

**OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY
RESIDENTS & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION (OPSRRA)
INFORMATION UPDATE – JANUARY 2006**

WISHING EVERYONE A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I would like to thank my Vice President, Directors and the membership for their work and support in the last year. I wish everyone a Happy New Year, and may you have good health and be surrounded by family and friends in the coming year.
Ken Pungente, President OPSRRA.

The Otter Point & Shirley Residents & Ratepayers Association (OPSRRA) is a registered non-profit society with an elected Board of 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 325. Any resident or property owner in Shirley and Otter Point is eligible for membership.

Lifetime memberships are \$5.00 and are available from OPSRRA directors—see our web site (www.opsrra.ca) for further information.

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 is now e-mailing this newsletter to over 100 of our members. Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca if you want to receive this membership service.

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1. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Contact Arnie Campbell at: d.acampbell@shaw.ca to have your community event listed in our monthly community events calendar.

Sunday
January 1

14th Annual Otter Point Polar Bear Swim
Sponsored by the Otter Point Volunteer Fire Department
Association

12 noon
Whiffen Spit

Registration: 11:15 to 11:30 a.m.

- Sunday
January 1
- New Year's Day Hike**
Sponsored by the Muir Creek Protection Society
- 1:00 p.m.
see article below for more details
- Wednesday
January 11
- Otter Point Zoning Committee Meeting**
7:00 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road
- Wednesday
January 11
- Shirley Community Association Membership Meeting**
7:00 p.m.
Shirley Community Hall
- Thursday
January 12
- Federal Election All Candidates Meeting**
7:00 p.m.
Edward Milne Community School Auditorium
- Monday
January 16
- Otter Point Zoning Committee Meeting**
7:00 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road
- Tuesday
January 17
- JDF Land Use Committee Meeting**
7:00 p.m.
District of Sooke Council Chambers
Council Chambers
2225 Otter Point Road
- You can obtain the agenda at the CRD Planning Services office, 2225 Otter Point Road or on the CRD website at: www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/index.htm
Click on "Agenda" at the top of the page.
- Wednesday
January 18
- Otter Point Zoning Committee Meeting**
7:00 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road
- Tuesday
January 24
- OPSRRA Directors Meeting**
Members welcome!
7:30 p.m.
Board Room
SEAPARC Leisure Complex
2168 Philips Road Sooke
- Wednesday
January 25
- Otter Point Zoning Committee Meeting**
7:00 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road
- Tuesday
February 21
- OPSRRA Annual General Meeting**
7:30 p.m.
Otter Point Fire Hall
3727 Otter Point Road

Second and Fourth
Thursday
of every month

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

2. OPSRRA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Meeting:

OPSRRA's AGM is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21 at 7:30 p.m. in the Otter Point Fire Hall. The agenda will be sent to members who are on OPSRRA's e-mail list.

Want to be added to the e-mail list? Contact:

Arnie Campbell

d.acampbell@shaw.ca

Nominations:

Send nominations to the Nominating Committee. Contact:

Ken Pungente

642-5177

Mitch Moneo 642-5146 or moneo@shaw.ca

David Evans 642-2477

3. MUIR CREEK NEW YEAR'S DAY WALK

The Muir Creek Protection Society is hosting a **New Year's Day walk 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 1** through a part of the area that they are trying to have saved as a park.

Kate Woods, from the Muir Creek Protection Society, will be leading the walk. Here are her directions for anyone interested in attending.

Meet at the parking lot on the right hand side of West Coast Road, just before Muir Creek bridge (coming from Sooke). Muir Creek, for those who don't know it, is about 15 minutes west of Sooke. Go past Gordon's Beach, and Tugwell Creek, up and over the hill (past Anderson Road) and the next creek is Muir. There is more parking over the bridge, on the left.

Kate is planning an easy to medium walk of about 1 hour (one and a half at most). Expect mud, a bit of bush crashing—although Kate has tried to clear up the worst of that—and the second stage of the walk has some moderately steep sections. Bowing out after the first, easy, section is allowed!

4. OPSRRA's REQUEST FOR A GOVERNANCE STUDY

OPSRRA's on-going efforts to have a discussion with the province concerning a governance study for Otter Point and Shirley is making progress. On October 6, John Horgan, our MLA, was able to secure a commitment for an exploratory meeting from Ida Chong, the Minister of Community Services. She agreed that she would direct Ministry staff to meet with a group from the community to talk about governance options and what may or may not be possible in the way of a grant for a governance study.

OPSRRA has been asked by the MLA and the Ministry to arrange a community meeting; planning for this meeting is now underway.

The following community groups have been invited to send two representatives each to this meeting:

- the Shirley Community Association
- the Shirley Volunteer Fire Protection Society
- the Sheringham Estates Water Users
- the Shirley Education and Action Society
- the Kemp Lake Waterworks District
- the Otter Point Fire Trustees
- OPSRRA

Other groups and individuals have asked to attend this exploratory meeting; however, expanding the size of the group at this time would likely diminish its effectiveness. The outcomes of this initial meeting will be shared with the residents of Otter Point and Shirley.

If the Ministry feels there is community support for a governance study, and they agree to take that next step, there is a provincial process to ensure democratic representation from the community on any Governance committee that is formed.

Here are some of the possible governance options that could be considered:

- Staying with the present structure of electing one Regional Director for the communities of Port Renfrew, Jordan River, Otter Point, Shirley, East Sooke, Willis Point, the View Royal Indian Reserves, and the Malahat.
- Remaining with one Regional Director but appointing the Chairs of the Advisory Planning Commissions as the Land Use Committee.
- Remaining with one Regional Director but having our own sub-division Approving Officer.
- Dividing the present JDF Regional District into two parts as it was before Sooke incorporated, with Port Renfrew, Jordan River, Shirley, Otter Point and East Sooke having their own Regional Director.
- Remaining as we are with one Regional Director, but moving the View Royal Indian Reserves to another municipality such as View Royal or Esquimalt.
- Incorporating Otter Point, Shirley and Jordan River with Metchosin.
- Forming a "Rural Alliance" with Metchosin.
- Incorporating Otter Point, Shirley or East Sooke with the District of Sooke.
- Incorporating Otter Point, Shirley, Jordan River and perhaps Port Renfrew into a new municipality.
- Forming a Commission government (a combination of regional director and elected commissioners) as the Island of Salt Spring is considering.
- Forming a Trust as was done for the Gulf Islands.

Note: OPSRRA received \$300 from members towards the cost of the “Please Vote NO to the Kemp Lake Annexation” flyer that OPSRRA sent to the residents of Sooke. Thank-you, your donations covered our expenses.

5. “RURAL ALLIANCE” – ANOTHER MODEL OF GOVERNANCE

Terri Alcock, Shirley’s representative on the Juan de Fuca Land Use Committee and present at the in-camera meeting with Metchosin Mayor and Council when the “Rural Alliance” model of governance was discussed, was asked to prepare a summary for the OPSRRA newsletter.

A RURAL ALLIANCE?

Recently the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Land Use Committee (LUC) members from Otter Point, Shirley, East Sooke and Malahat, as well as the Regional Director and alternate, met with Metchosin Council to discuss a possible alliance of JDFEA communities with Metchosin.

Metchosin feels threatened by urban sprawl. Though the Council has a mandate to maintain the community’s rural lifestyle, they feel it’s only a matter of time before development pressures reach Metchosin. Metchosin has no debt and the second lowest taxes in the CRD. They are not motivated by increasing their tax base, but see advantages in a larger municipality based on a rural model.

East Sooke and Otter Point feel threatened by Sooke’s boundary extension, fearing they’ll be gobbled up despite voting 80% against amalgamation.

The JDFEA and Metchosin both want to stay rural, but within the CRD, the current model of joining urban and rural areas doesn’t work, particularly for rural areas. There is tremendous pressure to accept higher density/urbanization. Therefore the concept of an alliance along rural lines is emerging. During the meeting 3 common goals emerged:

Establish borders

An alliance would guarantee that our borders are not threatened by boundary extension.

Share services

Policing, planning & building inspection, bylaw enforcement, roads, search and rescue and emergency services to be shared to mutual benefit.

Guarantee self-determination for participating communities

Land use, parks, finances, fire departments and economic development to be controlled locally.

Governance

The challenge is to develop a model that benefits each community while protecting self-determination. A ward system with designated council members, supplemented by a LUC-type structure for local decisions, might work and give more autonomy than the “deal” proposed by Sooke.

Mayor Ranns meets with the Minister of Community Services in January to seek intervener status and ask that Sooke boundary extensions be delayed until Metchosin and JDFEA communities can discuss their options. Mayor Ranns has made it clear that Metchosin is not interested in controlling anyone else's destiny, but that it may be in all our best interests to work together. JDFEA communities share with Metchosin our rural nature, approach to land use and OCPs and environmental issues. The question is: is there merit in an alliance and, if so, how can we make it work?

For more information, call Terri Alcock (Shirley) 646-2528.

6. OTTER POINT & SHIRLEY FIRE TRUSTEES

The following individuals were recently elected as fire trustees for Shirley and Otter Point:

Shirley

President: Sarah Tidwell
Vice-President: Dominique Bernardet
Secretary: Robert Amussen
Treasurer: Dick Kirby
Directors: Eric Ellis
Andre James

Otter Point

Chair: Ken Jones
Secretary: Marie-Ann Davidson
Treasurer: Bud Gibbons
Trustees: Lloyd Hieneman
Joanne Hemphill
Harold Melville

More information on the Shirley Volunteer Fire Protection Society and the Otter Point Fire Department can be obtained from their web sites:

<http://shirleyfire.cjb.net>
<http://www.otterpointfire.bc.ca/>

7. CAN ANYONE DONATE A FLIP CHART TO OPSRRA?

OPSRRA needs a flip chart. We have been making do with a borrowed one for our meetings, but no longer have access to the "loaner". Does someone have a flip chart that we can either have or would be willing to lend to us for several days at a time?

Contact Arnie Campbell at 642-313 or at d.acampbell@shaw.ca if you can help.

8. OTTER POINT ZONING COMMITTEE RESUMES PUBLIC MEETINGS

After a 5-month break, the Regional Director has agreed to the Otter Point Zoning Committee resuming its meetings. The Chair of the Otter Point Committee had asked for additional meetings so that the committee could conclude its work.

A revised draft zoning bylaw and a draft map showing proposed zoning areas have been prepared.

Gerard LeBlanc, the newly hired JDF Electoral Area Senior Planner will replace Ken Cossey as staff support to the Zoning committee.

The Otter Point Zoning committee will be meeting at the following dates and times:

Wednesday January 11
Monday January 16
Wednesday January 25

All meetings will start at 7:00 p.m. and will be held at the Otter Point Fire Hall.

9. JUAN DE FUCA ELECTORAL AREA OFFICES ARE MOVING

The Juan de Fuca Electoral Area offices will be moving between January 15 and 31. The new location will be at 6868 West Coast Road, the former provincial Human Resources office next to Barry Marine (Silver Streak Boats).

The move includes the office of the Regional Director, Planning/Administration staff and the Building Inspector. Phone numbers and e-mail addresses will remain the same. The Land Use Committee will continue to use the District of Sooke Council Chambers for their meetings.

10. INVITATION TO COMMUNITY EMERGENCY TRAINING

Invitation to Community Emergency Training Juan de Fuca

You Can Help in an Emergency: If you yearned to help those affected by such events as Hurricane Katrina, the Indonesian Tsunami, or the BC Wildfires, you will be interested in how you can help your own community during a disaster.

Juan de Fuca communities are subject to a number of hazards, including earthquake, wildfire, and tsunami. We are not immune. In fact, we know from historical records that Vancouver Island is periodically hit by natural events from time to time. Our time will come.

Work in the EOC: Most emergencies can be handled at the scene by Fire Department, RCMP, or Ambulance personnel. In major incidents, however, these first responders will require support. In such situations, we would call on area residents to volunteer at the Emergency Operations Centre, commonly called the "E-O-C."

EOC personnel perform a number of essential tasks, such as gathering information on the extent of damage, locating heavy equipment, documenting actions, and tracking costs. EOC personnel operate indoors in an office setting and are not exposed to dangers.

Training Available: We will offer four courses, each consisting of three hours of instruction.

- A – Overview of the JdF Emergency Program and Response Plan
- B – EOC checklists and function aids
- C – Practice working together in an EOC by walking through a scenario
- D – More practice while working in the EOC facility and using equipment

Training Schedule: The JdF Emergency Program will offer these sessions beginning in November and continuing in the New Year. All meetings will be held on weekday afternoons and evenings to allow participation by community members.

Date / Time		Afternoon Session	Evening Session
	Session A	1:00 to 4:00 pm	7:00 to 10:00 pm
January 10	Session B	1:00 to 4:00 pm	7:00 to 10:00 pm
January 24	Session C	1:00 to 4:00 pm	7:00 to 10:00 pm
February 14	Session D	1:00 to 4:00 pm	7:00 to 10:00 pm

You can attend either the afternoon or the evening session. You do not need to attend both. All sessions will be held at the Sooke Legion, Second Floor, 6726 Eustace Road in Sooke. Parking is available in front of the facility.

Test Drive: Don't know if this is for you? Come to the first session to learn more, and then decide. You are not obliged to attend future sessions. Your name will be added to our call list only after you complete the training, and you can remove your name at any time.

Participants: EOC training is open to any interested community member. These are working sessions, not public information sessions.

For More Information, Contact: Al Strickland at tel: 642-6888, e-mail: alstrick@shaw.ca

11. FREE ADVERTISING FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES 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.com. 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, fishing charters, eco tours, firewood, knitting, soaps, landscaping, bookkeeping, sewing and more. More information, businesses already listed and a registration form are available on OPSRRA's web site (www.opsrra.com) under Business Listings.

The following business listings are on the OPSRRA web site:

Malahat Farms B&B	Beaches West B&B	Birds Edge Press
ALM Organic Farm	Full Circle Seeds	Tugwell Creek Honey Farm
Tugwell Creek Meadery	Kemp Lake Store	Sandy's Drywall Ltd
1001 Welding & Equipment Repair		Otter Point Beach House

12. BACK ISSUES OF THE OPSRRA NEWSLETTER

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

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. 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 have got it wrong we will acknowledge that and make a correction as quickly as possible.
