

# CANDIDATES PERSONAL STATEMENTS – 2011

## Candidates for Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Regional Director

### **MIKE HICKS:**

How time flies! Three years ago I asked Juan de Fuca residents for the honor of representing them at the CRD Board table and working in the role of Regional Director. Today after thousands of e-mails and hundreds of meetings, I am asking for one more term to finish the work I started.

When I first became Regional Director, the B.C. Landowners were at war with the CRD, Western Forest Products were in court with the CRD, the B.C. Government had released thousands of hectares of land from the Tree Farm License into the JDF without consultation or zoning and our land use decision making process was in chaos. JDF planning staff were turning over regularly, Metchosin was entertaining amalgamation with East Sooke, the District of Sooke had annexed Grouse Nest, the Silver Spray Development was still dividing East Sooke, Port Renfrew's fire truck was parked outside in the sea mist, and in my view the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area was a mess.

In the last three years, we have tackled all issues, have the same planner, June Klassen that we started with, and have managed to work within our frugal budget keeping tax increases to one of the lowest on Vancouver Island. We zoned and wrote an OCP for all lands released from the TFL by the government and the thousands of hectares of JDF resource lands. We strengthened our APC commissions and LUC committee and are 100% up to date with development applications, variances and day to day land use matters for our JDF constituents. We are now sharing the costs of crossing guards with Sooke for the three elementary schools that teach JDF children, Port Renfrew has a new fire hall to cover their new fire truck, Metchosin has abandoned amalgamation with East Sooke for the indefinite future, Shirley has high speed internet, Otter Point has a beautiful new park, and residents may now house their extended family in suites detached from their home.

We have encouraged the development of an industrial park in Otter Point, the recreational cottage development in Port Renfrew, and the Circle Route with our web site [www.pacificmarinecircleroute.com](http://www.pacificmarinecircleroute.com) . In my job on the CRD Parks and CRD Regional Water, I instigated the purchase of Sand Cut Beach to the Jordon River , part of an 18 million dollar purchase of Western Forest Products Lands. In addition, I convinced my colleagues to release water from Thetis Lake to save the Craigflower Creek coho smolts and also to release water into Charters Creek for the coho smolts and demonstration hatchery.

The huge issues that were tearing apart the Juan de Fuca are over. Our tax base is slowly growing, our spending is tight, our staff are stable and we can now tackle the smaller but important issues facing our community.

The job of Regional Director involves defining the issues, working with staff to find solutions, convincing the CRD Board to adopt the solutions and to finally implementing the solutions. The last three years has given me the experience to understand the system and develop relationships which result in relatively quick decision making on issues and problems arising in the community. I will continue to be available 16 hours a day, 7 days a week and hope you will consider me for another term.

## **ALANDA CARVER:**

Thank you for this opportunity to address OPSRRA members regarding my candidacy for Regional Director. I was a founding member of this organization and admire its work in providing a forum for dialogue on community issues, especially the Strategic Vision project. This was an important step forward for our community and one that I support wholeheartedly.

One reason I am standing for election is that I can bring a new perspective to local issues and the way we do business. I have a long history of community volunteerism, have lived here for 25 years and, most importantly, have no personal stake in land development. This is why I will, without bias, bring strong, balanced leadership to the area.

Good local governance is directly related to community involvement in decision making. I will provide more opportunities for citizen participation by revitalizing advisory committees that have been underutilized over the past three years. And I will hold town hall meetings in each community so that residents can exchange ideas and express concerns.

An important issue in this election is land use planning. Reviews of various OCPs are underway, and I would work hard to address the local goals and concerns of all sectors of the community so that these essential documents truly reflect each community's vision.

Water sources need to be protected. Many residents receive water from local water systems and wells. Good planning is what keeps your neighbour's septic system a suitable distance from your water source. I would initiate discussions with Sooke regarding the Kemp Lake watershed, which is just one of the issues that the two communities must discuss given our common border. I look forward to hearing what residents of Otter Point have to say at the Nov. 2 all-candidates meeting.

Planning means looking at roads, fire protection and emergency services to ensure they can handle potential growth before it happens, rather than playing catch up afterward. Once the revised OCPs are approved, they will guide future growth and your Regional Director needs to know them chapter and verse while also standing by them.

Economic opportunities are important too, and I am a passionate believer in local food production, arts and culture, wilderness tourism and non-timber forest products to name a few. We live in one of Canada's most beautiful and unique regions. People come from all over the world to enjoy it. Why not focus our

economy on these assets? Let's look for opportunities that bring employment for our young people while safeguarding the area for their future.

The Electoral Area is the closest level of government to where we live, work and play. Decisions made here impact us all. Electoral Area residents deserve representation that is unbiased and allows citizens' voices to be heard. The time is right for change, and I am committed to bringing REAL change to local democracy.

## **Candidates for Otter Point Advisory Planning Commission**

### **AL WICKHEIM:**

Hi, my name is Al Wickheim, I am 52 years old and live at 8002 Westcoast Rd. with my wife and children whom we home-school. I work F/T as a paramedic in Victoria, and operate the Wilderquest Adventure Co. a small log cabin resort, as well as a medical device design company - Prodaptive Medical Innovations Ltd. - on 50 forested acres at my residential address. I am the Otter Point Community Coordinator for the JdF Emergency Management Program.

I have been nominated for a position on the APC for Otter Point. If so elected I believe there are three main and vital concerns which threaten the Otter Point District that will guide my tenure:

- Water - it's quality and quantity.
- Taxes - their continuous rise and direct correlation to affordability and development.
- Encroachment - by a neighbouring municipality bent on expansion through incentive and bribes related to the tax and water issues

My general feelings about the community are that development should also mean improvement for the land and residents, not just for realtors and developers.

I believe there should be tax incentives for *not* subdividing thus alleviating the cost pressures of maintain larger tracts of land. California has such a practice.

I feel very strongly that community growth must be limited by its' impact on available, proven clean water supply. Trucking in water, piping it in from Sooke, drilling deeper and deeper wells until all wells become either dry or brackish is not the answer. Tofino showed us recently the calamitous results of a drying up.

I am realistic in knowing that one voice will not change the world, and that I do not share the feelings of the entire community however you now know my position and I encourage you to vote for all those candidates whom you feel will do the best for the Otter Point community overall.

I can be reached at 250-642-5124 or [info@wilderquestadventures.com](mailto:info@wilderquestadventures.com) to answer any questions anyone may have.

### **SID JORNA:**

I am Sid Jorna and I ask that you reserve one vote for me as your representative on the Otter Point Advisory Planning Commission.

I have been associated with the Sooke region since 1965. I met my wife Rosemary here. We spent a number of years away as I was a Naval Officer but returned often to visit her extended family. We lived in Sooke during the mid 1970s we liked the community and the wilderness surroundings. Posted away, we resolved to return. We are both keen hikers and outdoors people.

We retired to Otter Point in 2003 and have been involved with the community in various volunteer capacities, as follows:

- I was a founding member and am the president of the Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society advocating for Community Trails on your behalf.
- I served on the SEAPARC Commission in 2005 for a cycle before being appointed to the Juan de Fuca Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission where I still serve as a commissioner.
- I served on the Otter Point Advisory Planning Commission for two cycles and am ready for a third.
- I served on the Otter Point Citizens Committee to develop the Otter Point Official Community Plan.

My motivation is community. All my efforts in the community have been strictly voluntary. With a house on two acres in Otter Point, community development is important to me and I am completely conversant with our land use issues.

I believe that the APC forum provides a basic building block of good democratic decisions by ensuring communication among the citizens on land use matters before they go up the chain and become formal.

Please include me in your vote for Otter Point APC.

### **ANNE MILLER:**

I am a resident of Otter Point for almost five years. I work in Victoria as a dental hygienist and because of my commute have a good idea of the concerns of the residents in my area about road safety. During our first year in Otter Point I joined the Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society and the Sooke Community Choir; last year I was vice president of the choir. These opportunities allowed me to settle in and understand the passions of this community. This year I also worked with members of the Kludahk Outdoors Club supporting trail maintenance. Riding horses has also been one of my hobbies, and I've had wonderful opportunities riding the different trails and bridal paths in our area. My personal interests have led me to attend meetings held by the LUC. Attending these meetings opened my eyes to the importance of community involvement and dialogue. When the issues of the Marine Holdings lands came up I was well aware of how special and unique this area is and the fact that this issue should have had much more public input and thought before it was allowed to go as far as it did. After attending two public hearings, I realized I was not alone in how I understood the governance of this area. The number of passionate and eloquent speakers influenced me to stand for this nomination of the Advisory Planning Committee. Simply put, it is time to get off the side-lines and make sure that land use issues are properly discussed,

understood and communicated before decisions are taken. I believe the true "developers" of this region are its residents. Long after others have made their money and left, we are the ones that continue to support and build on the structures that they left behind. We are the ones left maintaining infrastructure and fuelling the future success of these developments, therefore we are the ones that should be involved.

### **BUD GIBBONS:**

Hi. My name is Bud Gibbons and, I am seeking a seat on the Otter Point Advisory Planning Commission. I was appointed to the Otter Point Advisory Planning Commission, this summer, to fill a vacancy. I have lived in Otter Point for almost 30 years. On Oct 15th I received my 25 years of service pin for being a trustee with the Otter Point Fire Department. I have spent the last year as a member of the Citizens Committee rewriting the Otter Point Official Community Plan. I like to think of myself as a neighbor helping you my neighbors in Otter Point and hope I can count on your support on Nov. 19th.

Yours respectfully. Bud Gibbons.

### **SANDY SINCLAIR:**

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for being blessed by being born and raised in a free country, with little restriction on how I think, work and what I believe in.

I was born and raised in Victoria and moved, with my family, to Otter Point in 1999. My wife, Lynne, and I have been married for thirty nine years and have raised four grown children and are raising our six year old grandson. We also have one other thirteen year old grandson. With the help of my children I built four homes on our seventeen acre property, where we all currently reside.

I owned and operated a successful construction business for almost forty years and continue to work in the construction field.

I am currently the chair person for the Otter Point Advisory Planning Commission and have been on the commission for the past three years. I am also on the Otter Point Official Community Plan Review – Citizen's Committee.

I feel we do not have to be a divided community and can work out our differences without causing hardship to anyone. A community should treat every individual equally, working together to help each member achieve their goals. I hope I can continue to serve the residents of Otter Point and that you will re-elect me to be on the Otter Point Advisory Planning Commission.

I would love to hear your concerns and goals. Please email me at [sharebc@shaw.ca](mailto:sharebc@shaw.ca).

It has been an honor to serve the community these past three years.

Sincerely, Sandy Sinclair

## **GERRY NIEDERMEISER:**

No submission.

## **Shirley/Jordan River Representative to the JDF Land Use Committee**

### **HAROLD SHIPTON:**

I retired from Daimler Trucks North America as a manufacturing engineer in 2009. I am married with three grown children and have lived in Shirley since 2007. My wife and I have lived in rural settings for the last 30 years. Therefore I am familiar with the issues facing rural property owners. The challenges of wells, septic systems, emergency generators and limited local resources are things that I have been dealing with for most of my life. My wife and I enjoy living in Shirley and have both become involved locally. I am on the Shirley fire commission and am involved with the Sheringham water system as both a director and system operator.

I disagree with radical change being forced onto this community or the surrounding area by outsiders. I feel that the well being of the community should outweigh the desires of an individual when those desires will put the community at risk.

### **GEORGE MILLER:**

Experienced Representation. Re-Elect – George Miller

Land Use Committee Shirley/Jordan River.

I believe that:

- We are fortunate to live in Shirley/Jordan River
- Shirley/Jordan River should remain rural
- People should enjoy their rural lives and property
- We have strong community organizations-thank you
- Every person is entitled to be heard
- No property owner should be expropriated of rights without compensation
- With good intentions, all problems can be solved
- Above all, we should respect due process
- Any development should be the clean, eco-tourist type and rural friendly
- People are welcome provided they preserve rural character

Experience

- 50 years – Professional surveyor, mapping, subdivisions, heavy construction, railways, highways, tunnels, dams, ship building and expert witness
- Three years Shirley/Jordan River representative on Land Use Committee

## **Lot 113 – Denewood Place**

This year our committee was asked to consider a variance on lot 113 which would allow for a small home to be built. I joined the majority of the committee members in supporting this application because the sewage disposal system was guaranteed by environmental engineers and recommended by the CRD planning staff. I further expressed my views to Director Hicks that ideally, the CRD should purchase the lot for the absolute safety of the Sheringham Water system. I understand the CRD Board has tabled this variance until the option of purchasing the lot has been exhausted.

I will continue to represent Shirley/Jordan River to the very best of my ability and protect our Rural values.

I request your vote on November 19.

Thank you *George Miller*

## **Otter Point Representative to the JDF Land Use Committee**

### **HEATHER PHILLIPS:**

Since January 2009, I have served as the Otter Point representative on the Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee. I am asking you to vote me in for another three years.

This area has been my home for fifty years. I graduated from Edward Milne Secondary School in 1966 and brought my husband and two daughters home to stay in 1982. We moved to Kemp Lake Road in 1986. I had the privilege of being a full time parent and accepted the responsibility of building a community where my children and others could thrive.

I believe in community planning. I believe in the collective wisdom of our community. I find consistent themes in planning over the years. Protection of resource lands, prevention of pollution, concentrating growth in the Sooke core area, identifying and protecting those natural features which impart to our community its special character and promoting a development pattern “that is in harmony with the natural environment” are all objectives identified in the 1980s in the Sooke Official Settlement Plan. Our objectives today are the same. People know how they want their community to grow.

Official Community Plans lay out the big picture. The land use bylaws are more specific about what uses will be allowed in each area or zone, the number of buildings allowed, and where on the properties buildings can be positioned. The bylaws are like contracts administered by local government. When a person buys property in the area, the new landowner should be aware of the contract that goes with the land.

When someone asks for a change in their contract, it comes to the Land Use Committee. If someone asks for a variance as to how buildings are placed on the property, the Land Use Committee asks the neighbours how they think their property rights, the value of their property and their enjoyment of their property will

be affected by the proposed variance. The Committee then makes a recommendation to the CRD Board land use committee that makes the final decision.

Before a rezoning is permitted to change the uses and number of buildings allowed on a property, the whole community is consulted. For us, public consultation is facilitated by the Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee, usually through Advisory Planning Commission meetings.

As your land use representative, I take responsibility for learning as much as I can about how the variance or rezoning will affect the community. I have a background in education that developed my ability to read acts, bylaws and regulations. This doesn't make me a professional. It allows me to make an independent analysis of material put before the committee. It allows me to identify gaps in information supplied. It allows me to ask questions to clarify issues.

If you return me as your land use representative on November 19, I will make sure that you, as a land owner and member of the community, are always fully consulted and respected when changes to community plans are considered.

**JOHN BROHMAN:**

No submission.

**School District #62 (Milne's Landing Zone) Trustee Candidates**

**TERRANCE MARTIN:**

I am running for both school trustee and Sooke District council.

With 8 natural children and a host of international students and foster kids, I'm partly to blame for the surge in growth pressing our schools, so I feel I should step up and shoulder some responsibility in both offices.

For my bona fides, I have been in business for nearly thirty years, I'm a project manager, a stay at home dad, and I have a Masters degree in communication and culture. I moved to Sunriver Estates in 2005 with my wife, and have two children entering the school system through StrongStart and kindergarten within the upcoming electoral term.

Many issues wrap up into impact on student outcomes, but I believe community growth is the most pressing issue facing our district. Growth unpacks into impacts on classroom availability and class size, both determinative of student outcomes.

According to the school district 2010 Matrix report, substantial enrollment growth has shifted to Sooke, and that is why I believe a dual position as trustee and councillor will be of benefit to both the municipality and the school district.

Projections indicate that over 300 students will be added to the schools each year for the next ten years, requiring the equivalent of a new school every year. Of the 4,775 spaces planned, 33% of them will be in Sooke. Enrollment will be accommodated by the expansion of EMCS, replacement of Sooke and John Muir elementary, and the construction of a new school in the Sunriver development.

Two primary risks are certainty of funding from Ministry of Education, and securing property for new sites.

Because residential growth in the municipality is what drives school enrollment, I believe the municipality should make the schools a priority in planning. With a councillor holding office as a trustee, communication between organizations can be seamless and the municipality can champion the school district with senior and regional government and at the UBCM.

The partnering provisions of the Community Partner enable the municipality to enter into virtually any kind of beneficial agreement the council sees fit, and I can think of no better partnership for the municipality than that of assisting the school district in the provision of schools. The municipality needs significant expansion of its residential tax base to fund its spending plans, and schools are one of the primary attractions for in-migration. International student programs bring children to Sooke and carry away to far places experiences and stories that attract return visits by others. The synergy is obvious.

Facilities aside, other issues show in the data of the parent satisfaction survey. Only 33% of parents responding are satisfied that school is preparing their child for a job in the future, 50% are satisfied that school is preparing their child for post-secondary education, and 42% are satisfied with school-home communication. These measures indicate a trend that should be investigated and reversed.

The school district needs fresh, progressive, and creative people, and I believe I fit that description.

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## **JANET EVANS:**

I am running for a seat on Sooke School District #62 (Milnes Landing Zone) as a Trustee because I feel I still have the passion, energy and commitment to make a difference in my Community. I grew up in Port Renfrew and this region has been my home for over 50 years. I have seen many changes and have met many wonderful residents during my tenure as Sooke's Mayor and I want to continue to serve my community.

As Mayor and a Director on the Capital Regional Board, I bring knowledge to the school board table as having worked with other levels of government and the good relationship I have with them. Minister of Education George Abbott was

once Minister of Community Affairs and I have worked with him in the past. I have also worked well with our MP, MLA, Mayors and local Councils in the region.

Our School District is the fastest growing District on the Island and we will have to deal with finding student placement for a projected 300 additional students a year for the next 12 years. With over 9500 student population and 25 schools in the District, the biggest challenge for the next board will be finding funding to deal with the shortfall in infrastructure. Capital plans for two new schools in Langford and

Colwood must continue to be a priority; and more land is needed for Edward Milne Community School for additional classrooms. The challenge for the new board is to provide adequate learning spaces for all students while operating a very complex budget, and to provide quality educational programs in safe functional facilities.

The current board has implemented a document called- *Challenges of a Developing District – Learning Spaces 2013*. This document will guide the new board on when and how the recommendations can be implemented. The board also made a very strong commitment to the Middle School configuration which enables students to grow and develop at their own pace and I support that decision. However, I do not support the standardization testing of students' Province wide. Students are individuals and they learn differently, I believe the *Foundation Skills Assessment* scores are better for measuring student achievement

There will be many things I will have to learn if elected, I can assure the public that I will dedicate myself to providing my leadership to help the board with all the challenges they will face in the next three years. I look forward to meeting all residents to hear their concerns.

I ask for your support on **November 19th for Sooke School Board Trustee.**  
[janetevanssooke@yahoo.ca](mailto:janetevanssooke@yahoo.ca) 250-642-5532

### **ROBERT (BOB) PHILLIPS:**

School District 62 has 9,500 students, over 1,500 staff and an \$80 million budget. I offer valuable personal experience: 30 years clinical work in child protection, addictions and health care, 20 years administering and negotiating collective agreements and teaching experience at the high school, college and university levels. I have 12 years of trustee experience.

As a trustee, I have been hard working, fair, open-minded and well-informed. In each term, trustees have elected me as their Rep on the BC Public Schools Employers Association. I have been given many "files": a Sustainable Model for French Immersion, Enhancement of Aboriginal Education, conversion of Milne's

Landing schools to natural gas, contract negotiation with Admin Staff, Vice-Chair of the Board and recently to develop the model to conduct the Superintendent's Performance Evaluation.

We will have challenges and opportunities in the next 3 years.

1. We need funding for 2 new high schools in the Belmont Zone which will free up elementary classrooms for a projected growth of 200 pupils per year. We must have a full "partnership consultation process": parents, students, staff and communities to figure out course offerings at the new high schools and EMCS.
2. Research concerning individualized assessment and learning must be the focus of our educational programs, staff training and use of new technologies. We need innovative programs to keep our senior students in our schools and invested in their education. We need partnership

discussions about successful “transitions” from school to school, school to work and higher education. Given the increasing costs of secondary education and the lower average income of families in our District, we need more Camosun course offerings at EMCS.

3. “It takes a community to educate a child.” Our District must build and enhance its multiple internal and external relationships. That unity and cohesion applied to sound research gets us through the challenges of tight funding and collective bargaining. SD 62 can provide the quality, accessible, and responsive public education that our diverse student and family populations deserve and expect. That is my motivation to be a trustee.

Explore the School District website [www.sd62.bc.ca](http://www.sd62.bc.ca)

Come out and vote on November 19th.

Please consider me for one of your 3 votes for School Board Trustee.

Bob Phillips, 2459 Kemp Lake Road, Otter Point  
Phone 642-3297 Email [bother@telus.net](mailto:bother@telus.net)

### **MARGOT SWINBURNSON:**

I am running for my fifth term as a school trustee, Milnes Landing Zone, SD 62.

The decision to run again was not made lightly. To ask for the honour of serving again as your trustee is one that I take seriously, and I will not do this unless I think that I have the time, commitment and passion to be your representative. With the challenges that the Board faces in the future, and what we can to accomplish, I think my experience and focus will be useful to the Board, and our community.

Like our community, our Board is facing enormous change. Demographically, our student numbers are rising-we expect more than 300 students in our District per year-for the foreseeable future. We have buildings that need to be expanded upgraded or replaced to meet that need.

There must be community consultation, careful planning, focus and vigorous lobbying to achieve these buildings, and to get the best possible use out of them. If elected, that will be one of my primary goals.

In the next three years, if re-elected, I pledge-

- Strong advocacy for new and upgraded buildings to accommodate increased numbers, and to replace ageing and unsafe infrastructure
- Community dialogue and strong community partnerships to achieve the most comprehensive and user friendly results in those buildings.
- Continuing support for educational excellence and success for all students-we need to maintain our progress and improve our successes
- I will continue to advocate and support literacy in adults and children.

- Advocacy for strong succession in our senior administration when they retire. There must be a clear, supportive educational vision for the entire District.
- I will encourage and maintain dialogue between our administration and the municipalities as we grow

As your trustee, I will work to ensure that the educational needs of our Zone will be brought forward to the Board and the Province.

Provincial Governments over the last 12 years have never funded education adequately. I will continue to advocate and lobby for appropriate funding for our needs. I commit to bringing a non- partisan, experienced, reasonable voice to the Board table, to look for the best way through some difficult questions and find balanced solutions. I firmly believe that where there is a will, we will find a way, and my past record attests to that.

We have some of the best schools, some of the best students, some of the best staff in the Province and in Canada in School District 62. As your representative to the Board, I always keep that focus in mind.

Thank you for your support. Margot Swinburnson

### **ALLISON WATSON:**

My motivation to be school board trustee is because my roots are here. I attended kindergarten in Jordon River and then went to John Muir, Journey Middle School, and graduated at Edward Milne. My focus has always been on the education system in Sooke. I completed my degree majoring in First Nations Studies with an education focus specifically on the Sooke School District. I am here for the long haul and my hope is to build on the trust and confidence of this community that I have already gained in my capacity as a student, researcher, job developer and lifelong resident.

From conversations with the various community members I have heard the need for increased emergency preparedness, an open discussion over opening a school in Sun River, and a need for increasing advanced technology; all are pressing issues. We want to keep an open ear to other issues that arise, and collaborate as a community that is focused primarily on the health of our students. There are various communities within a community and all have a stake in our education system. Given my various roles in this district, I have an open ear to all issues and concerns. People can have faith in my decision making when issues arise, because I have been active in this community in multiple capacities.

Our years in school are deeply impressionable and I am determined to support and generate healthy education for all students. This would include support of programs that back various learning styles. I am not afraid of change. In fact, I encourage it. I want to push for programs that reach the many learning styles that are often neglected.

New ideas and technology that support education for ALL students is a focus. I will take an open and investigative approach to increase the opportunities technology can bring forward.

I have extensive working experience at managing a budget. I deal with limitations, so part of what makes me good at my job is when someone needs assistance to reach their goal. I am a determined and driven advocate for them. I'm innovative and tactfully persistent as a liaison. I will carry these strengths into my position as a trustee. My plan is to advocate for the students of this school district.

We want to elect a group of trustees who represent the voice of our community so that these issues are dealt with effectively. It is critical to have someone who is an informed listener. When it comes time to making decisions in the community, we will trust that they are good decisions. Given my active presence in the community, I am accessible to the members of this community and I will make informed decisions. My life experience, community involvement, and personal commitment, perfectly positions me to be school board trustee in the Sooke School District. I understand firsthand the impact trustees can have on education in Sooke. I have grown with this community and now I want to care for it.

### **NEIL POIRIER:**

The Western Communities has been home to my family for generations. I currently live in Sooke and both my children attend school here. I have spent the last 10 years actively involved in the education network here in School District 62. As a member of the Parent Advisory Council at Ecole Poirier I served two years as Vice President, two years as President as well as four years on the School Planning Council. Also, during this period I served as District PAC (DPAC) representative. Volunteering at the district level with Sooke Parents' Education Advisory Council (SPEAC) as Treasurer first and then as Vice President and BCCPAC Rep. I have represented both the district and local schools at the provincial organization of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC). I believe in getting involved and taking action when required. The decision to run for School Trustee seems like a natural extension of my involvement and continued support of public education here in the Sooke School District. Given the nature of current issues facing parents and teachers, now is the time for a voice that speaks with clarity, commitment and strength. Schools need more funding and strong advocates; educators need appropriate support; our kids need every opportunity to thrive within their educational environment. If elected as School Trustee, I will bring many years of experience and dedication to the job. It has become apparent that only through co-operative efforts between parents, teachers, support staff and the School Board can we hope to achieve the unity through which funding levels to education can be improved.

It is my intention to work toward:

- drafting and implementing policies that would see increased funding for our schools.

- building and strengthening healthy supportive relationships with parents, teachers, our community and the School Board Team, promoting honest and open communication to better serve our education system;
- supporting the continued funding of our schools sports/athletics, music, drama and art programs, which are an important part of a well-rounded education;
- supporting teachers and administrators who are developing and implementing programs that support alternative education. (For example, 'Academies' and 'Ed West');
- maintaining and upgrading the schools we currently have, with the goal of being prepared for potential emergency situations. Our children's safety and well-being is priority #1;
- open discussions with the public, especially with the parents in our community, and I will support transparency of School Board meetings;
- ensuring that we as a community are ready for growing enrolment numbers and that there will be appropriate education facilities available for our kids

Through my involvement with the above mentioned parent groups, I gained years of valuable experience and have gathered enough information about the issues to take this next logical step: becoming a Trustee. I know that I will be a valuable contributing member of your School Board. As a Trustee, it is my intention to serve the educational system and ultimately the children of our Western Communities in achieving their higher educational goals. We must make sure they have what they need to achieve these goals, whatever they may be.

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