

THE Oak Bay Connector

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY QUARTERLY PAPER ■ CONNECT - COMMUNICATE - COLLABORATE



Welcome to our second edition of the Oak Bay Connector!
Check out what's happening in Oak Bay on Page 2!

Bowker Creek: A long term relationship

Bowker Creek is like most urban creeks – it's in rough shape. Luckily, it also has some advantages. Bowker Creek runs through a densely populated area full of citizens who want more nature, less pollution, and better greenway corridors in their neighbourhoods. They have supported their municipalities – Oak Bay, Saanich and Victoria – to become part of the Bowker Creek Initiative, a partnership of groups working steadily to raise awareness and to address the problems of polluted water, flooding, and habitat degradation.

Change is slow in the urban environment. It usually happens with re-development of individual lots as buildings wear out or as population density increases. With re-development

comes opportunity for creek restoration or creek day-lighting (opening buried sections). However, since restoration opportunities happen on a lot-by-lot basis over time, a long term plan and policies need to be in place. The Bowker Creek Initiative (BCI) is working to produce a plan that includes policy recommendations by the end of 2009. Creek restoration opportunities typically arise with little warning, and the BCI's detailed plan and long-term vision will help all its partners be ready.

Re-development at Oak Bay High School highlights the need to be prepared. The school is aging and due for a major upgrade, and officials have decided to construct a new building. Currently, Bowker

Creek runs along the edge of the property in a narrow, deep ditch with a concrete bottom.

The ditched section at Oak Bay High school is typical. When most of the buildings in the watershed were constructed, creeks were not valued like they are today. The native vegetation was removed, the floodplain was filled in to make room for development, and the channel was deepened and straightened to move water more quickly off the land. This has left a legacy of habitat destruction, bank erosion, invasive species and flooding problems. This is in addition to the pollution problems caused by the run-off from our streets and buildings. We no longer have the free-flowing salmon stream that once supported local First Nations. But we have not forgotten the creek. Unlike many urban creeks, some of Bowker Creek (about 40%) is still above ground. The water still flows, and society's

expectations have changed.

At Oak Bay High School, the new facility and fields may allow for a wider creek corridor with a more natural stream channel and native streamside plants and trees. As the plan for the school is developed, the school board will investigate whether and how much land might be available to restore Bowker Creek. If the school board dedicates the land, the BCI partners would need to find grant money to make this project a reality.

There is extensive public support for a healthy Bowker Creek, and awareness is growing all the time. Creek restoration and greenway creation are efforts that are well understood to be important and worthwhile. In addition, municipalities and regular citizens are beginning to understand that taking care of the watershed is just as important as taking care of the creek corridor. "Low Impact Development" is the buzz-word for an approach to hold more water on the land to simulate what hap-



pens in nature. Instead of letting water rush off our streets and buildings into pipes that feed the creek, we can create rain gardens or install permeable pavers to let the water soak in. This has the double benefit of cleaning the water. Studies have shown that it is possible to reverse some if not most of the flooding and erosion problems in urban creeks through simple measures like these.

Having a caring relationship with an urban creek means taking the long-term view while working to improve conditions today. Like any long-term relationship, effort and commitment are required. Fortunately for Bowker Creek, many individuals and groups have decided to believe in a future where the water is clean, wildlife have a home, floods are controlled, and the creek is an asset to all the neighbourhoods it flows through.



Bowker Creek Initiative:
www.bowkercreekinitiative.ca

Contact the Bowker Creek Initiative Coordinator at:
info@bowkercreekinitiative.ca

The Bowker Creek Initiative is a collaborative effort between people, organizations and governments who envision the creek as a community amenity and a healthy, life-sustaining environment for native vegetation and wildlife.



www.caob.ca

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Curves

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A message from our Mayor



It is my pleasure on behalf of Oak Bay Council to welcome you to the second edition of the Oak Bay Connector. It is a very apt title because as all residents know, Community Connections is what Oak Bay is all about. In many places there are six degrees of separation, but in Oak Bay I always like to think that there is only one, and that one, between yourself and your neighbor, can be easily bridged.

Sitting in the southeast corner of Vancouver Island, within easy reach of the ocean, and blessed by great schools, and superb recreation facilities, we are all very lucky to live in this peaceful part of the world. I hope that this addition of the Oak Bay Connector helps you to enjoy it even more.

Congratulations to those who have volunteered to put this publication together and to those individuals and businesses who have financially supported it.

Please do not forget to turn out to support the Torch Run October 30th.

With best wishes for a Happy Halloween,

Christopher M. Causton
Mayor, District of Oak Bay

Rainbows

- New bike racks - Food Forum
- Thursday Night Market Oak Bay Avenue
- Fall colours in Oak Bay tree canopy

Raindrops

- Sign pollution
- Pot holes
- No free meeting space for non-profit groups

Oak Bay Business Improvement Association

Oak Bay Village is proud to host a variety of family-friendly, community events throughout the year. Fall and winter bring a wealth of activities for young and old.

For the first time, Oak Bay Village was host to a once-a-month night market. Numerous businesses stayed open late and a variety of artisans, crafters, and food vendors set up along Oak Bay Avenue to display their wares. A large number of Oak Bay artists also set up

along the Avenue, creating an informal paint in and capturing the scene. The final market of the season will be held on Thursday, October 15. Night markets will resume in the spring with the return of good weather and available local produce.

Oak Bay Village merchants will hold their annual Trick or Treat in the Village on Saturday, October 31 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Participating stores will display a pumpkin poster in the window

and ghouls and goblins are invited to visit for special treats. Participating merchants extend from Foul Bay Road to Monterey Avenue.

The ninth annual Oak Bay Christmas Festival Light Up will be held on November 29th. Festivities begin in the afternoon with a variety of activities for families including magic, giant games, a variety of street and mainstage entertainment. The official town crier will proclaim the

festival officially started and the lights adorning the buildings, trees and lampposts will come on. Santa will arrive to help start the Festival and will stay to hear Christmas wishes. Later in December the Village will host the Parade of Lighted Trucks and the Art on the Avenue Gallery Walk. Check www.oak-bay-bia.ca for details.



Our commitment to the Oak Bay community

1. Foster community involvement in all development and land use sharing;
2. Support development and co-operative use of community facilities;
3. Promote safety and well-being of community residents;
4. Maintain the character of Oak Bay in harmony with the environment;
5. Encourage the formation of neighbourhood associations.

Welcome from your Editor

Welcome to the 2nd edition of the Oak Bay Connector, brought to you by the Community Association of Oak Bay.

Linking independent community groups throughout our municipality has led to this inclusive, local, expanding newsletter. All the articles have been written by your friends and neighbours who live and love living in Oak Bay.

I am very grateful to all our contributors

and advertisers. It is exciting to meet and speak to many members of our community who want to share their valuable information in the Connector. The 3rd edition of the Oak Bay connector is scheduled to be published early in the new year. We encourage the community to participate in this informative publication.

Please contact me at jillcroft@telus.net or (250) 595-6284.

Jill Croft

A few words from the President

Connect - Communicate - Collaborate

I hope you enjoy reading the 2nd edition of the Oak Bay Connector which is provided to you by the Community Association of Oak Bay. Our first year, since our inauguration meeting at the Monterey Centre in September of 2008, has been a busy one. We organized the Emergency Response Event and Community Fair, have been invited by the CRD to sit on the Bowker Creek

Initiative and joined UVic community liaison committee. There are many more initiatives that we are involved in with Tourism Oak Bay, Green Mapping, and the forum on Sewage Treatment in our Neighbourhoods.

On Saturday, October 17 we are having a Community Association Pot Luck at the Scout Hall, all existing members and those interested in belonging are

invited, further details are provided in the Connector. In addition we are sponsoring a transportation Forum at Windsor Pavillion on Saturday November 7, watch for registration details.

The Community Association looks forward to working with all Oak Bay community groups in making Oak Bay a great place to live.

Tom Croft
President

What's happening in the Oak Bay community

ONGOING EVENTS

5TH GARRY OAK SCOUT GROUP

250-388-6577 or family@meares.ca or visit www.scouts.ca

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY DIRECTORS' MEETING

www.oakbaycommunityassociation.org or 250-595-6284 for more info

ROTARY CLUB OF OAK BAY

meets Tuesday Noon, Oak Bay Rec Sportsview Lounge www.oakbayrotary.com

KIWANIS CLUB OF OAK BAY

meets Thursday 5:45pm Kiwanis Manor 2075 Milton Street. Members Needed. Derek 250 477-1562 or Susan 250 477-7246.

VICTORIA CAR SHARE CO-OP

meets 3rd Thursday, 5-7pm #320-620 View St. Refreshments www.victoriacarshare.ca

OCTOBER 2009

OCTOBER 17

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY (CAOB)
4:30-7:30 Members' Harvest Pot Luck, Scout Hall eldstrom@shaw.ca

OCTOBER 17-18

GIRLS GUIDES OAK BAY PARKS ANNUAL BROOM BASH

Cattle Point/Beach Drive, Bring gloves, clippers, loppers, family and friends. Volunteers helped to receive federal funds to restore Garry Oak Ecosystem. mlidkea@shaw.ca

OCTOBER 21

PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION FOR SENIORS WORKSHOP

10am-noon, Monterey Centre coordinator@oakbayemergency.com or 250-592-9121 *FREE Event

OCTOBER 31

OAK BAY KIWANIS 60TH ANNUAL HALLOWEEN BONFIRE

Food, Music, Costume Parade & Prizes

NOVEMBER 2009

NOVEMBER 7

CAOB TRANSPORTATION FORUM

1am-2pm, mfoyd@shaw.ca

NOVEMBER 11

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Cenotaph at Cattle Point

NOVEMBER 16

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BEGINS WITH YOU! WORKSHOP

6:45pm-9pm, St. Patrick's Church coordinator@oakbayemergency.com or 250-592-9121 *FREE Event

NOVEMBER 21

FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAINING

10am-Noon, Oak Bay Fire Hall coordinator@oakbayemergency.com or 250-592-9121 *FREE Event
NOVEMBER 29
OAK BAY AVENUE LITE UP

DECEMBER 2009

DECEMBER 5

TRUCK PARADE

JANUARY 2010

JANUARY 2

5TH GARRY OAK SCOUT GROUP BOTTLE DRIVE

Save your bottles now!



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY QUARTERLY PAPER ■ SECOND EDITION OCTOBER 2009

Oak Bay Volunteer Services

One-to-one volunteer help to individuals of all ages.

Call for help, to volunteer or donate.

www.oakbayvolunteers.bc.ca

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Preparedness is everyone's responsibility!

Seniors Mitigation & Preparedness Project: Focus on Pandemic and Earthquake as first steps

Preparedness education, public awareness and neighbours helping neighbours are the three pillars of Oak Bay's emergency preparedness program. There are several steps that all Oak Bay residents can take to reduce their vulnerability to (mitigate) as well as increase their preparedness level for our community's identified hazards: earthquake, pandemic, fire, severe storm and power failure.

The Oak Bay Emergency Program recently received a one year \$10,000 Seniors Housing & Support Initiative Grant. Two key objectives of this seniors initiative are providing mitigation and preparedness education to seniors and the general population and engaging community-based organizations, seniors facilities and businesses as partners in these efforts.

The transformation of an emergency into a disaster- such as the European heat wave and Hurricane Katrina- where seniors, the poor and the marginalized were over represented in the number of casualties, demand that we look within our communities to build social support networks, strengthen community capacity as well as increase individual, family, neighbourhood and community preparedness levels. In Oak Bay, this is where our Block Watch, churches, volunteer services, service clubs, community association and others play a pivotal role in connecting their constituents with emergency preparedness education and resources. It ensures that our community can meet the basic needs of all its citizens.

Those who are most at-risk or vulnerable are those who are least likely to anticipate, prepare for, cope with and recover from a disaster situation. This includes those with limited social networks who may lack access to

assistance during an emergency or those with low income unable to buy supplies, evacuate quickly or recover. Many Oak Bay residents are not connected to or aware of emergency management or community resources that could assist them with steps to increase their individual resilience. Others, including many seniors, depend on outside resources to maintain their independence in their home. These services may be disrupted, unavailable or severely compromised during an emergency.

As we move into the second wave of the H1N1 flu virus this fall, please get prepared beforehand. Attend a preparedness workshop, get to know your neighbour and ensure you have necessary supplies if you get sick. Arrange to provide outreach support and check-ins via telephone and email and delivery of groceries and medication to each other should this be needed. Be a "flu buddy"!

For the most up to date information on the H1N1 flu virus, visit www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1. You can call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1, 24 hours a day/ seven days a week to speak to a nurse if you have questions or concerns about any illness/ symptoms experienced by you or your family.

Beginning this fall, our preparedness Outreach Team will offer Information Displays and Preparedness Education Workshops at venues frequented by seniors on strategies to safeguard against and prepare for a pandemic, earthquakes and other hazards. The next workshop is Wednesday, October 21st, 10-NOON, Monterey Recreation Centre. Sign-up at the front desk or call Sonja, 250-514-5249 or sruthe@oakbayemergency.com. Anyone interested in volunteering with our seniors initiative are asked to contact Sonja.

Please check Oak Bay's Emergency Program website www.oakbayemergency.com for additional information on upcoming preparedness workshops, training, education and volunteer opportunities.

Oak Bay Youth plans an influential year

The Oak Bay Youth Committee is a group of dedicated students involved in Oak Bay aiming to establish a political voice for youth in the community. This organization was started last year by Anneliese Sanghara, Allison Jones and Genevieve Rosheleau and has been continued this fall by Adam Ruebsaat-Trott, David Macauley and Jennifer Koide.

At this time, there is extensive planning going on to assess many possible projects for the Oak Bay Youth Committee. This year will be an influential one for the municipality. Construction on the new Oak Bay High School will begin in the spring and the Oak Bay Youth Committee hopes to voice opinions the youth of Oak Bay may have on the new school to the Oak Bay municipal council. In addition, the Oak Bay Youth Committee is looking to bridge the

gap between youth and the municipality's adult citizens. This could include a showcase of youth music and art, or a community project such as a youth-led mural or the maintenance of Oak Bay's new community garden.

We are also looking to strengthen the committee's voice in the community by gaining some new members. Potential members would be people aged 15-25 who are somehow involved in the Oak Bay community, either as residents or students at Oak Bay schools. If you are interested in joining Oak Bay Youth Council or have any questions, comments or suggestions, feel free to contact any of our members:

Adam Ruebsaat-Trott at 250-592-6073 or by email ruebsaat_trott@msn.com, or David Macauley at 250-598-350 or by email at macauley.david@gmail.com.

Oak Bay Volunteer Services: Preparing for a Pandemic

Help us Prepare. Volunteer Now.

There has been a lot in the news about a possible H1N1 flu pandemic. It is conceivable that some of our volunteers might succumb to the flu, despite best efforts to remain healthy. Our volunteers provide one-to-one help. It is always important for elderly people, and others, to be able to get to appointments, so volunteer drivers are consistently needed. One drive a week or even one drive a month can make a difference.

It is easy to feel isolated or lonely if one is ill and at home. This is where a regular Reassurance Phone Call from a volunteer can make a difference.

Therefore, we are appealing to members of our community to consider joining our league of dedicated volunteers in order that we may continue to offer our full range of one-to-one services to clients.

We also encourage people who have a small or limited support network to contact us to register in order to be eligible for services.

Phone: 250-595-1034

E-mail: obvs@oakbayvolunteers.bc.ca

Visit: 101-2167 Oak Bay Ave. (lower level of Municipal Hall)



Oak Bay Bicycle Master Plan Underway

The recent repaving of Cedar Hill X Road and the upcoming work on Beach Drive have thrown into stark relief the need for a bicycle master plan in Oak Bay. As a guide for municipal council and staff, the plan would keep bicyclists from getting forgotten again whenever major road projects are planned or budgets decided.

As part of Safer Cycling Oak Bay, a core team of eight members, assisted by many volunteers, has been working on such a plan for the past eight months. We have counted bicycle traffic at major intersections, surveyed cyclists, and begun to draft policy and guidelines for the plan. Over the summer, we gave presentations to the Oak Bay Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, and attended Velo Victoria, the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition's inaugural celebration of bike culture.

The fall kicks us back into high gear, with more bike counts and surveys to complete. By analyzing this data, we can identify priorities for future improvements to infrastructure and help municipal planners spend limited money most effectively. The ultimate goal is complete Oak Bay's first bicycle master plan and present it to council later this fall. We hope that council will then adopt the bicycle plan as part of the Official Community Plan.

But we aren't there yet. We still need the help of local citizens who want to see safer cycling and improve infrastructure throughout Oak Bay. Anybody who wishes to volunteer or track our progress, please visit our website at SCOB.ca.

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Victoria Car Share on the move

The Victoria Car Share Cooperative is a non-profit organization that has been providing Victoria with sustainable and economical transportation options since 1996. We have 19 cars, trucks and minivans throughout Greater Victoria, including a Honda Civic in Oak Bay at Oak Bay Avenue and Monterey Avenue (across the street from the Monterey Centre).

Oak Bay and Victoria residents can join by:

- i) purchase \$400 in share equity, which is 100% refunded if you ever leave.
- ii) qualify as a safe driver, 21 years or older.
- iii) attend an orientation and sign a

membership agreement.

To use a vehicle, simply book online on our website www.victoriacarshare.ca or call our booking line to make a reservation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. With your fleet key in hand, walk up to the car, truck or van you have booked, retrieve the vehicle key from the lockbox, get in, and drive!

Members are charged by the time and distance they drive, a \$15/month administration fee and taxes. That's all - gas and insurance are included. Our rates are \$2.82/hour, (with night-time and multi-day discounts) and \$0.42/km. Car share members report hundreds of dollars in savings compared to the cost of personal



ownership, renting, or taking cabs.

Our members also save the hassle and inconvenience associated with personal automobile ownership. Car sharing helps to take cars off the road and reduce your ecological footprint and contribute to an efficient and sustainable use of resources. For more information, visit our website at www.victoriacarshare.ca or call 250-995-0265

Oak Bay Native Plant Gardens

✿ Written by Patricia Johnston

After seven years of gardening work by members of the Friends of the Oak Bay Native Plant Garden, the garden is looking wonderfully lush throughout the growing season. Of course, early spring is the time to take pleasure in the wildflowers, such as the Fawn Lily, Camas, Shooting Star, Chocolate Lily and Western Buttercup. Late spring, on the other hand, is the time to enjoy the joyful colours on Penstemon, Woolly sunflower, Fireweed, Sedum and Nodding onion.

By summer a lot of colour disappears. That's how our native plants survive the summer drought; they go dormant. Regardless of the lack of color the various greens of many native shrubs, including the red and blue berries or Elderberry and the white fluffy flowers of Goat's beard, create an atmosphere of peace and tranquility.

Our regular Friday morning work involves pruning overgrown shrubs, planting native plants (many of which have been salvaged from construction sites), planning and designing, weeding and removing invasive species. Almost all the invasive species such as English ivy, Himalayan blackberry and Creeping buttercup have been removed from the site which has allowed the wildflowers, especially the Fawn lilies, to recover. Now they cover nearly the whole garden. Lesser celandine is the nasty one we continue to try and keep under control.

Our time together is not all work. We chat over long coffee breaks after gardening. It's not just the beauty of the garden that keeps us coming back every week but the camaraderie we develop through our work. We welcome anyone interested in giving us a hand.

Call 250-475-4412 for more information.

Positively Environmental

Oak Bay Green Committee's effort to divert plastic waste from the Hartland Landfill continues. The plastics recycling depot operates on the fourth Saturday of each month from 9:00 A.M. until 11:30 A.M. at Carnarvon Park (tennis court area) on Henderson Road.

Soft and hard plastics, foil-lined bags, all forms of Styrofoam, broth, milk and juice containers and electronics are accepted on a donation basis.

For complete lists of recyclable items, depot times and locations, contact Pacific Mobile Depots at their

website pacificmobiledepots.com

For those of you who bring in CLEAN, PRESORTED recyclables, we will be offering a "fast line" for your convenience

A portion of your donations are used to fund Oak Bay Green Committee's other environmental initiatives.

If you have any suggestions for the Oak Bay Green Committee, or wish to find out more about volunteering at the depot, contact Noreen Taylor at atcreamofthecrop@telus.net

Oak Bay Lawn Bowling Club ready for an active winter

The outdoor season has come to a close and the greens put to bed for the winter, but that doesn't mean the 200 OBLCC members become idle or the club houses are empty.

Winter activities are in full swing from the middle of September to the end of April. The club is utilized everyday of the week with bridge (contract/duplicate), cribbage, darts (ladies/mixed), Mah Jong and short mat bowling.

These activities are included in the cost of a full or social membership. The public can partake in an activity by paying a \$5 drop-in fee up to 3 times, if they wish to continue playing the drop-in fees already paid are put towards the cost of a membership.

Club members volunteer to organize and run these winter activities, from setup of card tables and dart boards to arranging a schedule for other volunteers to keep the club houses tidy.

Contact Information

JILL CROFT

Community Association of Oak Bay
Administrative Assistant

jillcroft@telus.net 250-595-6284

MEMBERSHIP: \$10 per year

Published by:

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY

The views expressed in the Oak Bay Connector do not necessarily reflect the views of CAOB.

IF YOU HAVE AN OAK BAY EVENT...

you would like listed in the Oak Bay Connector Calendar please send an email with the subject line "OBC calendar" to jillcroft@telus.net.

Green Corner ✿ Written by Noreen Taylor

Welcome back to the Green Corner. This is the place to share insights, concerns, and any environmental news in Oak Bay.

I'd like to kick off this second issue by responding to the article in our first issue, "Garry Oak Conundrum", written by Kathleen Matthews. Her article inspired me to seek out the particular trees she highlighted. I confess I was immediately overwhelmed. When I really started looking, it seemed there were massive Garry Oaks

everywhere. (It reminded me of why this is called Oak Bay.)

This brought me to the question "If there are Garry Oaks everywhere, what's the big deal about preserving and protecting them?" I then started asking some questions and this is what I found out: these trees are very mature, everything has a life expectancy, saplings have not been encouraged, there are precious few trees to replace the old growth, and this year produced a bumper crop of acorns.

I took a few long walks in the neighborhood, breathed the clean fresh air that these beautiful trees provided for me and tried to picture all of them gone.

It was barren and sad, and time for me to do my part, for myself and future generations.

So this is what I propose. I am inviting all Oak Bay residents to prevent this picture from turning to reality. There are two actions that I know of that we can do easily.

1. Collect all the acorns you can. Drop them in a

bucket of water. Floaters go to compost. Sinkers are viable and can become new trees. Bring the viable ones to Ron Carter, arborist and Oak Bay resident, to his house at 973 Falkland Rd. for potting.

OR 1. Come to the Carnarvon Park recycling depot on Saturday, September 26th from 9 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. to pick up a young sapling to plant for yourself.

I'm using mine to eventually replace the trio in my front yard.

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Kids (and Mums) Love the Taste of Provide Smoothies

The goodness of GREENS plus PROTEIN, FIBER and BERRIES in a great tasting smoothie. It's nice to find something the whole family can enjoy together.

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