

Roll Out those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer with Blueridge Good Neighbour Day

By Kim Nazar

After a long break due to COVID, Blueridge Good Neighbour Day is coming to you on Sunday, June 11 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Expect to see the return of much beloved activities such as bouncy castles, crafts and fishing ponds just as in past years.

Also ramping up are face painting (go on parents, you too!) food trucks, pickleball, a chess tournament with prizes, a slap shooting contest, live music with the local band Wishbone, and a pie-eating contest.

It all kicks off at 10:45 a.m. when the parade begins its march from the top of Berkley down to Byron and then across to Blueridge Elementary School grounds. Everyone is encouraged to creatively decorate their scooters, bikes and strollers.

For the adults, we again have the beer garden, community tables and a Silent Auction. The businesses that serve us have been very generous with their offerings so be prepared to bid on some items that will give you great value. If you are a business and want to donate something for the



auction, there's still time! Or if you just want to put up a community table or financially support a BGND activity, email to BGND@blueridgeca.org

Finally, we are seeking more volunteers, including ones with food safe certificates, to help with the concessions and other activities. Please email volunteer@blueridgeca.org



←
Kim Nazar's daughters Ava and Ember get a head-start prepping their bikes for the Blueridge Good Neighbour Day parade down Berkley.

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residents

Editor: Michael Bernard

Get Involved: Boost the Blueridge Spirit

By Eric G. Andersen

Blueridge Community Association Chair

IT'S BACK!

After three long years of keeping clear of COVID, we're ready to resume our yearly tradition: Blueridge Good Neighbour Day (BGND).

This wonderful event—this year on Sunday, June 11—has brought the community together since 1998, 22 consecutive BGNDs with the last one pre-pandemic in 2019.

You may not know this, but many studies have found that people's mental health is closely linked to social interaction; the more you mix with people, the less likely you are to suffer from mental illnesses and loneliness. That alone is a good reason to come out and see your old neighbours, meet new ones and enjoy the festivities.

It is a pleasure and privilege for me to be able to work on this event together with a rather new planning committee that has a ton of enthusiasm and energy - this certainly more than makes up for the lack of experience in event-planning!

We will need a lot of volunteers, so please consider donating one or two hours of your time on June 11. Our goal with BGND is not to fundraise, but ideally to break even. Unlike many other local events, we are providing nearly all the entertainment for the kids for free. The School Board has increased the rental costs tremendously at the school, and many of the other costs for the kids' activities have also gone up substantially.

We are fortunate to have some local generous sponsors, but we are still looking for more! We ask all the participants to be generous that day - particularly when it comes to our Silent Auction, whose proceeds help defray some of our costs. If you own a business, please donate gift certificates, or a gift basket, or items to our Silent Auction, or sponsor a specific activity, as some have chosen to do.

In other matters, with remnants of the COVID cloud still hanging over us in January, it was hard that month to begin planning **Dîner en Bleu**, that al fresco event that has proven wildly popular.



Eric G. Andersen

However, a small committee will start meeting this November to plan this fun-filled event, likely in June 2024. Why not consider joining the planning committee? Contact info@blueridgeca.org

Finally we have detected a growing interest in the **history of Blueridge**, story-telling, sharing pictures of 'old Blueridge' etc. The Deep Cove Heritage Society has already suggested that the Blueridge Community Association come and check out their archives that contain clippings, personal stories, interviews and photos. If this sounds like something you might like to take on, please contact us at info@blueridgeca.org

Dates to Remember

Sunday, June 11:

Blueridge Good Neighbour Day (BGND)
Parade Start 10:45 a.m.
Top of Berkley

Before June 11:

Register for Youth Chess Tournament at BGND (Email: marziehstern@gmail.com)

Sunday, Oct. 15:

Deadline for contributions to Blueridge Community Newsletter

November 2023:

First planning meeting for 2024 Dîner en Bleu. (Date TBA)

June, July and August, Wednesdays and Saturdays:

Blueridge Garden work parties (check blueridgeca.org for dates and times)

Wildfires, bridges and bathrooms focus of the Blueridge Community Association AGM

By Michael Bernard

District of North Vancouver Mayor Mike Little fielded a range of residents' questions—from ones about the Ironworkers Bridge traffic jams to the risk of local wildfires this summer—at the Blueridge Community Association Annual General Meeting at Canlan Sports on May 9.

With the forest fire problems growing worse in Alberta and the memory of the town of Lytton burning in 2021, Little said it's important that Blueridge residents do everything they can to reduce the likelihood of local wildfires.

Meanwhile, Association Chair Eric Andersen, who presided over the AGM, summarized the association's many activities during the past year. The association is in good financial shape, with about \$31,000 in the bank, including about \$15,000 earmarked for Blueridge Good Neighbour Day, and about \$6,500 in the Blueridge Scholarship fund. The \$500 scholarship for post-secondary education is awarded annually to a student who actively volunteers locally. It will be raised to \$750 in 2024. The remainder of the funds in the bank include monies for the annual Blueridge Cares during the festive season, and the Blueridge Sharing Garden, among other continuing projects.

Andersen praised Jeff Powell for his hard work enhancing the BCA website blueridgeca.org and for producing the monthly Blueridge Bulletin, which is delivered free to about 600 online subscribers. Powell later noted that about 1,000 people have signed up with the Blueridge Facebook page, 910 for Instagram, while copies of this printed newsletter are hand-delivered to 1,500 homes throughout Blueridge three times a year.

"We need to continue our work on social media, which is really the way of the future," he said. Residents interested in getting the monthly Bulletin can sign up at blueridgeca.org.

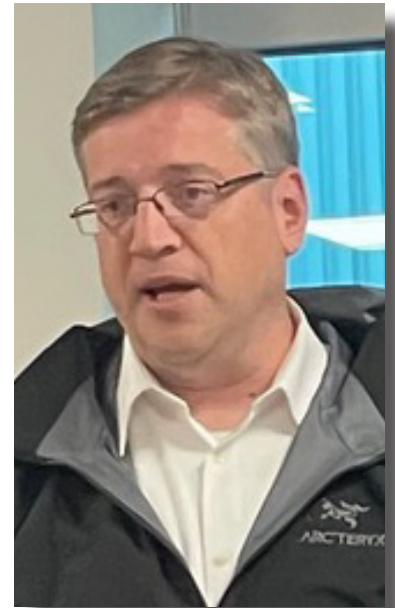
Priorities over the next year, Andersen said, include building a closer relationship with Parent Advisory Councils for Seymour Heights and Blueridge elementary schools. "It would be good for us, good for them and good for the whole community." He also wants the BCA to highlight for residents all the association's work and activities. "We have to be better at selling ourselves," he said. "We maybe have been a little too humble over the years and we should make sure people know what we are doing."

Mayor Little praised the work of the BCA, saying it is one of the District's most active resident associations. He added that the District is also a leader in wildfire fighting training and in fact was hosting hundreds of firefighters in May from throughout BC at the Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit.

He urged residents to look into FireSmart, a public education initiative that locally aims to "build defensible space" between Blueridge homes and the surrounding forest. Preliminary work has been done to reduce the amount of fuel that could feed wildfires in North Vancouver such as by limbing the first 16 feet of tree trunks, which interrupts the fire's progress to the forest canopy above.

About traffic issues, Little said the provincial government has been supportive of rapid transit on the North Shore, but is opposed to increasing car capacity on the Ironworkers Bridge, despite Victoria funding major improvements on the Patullo Bridge over the Fraser River. He had good news regarding provision for bathrooms with the Phibbs Exchange expansion, but he dismissed rumours of plans for permanent bathrooms at the top of Berkley, saying the costs are prohibitive.

He also promised to raise the issue of possible trail-building between Parkgate and Blueridge in his next meeting with local MLA Susie Chant, after Andersen said he learned the provincial government may be interested in creating usable access for firefighters in that area.



DNV Mayor Mike Little



BACK TO THE FUTURE

Another generation returns to Blueridge

By Kimberley Bernard

I grew up in Blueridge in the 80's and 90's. My family lived on a few different streets during this time: Byron, Berkley, Dunstone Place and then finally Walpole Crescent before I left for university and my parents downsized out of Blueridge. I never expected to move back into the area, but the draw of quiet streets, community schools and big trees inevitably drew my husband and me to the neighbourhood to raise our own family.

In reminiscing about growing up here, my first thoughts were about the things that have changed; after all, the North Shore has seen its own growth and development. I remember when Parkgate was just a gravel lot and when we had to take the one-lane bridge to get across the Seymour River. Faye's (now United Strangers) was the best corner store for chocolate bars and off-brand slurpees. Blueridge Elementary, back when it was painted a dark shade of brown and had all open-concept classrooms, had the best zip-line and metal slides to play on. I don't remember all the traffic and the parking issues at the top of Berkley, but I do remember the baseball games at Blueridge Park.

What's surprising is what hasn't changed. The Christmas lights on Hill Drive are still as bright and over-the-top as I remember as a kid - and walking up that hill is just as bad as I remember. The trails at the end of every cul-de-sac are still the local's secret and the best way to get to your friends' houses. The streams provide a great place to explore. I'm thrilled that summer block parties are still a thing as I remember the freedom and joy of running the streets

on warm summer nights. Kids are still riding their bikes and playing basketball on the streets. The forest behind the school still has the same magical feel to walk through in the mornings on the way to school.

The houses are getting renovated, and the kitchen colour schemes may change, but the overall feel of Blueridge remains the same as what I remember growing up. As a kid, I could never have put into words what made this place so special. Moving back to the neighbourhood has given me a new perspective on the importance of community.

I am grateful that we have friends in the neighbourhood that my kids can meet at the park or run into on the street on a sunny afternoon. I love that we have a wonderful community school within a few minutes walk of our house. It's the same school that I went to as a kid and my kids both think it's pretty neat that they go to the same school. My kindergarten teacher even lives a few houses down from me and has taught my own children from time to time; that's not something you get in many neighbourhoods.

I'm sure all of us have run into neighbours that grew up in Blueridge and have also moved back. It's clear that we've all been through the same range of emotions about moving back. After all, isn't it natural to move away from where you grew up? But the answer is always that this is a wonderful place to live.

This may sound like a love letter to the neighbourhood, and maybe it is. Blueridge has matured and developed into a very desirable community, and we are living in a lovely little hidden pocket of Vancouver. Thank you, Blueridge neighbours. It's awesome here.



Kim's sister, Jennifer, (second from left) poses with friends in a 1980s photo in front of Blueridge Elementary.



The author's family today, (left to right): Craig Kalnin, Isla, Kimberley, Bree and Jennifer Bernard.

Chess Tourney added to Blueridge Good Neighbour Day (BGND) Revival

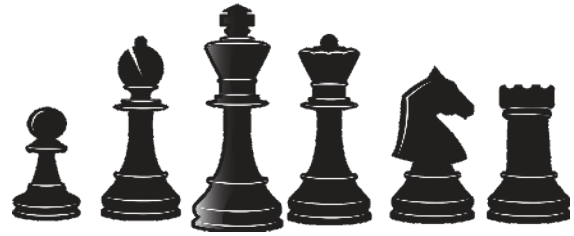
By Mary Stern

We are excited to announce the first-ever Blueridge Chess Open! This is thanks to the support of the BGND planning committee, which has added a youth engagement focus for the first time, and a youth grant from North Shore Neighbourhood House.

Thirteen-year-old Tristan Patterson of Blueridge, with support from the committee is organizing the tournament. He had this to say in his grant application:

“My idea is to have a community event which is mostly for youth. It will be competitive but also a bonding experience for people to make new friends that like the same things that you do and help you learn. My vision is for there to be high school students as well as Grade 6s and 7s that are learning so that the chess club gets new recruits which will help the chess club at the local high school prosper.”

“The people who already know how to play chess get a chance to show leadership and have a get-together that they might not normally get. The younger people will get a chance to meet high



schoolers who could possibly help them in their high school journey. For me, having gone to a bunch of chess tournaments I know that it is a great bonding experience, and you can meet lots of friends there. Taking it seriously and going to provincials myself, I understand how important it is to meet people who are interested in the same things that can help you grow and learn.”

“You’ll be connected not only by your friendship and community but also by the things you do.”

To register in advance of BGND, please email me at: marziehstern@gmail.com

Blueridge Sharing Garden

You might say Corinne Bergdal, the new chair of the Blueridge Sharing Garden, has the Garden in her genes. Her mother was involved in the creating the garden after the idea arose in a community brainstorming session in 2013. She explains below why she became more involved this year.

Q: Why did you step into the job of leading the Blueridge Sharing Garden?

A: I have been involved with the Blueridge Garden in one way or the other since its creation in 2015. My mother, Margaret, was very involved with getting it going and I have enjoyed gardening there for many years. It is a place that brings me a great deal of pleasure to contribute to however I am able. I look forward to fulfilling this role and supporting my fellow gardeners and the garden’s volunteers now and in the future.

Q: Are there things you would like to see done with the Garden moving forward?

A: I would like to see the Garden flourish and become more of a centre for the Blueridge

community, a place to go to and be enjoyed by all! Of course, we do need to keep up with our box rebuilding and overall beautification of the space.

Q: What kinds of things do you need people to volunteer to do in the garden?

A: There’s never any shortage of tasks for those who volunteer. I’m confident that we can find something suited to their abilities. If they want a little dirt under their nails, they can perform various gardening tasks during our bi-monthly garden work parties. Others might be interested in more behind-the-scene activities. For instance, we need some grant writing for funds for our on-going box rebuilding or help with social media to publicize special events and projects being done.

Q: Are there any plots available for rent in the garden now?

A: All our plots are rented for 2023 but people can add their name to our waitlist for next year and beyond. To do so, they can email: garden@blueridgeca.org

Our Blueridge scholarship winner reflects on her first year of university

by Maya Aubron-Albert

*M*y experience at the University of Victoria has been amazing. I feel incredibly fortunate to have been selected as the recipient of the BCA scholarship, which has been a significant help in kickstarting this new phase of my life. Not only has it provided me with financial support, but it has also given me a boost of confidence and motivation to pursue my academic and personal goals. It allowed me to focus on my studies and take advantage of the many opportunities that the University of Victoria has to offer. I am truly grateful for this scholarship, and I hope to pay it forward by making the most of my education and giving back to my community in the future.

Even though I don't live on campus, I don't regret my decision because it has allowed me to create my own space away from school, and I love it.

During my first semester, I found it challenging to adapt to the workload of my general science courses, but I was able to find my footing during the second semester and truly felt like a university student. Victoria is an excellent place to start living on your own, and I found that UVic was a great place to make new friends too.

One of the highlights of my university experience was getting the opportunity to work in a biology lab on campus, which I've been enjoying a lot. My job involves taking care of many plants each week, and it reminds me of home and of the plant swap my mom and I created. I also had the opportunity to take pottery and painting classes as electives this year, which I found to be a great way to disconnect from my schoolwork and tap into my creative side.

It was refreshing to have a break from my core coursework and engage in more artistic endeavours. In addition to art classes, I was able to experience chemistry, physics, and biology laboratories firsthand this year. I found these lab experiences to be extremely useful for learning because I was able to engage in hands-on activities, which is quite different from my experience in high school. It was fascinating to see scientific concepts come to life through experiments, and it gave me a deeper appreciation for the practical applications of what I was learning in class.

All in all, my time at the University of Victoria has allowed me to explore a wide range of interests and has been filled with valuable learning experiences, academic challenges, personal growth, and unforgettable memories!!



Letter to the Editor

All letters must be signed. Letters will be edited for brevity, legality and taste.

Dear Editor,

We have a problem in our lovely area: it's dog poop!

I am a dog owner myself and have been for many, many years and I have to say I have never seen this problem as bad as it has been in the last year or so. What is the big deal?? How hard is it to bend over and scoop? I understand it is not a pleasant task. None of us enjoy it, but it is a responsibility that comes with owning a dog.

I have witnessed people letting their dog poop on the sidewalks and just keep on walking, totally oblivious to what they have left behind. Come on people! We all know when our pups are pooping! I have seen people let their dog poop in the park, on the playing fields and on the pathways to Blueridge School. How yucky would it be for a child to sit all day with poop stuck to their shoe?

I have reluctantly erected signs on my grass, begging my neighbours to please clean up after their dogs only to have come out to a huge pile right in front of the sign!! I don't want to resort to cameras or special lighting to catch the perps, but I will if necessary. Also, it is not just the act of scooping and bagging, but also disposing of it in a proper manner. Dumping it in my bushes at the end of the drive does not work, nor does throwing it into the trees to let it hang like Christmas decorations left up all year round.

So, let's all work together to make our neighbourhood safe to walk in and just pick up the POOP!!

Thank you for letting me vent!! Now, don't get me started on the maniacs who drive up Berkley at warp speed!

Your neighbour and loving mum to fur baby Rupert.

- Robyn Davis



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So far, these companies have supported Blueridge Good Neighbour Day on Sunday, June 11. We will include a complete list of donors and sponsors in this newsletter's fall issue!



BLUERIDGE
Community Association

PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH!!

Web: www.blueridgeca.org

Email: info@blueridgeca.org • newsletter@blueridgeca.org

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