



HORNBY ISLAND RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Providing services and a voice for our island community.

President's Annual Report

Reporting Period March 1, 2008 – Feb 28, 2009

I have now completed three years as President of HIRRA and in all that time the current executive and administrator have not changed. This has resulted in a very close working relationship where we are able to challenge each other's opinions and go "out on a limb" with ideas without feeling nervous about it. In short, we work very well together and have enjoyed our responsibilities as your representatives of HIRRA. This term we will say goodbye to our wonderful Treasurer, Paul Clemens, who was our financial guru for five years. We wish you the best Paul and thank you for all you have done.

This was a very busy year for both the executive and all committees. Each service area had significant highlights. The Hall Committee managed a new heat pump, fire door, refinished wood floor and Bens Café; a new trail to New Horizons built by the Trails Committee; new water tank placements and a new recruitment policy for the fire department; a thirty year anniversary and lots of fundraising at the depot; tons of programming by the recreation committee; workshops sponsored by the Regional Parks committee; hugely successful Fall Fair organizing by that committee; plans to expand the cemetery grounds by the cemetery stewards, and never to be taken for granted – is all the effort put in by the volunteer committee and staff of the Privy Council. And all that is just scratching the surface of what goes on out there in HIRRA land. We would like to thank all of you for helping to make this community a wonderful place to live.

The first quarter of 2008 was highlighted by a major push to complete our new HIRRA park and new site of the Farmers Market. The grand-opening of the Copse was on March 23 when HIRRA sponsored a great Easter egg hunt and hid many dozens of beautifully hand-crafted eggs, and the Easter Bunny handed out 100 pounds of chocolates. As the summer progressed the Copse proved itself to be a success as

Hornby's market venue – receiving rave reviews from visitors and a double thumb's up from market vendors. So many people did so much to make this happen – and we thank you all – including the anonymous person who donated \$400 to pay for the bike stand at the Copse. And a very special thank you to Dale Chase for his project management expertise and contagious enthusiasm.

There was a lot of time spent in HIRRA talking about Big Tribune issues associated with its annual summer trashing. An ad hoc committee was formed to study this situation and make recommendations. Mary McKenzie, Kevin Woods and their team did a lot of work and made presentations and recommendations. In discussing funding with the Regional District to implement some of these recommendations, it became clear that no money would be provided because this whole area of garbage collection in public areas falls outside any current agreement signed between HIRRA and the CVRD. We will pursue this further when we renegotiate the new agreement in December 2009. Thank you to the members of this Tribune Committee for all your hard work and passion on this matter.

The depot had a year of challenges. A broken water heater; too much vandalism - busted windows, doors, graffiti, regular free store trashing including a small fire set on its floor, and the list goes on. The winter snow load has taken its toll damaging many of the structures and destroying the only water cistern. We thank the staff and volunteers for everything you do up there and for keeping your spirits strong, and we see the next year or two as an exciting time of planning and building that will result in both new and upgraded facilities for the recycling depot.

In September HIRRA sponsored a community road-side clean-up. About 20 people participated and 27 bags of garbage and recyclables were taken to the depot. We need to decide whether or not to do this again in 2009.

In October HIRRA co-sponsored a public forum where the government treaty land negotiators came in to tell us about the negotiation process with the Komock's First Nations that includes crown land on Hornby. This session was attended by about 120 people and was first rate in information sharing.

A significant accomplishment in 2008 was securing a new lease for the 10 acres of Crown land that HIRRA stewards. The new 30-year lease began on November 14, 2008. The only new language in the new lease was initiated by HIRRA which requested that the leased land usage be expanded to include "health care and community social services". This addition will provide additional options to consider when deciding how to best utilize the remainder of the unused leased land in the future.

The new 30-year lease extension provided the security required by the Hornby-Denman Community Health Care Society to go ahead with their plans to expand their services at the current site by adding a new facility. Hornby Island is excited about this initiative. In December-January all of the required applications were sent into the regulatory bodies to seek their approval of the expansion.

2009 will be an equally fun year, with fire hall planning, recycling depot facility planning, management of beach access areas, the future use of the Savoie building and negotiating a new 5-year service contract with the CVRD.

I would like to close this report with a special thanks to all of you - who regularly attend these HIRRA meetings and contribute your ideas and support. Thank you all.

Ron Sitter
President, HIRRA