

**DIRECTOR'S NEWS MARCH 2010**  
**AN UPDATE FROM SCRD DIRECTOR,**  
**DONNA SHUGAR**



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**CONTACT**

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In Person: Gumboot Restaurant Saturdays  
9-11am except March 27. Drop by for coffee  
and a chat!

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**OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY**

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Thank you Mar-Lynn Church, Tetrahedron Outdoor Club Jackrabbits, Roberts Creek Community School, Mark Lebbell and the band, Barry Krange and the many other volunteers who made the Torch Relay in Roberts Creek a delightful "national" event. We did it Creek style and everyone who turned out had fun being together! Check out the photos at the RC Library.

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**SUSTAINABILITY NEWS**

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Julie Clark, the SCRD's Sustainability Education and Outreach Coordinator, is organizing a couple of information meetings to let the community know what her program is all about and how you can get involved in Sunshine Coast sustainability initiatives. There will be two meetings, one in Gibsons and one in the Sechelt area, both towards the end of March. Watch the papers for details.

In collaboration with the municipalities, the SCRD has developed a draft report and recommendations for a Community Energy and Emissions Plan. This plan addresses what we need to do as a community to use energy more efficiently and reduce our GHG emissions over the next several decades. We are welcoming public input on the plan so do check it out on the SCRD website: [www.scrd.ca](http://www.scrd.ca).

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**SCRD BUDGET**

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The new budget process I told you about last month is working really well. The third and final round of discussions takes place the week of March 8 at the SCRD offices on Field Rd. As always, these meetings are open to the public. Going into Round 3, I am pleased to report that we are sitting at a close to zero% increase in taxation over 2009 levels. (Roberts Creek's residential tax rate is only .07% above 09 levels.) We will likely see some small changes as we have yet to finalize some budget items, for example, Library and Museum Services, Fire Departments, and Parks and Recreation. One important part of our discussions is how we can achieve financial sustainability and avoid the peaks and valleys of taxation in different years as conditions change. We have managed to begin putting away some money into reserves earmarked for such projects as the purchase of new fire trucks. The staffing cuts we made in December will show up in some small loss of service to the public. For example, the SCRD will no longer run recreation programs outside of our 5 recreation facilities. Parks maintenance schedules will be adjusted so that things like mowing will happen slightly less frequently. And a small reduction in Planning staff may result in slightly longer processing times for subdivision and rezoning applications.

The SCRD Manager of Corporate Services will be offering a public presentation about the budget at the SCRD offices on March 3 at 1:00pm. The presentation will be televised by Coast Cable and aired on Thursday March 4, 7:00pm. Sechelt and Gibsons mayors will join me on TV to discuss the budget and take phone in questions and comments from the public.

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## WATER

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The province of BC is looking at making changes to the Water Act. Sadly, this will not likely result in changes to our ability to gain control of the Chapman/Gray watershed system which provides the majority of the Sunshine Coast with potable water. But there is a way you can get involved in the discussions through the Living Water Smart Blog. Check it out at [www.livingwatersmart.ca](http://www.livingwatersmart.ca).

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## EARTH HOUR

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This year Earth Hour is on March 27. Lets all turn out our lights at 8:00pm to join others around the world to symbolize our commitment to reducing energy consumption!

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## PITCH IN COMMUNITY CLEAN UP

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We still need a volunteer coordinator and helpers for the annual Roberts Creek roadside cleanup. Sign up begins around Earth Day in April and the clean up takes place over the following couple of weeks. People who take on a section of road receive garbage bags and extra garbage tags so the stuff collected will be picked up on your regular garbage day.

If you can help, please contact RCCA President Laurie O'Byrne [lo@dccnet.com](mailto:lo@dccnet.com), 604-885-8899. This is a really excellent way to contribute to keeping our community clean and beautiful!

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## RECYCLING

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Debates about garbage continue to dominate the attention of the SCRD Board. I had hoped to be able to report that the Pender Harbour landfill issue would have been resolved. However, that community continues to be very divided about how to deal with the fact that the PH landfill has reached capacity. We are trying to wrestle with this problem without adversely impacting other areas of the Coast either financially or environmentally. It is my belief that converting the PH landfill site to a trans-

fer station (which results in no reduction of service to the public) with enhancements to the recycling program there would be the most fiscally and environmentally responsible decision. But there remain some PH citizens who wish to expand the landfill site onto a new footprint. We are still considering whether to hold a referendum in Pender Harbour on this issue. My support of this idea is contingent upon it having no financial implications for the taxpayers of other areas.

We are also still wrestling with how to manage our recycling programs on the lower Coast, i.e. curb-side pick up or enhancing the depot collection systems. We already divert many items from the landfills. In addition to household plastics, paper, cardboard and tins, we also divert gyproc, roofing, tires, paints, electronic waste and many other items from the waste stream. If you want to know more about recycling programs on the Sunshine Coast and how to best handle your domestic waste, please take a look at the SCRD website. There is a lot of useful information there including a Recycling Directory to assist you in knowing where to take certain items on the Sunshine Coast.

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## SCRD MEETINGS

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We have tried having SCRD committee meetings at 1:00pm for the last 2 months. The experiment has not worked out so we will be returning to the old time of 1:30pm beginning with the Planning and Development Committee meeting on March 11.

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## ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL EXPANSION

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The upcoming LEED Gold expansion of the hospital is moving along with the regional district taxation for this project remaining stable at the 2009 rate. The first bid package is out and the official sod turning is expected in mid-April! This expansion will increase the number of patient beds which will all be in single occupancy rooms and will provide many other much needed improvements.

