

Councillor's Neighborhood Report: **September 10th, 2014 - Volume #63**

Councillor Chris Coleman, Council Liaison to James Bay
(But, by request, also distributing to the folks in
all other neighborhoods in the City of Victoria...
.....and beyond!)

Upcoming days of celebration important to our multicultural country, include:

Fall Begins.....	September 22 nd
Rosh Hashanah.....	September 25 th
National Police & Peace Officers Day.....	September 28 th
Yom Kippur.....	October 4 th
(Eid) al Adha.....	October 5 th
Succoth.....	October 9 th
2014 <i>GoodLife Fitness Marathon & Half Marathon</i>	October 12 th
Thanksgiving (Canadian version!).....	October 13 th
National Boss Day (really!).....	October 16 th
United Nations Day.....	October 24 th
First of Muharram.....	October 25 th
Halloween.....	October 31 st
All Saints Day.....	November 1 st
Back to Standard Time.....	November 2 nd
Ashura.....	November 3 rd
Remembrance Day.....	November 11 th

Please celebrate with one & all.

Items in this issue include:

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Tree Tours - James Bay

Every neighbourhood has a rich assortment of native and non-native street trees. There are a variety of species growing on the boulevards and in the yards of these few blocks. During the walk we'll discuss the ecology of some of these species and several interesting anecdotes. The walk will be led by Dr. Val Schaefer, Academic Administrator of the Restoration of Natural Systems Program at the University of Victoria. No registration required.

Saturdays 10 am – 12 noon FREE

Sept. 13th – James Bay Tour – meet at Fisherman's Wharf Park
at the bridge crossing the dry creek.

Oct. 18th – James Bay Tour – meet at Irving Park, 250 Menzies,
by the giant sequoias.

Kudos to Staff: We get a great number of very complimentary comments about staff from all the Departments of the City.....here's a small sampling:

1)



2) “We recently went to the Ross Cemetery and needed help finding the gravesite of Edward Cridge, a distant relative of my husband. A parks maintenance employee, by the name of Jonas Farrell was incredibly helpful, interesting and courteous. He took the time to look up the gravesite number, then helped us find it. He had only been working at Ross cemetery for two weeks and didn't know the all the sections of the cemetery well. Nevertheless, he was very happy to help and very enthusiastic. We enjoyed our visit very much and left with such a positive impression. Be sure and tell Jonas what a great credit he is to the City of Victoria. We loved our visit and are anxious to return!” – **submitted by a visitor from Olympia, WA**

3) “Kudos to the Crystal Pool summer camp staff team who have entertained over 1000 kids this summer! From computer programming to caving adventures and sports camps, these young guys and gals have met the needs of all types of kids. They clearly care about making a difference in each child's life and giving them a summer to remember! Their energy and enthusiasm week after week is astounding, and just when they thought they were getting a break.. extended summer camps continue for as long as the teachers strike is on! – **From an admiring co-worker who also wants you to know what parents and kids of summer camp programs are saying:**

4) “Everything is my favorite, this is my best summer of my WHOLE LIFE” – **4 years-old Beacon Hill Explorers participant** *This could be my favourite of all time! Chris*

5) “My son can't stop talking about it and telling all his friends. He had the best time and switched out of another camp to come back for the next session in August...very pleased with the activities and organization of the program.” – **parent of child a Crystal Pool Summer Camp program**

City Hall First Stop for ‘Witness Blanket’ on Seven-Year Tour

The fully completed Witness Blanket, a wood-based First Nations art installation that incorporates objects connected to Residential School experiences from across Canada will begin its cross-Canada tour at Victoria City Hall.

“I am honoured that the first stop of this tour is in Victoria, the community that has supported me my entire career,” said artist Carey Newman. “I created this monument to reflect the strength of my people and it is my hope that everyone who stands in witness of this piece will be affected in some way. If the Witness Blanket fosters awareness in one person who is just learning about this difficult part of Canadian history, or touches a Residential School Survivor or one of their family members, it has made a difference.”

The Witness Blanket consists of 13 panels and is over eight feet tall and 40 feet long. Cedar frames hold over 800 collected objects and a multi-media presentation within the installation connects viewers to residential school experiences in a personal way.

Media and the public are invited to attend an opening ceremony. The event will begin with traditional drumming and singing. Mayor Dean Fortin will offer greetings and speak about the City’s commitment to the continued strengthening of Victoria’s relationship with First Nations. A welcome and blessing will be offered by Elmer George of the Songhees Nation and Mary Ann Thomas of the Esquimalt Nation. Carey Newman will speak about the journey of creating the Witness Blanket and a short preview of the video about the making of the Witness Blanket will be shared.

What: Witness Blanket Opening Ceremony at City Hall

When: Tuesday, September 9

10:00 a.m.: Doors will open, followed by drumming

10:30 a.m.: Greetings, blessing and presentation

Where: Victoria City Hall, Ante Chamber, 1 Centennial Square

Kwagiulth artist Carey Newman had the vision for this large piece of work since 2011 and in 2013 he and his team travelled across Canada collecting stories and objects relating to residential schools that operated from the 1840’s though until 1996. 150,000 First Nations children passed through the residential school system.

“The City of Victoria is very honoured to host The Witness Blanket,” said Mayor Fortin. “I invite everyone to bear witness to this important piece of Canada’s history at City Hall. The City of Victoria has a formal protocol to officially acknowledge First Nations traditional territories and we have worked collaboratively with the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations on many initiatives.

This installation reaffirms the importance of building trusting and respectful relationships between all communities and residents.”

The installation will be on display at City Hall until September 26. On Saturday, September 20, City Hall will open between noon and 6:00 p.m. so that the public and guests at the One Wave festival in Centennial Square can also visit the piece.

“Our hope is the final destination for this historic piece will be at the National Research Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, and we have now had a number of exciting conversations with them.” said Newman. “The Centre’s national focus, unique partnership agreements and its role as the permanent home for all documents, statements and other artifacts collected by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission make it a great fit for our vision for the piece.”

The creation of the Witness Blanket was funded by the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Rina M. Bidden Foundation. Today marks the launch of an Indiegogo crowd-sourcing campaign that aims to fund the completion of the Witness Blanket documentary that is being created by Victoria-based Media One Multimedia and the National Tour of the Witness Blanket.

To donate and view the short video about the making of the Witness Blanket visit: <http://bit.ly/witnessblanket>

City and Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 50 Ratify Three Year Collective Agreement

The City of Victoria and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 50 have ratified a new collective agreement for the period of January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2016. Terms of the three year agreement include wage increases of 1.75% the first year, 1% in January 2015 and 1% in July 2015, and 2% in 2016. Collective bargaining occurred from May to July. The agreement was ratified by the Greater Victoria Labour Relations Association on August 20, followed by CUPE Local 50 last night. The Canadian Union of Public Employees represents the City’s largest union with close to 850 members.

“The citizens of Victoria appreciate public service, and the City of Victoria is fortunate to have a dedicated workforce that is committed to making our city better every day,” noted Mayor Dean Fortin. “We are happy that we have reached a fair and just agreement that respects our public servants and respects citizens’ need for affordability. I extend sincere appreciation to everyone involved with the negotiations.”

Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre – Closure Sept 1 – 14

The Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre will be closed for annual cleaning and repairs September 1 – 14, reopening on Monday, September 15 at 5:30 a.m. Monthly passes (one month, three month and annual) will be accepted at the following facilities:

- Recreation Oak Bay
- Pearkes Recreation Centre
- Cedar Hill Recreation Centre
- Gordon Head Recreation Centre
- Saanich Commonwealth Place (*Pool closed September 1 - 14)
- Esquimalt Recreation Centre (*Pool closed August 27 – September 16)
- Panorama Recreation Centre (*Pool closed September 2 - 14)
- Westshore Recreation
- YMCA-YWCA

The Crystal Pool's front desk will remain open for registration Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. during the closure. Online registration for Crystal Pool programs is available 24/7 at www.victoria.ca/recreation

But....Getting Active Just Got Easier with New Online Registration for Recreation Programs

Online registration for Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre programs and passes is now available to customers, a service enhancement that makes getting active easier than ever.

Registration is open for fall and winter recreation programs and customers are now able to browse and sign up for available programs from anywhere, on their own schedule, using the new secure website.

Online registration is the latest online tool offered by the City of Victoria and is designed to reduce steps, improve access, and save time for customers wishing to register for programs or purchase passes.

Annually the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre offers over 1,100 registered programs such as swimming lessons, adult health and wellness, and preschool and youth programs, and welcomes 250,000 drop-in visits to the facility.

For more information, visit the new online registration site at www.victoria.ca/recreation or call the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre at 250.361.0732.

New Public Service Centre Now Open!

Staff and members of City Council joined together this morning to open the City's new Public Service Centre. The new Public Service Centre incorporates historic and modern elements and includes digital signage which will highlight programs and services available. The renovation follows a series of customer service changes including the addition of a City Hall Ambassador, new 15-minute free parking, improved accessibility in and around City Hall and city-wide customer service training. These ongoing enhancements reflect the pride the City of Victoria takes in serving our customers. Great job to all the staff that made these customer service improvements come to life!



Green Thumbs Up for Boulevard Gardening

A new set of guidelines are now available to help gardeners bring their boulevards to life. Boulevard gardens can create healthy and diverse ecosystems, and vibrant and attractive streets, while also improving local food security.

“We are excited to give the green light to boulevard gardens in Victoria,” said Mayor Dean Fortin. “These new guidelines recognize a practice that is already happening and provide assurance that boulevards will be maintained to a high standard. Boulevard gardens offer an opportunity to add vibrancy to our streets, increase local food production and build community.”

The interim boulevard gardening guidelines allow property owners to create gardens on boulevards immediately adjacent to their property. The guidelines outline the safety, accessibility, maintenance, and aesthetic elements that should be considered and also the legal responsibilities of managing a specific area of the boulevard. Once a comprehensive boulevard review is complete, final guidelines will be introduced in 2016.

Generally speaking, boulevards are the strip of City-owned land between a property and the street. The majority of boulevards are currently planted with grass and trees. Boulevard gardens can create more beautiful, interesting and diverse streets, add character to neighbourhoods and increase feelings of community pride. They can also support environmental benefits such as providing bird, butterfly and pollinator habitats. Working on the boulevard can bloom into community building, traffic calming, and healthier living. These benefits all relate to goals found within the Official Community Plan.

Boulevard gardens do not require City approval, but the guidelines must to be followed. Property owners are also encouraged to email details about their garden to parks@victoria.ca. These details will help evaluate the success of the guidelines and the boulevard gardens that begin to sprout up.

What to do if you're considering a Boulevard Garden:

- Review the Interim Boulevard Gardening Guidelines: www.victoria.ca/boulevards
- Call before you dig: Call BC One Call at 1.800.474.6886 to check to see if there are any utility lines under the boulevard. Also call the Engineering and Public Works Department at 250.361.0313 to see if there are sewer, stormwater or water lines in your area.
- Dig with care: Use hand tools only and follow the directions from the utility companies.

To learn more and to view the interim guidelines visit: www.victoria.ca/boulevards.

Work Underway on Approved Bicycle Network

On August 27th, work begins on new bicycle lanes on Cook Street, one of the areas identified by the community for improvements in the City's cycling network.

This spring over 1,300 people provided input on how to improve cycling infrastructure in Victoria over the next 25 years. The new bicycle network was informed by this feedback and identifies the specific routes that will be the focus of these cycling improvements.

The new north and south bike lanes on Cook Street between Maplewood Road and Lang Street will connect with Saanich's new bike lanes that will continue north on Cook, for a combined route of 1.2 km. These improvements will also make it easier for cyclists to access Finlayson Street, an east/west route with

existing bike lanes. Bicycle detection loops will be installed on both sides of Finlayson and Cook, so cyclists approaching the intersection will trigger the light to change. Work will take approximately five weeks. Some parking restrictions and lane closures are expected during construction hours, however access will be maintained for pedestrians and vehicles at all times.

Also responsive to public feedback, 14 new bike parking spaces have been added at City Hall. There are now 46 bike parking spaces, with additional areas for staff parking. These improvements correspond with recent renovations to the Public Service Centre at City Hall.

Other cycling improvements this fall will include:

- Improved access onto Vancouver Street in the 900 block of Convent Street
- Improved access onto Quadra Street in the 900 block of Collinson Street
- Paving of the pedestrian path on the Galloping Goose Trail, south of Selkirk Trestle
- New bike lanes on Skinner Street, from Bay Street to Catherine Street
- Path realignment on Doncaster Drive, between Myrtle Street and Hillside Avenue

The high volume of public input received this spring will now inform an overhaul of the Bike Master Plan itself. The focus will be on developing actions to guide cycling in Victoria over the next 25 years. At this time, it is anticipated an updated Bicycle Master Plan will be presented to Council for consideration in March 2015.

For more information about the new Bicycle Network and other routes that have been identified as priorities over the next five years visit: www.victoria.ca/cycling.

Pet Oxygen Resuscitation Masks Now Part of Firefighting Gear

Victoria Fire Department trucks are now equipped with new life-saving devices designed specifically for our four-legged, furry and winged residents.

The pet kits include three oxygen masks in different sizes designed for performing CPR on cats, dogs and other pets including rabbits, birds and guinea pigs. The masks have been designed to accommodate long snouts, beaks or feline features. The masks will be used primarily on pets that have suffered from smoke inhalation in a fire, and also on unconscious pets that require resuscitation.

“Pets are very vulnerable during fires and losing a pet is always a devastating experience,” said Paul Bruce, Victoria Fire Chief. “We are pleased to have the pet oxygen masks on the fire engines and available for use when necessary.”

There are 6,439 licensed dogs in the city, with many more unlicensed pets. Affixing 'pet rescue alert' stickers to your home can also be helpful for first responders.

Victoria to Host 11th Canadian Urban Forest Conference

This fall, delegates from across Canada are invited to participate in the 11th Canadian Urban Forest Conference in Victoria, British Columbia. The conference will run September 30 to October 2 and will include opportunities for City and park planners, architects, arborists, researchers and health scientists to share their experiences and innovative approaches to the stewardship of Canada's urban forests. The Canadian Urban Forest Conference, offered every two years, brings together leading experts from across the country and allows for dialogue between professionals and community groups on innovative strategies, policies, technologies, research, and best management practices.

“Victoria is known as the ‘City of Gardens’”, says Mayor Dean Fortin, “but with almost 250 species of trees and 33,000 trees on public land alone, we could also be called the ‘City of Trees’. Our urban forests are incredible assets and hosting this conference will connect our community with some of Canada's most innovative urban forest management strategies, technologies and practices.”

A recent inventory of Victoria's urban forests on public land identified almost 20,000 trees lining our streets and over 13,000 trees in our parks. Approximately 10% of all street trees in Victoria are flowering plum, 8% are flowering cherry and 6% are hawthorn. Maple, Garry Oak, Birch, Hornbeam and Horse Chestnut are some of the other species that line our streets. Our climate is unique in that a wide range of trees can grow here. Over 230 unique species were identified in the recent inventory. Last year, the City adopted an Urban Forest Master Plan that lays the groundwork for a healthy, vibrant urban forest in Victoria.

The City of Victoria is excited to be hosting this conference with support from the Municipality of Oak Bay, the District of Saanich and Tree Canada. Sponsors include TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Bartlett Tree Experts and Davey Tree. The opening keynote lecture will set the context by addressing the key issue of ‘Adapting Cities to a Rapidly Changing World’. This session will draw on the expertise of Dr. Kalanithy Vairavamoorthy, or ‘Dean Kala’, an internationally recognized expert in the field. The lecture will explore how pressing challenges—including climate change, water scarcity, aging infrastructure and risk management—affect the way we design our cities and their urban forests.

For registration details please visit: www.cufc11.ca/en

20 Cigarette Butt Canisters Installed, 25,000 Butts Collected and Recycling Partners Signed On

As of the beginning of August, 20 cigarette canisters have now been installed in downtown Victoria and 25,000 cigarette butts have been collected in the last month. The hard to recycle butts have also found a new home thanks to a partnership with TerraCycle, who will recycle them into pellets for future plastic products.

The cigarette butt canister pilot program is coordinated by the Vancouver Island Chapter of Surfrider Foundation, the Downtown Victoria Business Association and the City of Victoria. The canisters were installed in partnership with local businesses in areas where cigarette waste had been identified as a challenge. The Greater Victoria Harbour Authority is also hosting eight additional canisters at Fisherman's Wharf and by the Ogden Point Breakwater.

In addition to keeping cigarette butts off our streets, out of the stormwater system and off beaches, the pilot program has now been expanded to offer recycling off all collected cigarette butts. TerraCycle, a Progressive Waste Solutions partner, will take the collected butts, which are normally hard to recycle as they contain a mixture of materials, and recycle them into plastic pellets that will then be used in future industrial products. They will cover the costs of the recycling program.

Victoria is the second city in Canada to offer a cigarette recycling program like this. Since TerraCycle launched this recycling program in Vancouver in 2012, more than 17 million cigarette butts have been recycled.

Having cleaner streets and beaches are the goals of this program. It is estimated that cigarette butts make up a third of waste items collected at local beach clean ups. Beyond littering the beaches, the toxins in cigarettes leach out when wet and pose a threat to marine life. For more information visit:

<http://vancouverisland.surfrider.org>

Commercial Alley Art Gallery to Feature Artwork by Roy Green

On Friday August 12th, the *Commercial Alley Art Gallery* will launch its second installation showcasing artwork by Roy Green. Located on the west wall of the Youth Empowerment Society building on the 500 Block of Yates Street, the outdoor art gallery features temporary installations by local artists to add colour and vitality to the area.

Green's commissioned artwork will feature four birds, both iconic and indigenous to Vancouver Island; the Great blue heron, the Pileated woodpecker, the Rufous hummingbird, and the Red-winged blackbird. The

outdoor gallery space allows for four, 1.2-metre x 2.4-metre panels. Green's artwork will be available for viewing until mid-January.

Roy Green is a Victoria-based painter, poet and performance artist. He was born in Lethbridge, Alberta and graduated from the Emily Carr College of Art in 1984. Since that time, he has exhibited his work extensively and is represented in many private and public collections, such as the Canada Council Art Bank, the Richmond Art Gallery, the Nanaimo Art Gallery and Camosun College.

The launch of the new installation is timed with the annual *Integrate Arts Festival* (August 15 and 16). The public is invited to access an online map to tour a variety of exhibitions and events at participating galleries, studios and locations in Victoria. For more information, visit: www.integratearts.ca.

The *Commercial Alley Art Gallery* is a community enhancement project which launched in June with an installation by Other (a.k.a. Troy Lovegates). The initiative is funded by the City of Victoria in partnership with the Open Space Arts Society. Artwork installations are selected by a juried call-to-artists process.

Founded in 1972, Open Space is a Victoria-based, non-profit, artist-run centre that supports professional artists who utilize hybrid and experimental approaches to media, art, music and performance. For more information, visit: www.openspace.ca.

New Lease Facilitates Local Investment and Future Development of Key Harbourfront Property

City Council has approved a long-term lease with Victoria Float Plane Terminal Ltd. for the water lot area that fronts the City's lands at 950 and 1000 Wharf Street, adjacent to Ship Point and the Lower Wharf Street parking lots. Under the new lease, the float plane terminal will move off of the existing site on the City's land and onto the City-owned water lot where the float plane docks are currently located. This will enable a new public plaza to be constructed on this important waterfront site in future years, as part of the future David Foster Way, a 4 km waterfront pathway.

The design of the new floating terminal building, docks and upland plaza were approved by a development permit authorized by Council in April 2013. The new lease enables Victoria Floatplane Terminal Ltd. to move forward with a multi-million dollar investment in the new terminal building. The terminal will be constructed off-site and is scheduled to be installed on the water lot no later than January 31, 2017.

Terms of the new lease include:

- An initial term of 5 years with 3 five-year renewal terms for the water lot only
- Rent in the first term starting at \$202,000 (Year 1) rising to \$253,000 (Year 5)
- Construction of upland public plaza where the current terminal buildings are located
- Completion of all improvements required by the new lease by Jan 31, 2017
- Early termination clause can be triggered by City if City proceeds to develop City's upland & the float plane terminal is not compatible with development

Johnson Street Bridge Construction Activity

As you may have noticed, there is an increasing level of activity around the Johnson Street Bridge construction site. Concrete is being poured for the bascule pier (the housing to support the mechanical and electrical system that moves the new bascule leaf), the rest pier (where the future bridge bascule leaf will rest), and the west abutment (the structure on the west side of the new bridge).

Crews are also building a new four-way intersection at Harbour and Esquimalt Roads with new lights, sidewalks and crosswalks, set to open in late September.

The foreground of this photo shows the area that will eventually be turned into a new waterfront green space. The new green space will create more than two acres of public waterfront park. The existing concrete pier on the west side of the bridge will be transformed into [a new plaza space](#) adjacent to the new public green space. Two additional new plaza areas are planned for the downtown side of the bridge. More information and photos of construction are available at www.JohnsonStreetBridge.com



Recent Activity at Your Victoria Conference Centre

The Fairmont Empress

Union of National Employees Convention

Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Club Annual Convention

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police – Annual General Conference

UVic Peter B. Gustavson School of Business

Sabre Pilots Association of the Air Division Squadrons – SPAADS

Vancouver Island Gastrointestinal Group