

Newsletter Number 9
Summer 2010

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President:
Tom Cameron
Vice-President:
Colin Masson
Secretary:
Jenni Gehlbach
Treasurer:
John Peirce
Directors:
David Boehm
Rufus Churcher
Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley
Barbara Hague
Kerry Marcus
Bob Smith
Steve Struthers
Randy Young
Bob Weenk
Duane West
Newsletter
Barb Hague
Judy Preston
Penelope Bahr

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Tom Cameron

Although hesitant to stand for president, I am honoured to follow the strong leadership shown by both Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley and Kerry Marcus. In addition to their GaLTT responsibilities they juggled busy careers and major engagement in our community. I couldn't and wouldn't be president if I didn't know that the continuing, and new, board members are highly qualified, experienced and willing to take on tasks as they arise.

Some of GaLTT's current activities:

2010-2020 Management Plan for 707 community Park

The draft management plan and proposed infrastructure for the park seems to be generally supported by the community. On Monday, July 26, the plan will be considered by the Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee for Electoral Area B

(POSAC-B), which will make recommendations for implementation to the RDN. The board and members of GaLTT have been active through out the public input process and GaLTT hopes to partner with the RDN as they move into the implementation phase. For the present at least, I remain as chairperson for POSAC-B as well as president of GaLTT. I think I can wear one hat at a time but we will see how it goes.

Active transportation for Gabriola?

The district of Cedar has recently adopted the 2009 Community Active Transportation Plan Electoral Area "A" that provides for the integration of parks, water access and trails, as well as for safer pedestrian and cycling routes. This plan concerns how to retrofit a community to minimize vehicle trips and at the same time encourage healthy living by supporting walking and cycling as alternatives to getting around. At your leisure take a look at this web page from the RDN, <http://www.rdn.bc.ca/cms.asp?wplD=1749> The beauty of this plan is that it was guided by input from professionals at the RDN, from the RDN Director, and from a planning engineer at Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The work was funded by a grant from the Built Environment and Active Transportation program, a joint initiative of the BC Recreation and Parks Association and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities. I was impressed by the striking similarities and needs between Cedar and Gabriola, and think this might be a way to move forward with some of GaLTT's initiatives. Updating of the Local Trust OCP for Gabriola. Members and the board of GaLTT are active participants in the public process for updating Gabriola's OCP. In general our contributions to this process follow directly from our constitution especially with respect to: forging community connectivity, working towards a sustainable community, fostering conservation activities, protecting lands through park dedication or conservation easements, and other protective mechanisms.

Trails committee

This committee is where the heavy lifting occurs. Based on monitoring and requests, the

committee plans and executes work bees every two weeks related to existing trails, road right-of-ways, as well as broom and other weed eradication programs. The committee plans for new trail projects such as the pending Tunnel Trail. The 'boss' of this committee is Randy Young. Other board members that are active on the trail gang are Bob Smith, Bob Weenk, David Boehm, Duane West, Rufus Churcher and Steve Struthers. Of course members are more than welcome to volunteer and there are exciting new trails in the works.

Drumbeg to Descanso by 2010

Well, you know this is the motto on the T-shirt but are you ready for Drumbeg to Descanso towards the end of September? John Gambrell is busy planning for a walk, run, cycle, and ride event to go from one end of the island to the other in order to celebrate and illustrate GaLTT's success in establishing "trail" routes for Gabriola. Much more to follow on this celebration where you can do a little or you can do the whole shebang!

**Village food Market
Community card fundraising
Program**

At the July board meeting it was decided that GaLTT would register with the new Village Food Market (VFM) Community Card Fundraising Program. Village Food Market has put in place a unique initiative to help community groups raise project funds. My guess is the program is designed to "organize" the very generous contributions VFM makes to most every group that comes knocking at their door. Further, I surmise that the program will allow VFM to track their donations and push organization members to put their money where their mouths are—so to speak! Doing a calculation, if 100 GaLTT members each put \$200 onto a VFM Community Card, then with the 5% donation by VFM, we would raise \$1000 for a specific project within a couple of months. Not HUGE but very significant. Before GaLTT registers we need to finalize a specific project with budget and timeline. The board is presently developing an application for the Village Food Market Program. Stay tuned; we should kick-off this fundraising campaign in the early fall, with program implementation early in 2011.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Gabriola Lands and Trails Trust held their Annual General Meeting on February 23, 2010 and the following board members stepped down from their positions at that time. We owe them a huge vote of thanks for their selfless contributions to the running of GaLTT.

Thanks to:

Richard Welsh for his ongoing management of the books and membership lists, and for his continued efforts in this area as special adjunct to the board.

Carol Boyce for double-teaming as the secretary and the director of the Membership and Fundraising Committee, and also for her continuing supply of cards featuring scenes of Gabriola, the proceeds of which are directed to GaLTT.

John Orr for his rain or shine commitment to creating and maintaining Gabriola's trails.

Christine Purfield for her organizational, writing and computer skills, which assisted many publications.

We also owe **Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley** a grand vote of thanks for her tireless work as President of GaLTT for the past two years. Dyan's efforts on behalf of GaLTT and her enthusiasm for our goals will be hard to replace. We look forward to her continued input on the board in the role of Past President.

Tom Cameron was unanimously elected to take over the presidency; we are indebted to his commitment to our organization and his willingness to provide a guiding force into the next phase of our development.

The following people were unanimously elected to the board:

Rufus Churcher: Rufus has been retired on Gabriola for a number of years. He was previously a University of Toronto Zoology Professor, a researcher for the Royal Ontario Museum, the past chair of the Silva Bay Shipyard School, and a past Board member of the Gabriola Museum and Historical Society. He is a practising rock geologist, a vertebrate paleontologist, and a forester. Rufus and his wife are keen walkers of the beautiful trails in their neighborhood and Rufus manages the broom removal on his entire street.

Peter Llewellyn: Peter has lived on Gabriola since 2007. A professional photographer since the early 1980's, Peter has been

redirecting his expertise to event management, specifically through media and photographic services. He has been working with VANOC since November 2009 and was the Olympic photo manager for Whistler's nordic venue for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Peter has sat on various boards including the International Alliance for Equestrian Journalists (1995-2006) and the Blazing Paddles Dragonboat Society in the Comox Valley (2003-2006). Peter takes a special interest in Gabriola's trails having walked many of them with his dogs. He has also been involved in some of GaLTT's trail clearing events.

Bob Weenk: Bob and his wife Judy moved to Gabriola five years ago having had a career in the classrooms and gymnasiums of Saskatchewan. He has been involved with the Palette People, has instructed the Gabriola Squadron CPS courses and has umpired Softball for kids and the local Slo-Pitch League. An avid gardener and a once-and-future golfer, Bob has recently enjoyed the Sunday GaLTT work bees, pulling broom and building boardwalks in the rain. Bob and Judy, (and sometimes their two dogs) take every opportunity to walk the trails of the island, particularly in the 707 acre park.

David Boehm: David has been a Gabriola resident for more than 30 years. He has a BSc in Zoology from UBC and has been a long-time activist in all matters environmental. He was involved in SPEC (Society Promoting Environmental Conservation), the Sierra Club and Greenpeace in B.C. He has worked as a tree planter and contractor working mainly on the south coast (including personally planting about ten thousand trees on Gabriola Island). As an involved Gabriolan, David has served on The Gabriola APC for 6 years (2 years as chair), on the Boards of the Heartlands Conservancy, the Gabriola Conservancy, the Gabriola Groundwater Management Society and for last 6 years he has served as the Treasurer of the B. C. Environmental Network. He is also a member of the TOXICS CAUCUS of the Canadian Environmental Network and he is a participant in the current federal Chemical Management Plan.



LOCAL ARTIST DOUG HARRISON, CFA - donates painting to GaLTT

Gabriola artist Doug Harrison has generously donated one of his original watercolours from his collection of "Working West Coast" art to the Gabriola Lands and Trails Trust. Doug Harrison grew up Alberni and has lived at various locations on the British Columbia coast; for the last ten years he has resided on the Gabriola Island waterfront. His watercolour paintings portray this coast's fishing, towing, and forest industries, and focus on fishing boats, tugboats and tows, and historical forestry scenes. The fishing boat and tugboat paintings are based on an extensive collection of personal photographs and observations, while the forestry paintings combine childhood memories, career experiences, and historical research.

Mr. Harrison is a member of the Canadian Federation of Artists; his paintings, many of which were commissioned works, are now in homes and offices across our country and worldwide. He was a selected Marine Artist for the 2005 Victoria Tall Ships event; several of his paintings of the participating ships were exhibited at the follow-up art show at the Maritime Museum in Victoria. He also was a participant in the 2008 Christie's Auction fundraiser for the Maritime Museum.

BUY A TICKET, OWN A PAINTING!!!

As a fundraising project to raise funds to support the building and maintaining of parks and trails GaLTT is selling raffle tickets for the chance to win this beautiful painting. The tickets are \$3.00 each, or 2 for \$5.00 and we encourage you to view the painting at the Gabriola Library during the week and at the Farmer's market on Saturdays. This is a wonderful opportunity to own some original and local art and to support an active and enterprising organization. Please buy a ticket from any one of the board members or at the market; consider buying several and using them as gifts! The draw will be held at the market on September 11, at 11:00 am.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT

By Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley

As past president of GaLTT, I have the opportunity to reflect a bit on the past few years and, more importantly, to consider the years ahead.

Each president brings their own imprint to the board. My passion while president (besides the obvious eradication of Scotch broom!) was, and continues to be, taking every opportunity to advocate for parks and trails, and influence decisions affecting them by working closely with government bodies. It seems to be fashionable these days to deride government and complain about bureaucracy, but my experience has been exceptionally positive. GaLTT has been encouraged to participate in local government decision-making processes and our opinions, while not always followed, have been received with interest and respect. Thanks to the willingness of the RDN, Islands Trust, and Islands Trust Fund elected officials and staff to work with us, we have made great progress on projects like the Elder Cedar boardwalks and the proposed Tunnel Trail.

To describe this evolving relationship, I invoke the words of Gilles Paquet, Professor Emeritus, School of Management and Senior Research Fellow, Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa: “The state ... must become involved as a broker, as an animateur, and as a partner in participatory planning, if the requisite amount of organizational learning, co-evolution, and cooperation with economy and society is to materialize. This involvement will pave the way to a participation- society (where freedom and efficacy come from the fact that the individual has a recognized voice on matters of substance and procedure in the public realm, and more importantly an obligation to participate in the definition of such matters). ... The citizen will become a co-producer of governance”. Being a leader in this context provides you with lots of opportunities to learn about leadership. To paraphrase: “Leadership ain’t what it used to be”—The emerging attributes of twenty-first century leadership suggest a new paradigm where formal authority exists but is not always required to lead; followers are as important as leaders and are, in many instances, the drivers of change. The ability to facilitate, expose and explore conflict and forge consensus is essential.

While it is a lot of work to be the president of a volunteer organization, it is work that is

shared by many. As a relatively youthful organization we have emerged unscathed by some of the growing pains experienced by many new organizations. I think this is in part because we are all sincerely committed to one vision, and while we may disagree, from time to time, on the way to get there, we all agree on where we are going. GaLTT members are welcome to attend the board meetings which occur the second Tuesday of every month (usually at the WI Hall), but if you are looking for conflict and drama you will likely be disappointed: we are generally civil and collegial. That is not to say that being a GaLTT board member is not stressful; our biggest challenge is that there is more to do than we can reasonably hope to accomplish. My thanks to you, our follower-leaders, and to my colleagues on the board for helping me learn new lessons about leadership.

CONSERVATION COVENANTS & GaLTT

By Steve Struthers

GaLTT has recently received formal government authorization to be a conservation covenant holder. This simple statement raises (at least) two questions: What is a covenant, and what is a covenant holder? A conservation covenant is an agreement entered into between a landowner and a covenant holder; the purpose of which document is to conserve perpetually in their current state certain lands and/or buildings for environmental or historic reasons. A typical conservation covenant is restrictive in nature—that is, it prevents the landowner from doing certain things with the land. For example, the terms of the covenant may prohibit the owner from removing or altering a historic building, or may not allow the owner to cut down trees, alter or dam a water-course, remove plants, and so on.

A conservation covenant “runs with the land.” This means that the covenant document is registered on the title to the property and becomes a permanent attachment to the title. If the property changes hands the covenant remains in force.

Some owners choose to enter into a conservation covenant agreement simply because they want to preserve forever a property or portion of property that has unique ecological or historic features. Other owners may find there is a tax benefit in entering into such an agreement. An example of this kind of agreement is one under the Natural Areas Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP); a program operated by the Islands Trust Fund. More information on NAPTEP, and how to qualify, can

be obtained from the Islands Trust office.

The fact that a landowner has entered into a covenant agreement to preserve a wetland or forested area on his/her property does not make that property accessible to the public. Of course, an owner may agree to allow access but, equally, the covenant may allow the owner to prohibit or restrict access. The other party to a conservation covenant, the covenant holder (and in some cases there may be more than one covenant holder in a covenant agreement, in which case the covenant holders are identified as coholders) is involved initially in negotiating with a willing landowner the terms of the conservation covenant. After agreement has been reached and the document registered against the title to the property, the covenant holder’s major responsibility is to inspect the property at least once per year to ensure that no breaches of the agreement have occurred. If the covenant states that no trees are to be cut, no soil or gravel removed, no grazing of livestock permitted on the property, the covenant holder’s inspection must determine if the owner has complied with these restrictive provisions.

Should it be determined that a breach has occurred an attempt will be made to resolve the issue through the dispute resolution mechanism which is characteristically found in the covenant document. The covenant normally provides for substantial fines or damages to be paid in the event of a breach. If an owner refuses to pay a penalty called for under the conservation covenant, the covenant holder has the option of taking the matter to court. In sum, the covenant holder’s role is to make sure the terms of the covenant are carried out.

The Land Conservancy of BC holds more than 220 covenants across the province, and the Islands Trust Fund is a covenant holder in regard to a number of NAPTEP agreements referred to earlier. These bodies, each with numerous covenants to monitor and inspect, often wish to have a local body as a co-holder of a covenant. There is seen to be an advantage to having a local authorized body involved in negotiating the terms of a conservation covenant, and monitoring, inspecting, and dealing with dispute resolution. This is where GaLTT comes in. GaLTT is now in a position to be a co-holder for conservation covenant agreements involving property on Gabriola Island. This role would fit with GaLTT’s mandate to assist in conserving properties of environmental or historic significance. GaLTT looks forward to being of service in this regard.

EDIBLE PLANT WORKSHOP ON GABRIOLA



By Barb Hague

On the afternoon of February 23, prior to the AGM, Stephanie Mills from Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) led a group of interested participants around Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley's extensive garden pointing out and identifying edible plants. I discovered I had just spent an enormous amount of time and energy eradicating plants from my garden that I could have included in my diet!

NALT has a native plant nursery located just past the Nanaimo airport that houses and sells over 125 species of native plants. Although all species may not be available at one time, it is well worth a trip out there to see the interesting set up they have.

The NALT nursery will also accept plants from lots that are being developed. They will hold the plants so that they can be replanted when the lot is ready, or sell them to other gardeners if they are not needed.

This was a fascinating workshop and I should obviously have taken it earlier. Stephanie Mills has completed a four-year program just related to edible plants and their uses so there is much more to this topic than stated here, but perhaps this will whet your appetite and you will join us if we present a similar workshop in the future.

THE SPRING FLING

By Barb Hague

The Spring Fling and the Emergency Preparedness Workshop provided GaLTT with additional opportunities to show our commitment to the growth and development of a sustainable community. We continue to encourage neighbourhoods to connect with each other, and we attempt to provide trails so that this is possible. Should roads become impassable these trails may be the only way of reaching our neighbours. GaLTT urges you to become aware of connecting trails. Randy Young led a contingent of neighbours in the Whalebone area making them familiar with alternate avenues of access and egress from an area that has only one road in and out. Those avenues involve the use of some of the many trails that GaLTT maintains on the island.

TRAIL UPDATES

Late winter saw the completion of the Boardwalk behind the Commons; the history of which was given in our last newsletter.

This project done in conjunction with the Gabriola Commons Foundation and its volunteers was a major building project for GaLTT last year. Another boardwalk was also completed in a wet area of the Elder Cedar Nature Reserve. Along with the Islands Trust, GaLTT plays a major role in the care and management of this sensitive ecological area.

GaLTT TRAIL ACTIVITY

as provided by Randy Young

It was brought home to me several times since the last newsletter—and particularly since Gabriola's Emergency Preparedness Day—the importance of not only building new trails but maintaining the ones we have established as well. "Building Trails, Connecting Neighborhoods" has been our mantra recently, as the island has become aware of its needs for connectors and escape routes should a disaster occur. With the dry summer spell making us particularly susceptible to fire and the winter winds causing road blockages with fallen trees these connections could be life-saving.

Safety aside, these same trails also provide hours of walking enjoyment for visitors and islanders alike, and GaLTT work parties have been hard at work clearing, pruning and building from one end of the island to the other. The Commons Boardwalk, pictured in the last newsletter as a sinuous skeleton, has been completed with the assistance of enthusiastic Commons and GaLTT volunteers. It creates a picturesque walk over the wetlands behind the Commons; a delightful ramble if you have not yet tried it out. Likewise, the newly constructed boardwalk over boggy areas in the Elder Cedar Nature Reserve allows easier access during the rainy season. (GaLTT has requested permission to include the Elder Cedar trails in our trail map next year.)

The trail off McDonald East has been cleared of brambles and gravel has been used as fill in the lower and wetter areas. Work was done on the swampy area of McDonald West.

The Cox Park ditch has been cleared, as has the Coat's Marsh trail. The Tin Can Alley path to the



The boardwalk behind the Commons finished early this Spring in conjunction with volunteers from both GaLTT and The Commons creates an all-season trail from



One of the boardwalks built during Sunday work parties in the Elder Cedar Nature Reserve.

707-acre Park has been marked, but look carefully for the tree markers as they often mysteriously disappear!

The “Battle of the Broom” continues in Drumbeg. The Lions Club and GaLTT together organized two major broom bashes as they continue to attempt to control this invasive weed. For those of you who are fighting this plant on your own property remember that “Extractigators” can be borrowed from GaLTT to assist you in removing the more mature plants. (Call Randy at 250 247 8541).

THANK YOU

We would like to thank Randy Young for organizing the work parties and the volunteers who donate their Sunday afternoons to maintain the trails. If you are not on Randy’s list and would like to receive information about the work bees held every second Sunday from 1:30 - 3:00 P.M., e-mail him at (ranyoung@shaw.ca). We regret that we are unable to contact those of you who are interested in helping but do not have e-mail addresses. We will attempt to have a posting on the website but this provides very short notice.



The newly accessible Coats Marsh is seen here in the early spring.