

# COMMUNITY FOCUS

JANUARY 2008



NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR CENTRAL SAANICH

## NEW YEARS' GREETINGS FROM COUNCIL

*2008 is off to a busy start as we continue with a number of projects in the District. We are pleased with the progress we've made on a number of fronts, and one of those projects is looking at our municipal buildings and structures. Our facilities review project has shown that we must plan now to ensure the future safety and longevity of the buildings that house our police, fire and municipal services.*

*Energy efficiency is an important issue for everyone right now, and municipalities can certainly do their part. Our Community Energy Plan is a step in the right direction and we tell you more about that in this issue as well. We have signed on to the Province's BC Climate Action Charter, which aims to reduce emission standards, and we are pleased to join this provincial effort.*

*We also believe in the importance of planning for emergencies and being ready when and if needed. Fire Chief Ron French, who is also our Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, led staff in a dry run of a major event this past fall so that we can increase our state of preparedness and know how to deal with an emergency situation.*

*Our sincere thanks to everyone who attended our last Town Hall meeting on November 28, 2007. This has become a welcome District tradition, and a way to connect in an informal way with residents and business owners.*

*Very best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous 2008!*

## DISTRICT PREPARING ITS OWN COMMUNITY ENERGY PLAN

The Community Energy Plan, which will be completed this spring, is starting to take shape, thanks to community ideas and input.

Two government grants enabled the District to hire The Sheltair Group from Vancouver to advise it on how to cut greenhouse gases and become more energy efficient. Following two community workshops in December, residents and business owners were invited to provide input through the District website as well.

Last year (2007), the District signed on to the BC Climate Action Charter and this initiative is part of the District's commitment to fighting global warming. As a signatory to the charter, Central Saanich has pledged to be carbon neutral by 2012.

The Community Energy Plan will focus on how to be more energy efficient and reduce greenhouse emissions throughout the District. One of the focuses will be on District-owned buildings and its fleet, including police, fire, and public works. The District has been using a bio-diesel fuel mix in its diesel vehicles since July 1, 2007.

The Capital Regional District also has a Community Energy Plan and, according to CRD statistics, Central Saanich emitted 62,255 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2004 (excluding provincial highways). A total of 49% of emissions come from buildings.

Future action will be determined as the Community Energy Plan takes place, and may include projects such as planting more trees.

## SECONDARY SUITE BYLAW SIMPLIFIED

Central Saanich is planning to ease the rules for secondary suites by dropping the requirement for a minimum lot size.

The bylaw originally permitted secondary suites on lots of at least 780 sq. m. That was changed to 660 sq. m. for those lots zoned to allow for suites subject to certain parameters being met and a building permit being issued. Council is now considering a bylaw to drop all lot size restrictions in all but a few zones.

The District has moved in small steps. The latest move removes one hurdle towards

providing more affordable accommodation in the District.

The Building Department notes that the steady trickle of applications – 49 since the bylaw change – has been accompanied by continued enforcement of illegal suites.

Anyone with a suite without an approved building permit is subject to having the violation recorded on their property title, which could cause difficulties when it comes time to sell or re-mortgage the property.

## A NEW FIRE HALL PRIORITY IN FACILITIES PLANNING

Council has endorsed taking a closer look at a plan that could make a new main fire hall a priority. The Hall would potentially be co-located with a Police facility on Keating Cross Road (near the Works Yard).

The facilities review project is focusing on the buildings that house the fire and emergency services, police, public works and the municipal hall. Current facilities are being assessed and a range of development and funding options are being examined. Enhancing energy efficiency, safety and seismic readiness are all important considerations.

The municipal hall, fire and police services are located in one building in a structure that was built in 1964. The public works yard and buildings have been built in a piecemeal fashion starting in 1971. Buildings in both locations are deteriorating in a number of areas and have operational and performance deficiencies. Lots more to follow.

## TAX RELIEF FOR HOMEOWNERS

If you live in your own home in Central Saanich, chances are you are eligible for some relief on your property taxes.

The rules have changed recently so that homeowners who turn 55 any time in the tax year may be eligible for property tax deferral. There also are some changes to the Home Owner Grant Program.

Both plans are designed to reduce the burden of property taxes for eligible homeowners.

In some cases, explained Rosalyn Tanner, the District's Director of Financial Services, people of relatively low income, who perhaps bought their home 30 years ago, are facing a high property tax burden because the assessed value of their homes has soared.

There are two forms of assistance, available only to owners living in their homes: the Home Owner Grant and the Property Tax Deferral.

Under the Home Owner Grant, all persons aged under 65 who live in their own homes may apply to the District for a \$570 grant towards school taxes. Those aged 65 and over, veterans or people with disabilities are eligible for an additional \$845.

If your home is assessed at more than \$950,000, the grant is reduced by \$10 for every \$1,000 of assessment over the limit. But if you have a low income and are disabled or a senior, you may apply to the Province for the full grant under the Low-Income Grant Supplement Program.

The Tax Deferral Program allows anyone aged 55 and over to apply for a simple interest loan, at 2% below prime, to cover their property taxes. No payments are made until the house is sold or the homeowner dies. To be eligible you must live in the home and have at least 25% equity. There are a few other exceptions to assist those with disabilities. Call 1-800-663-7867 for more information on both programs. Homeowners have all of 2008 to apply for relief from their 2007 taxes. They must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants.

## WINTER HAPPENS ARE YOU READY?

*O, the weather can be quite frightful*

*But life is more delightful*

*If you're ready for winter's blast.*

*Here are things you need to do – fast!*

We may live in Canada's most benign climate but winter can still pack a punch, disrupting plans and even causing death and destruction. That's why governments at all levels urge residents to be winter wary.

"We can expect to see bad weather, we can expect to see temperatures below zero, and we can expect it to be very rainy, to snow again and to have windy events again," summed up Anne McCarthy, local outreach officer for Environment Canada.

She said the Peninsula is particularly prone to highly moist snow, which turns greasy and becomes very slippery under car tires. We also get sudden freezing in the morning, when the sky clears, which makes for sparkly streets and hazardous driving and walking. "It catches you by surprise." For up-to-date forecasts, you can call Environment Canada at 363-6717.

Central Saanich has a timely update on its website about winter weather preparedness.

From remembering to have enough prescription medication on hand, to tips for keeping warm when the furnace goes out, the site offers dozens of helpful hints.

Residents are urged to keep an eye out for neighbours who may be at risk and to have a supply of basic essentials at home, including a flashlight and battery powered radio in case of power failures.

Full details are available through [www.centrialsaanich.ca](http://www.centrialsaanich.ca): type the word 'winter' into the search box and follow the link to winter weather preparedness. More information is available by calling 544-4224.

## VISIBLE NUMBERS SAVE LIVES!

Is the street number posted on your home and address clearly visible from the street? If not, you could be putting lives at risk. In the case of an emergency, police and fire services need to see your address quickly and easily. Don't delay – take a look today!

## FIRE VENTURES: A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL YOUTH

The Central Saanich Fire Department operates the Fire Venture Youth Program for local youth aged 14 to 19 and is only one of three such programs in BC. Participants meet twice a month and learn about and participate in emergency response procedures. To find out more, call 544-4225 or 544-4240.

# MEET THE PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES DEPARTMENT

*This is part of a series of articles on District departments. Community Focus will introduce you to each department and describe what's on the horizon.*

Chances are that if you own a home or business in Central Saanich, or visit one of our many beautiful parks, you have used the services offered by this department. Planning & Building Services is responsible for a number of key areas, including:

- **Building Inspections**
- **Bylaw Enforcement**
- **Community Services**
- **Planning**

Staff also look at the “big picture” through their work on the Official Community Plan, which is currently being updated. They also oversee municipal land use bylaws, process development and subdivision applications, regulate building construction and issue Business Licences.

This department is also responsible for the use and future development of park space and these projects are either completed or well underway:

- **Chatterton Park**  
– Phase I Development
- **Newman Farm Park Master Plan**
- **Restoration of the West Saanich School (Scout/Guide Hall)**

One of the upcoming priorities for the department is continuing to integrate sustainability into all planning projects so that environmental protection, climate change and energy efficiency are taken into consideration when taking on planning projects.

Hope Burns, the Director of the Department, notes that making the best use of our available land, and protecting the agricultural and rural character of the District, are important issues when looking at how planning takes place.

The Brentwood Bay Revitalization Project was a major initiative undertaken

by both the Planning and Engineering Departments. This effort is now beginning to bear fruit as the revitalization is attracting interest in redevelopment along West Saanich Road.

Legalizing secondary suites is another project that took place over the last two years. Public consultation was a key component of this work.

A major responsibility for this busy department as well is helping the public with inquiries on everything from how to apply for a development application to understanding municipal bylaws and enjoying park uses.

For more information, go to the District web site at [www.centrialsaanich.ca](http://www.centrialsaanich.ca) or call:

- **Planning Department 544-4209**
- **Building Department 544-4217**
- **Bylaw Enforcement 544-4237**
- **Community Services 544-4218**

## SCHOOL OFFICER AIMS TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

For Corp. Dave Glancie, life is all about choices. He sees his new job as Community Services and School Liaison Officer as helping young people make good choices...about driving, parties, drinking, drugs, bullying--the myriad of issues that face youth today.

He plans to do it through being a familiar presence in the five schools in Central Saanich. “I want to build a relationship with the youth. A good relationship builds trust. Trust is important when it comes to youth, especially teens”, he explained.

But he admits, “I can’t be an expert in every area,” so, with the cooperation of school staff, he invites in the experts. One organization staged

a vehicle roll-over demonstration for Stelly’s Secondary School students, showing exactly what happens when you don’t fasten your seatbelt. A theatrical group from Vancouver was brought in to put on a presentation about the sexual exploitation of youth and making teens aware of the dangers associated with the sex trade.

Other problems concerning Corp. Glancie are Internet safety, vandalism and bullying. “If somebody is wronged don’t stand by and watch it,” is Corp. Glancie’s belief. He urges students to seek help. “It’s all about being a good community person in and out of school.”

The other part of his job, as the Community

Services officer, sees him driving Car 54 – the restored 1954 Chevrolet police car – to community events. He is also working on revising the Neighborhood Watch program, re-opening the Brentwood Community Police office, and presenting the Mature Drivers Program. Corp. Glancie is also the liaison officer for the Peninsula Crossroads Community Justice Program, the restorative justice program that brings victim and offender together in order to reach a resolution to an offence that’s been committed.

Corp. Glancie has been with Central Saanich Police Service for past 17 years and another 15 years with the RCMP. He took over this job in July 2007, after the retirement of Corp. Len Nolan.



# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Looking for people with heart

Organizers of the 10th annual Hearts of the Community Volunteer Awards are seeking nominations of individuals and groups who volunteer to serve seniors, children and families, and the overall community on the Saanich Peninsula. There also are awards for youth aged 14 to 19 and for lifetime service. Visit [www.beaconcs.ca](http://www.beaconcs.ca) for forms and information. Nominations close Feb. 5, and all nominees will be honored at a special event on Feb. 22.

## Bottled water banned

In an environmentally friendly move, Council has banned the purchase of bottled water for District events and facilities. Emergency personnel on the job are exempted from the ban.



## Council Meetings Schedule

### Regular Council Meetings:

7 p.m. on the first and third Monday of the month.

### Regular Committee Meetings:

7 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of the month. The public is welcome to attend Council and Committee Meetings. An agenda package is available on the Friday before each meeting.

## Museum Operating Hours

### Central Saanich Volunteer Firefighters Historical Museum

Open for tours the last Saturday of every month from 1 to 4 p.m. 1903 Mount Newton X Rd., Saanichton.

### Don't forget your best friend's license

Dog license renewal fees are due Jan. 31. A penalty will be applied to overdue accounts. Call 544-4206 for more information.

### Prepay your taxes and earn interest

Taxpayers can earn interest on property tax prepayments made before March 31. Call 544-4206 for more information.

## Stay on track with pre-authorized payments

Save time with convenient pre-authorized payment programs for both property taxes and utility bill payments. Call 544-4206 for more information.

## It's time to get flushed

Water mains and hydrants will be flushed January through March. Temporary discoloration of water and/or low water pressure may occur and is not a health hazard. If you notice murky water from your taps, fill your laundry or bathtub and re-use the water for a non-drinking purpose. The water department will provide advance notice of flushing on request to anyone with special requirements for water clarity. Flushing will not take place during freezing temperatures. Call 544-4224 ext. 221 for more information.

## Easter eggstravaganza

Take your youngsters to the annual Easter Egg Hunt organized by the Central Saanich Lions Club at noon on Easter Sunday, March 23, at Centennial Park.



## DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH

1903 Mount Newton Cross Road  
Saanichton, BC V8M 2A9  
Tel: 652-4444 Fax: 652-0135  
Email: [municipalhall@csaanich.ca](mailto:municipalhall@csaanich.ca) Website: [www.centralsaanich.ca](http://www.centralsaanich.ca)

## GET IN TOUCH WITH MAYOR & COUNCIL

We'd like to hear from you if you have ideas, opinions or thoughts to share. Letters addressed to Mayor Jack Mar and Council are included in the Council meeting agenda. You may also speak to your letter at the meeting. Send your letter by 12 noon on the Wednesday before a Council meeting. Drop off your letter to the Municipal Hall, fax it to 652-0135 or e-mail it to: [municipalhall@csaanich.ca](mailto:municipalhall@csaanich.ca)

## CALL OR SEND US AN E-MAIL

You're also welcome to call or e-mail Councillors directly regarding District issues. See the adjacent column for phone numbers or send an email to: [firstname.lastname@csaanich.ca](mailto:firstname.lastname@csaanich.ca) Please note Councillor Mason can be reached at [clanmason@shaw.ca](mailto:clanmason@shaw.ca) and Councillor King at [kingzeb@shaw.ca](mailto:kingzeb@shaw.ca)

## CRD ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICE

The CRD provides animal control and pound-keeping services for the District. For more information, call: CRD Animal Control: 478-0624 or CRD Animal Shelter: 658-5745

## BRENTWOOD BAY – MILL BAY FERRY SCHEDULE

Enjoy the most beautiful shortcut on Vancouver Island! Crossing Time: 25 minutes. Fares are payable in cash or travellers' cheques only. Commuter tickets are available.

Discount tickets (30% savings)  
available at Thrifty Foods

Leave Brentwood Bay		Leave Mill Bay	
* 7:30 am	2:25 pm	* 8:05 am	3:00 pm
8:40 am	3:35 pm	9:15 am	4:10 pm
9:50 am	4:45 pm	10:25 am	5:20 pm
11:00 am	5:55 pm	11:35 am	6:30 pm
1:15 pm		1:50 pm	

\* DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS

## COUNCIL

Mayor Jack Mar	Chair of Municipal Council & Central Saanich Police Board	652-8449
<b>Councillors</b>		
Alastair Bryson	Public Works & Transportation Committee	544-0668
John Garrison	Administration & Finance Committee	544-1033
Christopher Graham	Water & Waste Management Committee	896-0451
Zeb King	Community & Protective Services Committee	652-4642
<i>(Community chats held Thursdays at 7 p.m. at the Fresh Cup Café, 1931 Mt. Newton Cross Rd. For more info, contact <a href="mailto:kingzeb@shaw.ca">kingzeb@shaw.ca</a>)</i>		
Susan Mason	Parks & Facilities Committee	652-0783
Robert Thompson	Planning & Development Committee	652-4691
Visit <a href="http://www.centralsaanich.ca">www.centralsaanich.ca</a> for additional committee, commission and board positions.		

## MUNICIPAL STAFF

Gary C. Nason	Administrator	544-4201
Sara C. Beaman	Municipal Clerk	544-4202
Rosalyn Tanner	Director of Financial Services	544-4207
Nirmal Bhattacharya	Municipal Engineer	544-4210
Hope V. Burns	Director of Planning and Building Services	544-4209
Bonnie McKenzie	Manager of Community Services	544-4218
Ron French	Fire Chief	544-4227
Paul Hames	Chief Constable	652-4441
Brian Shields	Public Works Coordinator	544-4224 ext. 222

## OTHER MUNICIPAL CONTACTS

General Information/Mayor's Office	652-4444
Building Inspections/Bylaw Enforcement	544-4217
Property Taxes/Utility Billing	544-4206
Accounts Payable	544-4205
Park Use Reservation	544-4218
Municipal Yard/Public Works - 1703 Keating Cross Road	
Public Services & Parks Maintenance	544-4224
After Hours Emergency	652-4441