

# OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY RESIDENTS & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION (OPSRRA) INFORMATION UPDATE **DECEMBER 2008**

WISHING EVERYONE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY  
SEASON

**The Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA)** is a registered non-profit society with an elected Board Directors and strives to present the points-of-view of its members to local government. OPSRRA was founded in 1992 and has a membership of about **385**. Any resident or property owner in Shirley and Otter Point is eligible for membership.



**Lifetime memberships cost \$5.00 per person** and are available from OPSRRA directors—see our web site ([www.opsrra.ca](http://www.opsrra.ca)) for further information and on-line registration. Associate (non-voting) memberships are available for persons who do not reside or own property in Shirley or Otter Point, but who wish to support the Association.

The purpose of our society is to:

- Ensure that the development of the two communities of Shirley and Otter Point takes place in an orderly way and in the best interests of its residents.
- Co-operate with local government and other public bodies in the furtherance of the objectives of the society and benefits to the community.
- Concern itself with the performance of government agencies.
- Encourage citizens to stand for public office.
- Promote community spirit and sense of identity by organizing or supporting appropriate activities.

Are you an OPSRRA member? Do you want to receive the OPSRRA newsletter and notice of meetings directly to your e-mail address? OPSRRA now e-mails this newsletter to over **225** of our members. Contact Arnie Campbell at: [d.acampbell@shaw.ca](mailto:d.acampbell@shaw.ca) if you want to receive this membership service.

## OPSRRA's EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTORS

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### 1. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Contact Arnie Campbell at: [d.acampbell@shaw.ca](mailto:d.acampbell@shaw.ca) or 642-3113 to have your community event listed in our monthly community events calendar.

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**NOTE:**                    **DECEMBER MEETING CANCELLATION NOTICE:**  
                                  **Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Land Use Committee and**  
                                  **Economic Development Commission**

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Monday  
December 1                    **OPSRRA Board of Directors**  
                                  **Monthly Meeting**  
                                  **Members welcome!**  
                                  7:30 p.m.  
                                  Boardroom  
                                  SEAPARC Leisure Complex  
                                  2168 Philips Road Sooke BC

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Thursday  
December 4                    **Juan de Fuca Parks Committee**  
                                  5:00 p.m.  
                                  JDF Electoral Area Services Office  
                                  2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke BC

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Saturday  
December 6

**Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society**  
**Check out the trails recently opened by Canada World Youth**  
**and JdF Community Trails Society**

9:30 a.m.  
2 to 3 hour hike.  
Meet at the end of Manatu Road.  
Phone Rosemary Jorna, 250-642-2767 or email [sid2767@shaw.ca](mailto:sid2767@shaw.ca)  
for details.

Please note our new web address:  
[www.jdfcommunitytrails.ca](http://www.jdfcommunitytrails.ca)

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Tuesday  
December 9

**Otter Point, Shirley & Jordan River Developing a Strategic**  
**Vision Steering Committee meeting**

To finalize the project's supporting material.  
**Public welcome!**

9:30 a.m.  
Boardroom  
SEAPARC Leisure Complex  
2168 Philips Road Sooke BC

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Wednesday  
December 10

**Muir Creek Protection Society**

is pleased to debut a beautiful short film about Muir Creek at the  
Awareness Film Night

7:00 p.m.  
Edward Milne Community School  
Sooke BC

By donation  
Proceeds go to the Muir Creek Protection Society

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**Sunday**  
**December 14**

**Sooke Region Museum**  
**Moss Cottage Christmas**

Free family event  
1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Snowman building, hot beverages, roasted nuts,  
entertainment and more!

Call the Museum for more information: 250.642.6351



Sunday  
December 14

**Shirley Fire Protection Society**  
**Annual General Meeting**

2:00 p.m.  
Shirley Community Hall

Election of Board and Officers, reports and notice of motion to  
amend bylaws.

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**Saturday**  
**December 20**

**Otter Point Fire Department**  
**Candy Cane Run**

See route details in item number 5 and  
advertisement in the Sooke News Mirror



**2009**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

Thursday  
January 1

**Polar Bear Swim**  
**Sponsored by the Otter Point Firefighters**  
**Association**



12:00 p.m.  
Whiffin Spit Park, Sooke BC

Saturday  
January 3

**Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society**  
**Check out the Silver Spray Tail Corridor**

9:30 a.m.  
This is an easy walk.  
Meet at the end of Silver Spray Drive (East Sooke).  
Phone Rosemary Jorna, 250-642-2767 or email [sid2767@shaw.ca](mailto:sid2767@shaw.ca)  
for details.

Please note our new web address:  
[www.jdfcommunitytrails.ca](http://www.jdfcommunitytrails.ca)

Second &  
Fourth  
Thursday  
of every month

**Shirley Quilters and Crafters**

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Shirley Community Hall

## 2. ELECTION RESULTS

OPSRRA takes this opportunity to thank all of the candidates that ran in the recent elections. We would also like to give a special thanks to the following departing individuals who have represented our community over the past six years:

- Erik Lund Regional Director
- Ute Schnaar Alternate Regional Director
- Ken Douch Otter Point representative to the JDFEA Land Use Committee;  
Chair of the JDFEA Economic Development Commission;  
Vice-Chair of the JDFEA Parks & Recreation Commission;  
member of the Otter Point Official Community Plan & Zoning Bylaw Review Committee.
- Terri Alcock Shirley/Jordan River representative to the JDFEA Land Use Committee.

### Election Updates

Since the November 15 elections there have been recounts requested in the Otter Point and Shirley/Jordan River Land Use Committee elections. The following election results reflect the final outcomes based upon the recounts conducted by the Chief Electoral Officer on November 27, 2008.

### Museum Referendum

Referendum approved 88% in Sooke and 75% in the JDF Electoral Area.

	<b>Area</b>	<b>Votes Cast</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	District of Sooke	2857	3845
	JDF Electoral Area	988	
No	District of Sooke	398	726
	JDF Electoral Area	328	

### School Trustees

There were four candidates for the three vacancies in the Milnes Landing Zone of the Sooke School District. Margot Swinburnson, Rob Gordy and Bob Phillips were re-elected. The final vote tally was:

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Swinburnson	2857
Phillips	2166
Gordy	1865
Flett	1837

### Regional Director:

At OPSRRA's request Tom Moore, Chief Elections Officer, provided us with poll-by-poll results for the JDF Electoral Area Regional Director election. Mike Hicks was declared elected, for a 3 year term, as the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Regional Director. He has informed the OPSRRA newsletter that he intends to appoint Wally Vowles, from Otter Point, as his Alternate Director.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Hicks</b>	<b>Schnaar</b>
Advance Voting—Sooke Community Hall:	55	53
Advance Voting—Sooke School District #62 offices:	1	14
Port Renfrew:	60	23
Shirley/Jordan River:	66	66
East Sooke:	236	315
Willis Point:	89	40
Malahat:	15	9
Otter Point:	307	208
View Royal & Esquimalt Indian Reserves:	23	20
<b>Total Votes Cast</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>748</b>

### Land Use Committee:

For the first time since these appointments were created there was an election for the representatives from Shirley/Jordan River and Otter Point to the Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee.

**Shirley/Jordan River Candidates, one to be elected:**

Terri Alcock	56
George Miller	79

**Otter Point Candidates, one to be elected:**

Gerry Niedermeiser	183
Heather Phillips	247

**Advisory Planning Commission (APC):**

For the first time since the Advisory Planning Commissions were created, there was an election for the five representatives to the Shirley/Jordan River APC.

**Shirley/Jordan River APC Candidates, six candidates, five elected:**

- Dominique Bernardet
- Sonja Dewit
- Barbara Ferrett
- Fiona McDannold
- Jane Munro

**Otter Point APC by acclamation:**

The original membership on the Otter Point APC was to have been Wayne Fritz, Sid Jorna, Sandy Sinclair and Wally Vowles, with one additional member to be appointed by the Regional Director. However, the Regional Director Elect has chosen Wally Vowles as his Alternate Director which means that two appointments are now necessary. The Regional Director has informed the OPSRRA newsletter that intends to appoint David Evans and Gerry Niedermeiser to the Otter Point APC.

**COMMENTARY & COMPARISON OF REGIONAL DIRECTOR ELECTION RESULTS**

The CRD's Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Voters' List identified a total of 4,765 eligible voters. This is an increase of 147 voters from 2005.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Electors 2005</b>	<b>Electors 2005</b>
View Royal Indian Reserves (Counted separately as they are part of School District #61 and on a different Voter's List):	1,047	1,086
East Sooke, Otter Point, Shirley, Jordan River, Port Renfrew and the Malahat combined:	3,365	3,444
Willis Point (Counted separately as they are part of School District #63 and on a different Voter's List):	206	235

Using these figures, there was an estimated 33.6% turn-out for the Regional Director election.

### Comparison of total regional director votes cast:

Year	Eligible Voters	Votes Cast
1999	unknown	1,635
2002	4,000 (estimated)	1,182
2005	4,618 (confirmed by CRD)	1,367
2008	4,765 (confirmed by CRD)	1,600

Because residents living on the View Royal and Esquimalt Indian Reserves are entitled to vote for the JDF Regional Director, there are two ways that you can calculate the percentage of voter turn out. If you include the approximately 1,000 View Royal voters, the turn-out for the 2005 and 2008 election was about 29% in 2005 and 34% in 2008. If you remove them from the number of eligible voters, the turn-out for the remainder of the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area was about 36% in 2005 about 42% in 2008.

### For comparison, here are the turn-out figures for 2005 and 2008:

Area	2005	2008
Advance Voting	64	123
Port Renfrew:	60	83
Jordan River (combined with Shirley in 2008):	4	
Shirley	127	132
East Sooke:	494	551
Willis Point:	143	129
Malahat:	21	24
Otter Point:	391	515
View Royal Indian Reserves:	63	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>1367</b>	<b>1600</b>

### Inclusion of the View Royal Indian Reserves:

The inclusion of the View Royal and Esquimalt Indian Reserves within the JDF Electoral Area should be questioned. Although these voters have not voted in any great number (about 4% in 2002, 6% in 2005 and 4% in 2008) they constitute about 23% of the eligible voters in the Electoral Area and could seriously skew the results of an election if they voted in proportion to the rest of the Electoral Area.

The only reason that they are included in our voting area is because the Esquimalt and Songhees Native Bands have entered into a contract with the CRD to purchase about 20 miscellaneous CRD services such as Storm Water Control, Emergency Response, Regional Parks, Regional Planning and Family Court. They are "orphans" within the CRD and have to be attached to a CRD director, somewhere—which just happens to be the JDF Electoral Area. However, they do not receive any land use or planning services from the JDF Electoral Area as their governance is the responsibility of their Native Band Councils. While they are

entitled to have representation at the CRD Board, it would probably be more suitable if they were represented by an adjoining urban municipality rather than the Electoral Area.

### **3. MEETING WITH PROVINCIAL CABINET MINISTERS**

Representatives from OPSRRA were recently invited to two separate meetings with provincial Cabinet Ministers. The first meeting was arranged with the assistance of Mike Hicks, Regional Director Elect for the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area. The second meeting was arranged with the assistance of John Horgan MLA, Malahat/Juan de Fuca. Here is a summary of those meetings.

#### **Hon. Stan Hagen, Minister of Agriculture and Lands**

On November 3, 2008, OPSRRA Directors Arnie Campbell, Bob Phillips and Wayne Fritz met for an hour with Minister Hagen at the minister's invitation. Mr. R.J. Senko (Ministerial Assistant) was also in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss our community's concerns about the potential impacts of the removal of 28,000 hectares of Western Forest Products' private forestlands from Tree Farm License 25.

OPSRRA restated its position that the community should have been consulted in advance and that the provincial government should have provided community compensation as part of its agreement to release the lands. The recent report by the Provincial Auditor General supporting this view was also cited.

OPSRRA also emphasized that the completion of several key community planning processes is needed before decisions are made about the future development of lands taken out of TFL25. These include the:

- identification and mapping of watersheds and "significant environmental areas";
- completion of the CRD Parks Plan and the JdF Electoral Area Parks Plan;
- completion of the CRD's Resource Lands Bylaw;
- promised review of local official community plans and the necessary updating of the 1993 local zoning bylaw; and
- ongoing coordination of planning with the current review of the CRD's Regional Growth Strategy.

OPSRRA also pointed out that the zoning changes made by the CRD in response to the private forest land removal have increased the workload of local planning staff to the point where they are having difficulty dealing in a timely manner with routine land use issues as well as with the larger planning projects. Minister Hagen expressed sympathy regarding the planning pressures and indicated that he would ask ministry staff to see if they have mapping information that would be of assistance to CRD planning staff.

He asked if OPSRRA had any suggestions as to how his ministry might mitigate the impacts of the TFL25 decision. OPSRRA suggested that consideration could be given to establishing local parks or trails in accordance with CRD and JdF Electoral Area parks planning. Examples put forward for discussion included: a park at Jordan River; a Muir Creek park; a Kludakh Trail park and an extension of the Galloping Goose Trail to link it to the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail. OPSRRA also pointed out that if the provincial government were to provide community benefits comparable to those negotiated around the removal of 4,341 hectares of Pope and Talbot forestlands from TFL23 in the Kootenay area, it would mean roughly \$35 million in valuable community compensation for our communities.



Minister Hagen indicated that he also planned on speaking with the Hon. Blair Lekstrom, Minister of Community Development and the Hon. Pat Bell, Minister of Forests and Range, about these issues.

### **Hon. Blair Lekstrom, Minister of Community Development**

On November 4, 2008, Arnie Campbell, Heather Phillips, John Charles and Wayne Fritz (as representatives of the Otter Point, Shirley and Jordan River Developing a Strategic Vision Project Steering Committee) met at OPSRRA's request with Minister Leckstrom. Mr. Ian Mclean (Ministerial Assistant) and Mr. Gary Paget (Executive Director of the ministry's Governance and Structure Division), also attended. The purpose of the meeting was to update the Minister about the **Strategic Vision for Otter Point, Shirley and Jordan River** and to discuss the strategies outlined in the document to achieve the goal of a local elected government that is accountable and affordable.

OPSRRA provided a brief overview of why and how the **Strategic Vision** document was developed and outlined the many community concerns about the current governance model:

- the Regional Director's responsibility for a large geographic area with six different districts, each with their own Official Community Plan;
- the lack of local accountability on the CRD Board for land use and bylaw decisions made for the JdF Electoral Area;
- the inclusion of two urban First Nations reserves within the rural JdF Electoral Area for administrative convenience rather than governance functions;
- the inability to prevent land annexations by neighbouring communities;
- difficulty in maintaining adequate planning staff for local planning purposes;
- the absence of a locally selected Subdivision Approving Officer;
- compounding difficulties which are the result of not being able to complete necessary local planning.

The delegation also highlighted a range of ideas presented in the **Strategic Vision** document to achieve more balance and continuity in land use decision making.

There was a general discussion with Minister Lekstrom and Mr. Paget about the JdF Electoral Area communities' past difficulty in identifying their local governance preferences. There was also discussion of the impact on local land use planning of the government's decision to remove Western Forest Products' private forestlands from TFL25. Dealing with this unexpected situation has used staff planning and budget resources that are thereby not available to deal with other planning issues;

Minister Lekstrom was asked to support and fund a study into different models of representative government identified in the **Strategic Vision** including:

- incorporation as a municipality;
- moving to a system of community commissions;
- joining with Sooke;
- joining with Metchosin;
- maintaining the status quo; and
- maintaining the status quo with some changes (e.g., protocol agreement about the boundary with Sooke).

Minister Lekstrom indicated that he would think about the request and provide a written response.

#### **4. LETTERS TO JDF PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGARDING WILLIAM SIMONS (POIRIER LAKE) PARK**

The following letter was sent to the Chair of the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks and Recreation Commission on October 22, 2008.

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#### **OTTER POINT AND SHIRLEY RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION**

Dear Ms. Paterson:

I am writing on behalf of the directors of our association to inform you that we have had some preliminary discussions regarding the proposed improvements at William Simmons Park. Our initial comments are based, primarily, upon four sources of information: a presentation made at our September 30 membership meeting by Larry Hutchings, Wendy Miller and Sid Jorna; letters received from three of our members; individual comments from members and a discussion at our October 20 Directors' meeting, at which four members of our association with an interest in what happens with the park, were in attendance.

The letters that were sent to OPSRRA shared many common concerns and they can be summarized as follows:

- Proposed entrance to the park (at the 3100 block Otter Point Road) is not in keeping with wishes of Eric Sellars St.Clair who wished the area be kept as a wilderness park;
- Area around the proposed entrance is environmentally fragile—risk of silting in small salmon bearing stream that drains into DeMamie Creek and Poirier Lake; pollution from parked vehicles; risk of dogs and visitors destroying salmon eggs;
- Proposed access poses a safety hazard; located on blind corner, next to community mail boxes; limited parking;
- Increased garbage at public access;
- Poirier Lake is unsafe and shouldn't be open to the public;
- Promised clean-up of the existing trail has not happened;
- Will opening-up access present a "security" problem if camping or rowdy parties occur?
- Risk of pollution of Poirier Lake which is part of the Kemp Lake watershed.

My understanding, from having spoken with Commission staff, is that the present pathway (located in the 3100 block of Otter Point Road) to the lake will not have any public parking and will be barricaded to prevent vehicular traffic from gaining access. I also understand that no decision has been made on where parking (if any) for the park would be located. OPSRRA suggests that the adjacent Sooke Business Park would be a preferred location. We also wish to point-out that the use of the words "road right of way" in the information that was sent to the immediate neighbours on September 22 was misleading. The words left the impression that a road (not a widening of the existing path) was to be used to gain access to the Poirier Lake at the 3100 block of Otter Point Road. We have also heard of a concern about the risk of dangerous pollutants if the condemned buildings were to be burned-down rather than demolished.















In conclusion, because of the limited time available for discussion at our October meeting, the William Simmons Park has been placed on the agenda for our November Directors' meeting. In the meantime, because of the limited time that was available to ask questions at our September membership meeting, we

suggest that the Juan de Fuca Recreation and Parks Commission consider hosting a public information meeting as soon as possible so as to allow a more thorough review of the proposed improvements, by the broader community, prior to any remediation measures.

## 5. OTTER POINT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION CANDY CANE RUN

The Otter Point Volunteer Fire Firefighters Association sponsors an annual trip through Otter Point with Santa Claus. Donations for the Sooke Food Bank will be welcomed. Walk-out to the end of your driveway for 10 or 15 minutes and enjoy!

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20**

TIME	ROUTE
START	 Sarah Drive, Helen Place, Patricia Marie Place
	 2900 block Otter Point Road to Young's Lake Road
	 Up Young's Lake Road to Pointer Road and back to Otter Point Road
	 Otter Point Road to Robinson Road, to Tugwell Road
	 Tugwell Road to Michelson Road (entire length)
5:00 p.m.	 Tugwell Road to Goudie Road (entire length)
5:45 p.m. approximately	 Otter Point Road to and up Amanda Road and back to Otter Point Road
	 Otter Point Road to end of King Road (entire length) to Corby Ridge (entire length) and back to Otter Point Road
	 Otter Point Road to end of Otter Point Place (entire length) and back to Otter Point Road and down to West Coast Road
6:30 p.m. approximately	 West Coast Road towards Sooke to Olympic Place (entire length)
	 Through Well O'Veary mobile home park (entire park) at 8177 West Coast Road
	 Up Otter Ridge Drive (entire length) to Taylor Place (entire length) and back to West Coast Road
	 Otter Point Road to Robinson Road, to Tugwell Road
	 West Coast Road to Olympic View mobile home park (entire park)
	 West Coast Road to Carpenter Road
	 Carpenter Road (entire length) to Delrae (entire length)
	 Back to West Coast Road to Kemp Lake Road
7:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. approximately	 Kemp Lake Road to Milligan (entire length) and back to Kemp Lake Road
	 Kemp Lake Road to Otter Point Road and back to the Fire Hall



## 6. OTTER POINT FIRE TRUSTEES ELECTED

The Otter Point Fire Department elected the following trustees at their November 18th Annual General Meeting:

Re-elected for another two year term were:

Kenny Jones	Chair
Bud Gibbons	Trustee
Joanne Hemphill	Trustee
Scott Hemphill	Firefighters Association Representative

Trustees with another year left in their term are:

Marie-Ann Davidson	Secretary
Lloyd Heinemann	Trustee
Harold Melville	Trustee

## 7. WITHDRAWAL OF SEAPARC STAFFING TO THE JDF PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

The Sooke and Electoral Area Parks and Recreation Commission (SEAPARC) has notified the Juan de Fuca Parks and Recreation Commission that it will no longer be able to provide staffing resources to the JDF Parks & Recreation Commission. Notice was given in September 2008 and takes affect sometime early 2009.

### Background

When the JDF Parks & Recreation Commission was established in December of 2004 there was a staff sharing agreement established whereby the JDF Parks & Recreation Commission contributed 12.5% towards the salary of the SEAPARC Manager and 8% towards the cost of Administrative Support services. This allocation was increased to 30% and 20% respectively in February 2008 to reflect the increasing growth in parks acquisition and expanded services in the Electoral Area.

Demand for staff services has now grown beyond SEAPARC's ability to continue to provide the level of staffing needed by the Electoral Area.

### Alternatives presently being looked at:

- SEAPARC hiring additional staff to work as a Parks Manager or Supervisor plus adding additional staff for administrative support for the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks and Recreation Commission.
- The Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks and Recreation Commission hiring additional staff to complement the staff resources of Electoral Area Planning Services.
- Sharing staff between the Juan de Fuca Planning and Protective Services department and the JDF Parks & Recreation Commission.

It has been suggested that the Electoral Area budget about \$100,000 for staffing, administrative support, parks maintenance and inspection services in the coming Fiscal Year.

## **8. JUAN DE FUCA COMMUNITY TRAILS SOCIETY ACTS AS WORK PLACEMENT FOR CANADA WORLD YOUTH PROGRAM**

**The Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society submitted the following story to the OPSRRA newsletter.**

After receiving permission from the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts to maintain selected trails in the Broom Hill and King Creek Crown lands, the Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society agreed to act as a “work placement” to the Canadian World Youth Program.

Our Canada World Youth team, Edith Wangui Mwangi from Kenya and Genevieve Doyon from Quebec, have now completed the Canadian part of the exchange. Their last day working on our trails was November 20 after working four days a week in September, October and November. Many members of the Juan de Fuca Community Trails Society worked with them. Together we made impressive progress. We logged 692 person hours on the King Creek and Broom Hill trails. The work was physically demanding but we had fun and many great conversations in French and English.

We have cleared the log falls. Some of the trees that had fallen across the trails were pretty massive. We re-opened a 400 meter cross trail between the North and South loops on Broom Hill that had been closed since the famous December 2006 storm. We also have continued to work on the tread, removing ankle turning rocks, supporting washed out and narrow areas and generally improving the trail as we went. We have manufactured and installed sign posts in Broom Hill and in the King Creek Crown lands. This was arduous work as about forty signs had to be cut and inscribed, and the posts, cement and tools had to be hauled up Broom Hill and installed. Regrettably some of our posts have already been taken out by persons unknown.

Thank you to all the Community Trails Society members who helped. It was well done and you offered so much more to Edith & Genevieve. They have written to say to everyone involved, "...you make this experience unforgettable for us. You are extraordinary people, Love Edith and Genevieve”.

Now that the Canada World Youth are on their way to Kenya, we will slow the pace to a planned 1 day a week Wednesdays with a 9:30 a.m. start for trail improvements and sign installation. We continue to ask for volunteers to help with this. Please call Rosemary at 250.642.2767 or email [sid2767@shaw.ca](mailto:sid2767@shaw.ca) any time to join us.

## **9. REFLECTIONS ON TREES, PAST AND PRESENT**

This past year has been a difficult one for the communities of Jordan River, Shirley and Otter Point. The removal of 28,000 hectares of Western Forest Product’s private forest lands from Tree Farm License 25 could have been handled differently by the province. As a consequence, the proposal to sell much of this forest land for residential development has brought about public protest, down-zoning bylaws, Court challenges, potential costs to local taxpayers, serious delays in local planning and deep splits within the community.

How do we regard the importance of our forests? How could things have been handled differently? The following provides two reflections: one is from the past and is an advertisement that ran in the May, 1949 issue of the Readers Digest; the other is from the present and describes the feelings of the rural community of Cortes Island (off of Campbell River) to the removal of private forest lands by Island Timberlands. The community of Cortes Island has been engaged in a decade of discussions and protest over about 1,800 hectares of private forest land

(12% of Cortes) that has been owned over time by MacMillan Bloedel, Weyerhaeuser, Brascan and now Island Timberlands. Various attempts have been tried to acquire some of the private forest land as a community forest or to otherwise find ways to save the forest lands from further residential development.

### “NATURE IN BALANCE”

(From an advertisement in the May, 1949 issue of Readers Digest paid for by the Carling Breweries Limited.)

Trees prevent floods. Your forests are natural dams that make water walk instead of run down hills and mountains; they keep streams, lakes and wells at a constant level.

Where too many trees have been cut, melted snow and spring rains rush down-hill in mad torrents that carry everything with them, including the thin skin of topsoil the world depends on. Rampaging floods, soil erosion, and deserts of useless sand—with their stark skeletons of deserted farms—are the crop we reap following the destruction of trees.

Trees are one of the greatest factors in the balance of nature. Protect them as you would your country—they **are** your country. Remember, nature in balance is nature unspoiled.

*Nature Unspoiled—Yours to Enjoy—Yours to Protect*

### “PRAYER FOR THE FOREST”

(An extract from an article written by Noberto & Richard published in the November, 2008 issue of the Whaletown National Enquirer—Cortes Island, B.C.)

After we had the community meeting with Island Timberlands, in early July 2008, Sabina Leader-Meuse called me with the idea of doing an art show at our little School House gallery, where we could express our feelings, wishes, visions and reverence for those lands, in the form of a prayer.

I immediately liked the idea, and the rest is history. In October the gallery was converted in an amazing place for the **Prayer for the Forest** show. We had art work from more than 75 people, including all the children from Linnaea and Cortes Island Schools. Besides this incredible display, we had the participation of 15-20 performers and musicians. The total active participants to the show was close to 100, a record for the gallery!

The attendance for both days was spectacular; we couldn't accommodate one more soul in the gallery. We need to congratulate ourselves for this heartfelt expression of a **Prayer for a Forest**. The participation and attendance to this event showed, one more time, the incredible spirit we have in Cortes Island.

Thanks to all the artists and the community, and why not, thanks to Island Timberlands, that brought all of us together for this beautiful event.

## 10. DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

**The trees used for both the totem pole at Beacon Hill Park in Victoria and the flagpole in front of the B.C. legislature came from the forests north of Otter Point and Shirley?**

The totem pole in Beacon Hill Park came from a single cedar tree logged in the Muir Creek watershed in 1955. The totem pole was commissioned by the Victoria Times newspaper, carved by Chief Mungo Martin and was raised in 1956. It is considered to be the tallest freestanding totem pole in the world at 126 feet.



The ancestry of the flag pole in front of the B.C. Legislature is a little less certain. According to the Discover your Legislature series published by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, the current flag pole was erected in 1926, is made from a 165 foot Douglas fir tree and replaced the original flag pole that was erected in 1865. According to a quote from Eric Butler in *4,000 Years- A History of the Rain Forest*, he believed that the present flag pole was logged by Butler Brothers at 6.5 mile on Butler Main. The tree was felled in 1951 while they were falling pole trees for the local fish traps.

**Note:** Part of the fascination with history is checking the discrepancies. The OPSRRA newsletter will try to determine the “parentage” of the Legislative flag pole. Let us know if you are aware of any further facts.

Information for this month’s **Did You Know That?** came from *Discover Your Legislature*, published by the Legislative Assembly of B.C. and from *4,000 Years – A History of the Rainforest* and *The Sooke Story–The History & The Heartbeat*, both written and published by the Sooke Region Museum.

Do you have local historical information that you would like to share or questions that you would like answered? If so, let us know and we’ll try to help.

## 11. FREE SMALL BUSINESS LISTING ON OPSRRA’S WEB SITE

**Do you operate a small business?** Are you an OPSRRA member? OPSRRA is offering a free business listing service for members, on its web site: [www.opsrra.ca](http://www.opsrra.ca). We will list non-members for a suitable donation!

The purpose of this service is to provide an opportunity for businesses in Jordan River, Shirley and Otter Point to advertise their goods and services to their local community. We anticipate having listings for accommodation, farm produce, art, furniture-making, fishing charters, eco-tours, firewood, knitting, soaps, landscaping, bookkeeping, sewing, spas and more. More information, businesses already listed, and an on-line registration form are available on OPSRRA’s web site ([www.opsrra.ca](http://www.opsrra.ca)) under **Business Listings**.

**Note:** OPSRRA does not accept responsibility for the services provided. Always check references and ask for confirmation of Work Safe B.C. Registration if applicable.

### The OPSRRA web site has more information about the following business listings

1001 Welding & Equipment Repair	Accent in Grooming
ALM Organic Farm	A Point of View B&B
Beaches West B&B	Bear Home Remodeling
Birds Edge Press	DanCyn Kioti Excavation
Eagle Cove Beachfront Guest Suite	Fancy That Esthetics & Body Care
Full Circle Seeds	Heron’s Rest B&B
Jambo Pet Sitting Service	Kemp Lake Store
Knotty Beds by Nature	Le Sooke Spa
Malahat Farm Heritage Cottage	Otter Point Beach House

Rhythm's Edge Percussion Shop

Road's End Construction

Sandy's Drywall Ltd

Stick in the Mud Coffee House

Straitview Ridge Bed & Breakfast

Tugwell Creek Honey Farm

Tugwell Creek Meadery

Wood Visions

## **12. BACK ISSUES OF THE OPSRRA NEWSLETTER**

Back issues of the OPSRRA newsletter are available on the OPSRRA web site.

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This monthly newsletter is prepared by the directors of OPSRRA. It is available to members by e-mail and to others on our web site: [www.opsrra.ca](http://www.opsrra.ca). To have an item you would like to have considered for placement in the newsletter, or make a comment about the newsletter, contact an OPSRRA director. OPSRRA tries to verify the correctness of the information in this newsletter; if we got it wrong we will acknowledge that and make a correction as quickly as possible.

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