

MARCH 2009

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# Valley News

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BLINKINSOP VALLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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The Blenkinsop Valley  
Community Association

## Annual General Meeting

Tuesday March 31, 2009

At 7:00 p.m.

Cordova Bay School Gym

5238 Cordova Bay Road

Guest Speaker

Stacie Loutit

Bronze Medalist Sailing

2008 Beijing Paralympics

**Join The BVCA !**

**Mail to:**

**Blenkinsop Valley Community**

**Association**

**PO Box 30063, 3989 Quadra St.**

**Victoria BC, V8X 5E1**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed (\$10.00/person/yr):

Skills or desire to contribute?

Comments?

## Outerbridge Park Now Open

You might have missed it, but one of Saanich's hidden gems, Outerbridge Park, is now open. Formerly the Shangri-la Nature Sanctuary, the 3.8 hectare (9.3 acres) park at 1211 Royal Oak Drive has recently undergone a major transformation. Saanich Parks has done a considerable amount of work in the park, cleaning up some of the overgrown gardens, and building new wheelchair-accessible gravel pathways and bridges around the beautiful ponds and creek. Mrs. Joanne Outerbridge initially acquired the land that was the core of the Shangri-la Nature Sanctuary in the 1980's and added to it over the years by incorporating the back lots of a number of adjacent residences. According to Saanich Parks Planning and Design Manager, Gerald Fleming, Saanich acquired the park in 2005 and did some initial clean-up then, but did not develop it until recently. Mrs. Outerbridge was a professional horticulturalist and the variety of trees, shrubs and perennial plants reflect that. The newly developed area is only a portion of the park, and most of the land is still a bird sanctuary, so visitors should remain on the gravel pathway and keep control of their pets to avoid disturbing nesting birds. Part of Saanich's strategy of building healthy neighbourhoods, the park is accessible only by foot and bicycle. There is no vehicle parking available. Saanich Parks plans to install a sign identifying the park.



**Outerbridge Park**  
1211 Royal Oak Drive

The Horticulture Center of the Pacific is proposing to undertake the management of Outerbridge Park on behalf of the Municipality of Saanich. The BVCA has been asked to meet with the Horticulture Center and we expect they will make a request for volunteers to help restore and maintain the garden. If this would be of interest to you, please let us know.

## BVCA Directors 2008

Sharon Stewart	Annette Barclay
Dean Purych	David Charlebois
Charlotte Koettl	John Lawler
Anita Mayr	Rhys Smallwood
Dale Leeuw	

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### Executive

Secretary/Treasurer: Dawn Loucks

Vice-President: Nathalie Chambers

President: Barry Loucks

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***BLENKINSOP VALLEY***

***COMMUNITY***

***ASSOCIATION***

PO Box 30063, 3989 Quadra St.,

Victoria BC, V8X 5E1

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bvcanews.com

### Municipal Affairs

The BVCA directors have dealt with several issues since the October edition of Valley News. Jointly, with the Cordova Bay Association, we hosted an all-candidates meeting for the municipal candidates. The meeting was well attended and it received praise from the candidates for its organization. At that meeting, Mayor Leonard raised the idea of designating Blenkinsop Road as a heritage road. A group of BVCA representatives later met with the mayor to explore what this would mean. Traffic calming, increased pedestrian safety and heritage promotion were the three themes which the mayor associated with the initiative to designate heritage status for Blenkinsop.

### Zambia Mission Originates in BV

Steve Mann attended a directors' meeting to discuss the work his family does in Zambia. He and his wife, Joan, initially started a project in Zambia to help orphaned children and this led to the creation of a charitable organization called the Zambia Mission Fund (<http://www.zambiamissionfundcanada.org/>). Four orphanages and six schools have been built and 150 students are sponsored representing the poorest of the poor. Care is taken to involve the local people in the creation of the schools so that they actively participate in the construction. The mission provides construction material like concrete and re-bar that the local people can't afford. The students do not have parents and otherwise would be unable to afford schooling. The education they receive as a result of the Zambia Mission Fund can be life changing. Fifteen containers of supplies have been sent from the Victoria area to the Zambia project and include such donations as clothing, construction supplies and used school desks. Care is taken not to undermine the local trades people, so an attempt is made to give clothing only to those who have no purchasing power. The Zambia Mission Fund has, in effect, no overhead costs as these are donated. Thus, all other donations are applied entirely to on-site services. Steve has made 16 trips to Zambia in the last 20 years to monitor the work. The area in which they provide help is only two hours away from Victoria Falls. Most of the residents in the area of their project, however, have never been to the falls.

### Traffic and Safety

- The BVCA has communicated with Saanich about bicycle traffic safety on Blenkinsop where Centennial Trail crosses at Mt. Douglas X Rd. The municipality plans to improve signage. Bicycles cross with little warning for motorists so often that the BVCA expressed concern and asked if measures to require cyclists to dismount before crossing would be feasible.

- The directors responded to a survey and proposal to close Churchill Dr. to vehicles until 11AM to reserve the road for pedestrians. Churchill Dr. is the road to the summit of Mt. Douglas. The directors related their concern about the survey method and the impact the closure might have on some residents and tourists.

- A BVCA representative attended a Cordova Bay Association meeting to discuss the possibility of Pat Bay Highway improvements which might increase the traffic through Cordova Bay Rd. and potentially Blenkinsop Rd.

### Seven Oaks

- The BVCA donated \$300.00 to Seven Oaks to help purchase exercise equipment for the Seven Oaks residents. A small fitness room has been organized with nine exercise machines. Staff are pleasantly surprised with the degree of usage which is taking place.

- The BVCA has held preliminary talks with Seven Oaks about the possibility of creating a vegetable garden tended by the residents, hopefully with some therapeutic benefits. The directors felt that the BVCA might be able to help with funding, expertise and volunteerism. Seven Oaks has responded enthusiastically to the proposal.

I hope many of you will be able to attend our AGM on March 31 at 7PM at the Cordova Bay Elementary School. We are looking forward, in particular, to the presentation by our guest speaker, Stacie Louttit, bronze medalist in sailing at the Beijing Paralympics.

Barry Loucks, BVCA President