

Community Newsletter

September 2024 | Vol. #2



President's Message

What a busy summer it has been for the Sproat Lake Community Association! With the highlight being the unforgettable Farewell Party for the Martin Mars Bombers.

Thank you to our dedicated volunteers and sponsors who made everything possible, and to everyone who supported the event. It's very hard to put into words how much these iconic planes will be missed.

As you can see, this newsletter is packed with updates, reflecting just how much has been happening at the SLCA. I appreciate your time in reading through all the details, and I hope you find the information useful.

Sincerely,

Tamara Thorpe
President, Sproat Lake Community Association

Bomber Farewell Event

The farewell party for the Martin Mars Bombers was a tremendous success! We had over 80 volunteers, and the event went off without a hitch. We don't really know for certain how many people were in attendance, but some are saying around



2000 people attended throughout the day, enjoying live music, a bomber museum, a bomber theatre, a flight simulator, bomber dogs, bomber merchandise and access to the Bomber Base. It was so heartwarming how many of our community members helped us out with this event and/or came out to support it. We should all feel so proud about what our small community can accomplish when we come together! The total net profit from the event, including 50/50, food & beverage, and merchandise sales, was **\$9024.44**. We are so grateful to all of our fantastic volunteers and sponsors. We are also very grateful to our amazing planning committee members; **John Thorpe, Nancy Harvey, Darren Hansen, Wynn Thomsen, Carol Novak, Bob Cole, Walter Konkin, Jennifer Connell** and **Penny Cote**. Thank you all so much! This event couldn't have happened without you! Also, a big shoutout to **Warren Arbuckle**, our event MC. Warren took on the job that nobody wanted and did so great! Thank you, Warren!

A Very Special Thank You to Coulson Aviation!

Thank you to Coulson Aviation for their support. Not only did they donate a Bomber VIP Taxiing Experience for our raffle, but they also donated some of their beautiful red bomber t-shirts and some bomber stickers to sell!

Raffle tickets were sold for \$20 each, and the lucky winner was **Jim Simmons** of Sproat Lake. The net profit from the raffle was **\$15,378.82**. In accordance with the BC gaming rules, these funds must be spent within 12 months of the expiry of our gaming license and also must be used for the items approved in our gaming license application. As such, these funds will be allocated for repairing the undermined footing under the stage side of the hall, purchasing a new AED machine, and hall operating expenses. These are all items that would not qualify to be covered by our hall Community Works Funding.

Post-Event Merchandise Sales

Our bomber merchandise at the event sold out quickly due to extremely high demand. We therefore continued to sell Sproat Lake Bomber baseball hats and t-shirts on our website until August 12. We sold an additional 260 hats and 261 shirts, generating a net profit of **\$6,054.52**. Thank you to **Wynn Thomsen**, and her amazing merchandise team!

Rising Expenses

Unfortunately, we have seen a substantial increase in insurance costs this year. Our total premium for 2024 is \$7,091, and there is a good possibility that it will rise again next year. This is a significant expense, consuming a large portion of our ACRD tax proceeds, which is \$11,900.

Our Treasurer, Rene Lacoursiere, has presented the board with a detailed overview of year-to-date hall operating expenses compared to last year and noted that our annual funding from the ACRD

tax proceeds no longer covers our basic operating costs (insurance, hydro, propane, security system, cleaning, consumables, maintenance, etc). Rene made a formal request to the ACRD for increased funding, but this, unfortunately, has not resulted in an increase. While this is not the best news, thanks to the funds raised over the summer, we will still be able to cover these increased operating expenses.

We are committed to finding ways to manage these rising costs and will continue to explore additional revenue and funding options, and cost-saving measures to ensure the sustainability of our community hall and association.

Meeting Regarding ACRD Parcel Tax Funding

I recently had a productive and respectful meeting with Mr. Daniel Sailland, Chief Administrative Officer for the ACRD, to discuss the funding we receive from the parcel tax line item labeled *Sproat Lake Community Association* on our property tax bills. I told him that since our annual funding of \$11,900 has not changed in many years, it no longer covers our basic operating expenses; and this also leaves no money for community programming.

Mr. Sailland was very receptive to my questions, and we engaged in a positive dialogue about how our funding is managed and why it has remained the same, without increases. He advised that our current funding model does not allow for significant increases. Although he didn't have answers to all of my questions, he did promise to get me the answers soon. Here are some of the key points we discussed, and the unanswered questions that he is working on:

1. **Why don't we receive the increase reflected on the tax bills?** The SLCA line item on our tax bills increased from \$11.72 last year to \$12.76 this year. However, the SLCA does not receive any of these

increases.

- 2. Why doesn't our funding increase with new parcel development?** Given that our funding comes from a parcel tax, I asked why the amount doesn't rise when new parcels are developed at Sproat Lake.
- 3. What is the total amount the ACRD receives from this parcel tax?** Another key question was about the actual dollar amount the ACRD receives annually from the Ministry of Finance (our tax collector), for the SLCA parcel tax line item.

I'm confident that he will get back to me with the answers to these important questions. Once I have more information, I will keep the community informed.

Eligibility Review By BC Gaming Policy

We are pleased to advise that our association underwent and successfully passed an eligibility review by the BC Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch this past June. This review is standard procedure for ensuring that we meet the requirements to apply for gaming licenses, which allows us to hold gaming events such as raffles and other fundraising activities.

Passing this review means that the SLCA is now eligible to apply for gaming licenses without the requirement of another eligibility review for 5 years.

Survey Results

Thank you to the 151 people who participated in the recent community survey! Your valuable feedback will help guide the SLCA Board of Directors and committees in planning future initiatives and events. The survey results provide insights into our community's needs and preferences. As promised to our respondents,

individual responses will not be made public but the rest of the [results can be accessed on our website.](#)

Also, congratulations to **Bev Frolic**, the winner of the \$50 Visa Card prize draw!

Government Advocacy Committee

In the community survey, we asked, *"Would you support the formation of a committee within the Sproat Lake Community Association dedicated to lobbying the ACRD and other governments on community issues?"* An overwhelming 76% of respondents said yes, 4% said no, and the remaining were unsure. We then followed up with the question, *"How interested would you be in participating in or contributing to a committee focused on lobbying governments and advocating for community interests?"* 32% expressed that they are somewhat interested and 4% expressed that they are very interested.

While it's clear there is strong support for such a committee, it cannot happen without sufficient committee members from the community. Therefore, before bringing this matter to the board of directors, I am calling for expressions of interest from anyone who would like to be involved in this committee, if it were to be formed.

So, if you're passionate about advocating for our community's needs and would like to be part of this effort, please [reach out to us.](#)

Building Envelope Repairs



During the bar renovation, moisture was discovered inside the exterior wall at the front of the hall. An assessment revealed

that the issue was due to buckled siding and incorrect installation of the flashing, which caused water to get behind the siding and

accumulate inside the wall. Thankfully, since the problem was revealed during the bar renovation, we were approved to use Community Works Funds for the repair. This repair is now completed and the estimated cost is \$7200.

Our Community Works Funding

Our Community Works Funding that was designated for the pickleball courts has now been depleted. The last of it was used to help replace the rotting posts around the courts earlier this year.

The balance left over in our Community Works Funding designated for the hall is approximately **\$7200**. This money must be spent by December 31st of this year, or we will lose access to it. Therefore, at this month's board meeting the board approved these funds to be used to pour the concrete handicap ramp outside of the hall leading to the courts, and the remainder to start finishing one of the rooms downstairs, at the stage side of the hall.

The Community Works Fund can be used for capital infrastructure/asset projects but does not cover operating expenses, maintenance, repairs, non-fixed asset purchases, or community programming.

A New Association at Sprout Lake?

I want to address some recent questions and concerns we've received from some of our members about a new association that has been formed in our community. It is important to note that this new group is not associated with the Sprout Lake Community Association (SLCA) in any way.

Some of you who are on Facebook have noticed that the organizer of this new association was posting negative comments directed toward the SLCA volunteer directors. No doubt, this was an unexpected development as there was no

attempt to reach out to us with relevant questions or to express any concerns.

Is the SLCA perfect in everything we do? No, we're certainly not. We're a 70-year-old association that is a "work in progress" as we strive to evolve to the changing needs of our community. However, we are committed to doing our best. The SLCA board of directors are dedicated **community volunteers** who care deeply about the Sprout Lake community. We are your neighbors; some of us may be your friends, AND..... we are very grateful for your continued support! 😊

Developing a User Pay Model for Pickleball

We want to update you on the recent developments regarding the pickleball program and the ongoing efforts to ensure our courts are well-managed, accessible, and sustainable long-term for everyone.

Earlier this year some [changes were made to our pickleball program](#) to address concerns about hall security, fair usage of the courts, and the need for better management and funding for court maintenance and repairs. One of the changes that was made was the implementation of a drop-in fee of \$5.00 for visitors only, to use the outside courts. Community members are still free. However, many in our pickleball community felt this was unfair to their friends who are not community members and instead wanted to have all users, including members, contribute to the courts through an affordable user-pay model.

This summer our pickleball committee, which is comprised of three SLCA board members, David Brooks (Chair), Catherine Mackay and John Thorpe, held two lengthy meetings with the pickleball community, one focus group meeting, and several committee meetings to discuss potential changes to the program for next year, including the user pay model. This process provided an opportunity for all registered

pickleball members to share their views, and it quickly became clear that there were different opinions on how best to manage the courts, court access, and maintenance costs.

After thorough discussions, votes were taken, and the majority's preference was recorded. While every effort was made to listen to all sides and find common ground, it was just not possible to please everyone.

Based on the feedback and votes taken at these meetings, the committee prepared a [draft user-pay model](#) for the SLCA board of directors to consider. This model aims to balance fair access to the courts with the need to cover court maintenance, repairs, and the cost of pickleball management software. The draft model was presented to the SLCA board for approval at the September board meeting and was unanimously approved.

We sincerely appreciate the efforts of our Pickleball Committee and all those who have participated in these discussions and contributed their thoughts. We hope to move forward together in a positive way that benefits the entire pickleball community.

Weir Plates

The weir plates were removed on the morning of September 17th. Thank you to the SLCA Stewardship Committee for their continued monitoring of, and dedication to this matter.

Our New Outdoor Stage



The SLCA now has a 12'x12' outdoor portable stage. Thank you to **John Thorpe** and **the men's open-play pickleball players**

for their help in building it. We would also like to

thank **Aaron and Robyn Terepocki** for donating a significant amount of the wood for the stage. With this generous donation, the total cost of the stage was only \$340. The stage was built for the Bomber Farewell event but will be very useful for future outdoor events such as summer dances, BBQ's etc.

Christmas Community Hall Rentals:



We are currently taking rental reservations for Christmas parties and other events. The Sproat Lake Community Hall

offers a spacious and versatile venue perfect for any occasion. For pricing information and to book the hall, please visit our [website](#) or contact any board member.