

DIRECTOR'S NEWS JULY 2010
AN UPDATE FROM SCRD DIRECTOR,
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I am taking a break from my Gumboot Office for July and August, but I can arrange to meet with you if you send me an email.

TRANSIT NEWS

The SCRD Transit Summer Schedule began on June 29. Pick up the schedule at any SCRD facility, libraries and other key locations as well as on the bus. It is also available online: www.scrd.ca. As a pilot project, a new Family Pass came on stream July 1. Adults with a bus pass can take up to four children under 12 for free. At the end of December, we will evaluate the program to see if it should be continued. This is part of making our bus system more accessible and user friendly. The more ridership we are able to achieve, the greater our ability to expand our service.

GRANTS IN AID

The SCRD rural directors have decided on the grants we will give to community groups in 2010. Many thanks to Sheila Carlson and Bronia Kingsbury who helped adjudicate the Roberts Creek grants. The list of groups that will be helped out from Roberts Creek this year is long but the amounts going to each group are small. By pooling our resources with the other rural areas on the Coast, we have been able to be of great assistance to the volunteer organizations that make our community run: SC Branch of the BC Schizophrenia Society, Special Olympics, Coast Arts Society, Coast Cultural Alliance, Coast Recital Society, Community Justice Program, Gibsons Landing Heritage Society, Yacht Club Learn to Sail, Pender Harbour Music Society, RC Childcare Society, RCCA, Sechelt Seniors Centre, Community Foundation, Victim Services, Fruit Tree Project, Community Orchestra, SC Cy-

cling, Dance Society, Driftwood Players, Festival of the Written Arts, Film Society, SC Music Society, Jazz Society, Lacrosse, Salmonid Enhancement, Skating Club, Wood Crafters, Shirley Macey Accessible Tot Park.

POULTRY

We have been petitioned to expand the zones within the Regional District where the keeping of poultry is permitted. Currently, you may keep chickens in any rural area except in the R1 zone, which in RC includes many smaller lots in the denser areas below the Highway. The Directors believe that allowing poultry in the R1 zone is a good idea and an enhancement of local food production. The topic was examined by the Agricultural Advisory Committee and all the rural area Advisory Planning Commissions. To our surprise, the APCs did not embrace the idea, expressing concerns about smell, noise and rodents. Only the Roberts Creek APC recommended allowing a small number of hens (4) in the R1 Zone with specific setbacks from property lines, building requirements, as well as education and enforcement recommendations. This would require changes to the zoning bylaw and, if RC goes it alone, the burden of new bylaw enforcement resources being borne by RC taxpayers. Therefore I have recommended that this topic be addressed as part of the OCP review rather than having a separate zoning amendment and public hearing process just for this issue. What this means is that the current zoning remains in place without change and the option of expanding the areas where chickens are permitted to include R1 properties will be dealt with when the new draft OCP comes before you later this year. I am hopeful that we can bring in some broader guidelines that will not require an onerous enforcement regime. For those of you who already keep chickens or wish to, there are guidelines for healthy conditions for your birds on the SCRD website.

MEAT REGULATIONS

The provincial government has responded to protest from all over rural BC against the onerous Meat Regulations by making adjustments for "rural remote" communities. The Sunshine Coast has been given that designation which allows farmers in the SCRD to receive Class D and E licenses to slaughter and sell their animals locally. The Class E Direct Sales license allows on-farm slaughter of 1-10 animals annually for direct sale to local consumers in rural communities that cannot support a fully licensed slaughtering facility. The Class D Retail Sales license allows on-farm slaughter of a larger number of animals (1-25 animal units) for direct sale to consumers, and allows retail sales to secondary food establishments (e.g., restaurants and meat shops) within the boundaries of the regional district where the meat was produced. As part of the application process, Class D and E operators will be required to submit a food safety plan for approval and complete food safety training. Applications from farmers in the SCRD will be reviewed in late summer 2010.

SCRD ANNUAL REPORT

The SCRD 2009 Annual Report has been published and is available for viewing at the libraries and the RC Reading Room as well as on the SCRD website. Included in the report is a summary of services provided by the Regional District by department and detailed financial reporting and analysis. The auditor's statement is also included. If you are interested in how your tax dollars are administered, this is a document you will want to check out!

The auditor gave the SCRD a very clean report. Not only were the books squeaky clean but they were very well presented. There are new accounting rules regarding Tangible Capital Assets. This has meant that we have had to evaluate all our assets from parks to buildings to machinery and give every item a value. This has been a huge job for all local governments to undertake and ¼ to 1/3 of local governments have been unable to meet the June 30 deadline. SCRD finance staff have successfully met that challenge. Now that the job is done, it will be easier to track our assets and adhere to a maintenance and replacement schedule.

CLIFF GILKER PARK

The bridge above the waterfall was damaged in the last

wind storms and has been replaced with a wheel chair accessible bridge with a viewing area. The Sechelt Rotary will be making the paths that access the bridge off the playground wheelchair accessible as well. Next to the bridge a view bench has been placed by the Oldershaw and Olsen families in memory of Reg Oldershaw who was the Cliff Gilker resident caretaker for many years.

LIBRARY & CREEK DAZE

Don't forget to donate any books you no longer need to the library for its book sale which takes place on Creek Daze, Saturday August 28.

Creek Daze volunteers are needed. This a fun way to participate in our annual celebration of everything Creeky so contact Yanira at creekdaze@robertscreek.org if you have time and/or ideas.

ROLLER DERBY

There will be a free Roller Derby Event on July 23, 7:00pm at the Gibsons Community Centre. Come and watch members of the newly formed Sunshine Coast Roller Girls as they practice drills, spills and scrimmages. An info session follows.

PROVINCIAL CAMPFIRE REGULATIONS

New regulations for campfires come into effect July 1 to reduce the risk of human-caused wildfires. Under the new regulations, campfires cannot be larger 0.5 metres in height and 0.5 metres in diameter, or approximately 1.5 sq ft. Previously, campfires were permitted to a maximum size of 1m x 1m. The new rules also require campers to build a fireguard around their fires by scraping down to the dirt and clearing away potentially flammable debris, such as twigs, leaves and needles. A shovel or at least eight litres of water must be nearby to extinguish the fire. To report a wildfire or unattended campfire, call *5555 on your cell, or 1-800-663-5555.

WATER CONSERVATION

Check out the series of water conservation tips on the SCRD website. Sprinkling regulations are now in effect. Odd numbered addresses: Mon, Wed, Fri 7-10am and Mon, Wed 7-9pm. Even numbered addresses: Tues, Thurs, Sat 7-10am and Tues, Thurs 7-9pm. One device at a time is permitted and a soaker hose is considered to be a sprinkler.

