
Valley News

BLENKINSOP VALLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

BVCA Annual General Meeting

7:00PM

**Tuesday March 29
Cordova Bay Elementary**

**Guest Speakers:
Bill Dancer**

**Victoria Natural History
Society:**

**The Importance of the
Blenkinsop Valley to Birds**

Nathalie Chambers

The Land Conservancy:

**Native Pollinator Program to
Address Pollinator Decline**

Blenkinsop Valley Volunteer

Ed Polinsky, who is a founding member of the BVCA, gave a presentation at a directors' meeting about a project he worked on with a group named "For the Love of Africa".

Ed, along with 14 other volunteers, travelled to Tanzania to help build a new Galilaya Orphan Centre. The timing of this project was very critical as the old centre fell down during the last rainy season. The children won over the hearts of all of the volunteers and the children are what made the trip seem so very worthwhile. (For more: www.fortheloveofafrica.org)

Pedestrian Crosswalk

A new pedestrian activated light is to be installed for the pedestrian crosswalk at Braefoot Rd and Mackenzie Ave.

Saanich South MLA

Lana Popham met with the BVCA directors. Topics of discussion included the farm tax, preserving agricultural land and the use of propane cannons in the Blenkinsop Valley. Lana mentioned that the Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) is not sufficiently funded to fulfill its dual mandate of protecting farm land and promoting farming. There is support to increase this funding.

Covenants

The Broadmead Area Residents' Association (BARA) has been asked by some residents to take over management of covenants on some properties bordering Broadmead and located in an area jointly represented by BARA and the BVCA. The BVCA directors' did not object to BARA taking on this role.

Tap By Tap Energy and Water Saving Fixture Exchange

Saanich residents can get a FREE energy and water saving kit, including a high efficiency showerhead and kitchen and bathroom faucet aerators (\$35 retail value), just by turning in their old showerheads.

To Participate:

Remove your old showerhead and exchange it for a Tap By Tap energy and water saving kit at the Main Reception Desk at the Saanich Municipal Hall. Please also bring your utility account number for your hot water heating source (eg: gas or electricity) and proof of residence in Saanich. For more information, visit TapByTap.ca

Rezoning/Subdivision

The BVCA expressed concern to the municipality of Central Saanich about plans to rezone non-arable farm land for housing.

The BVCA sent a letter to Saanich expressing concern about an application to remove land from the ALR for a housing development on Mt. Douglas X Rd.

In response to a request for input from the municipality, the BVCA also expressed concern about a proposal to subdivide a large parcel of land on Blenkinsop for a four lot subdivision.

The BVCA has received expressions of concern that development in the Blenkinsop Valley increases the water runoff to the flood plain and threatens some crops.

BC Transit

A BVCA representative attended a transit meeting which was seeking community input on the new regional transit plan. A suggestion was left with the BC Transit representatives to provide transit service along Blenkinsop Road.

Wildfires

A representative of the Saanich fire department attended a BVCA directors' meeting to provide information about the potential for wildfires in our rural areas. There are approximately 1200 wildfires in BC each summer. About half are caused by lightning and the other half by people. The number caused by people has been increasing. The following suggestions were made to reduce the risk of fire to our homes:

- keep roof and gutters clear of debris
- close in open eaves
- screen vent openings
- assess property for combustibles within 30 metres of the home
- use non-combustible building materials on the house exterior when possible
- avoid branches overhanging the home
- provide access to attics and crawl spaces so homeowners can check for spot fires following fire passage.
- avoid storing firewood adjacent to the home
- contact the utility company to prune vegetation away from overhead power lines

BVCA Directors 2010

Nathalie Chambers Dale Leeuw

Annette Barclay Alex Hoole

Executive

Secretary: Dawn Loucks

Treasurer: Earl Hannan

Vice-President: John Lawler

President: Barry Loucks

BLENKINSOP VALLEY

COMMUNITY

ASSOCIATION

PO Box 30063, 3989 Quadra St.,

Victoria BC, V8X 5E1

250-477-8539

bvcanews.com

2010 Annual General Meeting

At the last AGM, Nathalie Chambers introduced a documentary video which she had prepared in which she interviews several long-time Blenkinsop Valley residents. Many memories of past years and neighbours were told. We also had a presentation from Bill Turner, who is the Executive Director of The Land Conservancy, about heritage properties and the rewards that one can obtain by looking into the history of properties and the people who have lived on them. He provided some interesting insights into the history of Elk and Beaver lakes and what is now public property adjoining the lakes.

At the last AGM there was a mixed reaction to the proposal to designate Blenkinsop Rd. as a Heritage road and the majority of those present preferred that it did not receive heritage designation. As a result of this, the BVCA directors recommended to Saanich that, as an alternative, consideration be given to amending the local area plan to promote such things as historical information, improved pedestrian safety and the evaluation of traffic calming ideas.

Saanich Policing

Deputy Chief Bob Downie and Police Board member Jacqueline Beltgens met with the BVCA directors to discuss a police initiative to seek community input on identifying police priorities for the next five years.

They also provided some statistics relating to Saanich policing. The Saanich Police receive approximately 30,000 calls annually and about 7000 relate to crime. The Block Watch program in Saanich is the second largest in the province. Neighbourhoods with Block Watch are three times less likely to have crime. Saanich has 50 reserve officers who volunteered 6000 hours in 2009. The crime rate in Saanich is 52 per 1000 population with a provincial average of 76. The Saanich policing costs are \$205 per citizen with a provincial average of \$249.

Wildlife Control

1) The BVCA has participated in several meetings pertaining to bird control and the use of propane cannons in the Blenkinsop Valley. These meetings have been with neighbours of the involved farm, the farm owners, the municipality, other community associations and one meeting hosted by the BVCA which brought all of these groups plus others together. Out of this latter meeting came suggestions pertaining to “good neighbour” policies which the farm owners have indicated are part of their plan. The BVCA also offered to contribute up to \$500.00 towards a report being commissioned by the Beckwith Farm looking for alternatives to the use of propane cannons.

The BVCA realizes that most residents would welcome being free from the propane cannon noise. The BVCA directors’ feel, however, that it is important to preserve farming in the Blenkinsop Valley. The BVCA position has been to support farming and accepted farming practices as determined by provincial guidelines. The BVCA also wishes to encourage the development and practice of “good neighbour” farming practices in relation to the control of bird predation.

2) In response to a request for input from the municipality, the BVCA sent a letter to the Mayor and Council expressing support for a program to control the deer population in our municipality.

3) The BVCA also sent a letter to the municipality supporting proposed measures to control the feral rabbit population which include:

- Prohibiting the feeding of rabbits in parks or public places.
- Prohibiting the sale or adoption of rabbits that have not been spayed or neutered.
- Prohibiting uncontained feral or pet rabbits from occurring on private property.
- Requiring property owners to clean up problem breeding sites.