

Orcas Highlands News
Spring 2011

COME TO THE ANNUAL MEETING: The Orcas Highlands Association (OHA) annual meeting will be held on Saturday, June 4. Place: Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Eastsound. Time: 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. You will hear a review and update on the water issue, including the Eastsound Sewer & Water/Washington Water (WWS) situation and WWS' releasing some water memberships. In addition, you will learn about anticipated road maintenance, the Board's new policy on collection of over due accounts and much more. Coffee will be available during the meeting, and we encourage you to bring a plate of cookies to share, as there will be a brief social hour at the end of the meeting.

WE NEED YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS: As you read in the last newsletter, we are collecting property owners and residents' e-mail addresses so that we can transition to an electronic newsletter. At this point, we have collected just under 60% of them. You can help us save some money and trees by sending yours to Judy Cook at leraascook@aol.com if you have not already done so. We assure you that privacy of e-mail addresses is carefully guarded. OHA notifications will go out as 'bcc' undisclosed recipients.

FIREWISE/CLEAN-UP-THE-HIGHLANDS DAY: Join us for the annual OHA Firewise/clean-up day on Saturday, June 25 at 2:00 p.m. We are going to spruce up the lower common area, the OHA sign, and the mailboxes themselves for summertime. Bring pruners, weed whackers, mowers and loppers. You can also lower our wildfire risk by bringing down green waste from your property, as there will be a fire at the burn area at the bottom of the hill. Avoid hauling and dumping fees later in the summer when outdoor burning is prohibited! The project will last for a couple of hours.

ANNUAL COMMUNITY POTLUCK: Also on the 25th, come down to the mailbox area for a potluck at 5:00 p.m. Bring something to share, eating utensils and a beverage. It's a great time to chat with your neighbors.

WATER MEMBERSHIPS ARE BEING MADE AVAILABLE BY WASHINGTON WATER SERVICE (WWS): Should you acquire a water membership from WWS, it is imperative that you coordinate your hook-up with the Highlands' water service professional. Contact a Board member to coordinate this.

COLLECTING OVERDUE OHA ACCOUNTS: The OHA Board will present its policy for collecting overdue OHA accounts at the annual meeting. For those individuals not able to attend the meeting, a copy is enclosed.

SUMMERTIME ROAD SAFETY: The established speed limit for the Highlands is 15 mile/hour. Please remind your renters and summertime guests. To avoid slowing emergency vehicles responding to an incident in the Highlands, be sure you and/or your guests do not park on or in any way block the rights of way.

BURN AREA: The burn area just up the hill from the mailboxes is open until the island-wide burn ban goes into effect on July 1. You will find a long community hose and spray nozzle at the pump house for your use. If you bring branches, windfall, or other vegetation to the burn area prior or subsequent to the June 19th Firewise Day, **you are responsible for burning it yourself.** Outdoor burning is prohibited after June 30. NOTE: Building waste and building scraps may not be burned in the burn area, per the Orcas Island Fire Department.

NOXIOUS/INVASIVE WEEDS: Spring is the time for you to remove noxious and invasive weeds. Yellow tansy ragwort and poison hemlock are noxious weeds that are prohibited by County law. Their presence can result in a fine to the homeowner. Scotch broom, English ivy and fennel are invasive species that should be eradicated from your property. If you are unsure whether a weed on your property is noxious or invasive, call a Board member for assistance or check out photos available at <http://sanjuan.wsu.edu/noxious/>.

WATER CONSERVATION: Check your water system for leaks! Turn off your master house valve for one to two hours and compare your meter readings before/after. With that valve off, a difference in reading means you have a leak in the ground between the roadside meter and your house that is your responsibility and means your water bill will be higher. If you need assistance with finding someone to repair the leak, please contact a Board member.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION: Enroll in the San Juan County Emergency Alert System. This is a new service offered by the San Juan County Department of Emergency Management to provide us with alerts related to a wildfire, tsunami, etc. See http://joomla.sanjuandem.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=57&Itemid=57 for more information.

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

Looking forward to seeing you at the annual meeting,

The Orcas Highlands Association Board