

THE Oak Bay Connector

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK ■ CONNECT - COMMUNICATE - COLLABORATE

Block Party Fun

■ Michelle Kirby

Summer is just around the corner, even if our Spring has been more like Winter, and it's time to relax and have some laid back, good times with your neighbours.

If you've never experienced a block or street party before, you might not know what all the fuss is about. Believe me, it's worth the effort. A big part of my childhood memories include our annual block party, where just about every single year, it turned quickly into a massive water fight, with The Block vs. My Dad. He had every trick in the book, including turning off the water to our house, so no one could refill a container, and made block history by managing one-by-one to soak every single person on the block in our backyard pool.

But, water fights aside, why should you have a block or street party this summer?

1. To have fun – no excuse needed to celebrate!

2. To meet your neighbors.

3. To increase the sense of belonging in your neighborhood.

4. To organize an Emergency Preparedness group like Block Watch or what you'll do in case of an earthquake.

5. To make connections within the community. When you know people, you can exchange skills or resources and perhaps organize a book club, baby-sitting co-op, share walking to school duties, or find new friends for your children.

6. To plan a campaign for traffic slowdown, get better lighting, or address other interests.

7. To "use" the street for one day, for example to roller blade, set up a kid's bouncy castle, or to practice bike safety skills.

8. To meet some of the old-time residents in the neighborhood and learn about its history.

9. To have a neighborhood clean-up day, play some good music and barbecue once all the work is done.

10. To start a tradition of getting together at least once a year.

If you would like to have a block party this summer, there's still time to put in your email requests to Oak Bay Council for street closure. If you want the freedom of a street closed to traffic for your party (street hockey, bicycle races, and people in general enjoy a street without cars), then you'll need permission from Council to do it.

All you have to do is send an email to Oak Bay Council at obcouncil@oakbay.ca

indicating the date of the party, times and duration of the street closure that you are requesting.

Once you've figured out a date with your neighbours, have asked and been granted the street

closure from Council, try checking out CAOB's Oak Bay Block Party checklist below, or on our website at www.caob.ca, and get started on your party plan!

The Oak Bay Block Party Check List:
Setting a Date

Email or contact as many of your neighbours as you can, and ask for their input on the date. It's important people are home and not on vacation.

Decide on what time of day you want to

...it's time to relax
and have some laid back,
good times with your
neighbours.



Make it happen with family, food, friends and fun.

host your block party. The time of day will influence the kinds of activities you can do, and what kind of food will be served. Is it a pancake breakfast, appetizer potluck, or a summer evening barbecue?

Once you have selected a date, email obcouncil@oakbay.ca to ask Council's permission to close the street. This can take more than a month, depending on Council's meeting schedule. Be sure to include the date, time, your name, address, and telephone contact information.

Notifying your Neighbours

Make a poster that you can put up around the block, deliver to your neighbours, and send around by email. Be sure to include where, date, time, what to bring, and contact information in case they would like to help with the planning, set up, coordinating of activities, or clean up.

Send your poster to oakbayconnector@gmail.com as well, so we can post it on the Community Association of Oak Bay website - www.CAOB.ca!

Ask neighbours to RSVP so you can

better plan the set up and activities.

Party Planning

- Name tags and a marker.
- Games/Activities for children.
- Games/Activities for adults.
- Include kids and teens in planning and running the games.
- Bring prizes, or make your own fun Trophy.
- Arrange tables, chairs, barbecues, coolers, and ice.
- In case of rain, or extreme sun, arrange to borrow a patio canopy. Thrifty Foods and Coast Capital are two local businesses that loan tent canopies out to community groups.
- Ask everyone to bring something for a potluck meal.

Clean up

- Take down any posters that you may have put up.
- Remove all garbage and recycling bins put out for the party.
- Make sure there's no garbage left in the street.



Hampshire Hens

■ Doug Clarke

Happily residing in the lane along Hampshire Road, nestled in the corner of our yard is our flock of five Rhode Island Red hens, "The Girls" as they are called,

All our research led us to believe chicken keeping would be easy and we've found that

they're almost no effort at all. Their coop was well planned out against predators and built primarily from salvaged materials, congruent with our sustainable vision. We are pleased to report that we've had no issues with pests - which was our biggest concern. The girls themselves don't require

much care. A clean house, clean water, a good supply of food and a daily run in the yard keep them happy. They love attention and being talked to, they coo for a pat and always come when they're called - assuming that there are snacks for them.

We've been composting their waste and spreading it in the garden in anticipation of a

successful harvest.

The 4-5 eggs per day have become daily treasures, which we happily share with friends and neighbours. We welcome anyone for a visit in the yard, we'll let the chickens out and you can spread seed or bring them a snack from your garden. The

kids love them.

There were hurdles, but the work we put into having them was well rewarded with a consistent supply of eggs that top the most expensive in the stores. Keeping the girls isn't for everyone, but anyone can come and visit.

For more pictures and info, please visit:
www.hampshirehens.blogspot.com

www.caob.ca

Come Visit The Tea Room At Willows Beach



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ROSE MANOR
VICTORIA BC

The Mardi Minstrel Choir

✿ *Miriam Thorn, Co-ordinator*

In an Oak Bay home on Wednesday evenings, a choir of 25 keen members of mixed voices practices from a wide repertoire of music – old and new – singing a cappella or accompanied by piano and occasionally flute, drum or other instruments.

This ensemble originated in the same place in 1991 with around a dozen friends who loved to sing. A name was needed eventually and our Tuesday evening choir became “The Mardi Minstrels”.

As the choir grew in numbers, several valued members also wanted to sing in more established choirs who met the same evening so we switched to Wednesday but “The Mercredi Minstrels” wasn’t

popular.

Our first concert (in 1992) was at the Wellesley. One of 12 members, Barbara Chapman accompanied us and remained our patient pianist for many years. Later Jocie Brooks, then Vienna Kappell were our capable accompanists and Vienna worked with us under the Directors we now have.

We are lucky to have Stephen Lee, a lead singer in the choir, who is an enthusiastic recruiter bringing new life into the membership. While he was working at the Ministry of Health we had three doctor members at one point – so handy if we became unhinged in the thrill of song.

The greatest impetus to our musical development



Mardi Minstrel Choir performing at Shannon Oaks.

came in 1997 when Catherine Young (then head of the Conservatory of Music Voice Department) introduced us to Lana Betts, singer, flutist and music teacher. Lana’s husband, David Enns, pianist, jazz musician and teacher became our co-director. David and Lana are both professional musicians and inspiring, enthusiastic leaders who, in every way, help us to aim at higher standards in our ensemble

singing which we love.

We start our season in September, with a break after the festive season, then finish our choir sessions and concerts in April or May. Our performances are in retirement homes or in compatible venues where we have been invited. We staged two public concerts which were greatly appreciated and well attended at Oak Bay’s United Church, Gardiner Hall.

Oak Bay Municipality Appoints Alternative Transportation Sub-Committee

✿ Submitted by Lesley Ewing

Earlier this year, the Municipality solicited volunteers to form the Alternative Transportation Sub-Committee of the Community Initiatives Committee.

We’re pleased to hear that a selection process was completed in March and the following citizens have been selected to serve on the sub-committee:

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------|----------|
| Corey Burger | Neil Jackson | Gary Law |
| Victor Lotto | Steven Toleikis | |

Councillor John Herbert serves as Chair, and other council members include Hazel Braithwaite, Nils Jensen, and Mayor Chris Causton.

There are no formal terms of reference for the Community Initiatives Committee or the proposed sub-committee. However, the group will be tasked with focusing on alternative transportation priorities and proposed improvements for Oak Bay Village, including issues such as sidewalk widening, parking, potential cycling lanes and beautification, and making recommendations to Oak Bay Municipal Council in this regard.

Sub-committee members Burger, Jackson, Law, Lotto and Toleikis are invited to introduce themselves to the citizens of Oak Bay by contacting the Community Association of Oak Bay, or the Oak Bay Connector. We look forward to recommendations and a defined implementation schedule that will help keep our community members safe and mobile, as well as generate improvements to link with those made by adjacent municipalities.



“Bee” Connected

why not bees: they are a very worthy subject. You must have read somewhere, something about bee losses, disappearances and threatened harvests and the recently

lifted quarantine on bee imports on Vancouver Island. So, bees are topical.

Before I share my helpful-never-before-divulged tips on the excellent hobby of Bee Gazing, I need to motivate you. Bees are not only topical, they are very important. Without bees (and a few like minded cousins), there is NO FOOD. It is that simple. Also, with no bees there are no pretty flowers (like the ones you want to set seed and multiply).

Fact: there are way fewer honeybees in Oak Bay this year. Have you noticed? I did not see a single honeybee in my garden until the Victoria Day long weekend and then only a paltry few. This is different from other years. Vancouver Island as a whole has suffered about a 90% loss of honeybees from last year.

I have a small orchard here

and feel so grateful for the Blue Orchard Mason Bee which shouldered the entire burden of pollinating my apples and pears in this 2010 year.

The commercial honeybee is going through a period of decline; the reasons are many and complex. Us Bee Gazers need to notice and cherish the many and varied native bees in our gardens. Remember, the honeybees of beehives and honey pots are NOT native to our shores: they were introduced with the European settlers.

North America is home to about 4000 species of native bee, ranging in size from the tiny sweat bees about a quarter inch long to the large eastern carpenter bee at over an inch in length. Your garden is likely visited by many of the wild or native bees found in the Pacific Northwest, especially if you have made your garden “bee friendly” with bee forage and bee habitat. Of course, if you are gardenless, you can always Bee Gaze in one of Oak Bay’s wilder

spots such as Uplands, or The Native Plant Garden.

Bumblebees are fun to watch and easier to see than some of the diminutive species. We have about 18 bumblebee species around here. As a group, they work long hours and are prodigious pollinators. They deserve our admiration and respect. Do not let them worry you: their minds are on their job and you are not in any danger of getting stung watching

a bumblebee unless you sit on it. Tips for gazing: Listen for a hum and go to the area of the loudest hum you can hear. Position yourself near the hum and get comfortable.

Keep your eyes on one part of your bush or planting of flowers. In other words, wait for the bees to come to you, don’t try running all over following bees. It won’t work. Bees fly very fast. They process visual images at more than twice the rate humans do, so they move on before we can clearly register what kind of stripes they have. If you stay still “your” bee

will come back and give you a second chance!

Hold your breath. I have read that bumblebees in particular, dislike the stink of human breath and this will make them move on even more quickly.

Move in close, at eye level. I generally try for a range of between 4-10 inches. Stay still and stay focused. Don’t answer your cell phone

Keep a notebook and use a sketch pad. This will make you aware of the huge variety of bees. I often use a schematic picture of a bee and fill in the colours (like bird watchers use).

Amateur documentation of the presence or absence of wild bee species is valuable information. Contact the Xerces Society for more information. *B. Griffin, The Humble Bumblebee* includes an excellent section on bumblebee identification for laymen.

Remember to help those bees along, grow plants that are old fashioned “singles”, plant or encourage native species, have a sequence of bloom, refrain from using pesticides or herbicides, provide a source of water, and leave messy areas as potential nest sites. Don’t clean these areas up in the fall because a queen bumblebee may be hibernating there. Tidiness is not a virtue when you garden with wildlife in mind.

Kick back and enjoy your garden this summer and get connected with bees.

“Without bees”
(and a few like minded cousins),
there is NO FOOD.
It is that simple.”

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY ✿ JUNE 2010

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FREE WORKSHOPS

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Learn how to be self-sufficient for up to 7 days.
6:45 (Sign-in) -9 pm

NEXT WORKSHOP! SEPTEMBER 23, 2010

Windsor Park Pavilion, 2451 Windsor
Upcoming Workshops in November, January, March & May
Details on www.oakbayemergency.com

PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION FOR SENIORS: KEEPING YOU SAFE!

WED, OCT 20TH - 10-NOON
Monterey Recreation Centre
Learn steps to keep you safe.
Register at front desk 250 370 7300

FIRE EXTINGUISHMENT TRAINING

Learn about how to properly use a Fire Extinguisher.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 OR NOVEMBER 27 - 10-NOON
Oak Bay Fire Hall, 1703 Monterey Ave.

PROGRAM CONTACTS:

Dave Cockle, Deputy Chief & Deputy Emergency Coordinator • 250 592 9121 (Fire Hall) or coordinator@oakbayemergency.com

Sonja Ruthe, Community Emergency Preparedness Coordinator • 250 592 9121 (Fire Hall) or sruthe@oakbayemergency.com

Philip Lin, Emergency Communications Coordinator 250 592 9121 (Fire Hall) or dsta@islandnet.com



Pre-register at 250 592 9121 or coordinator@oakbayemergency.com or check the Oak Bay Emergency Program website for upcoming meetings, training and workshops at: www.oakbayemergency.com

UPLANDS PARK GARRY OAK MEADOWS

Friends of Uplands Park launch celebration

❧ Kathleen Matthews

The Garry Oak Meadows in Uplands Park bloomed with a Camas, Spring Gold and Buttercup splendor, on Sunday April 25th, as 200 people gathered to help launch the new Friends of Uplands Park.

Nature walk botanist Matt Fairbairns, and naturalist Margaret Lidkea, guided tours at Cattle Point and along the trails and meadows in the park, sharing their knowledge of the Garry Oak ecosystem and rare, endangered species.

Artists Kristi Bridgeman, Verna Linney, Avis Rasmussen, Jane Ramsay, members of the Victoria Sketch Club and the Vancouver Island Illustrators' Society inspired us by creating new works of art in the park.

Performers Jim Moffat and Mike Sampson, Sian Elen, Carolyn Knight, and, The Bald Eagles (with former Oak Bay Parks arborist Ron Carter), entertained us with wonderful songs and music.

Brian Saunders shared his humorous poetry. Selected poetry, inspired by Uplands Park, were on display.

Children, transformed by face painters Heather Lidkea and Arwyn Moore, had fun following a treasure map to find treasure boxes filled with Kathleen Matthews' line drawings of meadow flowers to be coloured at the Colouring Station.

Displays by the Girl Guides, GOERT, and, the Community Association of Oak Bay (featuring an Uplands Park Community Mapping activity), along with tents donated by Thrifty's, created a festive and active atmosphere.

Helen Johnson, Barb and Sandy Currie, helping out at the Information Table, reported that 60 people signed up to be Friends of Uplands Park. The first Friends meeting will be held in September.

Priorities for the Friends will be to support the Oak Bay Parks Department's focus on preserving the park's rare and fragile species

and ecosystems, to celebrate the local creativity inspired by Uplands Park, and, to develop educational materials, and host experiences, to honour the many facets of this treasured space in our community.

If you are interested in joining the Friends of Uplands Park, please send an email to mlidkea@shaw.ca or kathleenmatt@gmail.com.

This special community event was supported by the Oak Bay Parks Department (who, along with Victoria Orienteering, provided wonderful maps for our displays), the Girl Guides of Oak Bay, and, the Community Association of Oak Bay. Thanks to all participants and to the park.



Above: Helen Johnson, Margaret Lidkea and Barb Currie, helping out at the information table, reported that 60 people signed up to be Friends of Uplands Park.



Taking a break from face painting on a warm April Sunday afternoon.

Seniors' Mitigation and Preparedness Project

❧ Sonja Ruthe, Community Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

Seventeen volunteers, most of them seniors, joined the Emergency Preparedness Outreach Team to offer preparedness education to nearly 250 seniors throughout the community. The Seniors' Mitigation and Preparedness Project, funded through a provincial grant, offered over 20 information sessions and workshops at seniors residences/complexes, 55+ condominiums as well

as through the Monterey Recreation Centre. Participants learned how to take action to reduce their vulnerability and to increase their preparedness in the event of an earthquake, fire or other disaster.

The Project management team also worked with the administration, staff and volunteers of the various sites to assess their strengths and resources and identify any gaps that could be supported by the Emergency Operations Centre after a disaster.

The Project has enabled the District of Oak Bay to develop its Geographic Information System (GIS) emergency mapping capability, including a social vulnerability map to identify where the highest density of seniors and other potentially vulnerable groups reside in relation to hazards, response routes and accessibility to emergency social services. Most importantly, it has lead to further collaborative emergency planning opportunities with our community partners.

The support and commitment of staff and managers has been greatly appreciated and many have become champions of emergency preparedness. Although it is the Emergency Program's role to educate and inform the residents of Oak Bay on steps they need to take to become better prepared, when that message is repeated and supported from a variety of sources, it has a better chance of being 'heard' and to promote action.

We want to thank the residents, staff and volunteers of Shannon Oaks, Marrion Village, Elgin Gardens, Carlton House, Oak Bay Lodge, Kiwanis

Manor, St. Clare Villa, Marquee Court, Newport Towers, Royal Newport and Monterey Recreation Centre for their continued support on this project. Thank You!

**For more information please contact
Sonja Ruthe or Dave Cockle, Oak Bay Fire Hall
250- 592-9121**

THE BOWKER CREEK BRUSH-UP ART SHOW & SALE

WHERE: Bowker Creek: Along the Creek from Oak Bay High School to Hampshire Rd.
WHEN: Sunday, August 8 - 11am to 430pm
ADMISSION: FREE!!!
CONTACT: jmmccorrey@shaw.ca

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY ❧ JUNE 2010

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OAK BAY VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteers recognized in record numbers

You could feel the energy and enthusiasm in the air as you walked through the door. On May 27, Oak Bay Volunteer Services held its Annual General Meeting in the Sports View Lounge, Oak Bay Recreation Centre. A record 59 volunteers and one dog were acknowledged for 660 years of cumulative service. Pins were given for five years (30), ten years (11), fifteen years (4) and twenty years (6) of service. There were also personal awards for twenty-five (5) and thirty (3) years of service. Our stalwart volunteers give so much to the residents of Oak Bay.

Most notable were the three people who have volunteered for 30 years. "Pen" Brown has done a myriad of jobs over the years including minor repairs, drives, visits and publicity displays. He currently helps by

putting inserts into the water bills. Frances Petley-Jones was an office volunteer, compiled statistics, did visits, helped at most events including publicity displays and more recently has been doing New Client Visits. Bill Vandermale is a driver and in the past also did minor repairs.

Someone once asked, "Do they ever leave?" Yes, they do. Sometimes volunteers become clients when health issues force them to give up their duties, others stop volunteering because of family or work reasons, and others move away. Regardless of the reason, OBVS recognizes and values the time each and every volunteer has contributed to our organization. And, we are always glad to have new volunteers join us. Thank you Oak Bay Volunteers!



Ah, the smell of fresh cut grass and fertilizer in the morning means... the greens are ready for lawn bowling

The hard work and dedication of our greens crew over the winter months keep the bowling green in tip-top shape for the onslaught of eager bowlers to get out and bowl.

Our open house in April was well attended by newcomers who tried their hand at this family sport (ages 10+). Many joined the club, had coaching from our experts and have even played in a few local

tournaments already.

Opening Day was the first gathering of the year for the club with Mayor Chris Causton and MLA Ida Chong rolling the first jack and playing a game (I won't tell who won).

New members are welcome throughout the bowling season as well as the off season when we enjoy indoor activities such as darts, cribbage, bridge, Mah Jong and short mat bowling.

During the summer months the club runs closed club tournaments and we host Bowls South Island games where lawn bowlers from Cowichan - Victoria can enter to win trophies and prize money. We also have visits from other local clubs for a friendly competitive game; businesses/organizations that come for a social time and school PE classes that have lawn bowling as part of their curriculum.

For more information about Oak Bay Volunteers call 250-595-1034, email: obvs@oakbayvolunteers.bc.ca or visit 101 - 2167 Oak Bay Avenue (Lower level of Municipal Hall)

If you are interested in learning more about lawn bowling please visit our website at www.bowlsoakbay.ca or drop by the club in Carnarvon Park, 2190 Harlow Drive



- Retaining Wall Bylaw
- Water Park Painting by Rotarians
- CAOB Membership Growing
- Walk from Estevan Village to Willow Way
- Library Bike Racks



- Graffiti in OB Lanes
- Narrow Sidewalks

Contact Information

JILL CROFT
Community Association of Oak Bay
Administrator, Editor
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.

THE Oak Bay Connector

CONNECT - COMMUNICATE - COLLABORATE ❖ Jill Croft, Editor

The Community Association of Oak Bay is making a difference!

Thanks to Mayor Causton and Council for the Community Development Grant and support of our Active Transportation and Oak Bay High Redevelopment forums.

Please renew your membership or consider joining your Community Association.

Community Association of Oak Bay Membership

Our Association membership is open to individuals who live, work, have a business, attend an educational institution or own property in Oak Bay. Membership is \$10 - sign up and be a member of your Community Association.

Name: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Cheques made payable to Community Association of Oak Bay and mailed to:
2655 Dewdney Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8R 3M3

www.caob.ca

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF OAK BAY ❖ JUNE 2010

Oak Bay Volunteer Services

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

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Looking forward to seeing you this summer at our many vibrant community events!

Ida Chong

MLA for Oak Bay-Gordon Head

Phone: 250 472-8528

Web: www.idachongmla.bc.ca