



Mayor's Report *May, 2015*



It is so encouraging to see the growth we are experiencing in our community. I'm not just referring to the number of people moving here; although that is certainly occurring. I am referring to another kind of growth and not just to the increased involvement and active participation by our citizens in activities that we have normally been involved in but to the initiation of new opportunities for our citizens to enjoy. Where we have enjoyed Trunk Treasures over many summer week-ends organized by the Cowichan Lake Chamber of Commerce, we now have the addition of the Farmers' Market which is held at the Ts'uubaa-asatx Square courtesy of the Lake Cowichan Downtown Renewal Society. The Farmers' Market is held weekly from the May long week-end until the first week-end of September.

Another great addition to our Town has been the Cowichan Lake Community Garden located at Centennial Park. It's been really interesting to see how many of our enthusiastic gardeners have been committed to this initiative. Well done.

I was unable to attend the Age Friendly workshop that was held at the Seniors Centre on Saturday, May 23, 2015 because of work commitments. I understand the event was a resounding success with a very large turnout of event participants. Having so many people address the many challenges and opportunities of ageing in Lake Cowichan is wonderful indeed. I understand the gathering dealt with a variety of topics ranging from such things as housing needs, mobility challenges, community support and health services for the ageing population to access challenges to outdoor spaces and buildings and the emphasis on respect and social inclusion of seniors certainly bodes well for our citizens.

We have recently had the Boy Scouts organization re-established in our community. Some committed ladies are trying to resurrect the Kinnettes (the female version of Kinsmen Club); these are all good for our community. These are examples of growth that are important to a community. Incremental steps like these might seem trivial to some, but we are seeing a snowball effect that is extremely gratifying. We are seeing more and more opportunities for everyone to become engaged in their community. If you recognize a group or organization that might interest you; inquire, because volunteer organizations are always looking for more members. Get involved and get active. Our entire community benefits from your involvement.

Our local Heritage Society organized a wonderful Heritage days week-end with many events for all to enjoy. Good job with your continued success on getting the community involved.

Time is now drawing closer for the Lake Days' event. It is another opportunity to come out and enjoy the company of your friends and neighbours in our town. It is always a great time to socialize. Good luck to the new Lake Days' committee and thanks in advance to this committee for all the preparatory work on organizing for the upcoming event.

Thank you to everyone who came out to help us celebrate the official opening of Ts'uubaa-asatx Town Square. We are thankful for the financial commitment from Island Coastal Economic Trust, the great ideas from the community focus group, and all those who worked to bring this amenity to fruition. The totem pole that the Ts'uubaa-asatx First Nation is donating to the Town Square is going to be a beautiful addition to the small roundabout in the square. Ron Hamilton the artist who is carving the pole has designed a piece that will add tremendously to this location and the community. We can't overlook the public who are stopping by to follow the progress Ron is making on the totem pole and to listen to his interpretation of this pole.

The recent algae bloom in our lake, with the subsequent odour and colour affecting the river, has made it abundantly clear how precious this resource is to all of us. The concerns recently raised just demonstrate how aware people are becoming of the importance of water to each and every one of us. Protection of this resource is and should be a top priority and greater emphasis needs to be placed on the protection of this valuable asset.

Summertime is always an exciting time in our community and this year is starting off better than ever.

Ross Forrest, Mayor