

**DIRECTOR'S NEWS**  
**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007**  
**AN UPDATE FROM SCRD DIRECTOR,**  
**DONNA SHUGAR**



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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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In person: Gumboot Rest. Saturdays 9-11  
Please note: I will not be at the Gumboot  
December 22-January 5 inclusive.

This will be my last Newsletter of 2007 so I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best of the Season and to convey my hopes for peace and goodwill through out the coming year. I would like to extend a special thank you to all the volunteers at the fire department, the elementary school, the community association, the library, the Legion, the OCPC, the APC, and all the other advisory committees as well as those folks who just perform kind acts for others without being connected to a group. You make our community such a special place!

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**BURNING**

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On October 24 there was a very lively discussion about Backyard Burning at the Hall with about 50 people in attendance. To ensure that everyone had an opportunity to express their point of view, we formed a large talking circle and passed around a talking stick. This turned out to be a really beneficial approach. Everyone was facing the centre speaking directly to one another; everyone was patient knowing they would all get a turn; and the mood shifted from antagonistic to respectful. Some folks shared their health issues. Others spoke about the difficulty they have with large amounts of woody debris following winter storms. We heard some excellent suggestions for modifying the bylaw so that we can both reduce the amount of smoke in the air and enable people on large lots to deal with their woody debris. These included: allowing only one or two burns per year (by permit) on lots of 1 hectare or greater (2.5 acres), allowing burning only when the ventilation index is favourable, and, when a person applies for a permit to burn, providing information on the best way to create a very hot fire. When a new version of the proposed bylaw has been developed, it will be brought back to the community for comment. I am pleased that we as a community have been able to come together in meaningful dialogue on this issue and I am confident that we will be able to achieve a compromise that everyone can live with. What do you think about a green waste drop off facility in Roberts Creek? Perhaps under the power line up the B&K where a chipper could come periodically to chip the stuff on site. The chips could be left for folks to pick up for use on their properties. Let me know your thoughts.

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**GREEN SHORES**

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It is my hope and intention that we will be able to engage in the same level of reasoned debate on the issue of environmentally sound foreshore development as we have with the burning bylaw. On November 6 there was a public information meeting on 2 proposed bylaws around this issue. About 80 people attended the meeting. While there did appear to be consensus that the Green Shores principles make sense and that good stewardship of the foreshore is important, there was not agreement on the best way to achieve that principle. It appears as if a number of waterfront property owners fear a loss of autonomy of land ownership and this is a very challenging issue for them. Others with a different viewpoint preferred to talk with staff or myself privately afterwards because they did not feel comfortable saying what they felt publicly. Some interesting ideas were suggested, however, and I am hoping that we can create some more opportunities for continued dialogue on this subject.

The proposed bylaws and background material can be viewed on the SCRD website where there is also a **feedback questionnaire** that you can fill out until November 30. Please take the time to have a look at these materials and give us your feedback via the questionnaire by going to [www.scrd.bc.ca](http://www.scrd.bc.ca). If you do not have computer capability, let me know and I will see that you get a copy of the questionnaire. The opinions of all residents and property owners in Roberts Creek are important. After Nov 30, SCRD staff will be collating the responses as well as the feedback from the public meeting and preparing a FAQ page on the website. I will also post this on my website. A report including notes from the public meeting, correspondence received and the questionnaire results will be presented at the December SCRD Planning and Development Committee meeting followed by Board discussion on the best way to proceed.

Please note: these bylaws are very much in draft form and have not even had first reading by the Regional District Board. We expect there to be many modifications to the draft bylaw and the result may look very different from what is before us today. You will be given opportunity to comment on the changes. One idea that I have is to create a working committee of citizens to study the Green Shores material and the Thurber Geotechnical Report and to look at what is happening in other areas. (For example, Gibsons and Sechelt both have 15m development setbacks from the natural boundary of the ocean.) This working group could come back with suggestions. These proposed bylaws were developed in response to community concern about the proliferation of sea walls and the removal of native vegetation along Roberts Creek's shoreline. It is not the intention to render anybody's property unbuildable, to expropriate private property or to lower property values. It is

important that we develop solutions to this problem that support a sustainable community by balancing the needs of the beach environment, private property rights, and the rights of neighbours who may be affected by the actions of adjacent property owners. It is also important that we do this as a community working together – that includes respecting different opinions and valuing the input of all who choose to participate.

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### OCPC ELECTIONS

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Come out to the Hall on November 28 at 8pm for the annual elections of the Official Community Plan Committee. The elections are held immediately following the Community Association monthly meeting which begins at 7:30. The OCPC is an elected group of volunteers who meet on a monthly basis to ensure that the Official Community Plan is being followed, that it remains current and that it continues to meet the needs of the citizens of the Creek. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of every month at the Community School and are open to the public. To vote in the OCPC elections you must be a resident of Roberts Creek and candidates must have been residents of Roberts Creek for one year. Come out to the elections and support this important community function! Run for election. It's a great way to get involved.

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### CHRISTMAS IN THE CREEK

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Everyone is welcome to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Feast to be held in the Hall on Christmas Day. Doors open at 4:30 for those who want to help set up. Dinner is at 6. It's pot luck augmented with turkeys bought with Turkey Bucks that are collected at the stores in Roberts Creek. There are veggies and other delights donated from local businesses. We welcome donations of all kinds including music, story telling, decorations and helping hands. Cooking begins about noon. Turkeys and hams are cooked at home by different people who attend the dinner. Contact Trish Thompson.

[riodancer101@hotmail.com](mailto:riodancer101@hotmail.com)

It is a great way to spend Christmas if you think that it isn't all about presents...here it is your presence that counts.

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### JOINT USE

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The SCR D and School District 46 are collaborating on an application for 2 combined projects under the School Community Connections Program: a community garden either at Elphi or Gibsons Elementary and a commercial kitchen for Elphi. These projects will blend very well with the work the very active Food Security Network is doing on community self sufficiency. There is a waiting list for the community garden plots that are available in Sechelt and there are many people in Gibsons who do not have the land to grow their own food. These projects will also provide valuable learning opportunities for both adults and children.

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### THE WATERSHED

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After careful consideration of the risks and benefits the SCR D Board has decided not to appeal the decision by Justice Butler to overturn the order placed by the SCR D acting as a Local Board of Health regarding logging activity by Western Forest Products in the Chapman Watershed. You can go on my website to read the press release issued by the SCR D which fully explains the reasons and the other actions being taken to gain control of the watershed to protect our water supply which is, after all, the ultimate goal.

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### LRMP/SLUP

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For years this community has been calling for a fully funded, comprehensive Land and Resource Management Plan. We now have a commitment from the provincial government to a planning process, but it is not nearly what we asked for. The Strategic Land Use Plan is a scaled down version which is lacking in many respects. The role of local government is minimal. Public involvement is even less. There are areas entirely left out of the process, namely the Squamish traditional territory which is from the middle of Roberts Creek eastward to the end of the Regional District boundary. Insufficient financial resources are allocated to local government to facilitate our participation. These items and others have been conveyed to the province. We expect some adjustments to be made in response to our concerns but we will not know whether they will meet our needs for several months.

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### OCP REVIEW

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The review of the Roberts Creek Official Community Plan will begin in the new year. We will be advertising for volunteers to serve on a Review Committee as soon as the terms of reference have been developed. There are many concepts that are important to us now that were not issues back in the early 1990s when the plan was first developed such as cluster development, smart growth, affordable housing and so on. While I believe that the overarching goals in the Community Plan (such as maintaining the rural character of Roberts Creek) are still valid, the community may want to look at creative new ways of implementing those goals. This will be an exciting project to be a part of. Even if you don't feel you have the time to be on the OCP Review Committee, there will be frequent opportunities for public input as the process moves along.

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### ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

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Thank you to Renee Switzer and Marion Jolicoeur who volunteered to serve on the APC! There is still one vacancy left and I would like to invite a waterfront resident to come forward to balance out the group. The commitment involves one meeting per month on the last Monday and some reading prior to the meetings.