

February Boot Tales Director's News

Mark Lebell, SCRD Director for Roberts Creek

Contact

In Person, Gumboot Café,
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Hi there. I hope you're having a good winter. I've been busy learning the ropes, of course. My recent schedule included orientation workshops in Richmond with Area Directors from many of the other 27 Regional Districts across the province. I have to say that my general impression was that around such governance issues as Strategic Planning, Financial Sustainability, Asset Management, First Nations Relations, and Public Engagement, the SCRD is in good shape relative to many other Districts. Of course, there is always room for improvement as best practices evolve, legislation changes, and new local challenges emerge. Aging infrastructure costs, the advocacy role of local government, and the social impact of provincial and federal downloading were among some of the other themes discussed at the conference.

You can always check the News Blog on my website ***robertscreekmark.com*** to see if there are more recent postings on an issue. In addition, there may be the rare Saturday when neither Chris nor I are available for Saturday Gumboot office hours. This Feb 28th is one of those days. To be 100% certain of catching one of us there, check my website, or send me an email and I can book you in between 10 and 12.

Volunteer Corner – Roberts Creek Library

Our Roberts Creek Library benefits from countless hours of volunteer commitment. It's true, we tried to add them up and couldn't! As with all organizations, there is so much that goes on behind the scenes.

The library, started 66 years ago in a heart-of-the-creek cottage, now has a membership of more than 1500 households, and offers thousands of titles—fiction, non-fiction, teen and children's books. True to its beginning, the library is staffed by a dedicated group of 28 volunteers who make sure the library remains open 20 hours per week. Volunteers hold a book sale on the first Saturday of each month, a yard sale on Earth Day, and, of course, their legendary summer book sale during "Creek Daze," all to raise funds for new books. They also maintain a computer for public use.

The library is also supported by monies from the SCRD and Roberts Creek Community Association. Their hours of operation can be found on the RCCA website, and enquiries about the library, including volunteer opportunities, can be sent to Library Chair Elaine Seepish at seepish@dccnet.com. Thank you, Elaine and team!

Medical Marijuana Production on “Smaller” Properties

On Feb 24th, at 7 PM at Roberts Creek Hall, there will be a public meeting on the topic of small scale medical marijuana production in Areas D (Roberts Creek) and Area E (Elphinstone). There are two bylaws being considered, encompassing minimum lot size (proposed to be 1 hectare or about 2.5 acres), facility square footage, and building form and character considerations.

The Federal and Provincial legislative “playing field” is in flux on this issue, and the Board felt it prudent to establish zoning regulations around small-scale production. Note that this is a public meeting to educate around the proposed bylaws and elicit feedback, rather than a formal final public hearing.

More details will be posted in the newspaper and on my website closer to the date, but if this is an issue of interest to you, put a note on your calendar. Information and background documents, including the proposed bylaws, can be found at <http://www.scrd.ca/Medical-Marijuana>.

Website Update

The SCRd.ca website has recently been updated to make it more user friendly, including improved accessibility via mobile phone. Check out the [scrD.ca/stayconnected](http://www.scrd.ca/stayconnected) page which offers a wide range of options for two-way communication with the District. Meeting Schedules, Agendas, Minutes, Newsletters, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, News Releases, Departmental Contact Information, Feedback forms, and the like are all easily found on that page. The site also outlines the process for presenting an item to the Board at a weekly Standing Committee meeting.

Looking Ahead:

Round 1 of the Budget process will have begun when you read this. Challenges at this point include funding capital upkeep costs at the four Recreation Facilities, supporting more frequent bus service as laid out in the Transit Future Plan, and funding Solid Waste function costs. These, along with general increases in things like Hydro rates, will make this year’s budget particularly difficult.

The Regional District provides over 45 different services. Each one has a separate funding “silo”, the idea being that different areas pay into the services that they use. This is a slightly different model than municipalities, where funds can be shifted more easily between budget items. The Budget meetings are open to the public, and the dates, times and locations are listed on my website robertscreekmark.com and on the SCRd website.

Online Survey

The SCRd is conducting an informal online survey to learn more about how Sunshine Coast residents get their information about Regional District services, programs, meetings, and the like. Hopefully you have a chance to give your input in the next little while. It’s not a long one...<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/SCRdcitizensatisfaction/>

Here are some upcoming February highlights. Check scrd.ca for detailed information, or have a look at the Winter/Spring Recreation guide that came in the mail. Note that recreation staff has obtained grant funding for some free family programming on the February 9th Provincial Family Day Holiday.

Family Day (Feb 9)

Free Family Swim: between 1pm and 5pm at both the Gibsons and Sechelt Aquatic Centres.

Free Family Skate at Gibsons Community Centre, 1:45pm

Registered classes:

Great programs are starting every month—here are some February highlights:

Intro to Strength Training for Women: Sechelt Aquatics Centre, Wednesdays 7pm, 4/\$95

Myofascial Ball Release: Gibsons Community Centre, Wednesdays 7:15pm, 6/\$66

Also:

Pre-Teen Dance Neon Lights: Sechelt Arena, grades 5-7, 7-9pm, \$7. Organized in partnership between SCRD and Sechelt Community Schools (register through Activenet).