



Mayor's Report

August, 2015



A large crowd was in attendance at the Cowichan Lake Arena as we celebrated the induction of the two newest members to the Heritage Sports Wall - Marg Radcliffe and Randy Irving. Marg has won hundreds of medals, both nationally and internationally, competing at track and field events. She also holds Canadian records in two different age categories. Randy was selected for his successful hockey career where he won a Memorial Cup with the New Westminster Bruins of the Western Hockey League and led the 1978-79 Canadian Juniors in scoring at the World Championships. He would later have a long professional career before settling down in North Carolina. Congratulations to both Marg and Randy for their most deserving recognition.

Cowichan Lake was close to having a world record established there during the August long weekend. Susan Simmons and Alex Cape might have come up so short in their attempt for the longest, continuous, unassisted, solo, lake swim on record but both of these ladies should be very proud of their accomplishment. They began their swim at 4 pm on the Friday evening of July 31, 2015 with the goal of breaking the 97 kilometre swim record by attempting to complete 105 kilometres. Susan, who has Multiple Sclerosis unfortunately became ill and had to withdraw from her swim after 24 hours and 48 kilometres later. After approximately 50 hours and 50 minutes of continuous swimming Alex having completed 94 kilometres had to come out of the water for health and safety reasons. She was just 3 kilometres shy of the record. In the meantime, Susan who was feeling better was back in the water swimming alongside Alex to lend her support by her presence. It was very emotional for everyone involved as the decision was made for Alex to come out of the water with the record so close in sight. This was a very monumental swim and it was exciting that they chose Cowichan Lake for their attempt at a record. Great job by all the volunteers who helped and provided encouragement during this memorable weekend. Go to the website, www.swimmerslastlonger.com, to see the incredible distance Alex and Susan swam. Wow, one remarkable swim to remember.

Former Lady of the Lake Princess Mary Batyi worked extremely hard in preparing for the British Columbia Ambassador program and her work certainly paid off as she was crowned BC Ambassador on August 15, 2015. Along with the ambassador title, Mary won the public speaking award, the knowledge award, and the community presentation award. We are proud to have Mary as another local girl representing our community with this prestigious title. Congratulations Mary, what a great accomplishment.

Wild fires have devastated many regions of our province and the one at Lizard Lake certainly demonstrates how vulnerable we in the Cowichan Valley are to this type of event. The damage and destruction caused by wildfires can be repaired and remedied over time but the potential for injuries and health issues caused by the poor air quality can be devastating. A large number of these fires were caused by humans and it is imperative that people take every precaution to ensure they are not responsible for igniting such fires. It is dangerous and difficult work for those protecting us from these fires and everyone involved deserves our heartfelt thanks and recognition.

A huge thank you goes out to the Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship and all the volunteers for their donation of time and effort for the annual river clean-up. It is reassuring to know how passionate so many people are about protecting our most precious resource. Thank you to everyone involved for your continued efforts in keeping our river clean.

The work being done by Stalker Excavating at our sewage treatment plant is now approximately 60% complete. The creation of a third cell is a necessary step for ensuring future sewage treatment capacity and for meeting Ministry of Environment Permit requirements and specifically its Water Quality Objectives for the Cowichan River. Those objectives include targets for bacteriological parameters, nutrients, dissolved oxygen, suspended residues and other objectives that include the protection of our heritage river from phosphorous and other contaminants. Our thanks to the neighbours of the site for accepting the occasional inconvenience associated with the work being accomplished.

The two latest pedestrian activated crosswalks have been installed one near Darnell road and other by Ts'uubaa-asatx square. Pedestrians can now manually activate the lights at four important crossings along South Shore and Cowichan Lake Roads. The financial contributions for these lights from ICBC and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure are much appreciated. Improving pedestrian safety has been greatly enhanced thanks to their continued support.

It was encouraging to see the large turnout for the information session at the new proposed Lake Town Ranch. For those who were unable to attend, here is an excerpt from the information flyer provided at the site: "Welcome to Lake Town Ranch. We would like to introduce our land use proposal for the creation of a natural amphitheater at the centre of an outdoor recreation and festival site. Welcoming visitors to experience a diversity of musical, cultural and community events, Lake Town Ranch will set the stage for economic growth and the establishment of a destination campground and world-class venue within the Cowichan Valley."

Saturday September 5, 2015 promises to be an exciting day with the Totem Pole raising ceremony at Ts'uubaa-asatx square. This cultural event is a first for our community and a big crowd is anticipated. Many people have followed the progression of the pole's carving and the ceremony to raise it will be an interesting experience. Thank you so much to the Ts'uubaa-asatx First Nation for this spectacular gift to our community.

Ross Forrest, Mayor