

James-Alexander Neighbourhood Newsletter

February/March 2008

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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The James-Alexander Newsletter is published bimonthly. If you would like to contribute an article about the James-Alexander Community please contact Veronica Scott: 733-2441 or verscott@telus.net

DID YOU KNOW?

John Fons was a farmer in our community in the 1950's. He owned the whole block between Chesterfield, Alexander, Howard and Dingwall streets. He had a farm market and grew root crops for sale on the land where M'akola Housing now stands. Mr. Fons didn't like the neighbourhood kids bothering him while he worked. If a child threw a dirt ball at him while he was on his tractor, he would quickly catch them and put them in his greenhouse. He called the greenhouse his jail and left children there to think about their crimes.

Mr. Fons helped several people in the neighbourhood with his tractor. He also worked for Jack Long at the Forestry Nursery, which is now the Chesterfield Sportsplex. Some say that Mr. Fons lived a reclusive life at the corner of Lakes and Beverly without power or water. He left town around 1960, but no-one knew where he went. A Mr. Alex Rasmussen Fons died in Port Alberni around the time our Mr. Fons left town (there were no other Fons's in BC at that time). It would be interesting to know if John Fons grew the hazel nut trees on his property that now line Howard Street.

Genny Boden
Community Resident

NAIG COMES TO THE JAMES ALEXANDER COMMUNITIES – AND WE'RE EXCITED!

By now we've all heard about the upcoming North American Indigenous Games (NAIG). It's estimated that there will be 10,000 extra folks here in the valley in August.

When I heard about the event, I must admit I felt quite apprehensive about the impact on our neighbourhood. I live right across the street from Alexander and Quamichan schools and right around the corner from the Cowichan Sportsplex on Chesterfield Street. I wondered if I'd feel like I was in the middle of a siege.

Thanya Al-Saadoon and I met with Derek Paton, Operations Manager, NAIG, last week to find out more about what will actually take place. When Derek told us that he had worked on the Olympics, Pan Am, Commonwealth, Canada and Arctic Games and shared information about the level of organization and planning, I stopped worrying. I went from being nervous about the event to being excited about it and wondering how I could be involved.

Athletes will be housed in community schools around the Valley and bused to the Cowichan Centre for meals and from there to their various events. A fleet of 40 school buses will transport them. I came to the conclusion that during the Games, I can expect the same level of traffic flow that I am used to on school day. I was also reassured that these young athletes will be extremely well supervised. In fact, after they leave their dorms in the morning, they will not be allowed back until late afternoon. There is an eleven o'clock curfew and a zero tolerance policy regarding, alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

At the Sportsplex there will be two or three days of track and field events and softball games will be held each day at three fields. Basketball games will be held at Quamichan School gym. All these events are free to watch, as is everything that will happen at the Games.

As well as the sporting events, there will be a full program of cultural activities and entertainment at the Cultural Village that will be located at the QUW'UTSUN' Cultural Centre on Cowichan Way. Everything is free and open to the public. I'm looking forward to welcoming the athletes and spending as much time as I can enjoying the events and entertainment.

Laurie Williams,
Beverly Street



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2008™**
THE JOURNEY OF
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LE PARCOURS
D'UNE GÉNÉRATION™

THANYA AL-SAADOON IS BACK!

I am back at work. I've been away for health reasons for the past few months, but now I am back at work and ready to dive into the James Alexander community work, alongside the Neighbourhood Resident Working Group. So, for anyone with concerns, issues or just the need to reconnect, I can be reached at Safer Futures, 748-7000 extension 229.



Newsletter sponsored by:

Municipality of North Cowichan: www.northcowichan.bc.ca

Safer Futures: www.saferfutures.org

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The Government of Canada's National Crime Prevention Centre is a partner in this initiative.



FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP PROVIDES EXCELLENT 'FOOD FOR THOUGHT'

Amy Rienzo, Cowichan Green Community Project Coordinator, reports that a Cowichan food security workshop held on February 23, in Duncan, was extremely successful. Fifty-two people from throughout the region turned up to hear about the importance of growing and supporting the production of local food. The half-day workshop focused on getting the whole family involved in home grown food and finding ways to make farming financially viable. There was lots of good food for thought and "everyone had a great time," said Amy. A highlight of the half-day workshop was a delicious lunch provided courtesy of Cowichan Community Kitchens. Participants enjoyed several salads and soups as well as homemade bread provided by True Grain.

To keep up the momentum from the workshop, the Cowichan Green Community and the Food Security Steering Committee will be compiling information for a document to be released at the end of March. Information will be of use to local governments as well as the general public. For more information, please call Amy at 748-8506 or email cgc@island.net

Bravo!

Greek Mediterranean Cuisine

Bravo! is opening in mid- March in the old Barnacles location and we look forward to serving you!

We will feature Greek, Italian, Pasta, Pizza, and much, much more. Something to please everyone. We will provide you with quality food cooked with heart and welcoming service in a relaxed and festive atmosphere.

Ciao, Bravo!



DIGGER PINE TREE LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME!

About five years ago, several trees were removed to make way for a parking lot at the Chesterfield Sportsplex (along the Chesterfield boundary). We grew this tree, a Digger Pine, from the seed of one of the parent trees. The cones of a mature Digger Pine are huge, about 1 foot long and 6 inches wide.

The common name of the *Pinus Sadiniana Douglas* refers to the Digger Indians who dug up roots for food and harvested quantities of the large seeds. It grows naturally in North to South California. Genny is holding a couple of the cones from a mature tree (see picture above). This is where we got the seeds to plant it.

We are looking for a new home for the tree, which is now 6 feet tall. It would be nice to plant it somewhere to remind us of its predecessors. If you have any ideas, please contact me at nrboden@shaw.ca.

**Norm Boden
Community Resident**

NEIGHBOURHOOD TAGGING

You may have seen paint marks on fences, poles, etc., on or around your property. Graffiti is a serious issue because it sends the signal that nobody cares – and we do care about our neighbourhoods! As well as being a crime, graffiti gives the wrong impression that our area is unsafe. Here's what you can do if you see graffiti - please remove it and then call the police at 748-5522 or email warmlandcops@shaw.ca. If you can, take a picture as well. If you see graffiti in a public place, please call North Cowichan Parks & Recreation (746-3100). They will try to get someone out in 48 hours to remove it.

You may also want to join Community Policing and learn about programs such as Block Watch, Citizens on Patrol and Home Security. For more information, please contact Carol-Ann Roles, Manager Community Policing at 701-9146, email warmlandcops@shaw.ca or visit the community policing office at #3 – 149 Canada Avenue.

LOOK FOR SAFER FUTURES ONLINE!

Surf to www.saferfutures.org, click on Neighbourhood, and browse the information about your community. You can even read current and back issues of the newsletter by clicking on Community Publications.



BLOCK WATCH NEWS: In an effort to try and make our community safer, some members of the James Alexander Neighbourhood Working Group would like to try and implement a neighbourhood Block Watch Program. This to give you a 'heads up' that your neighbours will be canvassing the area to ask for your participation. If you would like to join the Block Watch Program you will be required to attend an information meeting where the details will be discussed. As an added bonus, some home owner insurance policies offer a discount for people who are involved in the Block Watch Program. For more information, please call either Trina at 746-8935 or Kim at 748-2027.

Trina Craven and Kim Burt, Community Residents

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