



Bluewater Shoreline Residents' Association

NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2010

Note this date on your calendar

Saturday, August 28th -- BSRA Annual Meeting Coffee at 9:30 am Meeting at 10:00
at St. Peter's Church Hall just north of St. Joseph on the east side of Highway 21

Protect YOUR Interests: Make Your Vote Count

In less than 2 months, Bluewater electors will receive at their tax bill mailing address a ballot for this fall's municipal election. For **seasonal residents**, it is important to note that you should both **complete the ballot for the Bluewater election** and also vote for the municipal council in the municipality where your permanent residence is located.

To appreciate the significance of this municipal election, it is necessary to reflect on Bluewater's first 10 years.

- The first term (2001-03) reflected a Council experiencing the expected growing pains as newly-elected councillors and the then administrative staff struggled to adapt to operating a larger, more complex organization than they had been accustomed to. The lack of effective representation for shoreline residents and Council's failure to respond in any meaningful way to the issue of equity of taxation and services led to BSRA's petition to the Ontario Municipal Board to restructure the Municipality, and Council's eventual decision to create the two shoreline wards.
- In the 2003 election, shoreline electors received direct representation through the election of the two Councillors for the wards of Hay West and Stanley West. This change, coupled with the election of Jim Fergusson as Councillor-at-large, was a major factor in the new Council (2003-06) coming to the realization that it could no longer micro-manage an organization larger and more complex than the five former municipalities and that one of Council's primary roles was to develop policies within which the organization would be operated.
- In 2006, the primary change in Council was the election of David Johnston as Deputy Mayor. Over the past four years, there has been observable improvement in our municipal operation. The changes in both administrative organization and personnel have yielded positive results; the budget process and financial reports are of high quality; the administrative reports upon which Council bases its decisions are by far the best in its 10-year history. Other factors contributing to the improved quality of Council decision-making are the structure of its meetings and the personal qualities of the majority of the current members.

Our Spring *Newsletter* outlined the importance of this upcoming election. The resulting makeup of Council will determine whether or not Bluewater will, over the next 4 years, progress further toward becoming the type of municipality of which we can all be proud. Although all members of Council are factors in determining this future direction, the positions of **Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor-at-large** are particularly significant since they are Bluewater's three representatives on Huron County Council which levies the majority of your property taxes.

In assessing candidates for these three positions, the following questions are relevant:

- Does the candidate articulate clearly a vision of what Bluewater could become and a plan to achieve it?
- Does the candidate's track record demonstrate a sense of fairness and equity, and a lack of bias?
- Which candidate for the position will best represent the interests of Bluewater on County Council?
- **Has the candidate consistently demonstrated both an understanding of issues affecting shoreline residents and support for various measures to address concerns raised on your behalf?**

As you are aware, BSRA representatives have been in attendance at almost every meeting of Bluewater Council for the past 10 years and thus are in a position to objectively assess the track records of the various candidates. It is expected that prior to the mailing of the ballots the BSRA Board of Directors will identify those candidates most worthy of your support for each of these positions.

Does **your** vote make a difference? Yes, the number of shoreline electors can determine the outcome, but only if we all vote. If one couple in each of our 50+ subdivisions fails to vote, that means 100 lost votes – more than enough to determine the election result and Bluewater's future direction. When you receive your ballot:

- Consider the reasons why the BSRA Board has endorsed a particular candidate.
- Complete the ballot immediately, noting carefully the detailed instructions re envelope insertion to ensure your ballot is not rejected.
- Mail it that day.

Protect YOUR interests – make your vote count!

BSRA launches its BSRA e-Bulletin

Are you on the list of subscribers to receive BSRA's e-Bulletin? In July 2010 BSRA sent out the first issue of its email bulletin sent directly to shoreline residents. This does not replace the Newsletter entirely but does give BSRA an opportunity to send you information about emerging issues in a timely way. Many of our member subdivisions communicate internally using email and, rather than send an email to the subdivision contact and have them send it on to their members, the BSRA e-Bulletin goes directly to our members. It's easy to sign up: go to www.bsra.ca and follow the links.

Bluewater's Shoreline Heritage

Those little wooden cottages and brick farm homes from the 1940s and earlier are an important part of the shoreline's history. Jodi Jerome, contracted to work with the Bluewater Heritage Committee, is working on putting together a list of heritage homes and historic places in Bluewater, complete with photographs (past and present). The development of the waterfront from Bayfield to Port Blake has not been widely documented and Jerome feels it is an important part of the local history. She is looking for pictures and information about cottages, farm houses and homes that are unique in architecture, been owned by historic persons from the community and beyond, or are from the early times of beachfront development in Bluewater. Photos, past and present, of the property and information about who built the structure, who lived there and recollections of past events on the property, can be sent to Jerome at jjerome@hurontel.on.ca, as can scans of photos (scanned at 300 dpi). It is important to put the street address and legal address of the property in the write-up. All help with this project is greatly appreciated by the Bluewater Heritage Committee.

Lakeshore Sewage Collection Project

Are you a Bluewater resident – seasonal or permanent – living between Port Blake and St. Joseph? Do you have questions about the Highway 21 Sanitary Sewage Collection System being proposed by the Municipality of Bluewater? Do you wonder how the project will be implemented. Are you thinking about the costs involved? The first public OPEN HOUSE/PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE will be held on Saturday, Aug. 28th from 2:00 to 5:00 pm at the Dashwood Community Centre (158 Centre St., also known as the Bronson Line). Representatives from Dillon Consulting, the engineering company working on this project, will be there to obtain your input and to answer your questions.

It's Dark at the Cottage

The absence of light pollution at the cottage means that the wonders of the night sky are easily seen. Watch for the Perseid Meteor Shower in mid-August by looking to the northeast just after midnight. Or follow the International Space Station across the sky just before dawn; google "iss nasa tracking" to find exact times.