



January 2020 Newsletter

Greetings from your Council and Happy New Year to all. I hope you had a great Christmas season at the lake or wherever you celebrated. A new decade is upon us. My how time does fly. Just a few points to keep you informed on Village goings on:

- Thanks to all who removed dead fall from your property and Village M.R. Remember to put it in piles at an angle to the road and no larger than 6' length and 4' X 4' rounds and away from fences, power poles, signs, etc. to allow easy pick up for the tractor. If possible, it is much appreciated if you can haul your own brush to the landfill on Hwy 56.
- There is no camping or storage of trailers, RVs, etc. allowed on Village roads and M.R. This is to ensure access for emergency vehicles.
- Our Bylaws prohibit burning brush or garbage within the Village.
- Removal of large windrows at your property can be arranged with a minimum of 3 days' notice. Phone our maintenance man Allen at 403-740-6886.
- If you have medical training – i.e. Doctor, RN, EMT, etc. – and would like to volunteer to help if there was a medical emergency, please call Lorne at 403-742-0210 or email kathyandlorne@yahoo.ca.
- As we are no longer able to provide plastic recycling, please take your plastic recyclables to the Transfer Station in Stettler. You must remove and dispose of any lids as they are not recyclable.
- There was a cougar sited a number of times by several different people in the Village this fall along with our usual compliment of coyotes. As a safety precaution, please watch your pets and do not let young children walk your pet unaccompanied.
- The ice fishing shack "Take it off program" is available on Buffalo Lake and is administered by the County of Lacombe. They can be contacted at www.lacombecounty.com or call 403-782-8959. This is a free service. If you register, a card will be mailed to you to attach to your shack. This helps to ensure that you can be contacted if necessary and to ensure that shacks are removed before the ice breaks up. We thank you for your participation in this program.
- Please keep your yard mowed and clear of debris for fire safety.
- Please be aware that, the same as for cabins or houses, all RVs on empty lots are required to have an approved concrete pump out tank for sewer.
- Many thanks to Heather Zyerfeld and her helpers for taking care of our Village flower boxes this past summer.
- A big thanks to Harold and Jenn Woofenden and Ron and Carol Bryson and maintenance man Allen Berger for helping Kathy and I place and remove the crosses and poppies on the Veterans' graves for the National "No Stone Left Alone" program. The Village has

taken on the Erskine Cemetery on Hwy 835 where we placed and will be placing 26 crosses each year on the first week of November.

- The new shop at the hall cost about \$170,000 plus concrete, dirt work, retaining wall, plumbing, etc. for a total of \$200,800. We have fencing, electrical and a new surveillance system still to be installed. These costs, along with the cost of a new LED sign planned for the truck fill station are all being paid through past years' various grants and the savings and grant money we had built for our portion of the funding for the truck fill station. Our portion ended up being paid through the "Water for Life Program" who funded that entire project. Lucky boon for SVWS. Grant money has to be spent in a timely manner or the Government will take it back.
- The Province's new Rural Policing Program, intended to fight rural crime with 350 new officers and administration staff will cost us \$3,000 this year, \$6,000 next year and \$18,000 on the third year. This will result in a tax increase. However, on a positive note, the Shirley McClellan Water Commission admin funding is going down about \$3,500.
- A big thank you to all who built Jack's Pond skating and curling areas, fire pit and lighting. They also added a change house. This area was very well used over the holidays and is a tremendous asset for our Village.
- At this time, the Paradise Shores development is at 168 lots as per Stettler County's Subdivision and Development Appeal Board. This decision was upheld by the Court of Appeal of Alberta. We will keep you posted of any changes.
- **ATTENTION DOCK AND LIFT OWNERS.** Mooring and docking regulations have been in limbo since the Feds unloaded it onto the Province in 2012. This past spring we received a document from the Province, who is downloading the administration to the upland land owners and lease holders, in our case the SVWS. You can find the PDF User Guide for Dock Permits at www.alberta.ca/lakeshores.aspx. This spring the Village will be registering all docks and lifts. As a dock or lift owner, you must first get a letter of approval from the SVWS, then submit the letter and a sketch of the dock and lift location to apply for an ID# and a temporary field authorization from AB Environment. Then the Village will issue you a registration number to be placed on your dock and lift. This will be a user pay system. Council will also need to form a policy to govern who can place equipment in water adjacent to the Village. It will be a painful, time consuming and confusing process. I will try to keep you posted.
- On a lighter note, Kathy and I purchased a new, smaller, lighter Christmas tree this year to accommodate my age related limitations. I would like someone to tell me how you get it to fit back in the original box? I tried cussing but that didn't work.

All the best to you all! Have a safe and healthy winter.

The Ol' Gray Councillor Lorne Thurston
For the Summer Village of White Sands Council