

Mark Lebell

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In person: Gumboot Café, Saturday Mornings, 10-12, except August

It's Beach Season!

Low tides, sandcastles, picnics, skimboards, marine mammals, great sunsets...and parking issues. We all know this is a great place to be in summertime, and the secret is clearly out. With the perennial challenge of "downtown" summer parking upon us, a reminder that parking on the extension of Timberland Rd (up near the school, beside the Basketball Court) is a great option when classes are not in session. Better yet, ride your bikes!

Volunteer Corner

Is life moving a bit fast for you? Then **Slow Sundays in the Creek** just might be what you need. Beginning on June 26, and running (at a sluggish pace) into September, Sundays will hold some low-key fun in downtown Roberts Creek. Starting mid-morning, you'll find things like Qigong, art, board games, storytelling, knitting, poetry and other activities. From 11:00-2:00 the Heart Market will run, and from 2:30-4:00 there will be live local bands. Come and exchange your library book, grab a coffee, catch a busker, stick your head into a local store, learn to juggle, ...who knows? Graham Walker (886-2417) and his team of volunteers have already had a work party and spruced up the park area behind the library in preparation. Drop him a line if you have an idea you want to pitch, and check the Slow Sundays in the Creek Facebook site for details.

Fire Season

Clearly, if we didn't realize it before, our experience last summer taught us that we all need to be vigilant in both the backcountry and "frontcountry" during the dry season. Roughly half of BC wildfires are human caused, and cigarettes, hot vehicle engines and un-extinguished campfires are some of the common culprits.

Provincial Fire Regulations can be found here:

bcfireinfo.for.gov.bc.ca/hprScripts/WildfireNews/Bans.asp We are in the "Coastal" Fire Region, and summer bans on "Crown" Land are widely publicized. Locally, Fire Chiefs implement our safety bans, and local media, signage, and social media spread the word. The latest update can be found on the RC Volunteer Fire Department's website, **robertscreekfire.ca**. Sometimes visitors aren't aware of the current status, and locals can always use a reminder about the following bylaw specifics:

Beachfires need to be below the high tide mark, 2.5 m from property lines, 5m from structures, and comply with the campfire regulations that follow. **Campfires** require an area clear of flammable debris, a responsible person present, a nearby water supply, an extinguishing tool (eg. hose, bucket), be less than 1 meter across, and finish by being completely extinguished. A local campfire ban can be called at any time. Looking to **Fire Smart** your property? There is a good "how to" flyer on it at the Library.

Community Garden

The RCCES Community Garden is beginning to grow! After a very well attended workshop in 2014, the Community School is supporting school staff and community volunteers in developing a learning and growing space for both young people and the broader community on the property just "south" of the schoolyard. Since the property belongs to the School District, certain protocols will need to emerge, and the pace of the project will be driven by the vision of hands-on learning for youngsters, and a place for the community to share horticultural knowledge.

One aspect that the students won't be involved in is tree removal. After consultation with a community arborist and BC Hydro, the plan is to remove the 5 trees that abut the road and telephone wires. The Grand Fir, Douglas Fir and Cedar that form a grove in the center of the property will be limbed. This will not only make property safer, but will allow more light to penetrate the site.

Local resident, gardener and retired teacher Joanne Harrington stepped up last year to help coordinate the project. She has taken the workshop input and collated it into a series of mind maps that will help chart the way forwards. A review of the information reveals not only the project's great potential, but also the importance of taking a balanced, patient and mindful approach. Stay tuned, as many volunteer opportunities will emerge along the way.

A fall kick-off event, that will involve some blackberry, broom and laurel removal is in the works. If you would like to be added to an update list, or have other thoughts, drop Joanne or the Community School an email at rccommunitygarden@gmail.com. A bulletin board at the site will keep folks informed of developments, and the community school website will contain information shortly as well.

Park News:

If you're wondering where the recycled plastic furniture from the pier has gone, much of it can now be found at the SCRD's new designated off-leash dog exercise area at Shirley Macey Park. Take Rover for a spin there when you are next out Grantham's way. In other re-use news, salvaged parts of our unlucky aluminum bridge in Cliff Gilker Park will end up on the Circle Trail in Halfmoon Bay, and a new bridge over Clack Creek on the Red Trail should be in place soon.

Water

It almost happened again...I've written a newsletter with no reference to arguably the Coast's most pressing issue! Perhaps that's because the subject is so broad and deep that it would take several newsletters to do it justice, leaving room for nothing else. There is some further background on my website newsblog, but here is the short version:

The SCRD is moving forwards with **deepening the access channel that allows water to flow from the Chapman Lake source**. The lake sits in a protected Provincial Park, and up to date environmental impact study and public engagement is required before moving ahead, which will mean that construction will likely begin in 2017.

Water Meter installation will take place in Roberts Creek over the next 18 months and following that there will be opportunity for public input as new water rates are set. In addition, the Board has approved a **study of local aquifers** to ascertain their potential as future water sources. Last summer, the community rose admirably to the challenge of water conservation, and the **Drought Management Plan** with its various Stages, education, enforcement and communication components will be rolled out again. We're already in Stage 1, which happens automatically on May 1st.

Want to talk water some more? Come on out to the **RCCA's General Meeting on June 22 at 7PM at the Hall**, where SCRD staff will answer your questions around Water Meters, and I'll be there with a brief presentation **and round table discussion on broader water topics**. We might touch on Climate Change, Global Drought Patterns, Canadian Consumption Habits, BC's Legislative Context, South-Coast Drought, Sunshine Coast Topography, First Nations Rights and Title, Watershed Protection, Treatment Plant Capacity Issues, Conservation/Demand Management, Supply Issues, Chapman Lake Access Deepening Project, Water Storage, Source Diversification, Growth Patterns, Salmon Enhancement, Food Growing, Fire Protection, Water Rates, Social Justice, Governance, Resilience... If we're still going at 10 maybe we'll shift to the Legion.