

NOVEMBER 2024 ISSUE



Christmas Coming!



By Michael Bernard

For those of a certain age, Christmas mornings of yesteryear conjure up a special memory: an electric train chugging around the Christmas tree.

Brian Gardiner was part of that crowd. When he was young, he collected HO scale model trains. While model trains have long been replaced by video games and other toys under the tree, Brian's fascination with trains—both real and toy size—is as strong as ever. And now, during the Christmas season, he operates a model train in his front yard at 2377 Berkley Avenue.

His current train is several times larger than the trains of his childhood. It's a "G" gauge category, which stands for garden scale. He points out that the locomotives get power from electricity in the rail, just like other model trains. It can run in the rain and snow with no difficulty, although ice can slow things down by breaking the contact between the engine and the rails.

Brian is sharing his love of trains for the 15th consecutive year for all kids—young and old—to enjoy.

"I've been a train fan forever," says Brian. "When I first saw a train set that could run outside, I thought that would be a nice Christmas feature. It's always great to add to the Christmas spirit in Blueridge and see the train fans of all ages come by!"

He plans to start up his Christmas train on Saturday, Dec. 14, and operate it from 6-9pm until Jan. 1. The lights of the Christmas caboose, of course, show up best at night. He urges residents to check the Blueridge Community Neighbours Facebook page or the Blueridge Community Association website to confirm the train is running.

If readers have any questions, they can contact Brian directly by Direct Message on the Blueridge Community Neighbours Facebook page or by email at briangardiner@gmail.com.



Engineer Brian Gardiner gets ready to set up his Blueridge Christmas train in front of his house at 2377 Berkley Avenue. The train has been running every year since 2010.

Christmas carolling to support Blueridge Cares initiative

By Cathi Wetsch

The Berry Family Child Care Society, Huckleberries, and friends will be carolling for the third consecutive year for the great cause, Blueridge Cares. We will carol on Violet and on Emerson on Tuesday, Dec. 3, so when you hear little voices singing at your door, open your door and your hearts for Blueridge Cares. The annual local initiative aims to help neighbourhood families experiencing difficulty during the festive season. *Merry Christmas to All!*



Another bustling year in Blueridge

*By Eric G. Andersen
BCA Chair*

Nearly five months have gone since our last newsletter and despite a relaxing time over the summer holidays for most people, we can say that the Blueridge Community Association (BCA) continues to be very active. You will note this from the details below and perhaps some of the activities will urge other residents to join us and help out as we always need more assistance for all our activities!

It's also a great way for new residents to contribute to local projects while getting to know some of their new neighbours.

As usual, our largest event of the year, Blueridge Good Neighbour Day (BGND), took place in June. The weather could have been better, although we escaped the hail in the early morning as well as the rain.

Unfortunately, the bureaucracy continues to increase to a ridiculous level, and one of our service providers seems to have lost sight of the community building that we do.

The bottom line is that we would like to proceed with BGND in 2025, as this will be our 25th anniversary – something to be very proud of.

However, after next year's event – particularly if we encounter as many hurdles and bureaucracy as we did this year – indications are that we have reached the end of BGND.

Having been part of this event since Day 1 in 1998, I know how much BGND means to Blueridge residents, and it would be heartbreaking to see the end of such a community event.

Regretfully we are up against a mindset that prioritizes paperwork over community pride.

Should other Blueridge & Seymour Heights residents wish to continue BGND (or a different, perhaps smaller model), the BCA will continue to support the event, including financially.

On World Rivers Day in late September the BCA promoted and supported a cleanup of Blueridge Creek, spearheaded by a local resident. It was reasonably well-attended, and it has now become a regular yearly feature in our neighbourhood.

Together with a couple of other community

associations and Parkgate Community Centre, the BCA recently co-hosted an All Candidates Meeting (ACM) prior to the provincial election.

It was held at Mount Seymour United Church as usual, but this time the turnout was less than usual. This is no doubt due to the Leaders' Debate, which took place the very same night. When it was announced, we were unable to change the date for our own ACM.

As you can read about in this newsletter we have started working on the Blueridge Cares Program, where local families who apply can get financial assistance prior to Christmas. We urge local residents to make contributions towards this activity.

This worthwhile initiative started during the pandemic, and we fear that the number of families will be growing this year.

The Blueridge Spirit Award was handed out in October by the previous recipient (as is the tradition). It is amazing to see the variety of local residents who are consistently volunteering their time at various levels and activities. They are not all necessarily involved with the BCA, but all do commendable work for our community.

Over the summer local chlorine-producing company, Chemtrade, has offered many tours of their facility in Maplewood.

As many of you will know their current lease allows chlorine production until July 2030, and they are now looking for a 'long-term' lease extension.

This is a very complex issue, and we urge every resident in Blueridge to find out more about this by attending meetings (also if hosted by the DNV), visiting the plant and reading about the development, including various articles posted on our website.

We are considering hosting a meeting in January with North Shore Emergency Management (NSEM) to prepare everyone for a local natural disaster, an earthquake, wildfires, a chemical spill etc.

Would you be interested in learning more and participating? Please contact us at info@blueridgeca.org or sign up to the Blueridge Bulletin, our monthly e-newsletter.

In addition to all these separate activities, I should also mention the always very active members of the Blueridge Sharing Garden who continue their great work there. The Blueridge Good Neighbour Greeting team continues to be very active and meets with all new residents.

Even less visibly, but equally important are the members of the BCA who continue to help sharing information about our community, both on social media, on our website, in our monthly e-newsletter, the Blueridge Bulletin, and in our printed Blueridge Newsletter, distributed three times a year to every doorstep in our community by an enthusiastic band of volunteers.

Without everyone's time and efforts, we would not be able to maintain all our activities. Thank you, everyone!

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for Blueridge and
Seymour Heights residents
Editor: Michael Bernard**



The Blueridge Spirit Award

The Blueridge Spirit Award is given to individuals or couples who show enthusiasm and passion in serving our community. Every three months, this award is passed on to a new recipient by the winner. Melissa Brotz, the past award holder, has chosen Sarah Manvell to be the latest recipient.

By Melissa Brotz

There are so many people in our community who deserve this award for all that they do to make Blueridge a safe and amazing place to live. Sarah Manvell is definitely one of them.

Sarah is a local resident whose two children attend Seymour Heights Elementary School. She signs up for many parent volunteer jobs at the school, and is a member of the Seymour Heights Parent Advisory Council (PAC). She also represents the Seymour Heights PAC in the Windsor Family of Schools which includes Seymour Heights, Blueridge, Lynnmour and Windsor.

What I find most impressive about Sarah is her dedication and passion for traffic safety in our community. Her “target” area is on Carnation Street in front of Seymour Heights. She has led a traffic safety committee, within the parent community, to improve safety for children and other pedestrians on the street. This has earned her the nickname “Safety Sarah”.



Sarah, with her two boys Mylo (left) and Hunter.

She and two other parent volunteers, and occasionally their children, don those bright yellow vests before and after school (or when their schedules permit). Not only are they crosswalk guards, but they also work to discourage parking in “drop-off zones,” and remind drivers to slow down. All these things make the street safer for our children.

Sarah is so passionate about traffic safety that she has become a director-at-large on the North Shore Safety Council. This year, the council aims to create a forum focused on some of the traffic issues that currently impact school zones. Her work not only improves traffic safety at Seymour Heights, but also enhances safety throughout Blueridge, Windsor, Lynnmour and other school areas within North Vancouver.

What Sarah does for our community requires a lot of hard work and many volunteer hours. As residents of Blueridge, we can make her job easier by being more aware of traffic rules in all of our school zones. After all, it’s for and about our kids!

If you are a concerned member of the community with some extra time to spare in the morning or afternoon, please reach out to Sarah to see how you can help. You can do so by dropping a line to info@blueridgeca.org with the subject title “Safety Sarah”!

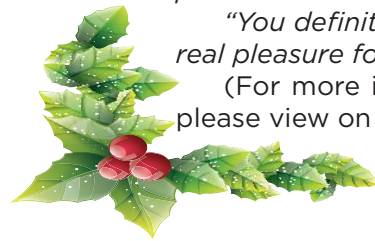
If you have a high school student at Windsor, ask them if they would like to volunteer with traffic safety on Carnation Street. This volunteer work will be counted towards the volunteer hours that they require to graduate from high school.

The following is a note of congratulations from Eric Andersen, chair of the Blueridge Community Association.

“On behalf of the Blueridge Community Association’s board I would like to congratulate you on being the latest recipient of the Blueridge Spirit Award, deservedly picked by the previous winner, Melissa Brotz.”

“You definitely deserve it with the amount of community work that you are doing! It’s a real pleasure for all of us to have neighbours like you living in our community.”

(For more information on the Blueridge Spirit Award, including a list of past winners, please view on www.blueridgeca.org)



What is the right pace of population growth for our community?

By Jim Hanson

How much growth is too much? At the Oct. 21, 2024, meeting of North Vancouver District Council (DNV), we received and discussed the provincially-mandated 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report. This report is the first Housing Needs Report undertaken since the passing of Bill #44 in the fall of 2023. That bill required local governments to adopt a provincially-prescribed methodology to set housing needs over the upcoming five and 20-year periods.

The methodology prescribed by the province seeks to establish a standardized way of determining housing need, considering measures of existing shortage of housing (for example, rates of homelessness and rental vacancy) and measures of anticipated population growth. Using this method, the district's housing needs are 7,425 net new units in the five-year period ending in 2024, and 22,369 net new units in the 20-year period ending 2041.

To put it in context, this represents a doubling of our current rate of growth. In the 44 months between January 2021 and August 2024, the district has delivered 2,240 net new housing units, just over 50 per month. For the period 2021 to 2026, the provincial government's prescribed housing need is 6,408, about 100 units per month of newly constructed units. For the 20 years ending in 2041 the provincially prescribed number is 22,269, again close to 100 units per month over these 20 years.

Using the provincial formula, we can expect overall growth across the North Shore in the range 55,000 to 70,000 new residential units by 2041, representing

an increase in population of about 100,000 to 125,000 persons, on top of the existing North Shore population of about 200,000.

At the moment, the Province has mandated a Housing Order for the district which requires 2,838 net new units between 2023 and 2028 (47.3 units per month) just less than our historical rate of growth. However, given the housing need as established by the provincial methodology, we could expect Housing Orders to require zoning to accommodate a significantly greater pace of growth.

For my part, I question the sustainability of increased rates of growth at this magnitude. Should we be doubling the rate of residential development in the district? Given the capacity of our roads, buses, schools and hospitals, I believe we must be careful about significantly expanding our rate of growth without a clear and financed plan to support the growth with necessary infrastructure.

As we work our way forward through an amended Official Community Plan and a strategy for accommodating provincially-mandated growth, I encourage all residents to make their voices heard by communicating with elected officials in provincial and municipal governments, and providing their input in our upcoming Official Community Plan review.



Jim Hanson
District
Councillor

Can You Lend a Hand at Christmas Time?

By Carolann Fraenkel

Blueridge Blueridge Cares, a neighbourhood program started in 2020, is designed to assist Blueridge families needing a little help during the holiday or at another difficult time.

We need your help to make this possible. If you can purchase and wrap a gift, would like to make a monetary donation, or can help with organizing and delivery, please fill out the form that will be available on the Blueridge website www.blueridgeca.org,

If you are a family in our neighbourhood who might need help, there will also be a form for you to fill in posted on our website at www.blueridgeca.org, or you can request a phone call from one of our elves by contacting us at info@blueridgeca.org.

Families who request help will be asked to provide us with specific holiday requests. Our elves will transfer the information to a gift tag, which will be emailed and printed by the gift buyer. Once the gift is purchased, the giver can wrap the gift and attach the tag and drop it off at a central location. Our elves will sort the gifts by family and arrange for them to be delivered.

We are offering a grocery gift card to our families who ask for help. We hope to deliver it in early December to help ease the burden of the holidays.





Everything old is new again

By Jennifer Brun

We asked Jennifer to write about growing up in Blueridge. She has returned to the community to raise her own family here.

I recall mornings spent playing in our family room, waiting for the first bell of the day to ring out before donning my backpack and running out the back door with my brothers. Living on the edge of the forest at the back of Blueridge Elementary certainly had its perks. Not only could I enjoy my mornings at a leisurely pace, I also returned home for lunch each day. My grandmother came over once a week and brought with her freshly baked white bread, honey ham from the deli shaved that morning, and three doughnuts - one chocolate long john for me, one plain honey glazed for my older brother, and one jelly-filled for my younger brother. It was the same every time and when we walked through the door for lunch on the day that Nana was there, the kitchen smelled of bread, doughnuts and spray starch from her carefully pressing each of my father's shirt collars and cuffs.

Growing up in the Blueridge community in the 80s and 90s was special. As a younger sibling, I was so excited to be able to start at Blueridge Elementary my kindergarten year. I already knew the school and many of the teachers. I was welcomed by the most incredible kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Silverwood, and I cherished the time I spent with her. I still recall the layout of her classroom, the rice table that I loved so much, happy circle times and being so proud that I was able to attend school. In grade one I was fortunate enough to be placed in Ms. Sedola's class. I adored her stirrup tights, blouses, and belts, and her fun and energetic teaching style. I always worked diligently on the enjoyable tasks she assigned. When Mrs. Denny started at Blueridge as our new music teacher, it was unanimous we had struck it lucky. Mrs. Denny was so passionate about music and the arts, it was contagious. She put countless hours of her own time outside of school hours into our exceptional music program. Suddenly we were having our holiday concerts at Centennial Theatre and I felt like a real star! And of course there was Mr. Stewart, the most kindhearted librarian who always wore a collared shirt and button cardigan. He taught us how to properly research topics and write coherent essays with paragraphs. I have wonderful memories and could go on and on, naming each teacher and administrator who inspired me to be my best - sending me on the trajectory that has landed me where I am today. The point, however, is that it is no surprise decades later my husband and I decided to return to Blueridge to



raise our family here.

Upon returning to Blueridge just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we received a warm welcome from our neighbours and were quickly introduced to Eric Godot Andersen and the tremendous work of the Blueridge Community Association that he spearheads. Blueridge Cares and Blueridge Good Neighbour Day are two perfect examples of volunteer-led initiatives that further enhance our community, setting it apart from all others.

When our eldest child started in kindergarten at Blueridge Elementary last year, I was both hopeful and curious. Hopeful that my children would experience safe, happy and formative years at elementary school like I did, and curious to see whether Blueridge had somehow managed to retain its *je ne sais quoi* that makes it so special. I can truly say my hope was well-placed and my curiosity was quickly satiated. Under the strong and steady leadership of Brigette Gerandol, principal, and Courtney Johnstone, vice-principal, Blueridge has incredibly dedicated staff members who are united in their resolve to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for the personal and social development of our children. I feel the same fondness toward the administration, teachers, music teacher, librarian, and other allied professionals serving Blueridge today, as I do toward those from my childhood so many years ago. Further, the Blueridge Parent Advisory Council (BPAC) led by the current chair, Amanda Guest, is incredibly active. BPAC hosts near-daily events for our children to enjoy, as well as numerous fundraising opportunities throughout each year, further enriching the Blueridge Elementary experience. I am grateful for the staff and volunteers that make Blueridge so exceptional.

In short, Blueridge is a unique and special place. We are all so fortunate to call it home.

Blueridge Good Neighbour Day a resounding success, despite a litte hail storm

By In-Ah Mellor

We were all worried about the weather, but after a heart-attack-inducing hailstorm early in the morning, just when the first trucks arrived, it cleared up and became a miraculously rain-free day! Small bursts of sunshine highlighted the successful day-long event on Saturday, June 15, during which many Blueridge and other North Shore residents, friends, and families came to the community parade, and enjoyed the free activities, community tables, and food trucks.

The bouncy castles were a definite highlight, with newer additions this year that kept many kids and youth happy for hours. The mini train chugged around the field tirelessly while the large kids' activities area offered arts and crafts, face painting, games and more. Adults could enjoy the silent auction, which was brimming with beautiful deals, have a beer in the gym, and try a bit of pickleball on the courts. There was also skateboarding this year, the cakewalk and the very popular tombola, which the BPAC ran. And if you needed a little furry cuddle, our small petting zoo was able to provide it!

Special guest Whitecaps mascot, Spike, enjoyed the pie-eating contest as much as the contestants, one of whom went home with a beautiful BGND Pie Eating trophy! Speaking of trophies and awards, the chess tournament offered prizes this year, including a trophy, and for the first time, a Volunteer of the Year award went out to our most dedicated helper.

One thing is sure: without the help and effort of our planning committee and volunteers, we would not be able to have such a huge event that brings happiness to so many.

Unfortunately, ongoing difficulties with the school board have soured the aftertaste of this beautiful neighbourhood celebration, which a small, dedicated, and very hardworking committee put together and made happen. It went as far as to shake the very foundation of BGND. Despite this, the committee will come together again this fall to start planning BGND 2025 since this will be a very special one: the 25th anniversary!! For the 25th time, let's all get together for a huge happy hurrah and enjoy this special neighbourhood event in mid-June 2025!

We are excited to see you there.

They Make It Happen:

Our thanks to the following donors and sponsors!

Blueridge Good Neighbour Day wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for an impressively long list of sponsors and donors. Our thanks to each and every one of them for their ongoing support of our community event last June.

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 Vancouver Fraser Port Authority
 White Spot, Park & Tilford
 Wonderstruck Camp

Dates to Remember

Nov. 23

Deadline for buying Purdys Chocolates for Christmas (and getting 25% donated to Blueridge Cares!)

Dec. 3

Christmas Carolling (Walpole and Emerson with donations to Blueridge Cares!)

Dec. 14-Jan. 1

Blueridge Christmas Train runs at 2377 Berkley Ave. 6-9 pm nightly

Dec. 31, 2024

Deadline for nominations for Outstanding Blueridge Neighbour Awards

May 13, 2025

Blueridge Community Association Annual General Meeting

2024 PURDYS CAMPAIGN

By Ruth Hanson



It's that time once again: Time to start thinking about the Holidays! And as we all know, what goes best with the Holidays is chocolate!

Every year the BCA runs a fundraising campaign with Purdys Chocolatier. The proceeds help those in need right here in Blueridge through our Blueridge Cares program.

You can help by purchasing some Holiday Chocolates from Purdys using this link: <https://fundraising.purdys.com/1419547-120559>

If you've never purchased from Purdys for a fundraising campaign, you'll have to create an account before you can order. If you have an account already, click on the "SIGN IN" link in the menu to login. Either way, once signed in click on "SHOP ONLINE" to view the candies available.

Every purchase helps, and the BCA will receive up to 25% of your order total. But only if you order by November 23rd!

Your order will be shipped right to Blueridge, and you'll be able to pick them up from Ruth Hanson on December 1st.

Please go online to the link above and help out today!



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Outstanding Neighbour Award Nominations

By Eric G Andersen

*K*now a Blueridge resident who has gone above and beyond in helping out a neighbour? Ensure that their good deeds are recognized by nominating them for an Outstanding Neighbour Award at <https://blueridgeca.org/blueridge-awards-nomination/>.

This award recognizes a resident who distinguishes themselves by supporting their neighbours. Residents nominate their neighbours, and the Blueridge Community Association (BCA) board selects the winner.

So if you find that you have a fantastic neighbour(s) on your street, please feel free to nominate him/her/them and let us know why you think they deserve recognition!

Once the winner has been selected, we would love to have a picture of you and the party you nominated, which we will post on our website and include in our next Bulletin and Newsletter.

Deadline: December 31.



BLUERIDGE
Community Association

PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH!!

The BCA is on these social media sites, follow your favourite.

 Facebook: Blueridge Community Association

 Instagram: Blueridge__Community

Web: www.blueridgeca.org

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