.

The Seymour Salmonid Society's Annual General Meeting is being held **Wednesday, November 18** at 7:30 pm at Canlan Ice Sports.

The Society will also be hosting an event on **Saturday, November 28** at the Seymour estuary to highlight the work they and their partners have been doing on that part of the river. The Mayor of the North Vancouver District will be in attendance as well as other dignitaries. More information on both events can be found on their website [www.seymoursalmon.com](http://www.seymoursalmon.com).

We are looking forward to hearing more at the Blueridge Community Association meeting on November 10 at 7 pm.



## **A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A NEWLY-ELECTED DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

It has been almost a year since I was elected to a seat on District councillor.

The council is composed of six councillors and the Mayor. Two of us (Councillor Mathew Bond and myself) were new to this group. The other four councillors and the Mayor are all veterans of District government.

After a brief orientation session, and an elaborate swearing in ceremony, council immediately got down to the business of municipal governance. As a newly-elected councillor, there was much to learn. Many of the issues faced by council are commonplace. By statute, council must make decisions on issues ranging from whether an individual taxi driver will have his chauffeur license re-instated, to land use, zoning, staffing, finance, and the maintenance and repair of our sidewalks, roads, district buildings, and sewers.

Each week a councillor receives an "agenda" package, for "closed special meetings," meetings of the "committee of the whole", and "regular meetings of council." The "closed special meetings" have attracted some controversy. This is just a fancy name for council decisions that must be made in private owing to the nature of the subject matter of the meeting. Decisions involving private interests in "land, labour and law" (for example, buying and selling District land, hiring and firing of staff, and the conduct of lawsuits brought by and against the District, to name a few such issues) must by their nature be dealt with in private, and are addressed in our "closed special meetings."

The dominant public policy issue faced by District council today is the "pace of development". Local government has a key role in making land use decisions involving increased density, and during the last year District council has voted on many proposals for re-development of private lands to allow increased density. Land use decisions can also involve questions such as the location of the Turning Point Drug and Alcohol recovery centre, which has now been approved by Council to proceed on Burr Avenue. In the months and years to come, council will have a significant role in defining the scope of potential development of some



*Jim Hanson, a long time Blueridge resident, has also served as a Director of the Blueridge Community Association. Last November, Jim was elected to his first term as a Councillor for the District of North Vancouver.*

of the larger "green spaces" in the Seymour area. I will speak out to limit development in the Seymour area unless and until appropriate transportation infrastructure is put in place to handle any increased population.

So how would I summarize my experiences of my first year in office. I have been impressed at the range of decisions council is called upon to make, and the complexity of some of the issues facing us. The hours have been long. The learning curve steep.

At the same time, it has been very rewarding for me to have the opportunity to speak up for my community at council.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at my e-mail ([jameshanson@shaw.ca](mailto:jameshanson@shaw.ca)) or by telephone (604) 505-3500. I am always interested in meeting with District residents to discuss local issues, and to receive feedback on your interests and concerns. My goal is to be your voice on council.



## **BLUERIDGE CAR SHARING**

Written By: Michael Bernard

Want to save some money and reduce your carbon footprint on Blueridge at the same time? I have been a member of Modo, the not-for-profit car-sharing co-operative, for three years now and it is the cheapest way to rent out a car or truck for everything from yard work to moving your son or daughter into their new digs.

We recently updated our kitchen, which meant many trips to the transfer station as we pulled out the old kitchen flooring and cabinets and put in new ones. If I had rented a small or large truck from U-Haul or any of the other agencies, I calculate it would have minimally cost me \$60 a trip, including gasoline, insurance and mileage. The cost doubles if you have to make special trips. Our house was built in 1963 and had trace amounts of asbestos in the kitchen's vinyl floor tiles. That called for a 60-kilometre round trip to the Metro Vancouver landfill at Tsawwassen to dispose of it.

With Modo, the rental cost runs from \$3 to \$10 an hour, depending on the kind of membership you take out. That cost, if you can believe it, *includes gasoline, mileage and insurance*. You can give Modo a try by taking out a casual membership at \$5 a month or jump in with an individual membership for \$500, which is fully refundable should you decide car sharing is not for you.

If you are self-employed and have call to occasionally use a car or truck, you can sign up as a business member, which at \$250 is even cheaper than an individual Modo membership. You can even add employees to your business membership for \$20 a person.

Right now, there are a limited number of vehicles stationed on the North Shore but that is offset by a good supply of cars and trucks just across the bridge in East Vancouver. As the co-operative continues to grow—it now has 13,000 members who use more than 400 vehicles in 250 locations in Vancouver and Victoria—Modo will probably add more vehicles in North Vancouver.

I wish I had learned about Modo sooner. If I had, I would have sold my gas-guzzling 2002 Nissan Pathfinder long before its automatic transmission gave out last year. I figure that mistake cost me a few thousand dollars in gasoline alone over the years, simply because I wrongly thought it was

“handy” for garden work and other household chores. Sigh, live and learn!

Anyway, it's not too late for those of you who want to save a few bucks and protect the environment by car sharing. For more information, visit [www.modocoop.com](http://www.modocoop.com).



## **CHRISTMAS AND BABYSITTERS!!!**

Written by: Angela Duso

Christmas is coming, and with it a whirl of social functions. Parents - book your babysitters now so you aren't left out. The Blueridge Community Association has a handy list of sitters in our Babysitter Directory. Check out the list at our website, [www.blueridgeca.org](http://www.blueridgeca.org). Look for the tab that says "What we do" - under there you will find the babysitter directory [here is the exact web address <http://blueridgeca.org/what-we-do/babysitter-directory/>].

If your son or daughter wants to be on the Babysitter List - please send an email to [babysitter@blueridgeca.org](mailto:babysitter@blueridgeca.org) with their Name, Contact Info, Qualification and Street Address. We never publish contact information on our website - instead parents are able to contact babysitters directly through our website. We recommend that prospective babysitters be at least 12 years of age and have completed the Red Cross Babysitting course.

**Ron Andrews Rec Centre and Lynn Valley Rec Centre** also offer "Kids Night Out" during the build up to Christmas. Better suited for younger children (ages 3 - 8) they offer group childcare from 5:45 - 8:30 pm on alternating Friday and Saturday evenings. While it's not enough time to catch a movie you can get some Christmas shopping done, or have an early dinner, or collapse exhausted in front of the TV until you need to pick up the kids. Cost is \$9.50/child. Call 604-987-PLAY for more info on "Kid's Night Out" programs.

**Last but not least - Flicka Gymnastics** is offering Kid's Night out from 7 - 10 pm on Saturday Nov 21st for ages 6 - 12 years. The evening includes gymnastics, pizza dinner and a movie. Cost \$25/child (must have an annual Flicka membership which is \$20/year). Register online at [flickagymclub.com](http://flickagymclub.com).

## LOCAL TRAIL WALKS

*Written by: Anni Danielson*

### **Saturday, November 21 2015**

Walk to the Seymour River slide area. An easy walk from the end of Riverside Drive lasting anywhere from 40 minutes to an hour. There is some uphill at the start of the trail.

Join me if you have never seen it or simply want some exercise and meet people from the community.

Meet at the end of **Riverside Drive at 2 pm** (Yes, you can park there now)

or

If you want to leave the car at home you can meet me at **1:30 pm at the corner of Berkley Rd and Sechelt Dr.** We will walk down the stairs to Riverside Drive and probably return via the Baden Powell Trail to Hyannis Drive.

Bring the kids , dogs, cats etc. Everyone is welcome. Whether you are new to the area or have lived here for a long time and maybe are not familiar with the surrounding area.

In the event of heavy rain, snow or storms the walk will be cancelled.

Call Anni at 604 929-2807 if you have any questions.

## NORTH VANCOUVER (AND GREATER VANCOUVER) REAL ESTATE NEWS

*Written by: Ruth Hanson*

According to the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver on November 3, 2015, conditions continue to favour home sellers across Metro Vancouver's housing market.

Sales in October 2015 were 36.2% above the 10 year sales average for the month. Overall listings (properties for sale through the Multiple Listing Service) are down by 30% compared to the same month last year.

The sales-to-active-listing ratio in Greater Vancouver in October was 38.1%. Generally, analysts say that downward pressure on home prices occurs when the ratio declines below the 12% mark, and home prices often experience upward pressure when it reach 20% or higher, in a particular community for a sustained period of time.

Detached home sales in Greater Vancouver saw an increase of 13.1% over the number of homes sold in October of 2014. The average sale price of a detached home in Greater Vancouver in October was \$1,584,110.

Apartment properties in Greater Vancouver showed an increase in sales of 21.7% compared to the sales activity shown in the same month in 2014 for similar properties. The average sale price of an apartment/condo in October in Greater Vancouver was \$494,689.

Attached (townhouse and duplexes, etc) increased 28.6% over October 2014. The average sale price of an attached property in Greater Vancouver in October was \$658,017.

In North Vancouver in October, through the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver MLS Service, we saw 130 detached homes sold at a median\* selling price of \$1,448,800. There were 36 attached (townhouse and duplex, etc) sales at a median\* selling price of \$822,500, and apartments/condos saw 123 units sold at a median\* price of \$399,900. (Note: "median" selling price indicates that this is the mid-point; that half the homes sold for more and half sold for less than the median.)

In Blueridge, since January 1, 2015, we have seen 53 detached homes sold, at an average sale price of \$1,167,459. As of November 4, 2015 we are showing two homes for sale ranging in asking price from \$1,498,000 to \$2,200,000.

## **The Blueridge Community Association meets with Coast Mountain Bus Company**

*Written by: Alberto Trujillo*

You may have noticed that since September 7th our familiar 214 bus started to detour away from Mountain Hwy and instead use the ramps from Hwy 1 in order to gain access to Phibbs Exchange and Mount Seymour Pkwy. These changes are the result of the hard work of the BCA on the part of the local community who has voiced its unhappiness with the deterioration of our bus service.

On August 25th the BCA met with Coast Mountain Bus Company (CMBC), and once again I was able to present our solutions to the inconveniences that we were experiencing with the 214 bus, as well plans for the new bus line 213 that we would like to see implemented. We are really thankful to our councillor Jim Hanson for making this meeting a reality. In attendance at the meeting were: Eric Godot Andersen, Rhoda Irwin, Ginette Pepin, Ruth Hanson, and myself; with Mike Madill and Denis Gaunt representing the CMBC.

Because the 214 is linked to other bus lines, we had to find a way to “gain some time” to eliminate the 20+ minute waits at Phibbs, or just arrive there to see the next 214 bus departing in front of our eyes; and since the 214 is meant to cover the Blueridge area, we didn't feel it necessary to maintain the long detour around the SeyLynn properties.

Also CMBC told us that they were to tweak the arrival and departure times for the 214 at Phibbs Exchange to improve the bus transitions, but since there is no public schedules yet for these changes and I haven't been able to take the bus regularly, I don't have much to report except that on two occasions I arrived from downtown and made the 214 connection right away.

We need your feedback and your help. We are happy about the recent changes but we are still fighting for the 213 to become a reality. Please contact us, get involved, give us your input, because only with your help we will be able to succeed.

### **What I got out of the Sharing Garden**

*Written by: Eric Andersen*

Most people in Blueridge/Seymour Heights now have heard of and seen the wonderful Blueridge Sharing Garden between Lytton Street and Carnation Street.

It is amazing what a difference it can make when a community works together. Most of you will remember what the Sharing Garden site looked like till early April. There was garbage all over, the vegetation was mostly blackberry bushes and the trail was strictly used to connect Lytton Street with Carnation Street. Calling it an eyesore is an understatement.

I will be honest and confess that I have not invested much time in the garden since June for a variety of reasons, but that month I helped move a good number of bricks from a house in Edgemont that was being torn down. The new owner, Thomas, came from Violet Street in Blueridge, and during the work of moving the bricks I met his poodle, Spike. While moving the bricks together we got talking about Thomas' upcoming trip out of the country. We had lost our wonderful dog, Hap, to cancer a few months earlier, and we were not ready for our own new dog yet, but my wife and I certainly didn't mind looking after another dog for a week or so. In no time it was arranged that Spike would come and stay with us.

I had some preconceived notions about poodles before we looked after Spike – and, boy, was I ever wrong! We had a wonderful time with Spike, and I think he had a good time with us back in his old neighbourhood.

We had barely returned little Spike to Thomas and his family before I noted a little request on the Sharing Garden's Facebook page. Montana, a new resident on Violet Street, was looking for somebody to walk her dog for a couple of weeks while she was at camp, which was part of her background and education to become a nurse. Contact was quickly made and we got to meet Tusker – a German Munsterlander cross Duck Toller, and, by far, the most energetic dog I have ever seen. This dog can run non-stop for hours in the woods. We got to walk Tusker for two weeks, and at the end we suggested to Montana that we sure wouldn't mind walking him a bit longer than that. With her busy schedule she agreed, meaning that we now walk Tusker five days a week! Tusker seems rather happy, and so are we and Montana. We looked after Spike a second time in August and the two Violet Street dogs got along like a house on fire!

By telling our story about Spike and Tusker I just wanted to use that as an example of what you can get out of our beautiful Sharing Garden. After all, it is a matter of community building and getting to know new people. I would for sure never have met Thomas or Montana, nor their wonderful dogs, had it not been for Blueridge Sharing Garden.

You, too, can get to meet great people if you go there – you just never know what is waiting for you at the Blueridge Sharing Garden!