



GORGETILlicum

Neighbourhood

NEWS

Totem Pole Raising

The Victoria Native Friendship Center on Regina Avenue has something new out front.

On National Aboriginal Day, June 21st, a traditional pole-raising ceremony was held and the Coast Salish 'Welcome-pole' called "Connected Through Our Roots" was slowly brought into position using ropes, pulleys and sheer human strength.

The road was closed and hundreds of people gathered to watch and help pull steadily on those ropes. There were drums, traditional dancers, and ceremonially dressed dignitaries. The mood in the air was electric and the emotion was justifiably proud.

Chiseled from a portion of a giant 1400 year-old red cedar log, the totem stands 9 meters tall and depicts human and animal figures, interconnected and woven together by roots. At the top of the pole, these roots start as the hair of a maternal grandmother figure.

The pole was carved by local master-carver Carey Newman, and 36 youth as part of the 'Eagle Project'. This 18 month life/job-skill training and mentoring program which gave participants an opportunity to obtain qualification certificates and develop their resumes.

All but one of the participants went on to further education programs or have already entered the workforce.

This pole really is very striking, and it's well worth taking a walk to get a close look if you haven't seen it already.

In addition to all this, there are hopes and plans to carve another pole under similar circumstances. Something else to look forward to! Go to the GTCA Facebook page for a link to a video of the raising ceremony.

— Scott Karpes



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Photo by Scott Karpes

We welcome comments—please let us know what you think of your newsletter!

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Unsolicited Articles Welcome.

The deadline for submissions & advertising for the next issue is February 15, 2012

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All 4000 copies of this newsletter are delivered by volunteers and we could always use more help. Please contact Ray Farmer 382-1122.

Additional articles posted online at:

www.gorgetillicum.ca

Carriers needed on Adelaide and Wyndeatt – contact Ray Farmer

a word from the president

Since our last newsletter in June, we hosted one of the most successful Gorge Canada Day Picnics in our history, with an estimated 10,000 people coming out for the day. Check out our Facebook page for pictures and video from this event. Congratulations to the whole picnic team for another outstanding effort. Later in August, we held Music in the Park at Rudd Park. It was another clear success and we are looking to next year to bring more events like this to our community. A hearty “well done” goes to Sue Koolman and her team of volunteers.

Some of you may have noticed Saanich Parks staff working in Gorge Park late in August to remove some dangerous tree hazards. This cleared the way for our great team of volunteers led by Ramon Farmer along with Scott and Katrinka Karpes to come in on September 17th to clean out some of the English ivy and other invasive species that blocked the view of the park from the road. Then the following week, we helped Saanich plant 100 new trees. Gorge Park has really come a long way since we first started our annual cleanup. Not only are more folks using the park, but a number of neighbours have discovered the joys of swimming in the Gorge on a hot summer day.

Over the summer, Saanich Council approved EY Properties’ proposal for a rental apartment building at the corner of Burnside and Tillicum. This has been given preliminary approval for a development permit.

As we move into the fall we can look forward to more developments on the management plan for Cuthbert Holmes Park, the municipal elections on November 19th, and monitoring the transportation improvements on Admirals Road and the plans for a new Craigflower Bridge. I would like to thank Pam Loadman for taking on the chair of the West Gorge Transportation Committee, and a very special thank you to Donna Roth who led this committee for over 5 years.

Finally, I hope you enjoy this edition of the neighbourhood news. We are excited to have a new series, Local Artist, spotlight some of our area’s talented residents. Best wishes to all as the seasons change.

— Rob Wickson, President

Gorge Tillicum Community Association www.gorgetillicum.ca



GTCA Board of Directors 2011/12

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The Board meets the first Thursday of each month, September to June, at Pearkes Recreation Centre. All members are welcome to attend!

LOCAL ARTIST SERIES

Kay Stewart and Chris Bullock moved into the Gorge-Tillicum neighbourhood nearly three years ago. Since that time, Kay has published her second detective novel, *Sitting Lady Sutra* (TouchWood Editions), and she and Chris have been working on the third novel in the Danutia Dranchuk series, based on the odd and ancient English tradition of well-dressing. They have also begun research for their fourth, which will partly be set in the towns at the northern end of Vancouver Island and will have a mystery linked to the annual Tour de Rock Cops for Cancer bicycle ride.



Photo by Kate Seymour

Kay and Chris's collaboration didn't start with mystery novels, though. It started with an academic textbook on writing, *Essay Writing for Canadian Students*, first published in 1981 and now in its 7th edition. "The only book that's ever made us any money," they joke.

As their academic careers at the University of Alberta started to wind down, they had the inspiration to collaborate on a detective novel based on the exploits of a travelling light opera company. But *A Deadly Little List* (the title is from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*) only worked when they transferred the setting from Alberta to Salt Spring Island, anticipating their move to Yellowpoint, outside Nanaimo, in 2000.

Of course, some of their writing is not collaborative. Kay, whom Chris calls the "real writer," has edited books of women's essays, and wrote the second novel in their mystery series solo. Chris, a self-acknowledged dilettante, gives writing the time he can spare from environmental group work, hiking, 5 Rhythms dancing and much else. He is, though, serious about his project of writing a series of essays on grand parenting and its evocation of childhood experience, both joyful and difficult. Indeed parenting and grand parenting still remain a big part of these writers' lives.

And what do they think of living in Gorge-Tillicum? They still can't decide whether condo living is really for them, but they are impressed by the work of the Gorge Tillicum Urban farmers and find this area "without question, the most beautiful area in Victoria; a green oasis in the city".

— Belle Leon

Upcoming Events

8th Annual Teen Christmas Craft Market: Sat, Nov, 12, 9.30 am – 3.30 pm at Pearkes Rec.

Municipal Election 2011 All Candidates Meeting: Tues, Nov, 15, 7:00 – 9:00 pm at Spectrum Community School Auditorium, 957 Burnside Road W. Info: www.gorgetillicum.ca

Municipal Election 2011: Sat. Nov. 19. Get out and vote at your closest voting stations: Tillicum Elementary or Spectrum Secondary. More info. at www.saanich.ca

Gorge Tillicum Urban Farmers Meeting: Sun, Nov 20, 3:00 – 5:00 pm at Saanich Neighbourhood Place in Pearkes Rec. Centre. Anyone is invited and welcome to attend. For more info. contact Gabe Epstein at belle.leon1@gmail.com or 250-382-1328.

Lucy's Animal Adventures: Four Puppet Plays: Wed, Nov 23, 3.30 – 4.30 pm at Saanich Centennial Branch. Join our resident puppet, Lucy, and some of her favourite animal friends, for a boisterous puppet show. For young children and their families; children under 3 must be accompanied by an adult. No registration required.

Author Martine Reid: "Bill Reid and the Haida Canoe": Thurs, Dec 1, 7:00 – 8.30 pm at Saanich Centennial Branch. With stories about her husband and his iconic sculptures that showcase the canoe, the book's editor, Martine Reid, will arouse the passion for this powerful Haida symbol. Register online or call 250-477-9030 for more info.

Deck the Hall: Winter Lights Festival: Sat, Dec 3, 5:00 – 8.30 pm, at Saanich Municipal Hall. Kick off your holiday season at the Hall with a festive lights display and a variety of seasonal activities. FREE.

Saanich Sunday Hikes – Gorge Waterway: Sunday, December 4, 1:00 – 3:30 pm. Meet in Gorge Park parking area, beside playground. No fee or registration required. For details call 250-475-5408.

Be Prepared for Disaster! Mon, Dec 5, 10.30 – 11.30 am at Saanich Centennial Branch. Are you a parent who can't get out to emergency programs in the community? Saanich Emergency Program representatives are in the library to answer all your questions. Register online or call 250-477-9030 for more info.

Christmas Storytime at the Library: Sat, Dec 10, 11:00 am – noon, Saanich Centennial Branch. Festive stories, songs, a craft and a tasty holiday treat for young children and their families. Register online or call 250-477-9030 for more info.



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We love our lawns. Green and glossy (well, in springtime at least), a soothing backdrop to a well-kept home or a pretty view. A durable carpet for children and pets to play on. But can we afford to go on loving them so well that we pour more than 60% of our drinking water supplies into them?

In 2009 David Suzuki opened some minds when he aired American Savannah: The quest for the perfect lawn on CBC's The Nature of Things: lawn-quality grass is now the largest crop in North America, and it carries huge costs: in money, time, water and loss of plant biodiversity; requiring use of environmentally unfriendly lawn maintenance equipment like gas-powered mowers. And it has involved the overuse of chemicals, many of which are heavily toxic, that can run off into salmon streams like Colquitz Creek, water bodies like the Gorge, and down into our groundwater.

Lawns are also a big industry in genetic engineering, as lawn grasses are not native species. Just this July, genetically-engineered bluegrass was sped through the licensing process in the US, exempted from federal regulation, and opening the door to a whole new generation of herbicide-resistant superweeds.

It surprises many to hear that lawn mix used to include clover seed, which would have helped to keep the lawn fertilized; it is only in recent times – probably influenced by herbicide and fertilizer industries – that it had to be grass, grass and nothing but grass. There are alternatives!

Clover lawns – a mix of clover and grass – are greener and easier to maintain than straight grass ones. White clover is actually a desirable plant to have in your lawn as it fixes nitrogen in the soil, making it more fertile; it resists compacted soil better than grass; and it's an excellent nectar source for bees and other wild pollinators that are part of a healthy garden ecosystem. Drought-resistant herbs like creeping thyme can make attractive "lawns" as well. Or you can turn your lawn into a productive food garden by sheet-mulching or adding raised beds.

Carol Rubin's 2002 book *How to Get Your Lawn off Grass* was a great leap forward for water and soil conservation. Native plants (xeriscape gardens) are the best alternative to lawn as they're well-suited to climate conditions, drought-tolerant, and requiring little maintenance while they peacefully encourage native pollinators. Many such plants are edible too, so giving you a bit extra. Best of all, once they're established, they're self-maintaining to a large degree: no watering or fertilization needed.

— Rhona McAdam

Some books (available from the Greater Victoria Public Library system) to inspire you:

1. **How to Get Your Lawn off Grass: A North American Guide to Turning off the Water Tap and Going Native** (Carol Rubin)
2. **The garden that you are** (Katherine Gordon)
3. **Tomorrow's garden: design and inspiration** (Stephen Orr)
4. **Food not Lawns: How to Turn your Yard into A Garden and your Neighborhood into A Community** (H.C. Flores)
5. **The Wild Lawn Handbook: Alternatives to the Traditional Front Lawn** (Stevie Daniels)
6. **Guerrilla Gardening: A Manual** (David Tracey)



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Cooper's hawk chicks from Cuthbert Holmes Park.

Photo by Julian Anderson

The great blue herons expanded their nesting sites this year. Ten nests in six trees were established in Echo Hill, behind Silver City and the arena. The nest trees are monitored by a local volunteer on behalf of the provincial Wildlife Branch. Total number of nests in the park is now 61. Unfortunately this season the herons suffered from extensive predation by bald eagles.

For five months last fall/winter, many neighbours enjoyed the pair of great horned owls who resided just beyond the Dysart Street bridge. Sadly, one of the pair died, and a newcomer was briefly seen in the park. Recently a young great horned owl was photographed in the park and there is hope of a returning pair again. The great horned owls have cat-like ears. Watch for them!

Work parties to remove invasive exotic plants will be organized by Friends of Cuthbert Holmes Park starting in October until the weather no longer cooperates. To receive email updates about these work parties and other news relating to Cuthbert Holmes Park, please contact cuthbertholmes@telus.net

— Dorothy Chambers

Cuthbert Holmes Park Update

The fish counting fence, on the Colquitz River behind Tillicum Mall, was installed in late September in anticipation of the 2011 fall coho spawn. The nearby schools have plans to do field trips to see the salmon and visit Cuthbert Holmes Park. Volunteers are there each morning about 10 am to assess the salmon. Please join us!

In late June, wildlife biologist Andy Stewart was in the park to band the four Cooper's hawk babies. They can still be seen in the neighbourhood. A photo of any sightings is appreciated to help track their movements.

Email the picture(s) to andy.stewart@shaw.ca and include the location.

Colton Karpes and Prairie Simard help Norma Dowler and other volunteers plant over 100 trees in Gorge Park on Tree Appreciation Day. Photo by Katrinka Karpes



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Could 30 Be The New 50?

Unsafe driving speed in our area has been the main issue brought forward to the GTCA by community residents. When Saanich traffic engineers examined speed on our residential streets, this concern was validated. Speed on the busiest streets (Vincent, Walter, Ker, and Cowper) was greater than 50 km/hour, while most other streets hovered around that speed. Although it is the provincial speed limit, 50km/hour is NOT considered safe for residential streets where there is no clear separation of people and bikes from cars. Our roads are narrow and have no sidewalks and have people living on either side. Our streets are where we would like to see children walk to school, neighbours meet, residents riding bikes; and where we would like to walk to the library or the grocery store. Our streets are an important part of what brings our community together. Currently, people do not feel safe being on many of our streets and are therefore not on the streets except to drive. The vibrancy of our community is suffering as a result.

The evidence that relates traffic speed to pedestrian safety, and validates pedestrian vulnerability, is staggering:

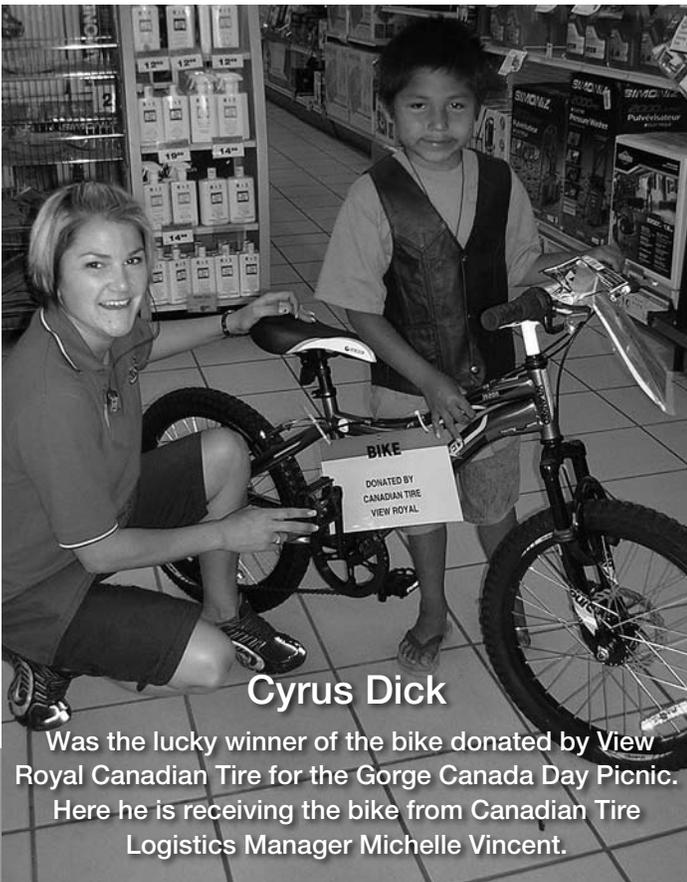
- Including the reaction time of the person driving at 50 km/hour; it takes 35 meters to stop. 35 meters!
- If a person is hit by a car travelling at 50 km/hour there is a 55% chance of death and a 95% chance of serious injury. There is an exponential increase in chance of death and risk of serious injury caused by cars driving more than 30 km/hour.
- People travelling at high speeds within a city do not get to their destination significantly earlier. Most travel time is taken up at traffic stops (how many times have you been passed by a speeding car and then caught up to them at the next light?).

*****Driving at 30km/hour reduces the chance of death to less than a 10% and the risk of serious injury to 45%. That is a big difference. *****

Vehicles must coexist with pedestrians and cyclists on our residential streets. There isn't an option when we don't have sidewalks. The roads must be accessible for all modes of transport without priority given to cars. Lowering speed limits is an option that Portland Oregon, Vancouver, and Edmonton are considering seriously. We would like Saanich council to do the same.

Please contact us to sign a petition asking Saanich to consider reducing speed limits on residential roads to 30 km/hr (info@gorgetillicum.ca), and/or voice your concerns to those who are running in the upcoming municipal elections.

— By Pam Loadman



Cyrus Dick

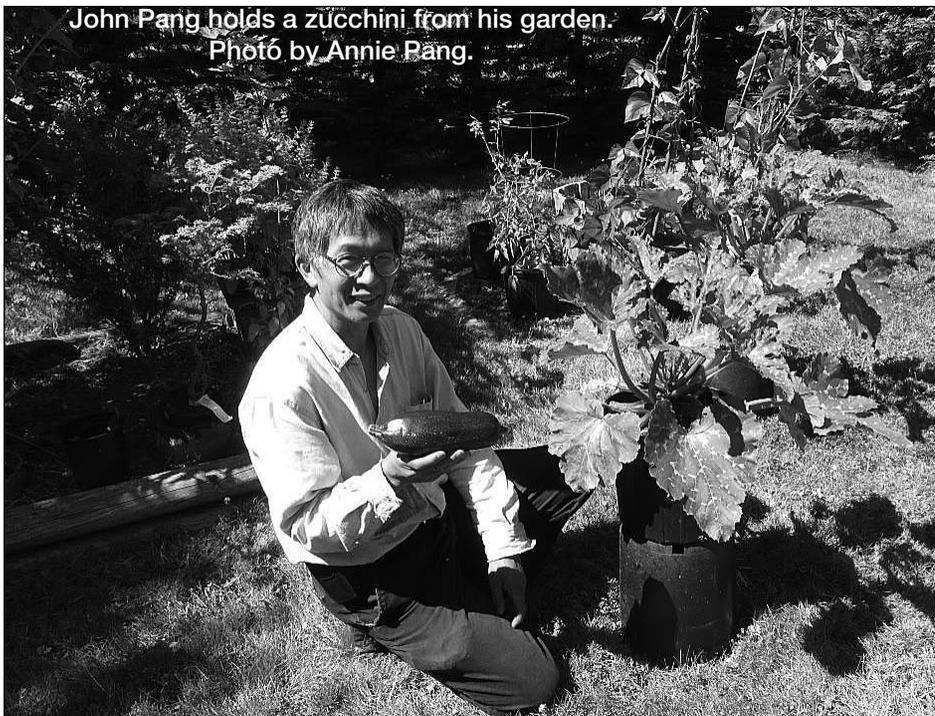
Was the lucky winner of the bike donated by View Royal Canadian Tire for the Gorge Canada Day Picnic. Here he is receiving the bike from Canadian Tire Logistics Manager Michelle Vincent.



New GTCA member Catherine Culley (here with husband John) was the lucky winner of the grand prize at the Gorge Canada Day Picnic presented by GTCA President Rob Wickson. All current GTCA members were entered into the draw for the BBQ, generously donated by View Royal Canadian Tire.

This Harvest Season Let Your Neighbours Inspire You

Harvest season is here and you need to look no further than the urban farmers in your neighbourhood for inspiration: from zucchinis the size of one's calf to pound-sized tomatoes and buckets of pole beans. And don't forget about the potatoes! Kendell Nielsen grew 20 lbs of organic Kennebec potatoes in her front garden, a strip of just 2 by 20 feet. The Kennebec is a superior potato for making French fries and something different from the regular varieties of Russet, Burbank and early New Potatoes that make up about 90% of the potato market. Kendell gave away some of her potatoes to her colleagues to prove the finer taste of an organic and locally grown potato. The response she heard was, "these are the best potatoes I've ever tasted", quite a response from someone in his mid 60's. Also in her front garden plot, Kendell grew strawberries, 25 cooking onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, beets, spinach, garlic, wheat and mammoth leeks and still had room in her front yard for the lawn and flowers.



John Pang holds a zucchini from his garden.
Photo by Annie Pang.

It has only been in the last 50 years that people have left their garden plots behind in search of quick and easy food at the supermarket. But that trend is reversing: locally grown food is catching on and people are finding all sorts of ways to grow food.

Annie Pang and her husband John have a good sized back yard but concern over arsenic leaching from CCA treated landscape ties has always stopped them from growing food. This year, however, they grew vegetables in plastic garden pots, everything from parsnips and collards to amaranth and kale. It worked great and they even had the option of moving the plants for more sun. Although we don't yet have a fall fair to show off our prized local produce, we have enthusiastic growers and inspiration to share.

— Angeline Tillmanns

Saanich Election - A Contest For Mayor!

GTCA Hosts All Candidates Meeting

Across the province, municipal elections take place every 3 years in November, and by the time this newsletter reaches you the campaign will be in full swing.

As in the past, GTCA is hosting an all candidates forum at the Spectrum School Theatre, 7pm on Tuesday, November 15th.

We hope to see a strong turnout to hear how those vying for seats on council respond to questions on local issues and concerns.

This year's election is expected to draw increased public interest as long-time mayor Frank Leonard is being challenged by David Cubberley, a former Saanich councilor and area MLA.

Of local interest to GTCA members is the candidacy of current association president Rob Wickson. Rob has been active in Gorge Tillicum and Saanich affairs for many years, and is also known across the capital region as president of the Victoria Bike to Work Society and his positions on regional planning and transportation. Past GTCA president, Paul Gerrard is seeking re-election to council, as is Dean Murdock, also a resident of our neighbourhood.

So, please mark down November 15th on your calendars, and support civic participation by joining us at Spectrum school for the Saanich all candidates forum.

By Harry Lewis

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Become a member of the Gorge Tillicum Community Association TODAY!

It is time once again to renew your GTCA membership for 2012. We would like to see our membership increase to over 400 in 2012—still less than 5% of residents. The \$5.00 per person yearly dues helps offset the cost of our community newsletter. Thank you to our members who donated a little extra to help cover the cost of the mailout. Congratulations to new members Catherine and John Culley who won the BBQ, generously donated by View Royal Canadian Tire, at the Gorge Canada Day Picnic.

Thank you to all the GTCA members—you have helped make our neighbourhood a better place to live.

Mail to:

Gorge Tillicum Community Association,
P.O. Box 44152, Victoria, BC V9A 2A0

**2011 Membership Application/
Renewal**

Name(s) : _____

Address: _____

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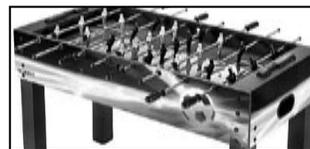
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Pearkes Teen Centre



Pearkes Teen Centre is a safe, welcoming, drug- and alcohol-free place. A place for pre-teens and teens to socialize in a supervised, supportive and friendly environment.

Our state of the art centre is complete with foosball, ping pong, and pool tables, surround sound, big screen T.V.'s, and an entertainment area with gaming consoles (Playstation 2, Wii, & X-BOX)

Youth Christmas Craft Market

Saturday, November 12th ~ 9:30-3:30pm

Calling all creative and crafty youth looking to showcase their amazing work! Artists, bakers, jewelry or soap makers - join us for our 8th annual Teen Christmas Craft Market and raise some funds for yourself or for a charity! This market runs alongside another large, well-attended Christmas Craft show. Vendors 10-18 years old are welcome. Shows take place at Pearkes Recreation Centre. **Please call 475-5400 to book your table today!**

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