

Orcas Highlands News
Spring 2009

ANNUAL MEETING! Join us for the Orcas Highlands Association (OHA) annual meeting on Saturday, June 6. Place: Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Eastsound. Time: 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. The meeting will be followed by a potluck, so bring a dish to share, along with a plate and eating utensils. OHA annual meetings are a wonderful opportunity to meet your neighbors and to learn about Highlands-oriented issues from roads to water and much more. Be sure to come!

FIREWISE/BEAUTIFICATION DAY: Participate in the annual OHA Firewise/beautification day on Saturday, June 20. This is the day we prepare the common area adjacent to the mailboxes, the OHA sign, and the mailboxes themselves for summertime. Bring pruners, mowers and loppers! In addition, we will conduct a project to lower our community's wildfire risk. This year, we will be tending a fire in the burn area at the bottom of the hill for your use. This is the opportunity for you to get rid of dead branches, windfall and other green vegetation on your property (only green waste, please!). Take advantage of the fire on the 20th, and avoid hauling and dumping fees later in the summer. The project will begin at 2:00 p.m. and last for a couple of hours.

COMMUNITY POTLUCK: Also on June 20, everyone in OHA is invited to come down to the common area for a potluck at 5:00 p.m. Bring something to share, eating utensils and a beverage. History has shown this is a great time to meet the neighbors, and it is our only annual get-together.

REMEMBER TO PAY YOUR QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP AND WATER BILL: Numerous OHA members have outstanding accounts. Be aware that the Association has the right to file liens on their properties, at its discretion. Some members have chosen to send monthly checks to the Highlands "on account" to make the payment process easier, thus keeping up to date and avoiding falling into arrears.

ROADS: The established speed limit for the Highlands is 15 mile/hour. Please ensure that you, your guests and your renters abide by this speed limit for the safety of all residents.

WILDFIRE: Flammable brush removal will occur along Lindsay and Switchback this spring, as well as around the water tanks in the upper common area. The burn area adjacent to Lindsay will be open until the island-wide burn ban goes into effect on July 1. If you bring something down to burn prior or subsequent to June 20th (Firewise Day), you are responsible for burning it yourself. Remember that the burn permit expires on June 30, so everything must be burned by that date. You will find three community hoses at the pump house. All you need is a spray nozzle. NOTE: The burn pile was created as a convenience for homeowners when ridding themselves of green waste from their properties. Building waste and building scraps are prohibited from being burned, per the ordinance posted in the burn area. Please do not bring anything except green waste to the burn area.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The OHA Board has three vacancies that need to be filled quickly. If you have an interest in serving the community in this generally fun, always interactive way, please contact a Board member. Board members' names and telephone numbers are posted in the 'Contact Us' area of the web site.

WEEDS: Several noxious and/or invasive weeds are appearing on OHA properties. Spring is the time of year to be on the lookout for them. Remove all yellow tansy ragwort. Its presence is prohibited by County law and can result in a fine. Scotch broom, English ivy and fennel are invasive species that should also be eradicated if they appear on your property.

WATER: Voters in the Eastsound Sewer and Water District (ESWD) chose to add two additional commissioners to the existing three commissioners. Carl Yurdin from Rosario and Rollie Sauer from the Highlands were appointed to fill the vacancies. The ESWD is investigating the possibility of developing well(s) in the Highlands to provide OHA with less expensive ground water, which typically does not need to be treated at a filtration plant as is currently the case with the surface water from Rosario.

CONSERVATION: Please conserve during the hot summer months. Check for leaks in your system by turning off your master valve for one to two hours and comparing your meter readings before/after. With the valve temporarily off, any difference in reading means you have a leak in the ground between roadside meter and your house that you can trace and eliminate. The association has no way of knowing if you have water leaks; last year there were a few that were very costly to those residents. If you detect a leak in your system, let a Board member know immediately so it can be repaired.

PETS: Pet owners are reminded that both the Highlands and the County mandate the use of leashes if your dog leaves your property. When you walk your dogs, please pick up after them.

FIREARMS IN THE HIGHLANDS: Hunting and/or shooting---including target practice---are not allowed in the Highlands.

MAILBOX SPACES AVAILABLE: Several mailbox spaces for OHA residents remain available at the foot of Lindsay. If you would like to place a mailbox there, this is a good time to do so.

OHA WEBSITE: The Highlands web site (<http://www.orcashiighlandshoa.com>) contains current information on issues affecting all of us including water, Board meeting minutes, OHA CCRs and more.

Looking forward to seeing you at the annual meeting,

The Orcas Highlands Association Board