

qathet Regional District
ELECTORAL AREA 'A' NEWSLETTER

for September 2018

from Patrick Brabazon, Director

This newsletter is being sent to all residents of *Electoral Area A* of the qathet Regional District. At the end of this newsletter you will find my telephone number and my e-mail address. I welcome your comments.

What's your name? Why, it's



A year ago, in *Green Sheet #52*, I advised that we were in the process of seeking a change of name for the regional district. At that time I suggested that with public consultation concluding in October we might have our new name in time for our 50th anniversary in December. Silly me. The Regional Board accepted the change in October and sent the request off to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. And . . . silence. The months passed, interrupted only by the occasional query as to whether or not we had asked . . . or consulted . . . or? Finally, on July 5th the Lieutenant Governor issued an Order-in-Council declaring that Powell River Regional District is now qathet Regional District (qRD). Done. However, the old name will be with us for a while yet as signs wear out, websites get updated, etc.

Fire!

Every summer I have commented about the fire hazard in a *Green Sheet*. I do so again now but as I write British Columbia has declared a Provincial state of emergency which may have been lifted by the time that you read this.

Check <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PSSG0061-001584> for the latest. Last year was horrific and this year is on track to repeat it. Evacuations are underway in communities throughout the Province and more are threatened. Area A has already suffered two close calls with wild fires and the weather and the forest allow for no carelessness.

I will offer an example of a mindless act resulting in fire but with a happy ending. I spent much of my flying career fighting forest fires and one April my crew and I were sent to northern Alberta. On arrival I reported to the forestry Fire Control Officer for a situation report. He advised that the humidity was very low and that the forest had yet to "green up" and thus the fire hazard was extreme. Curious, I enquired about the broken pop bottle on his desk. He told me that they had had a fire the previous week but their quick response and easy access allowed for rapid containment. They traced the fire's origin back to the bottle at the roadside. The sun shining through it had ignited the grass and the flames were off and running. A mindless act of littering could have been devastating.

Remember, if you see smoke call *5555 on your cell phone or 1-800-663-5555 on the land line. As always 9-1-1 will get the local [Northside or Savary] fire department. Don't dither, time is critical. For good advice on protecting your home and family check the regional district website for the FireSmart Manual.

Have I got a bridge to sell you . . .

Actually, I don't. I mention this because it illustrates how regional district services are funded and protected. In this case the people of Savary Island funded a major upgrade on the wharf which included replacing the gangway with one that was much longer and wider. The former gangway was transferred to storage with the Regional Parks. What to do with it? Built on aluminum beams and over ten metres in length, this asset attracted a lot of attention. The final decision was to retain with a view to replacing one of the wooden bridges on our trails or beach accesses. Thus the service which gets the asset will "buy" it from the Savary Island Marine Service and Islanders will not be out the \$5,000 which is the current estimated value.

One less aggravation at the recycle depot

qRD has been at the forefront of recycling from the beginning of the province wide Recycle BC program. Thanks to the superb work of our Let's Talk Trash team we are recognized as a leader and example for others. Now qRD has been selected for participation in a pilot program conducting recycling research and development and possibly engineered fuel. For you this immediately means that a wide range of plastics etc., which were not recyclable, are now accepted at our depots. Have a look at <http://letstalktrash.ca/new-plastic-packaging-collection/> for more information.

Back at Savary . . .

This summer the regional district became aware of a serious problem with access to the wharf. If you have taken the water taxi there you are aware that the approach is an obstacle course created by the multitude of boats secured to buoys. Bad enough in daylight, night medical evacuations are delayed and people are placed in jeopardy. Several solutions were considered, ranging from expensive and time consuming extension of the regional district tenure to simply asking boat owners to move. We decided on the latter. Employing ASIC [Association of the Savary Island Community] as messenger the word went out. Now two buoys have been moved voluntarily and I expect more to follow. Thank you to those who acted promptly and thank you to ASIC.

Who's in your neighbourhood?

Neighbours are more than just the people who live nearby. ASIC is but one of the neighbourhood organizations that are critical to the well being of our communities. Another is the Okeover Ratepayers Association [ORA]. These organizations meet annually with an annual general meeting [AGM] which I try to attend. I do so because they are a two-way street: I get to advise them on regional district matters and I also get to listen to their concerns. At the ORA's meeting in September they are discussing the idea that members collectively purchase tanks to be placed around the area to provide emergency water supply for the fire department. At the AGM they will be provided with the information needed to make an informed decision. Thank you ORA, together we are stronger.

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