



GORGE TILLICUM

*Neighbourhood*

## NEWS

*Gorge Pocket Market*

A busy Saturday morning at the Gorge Pocket Market, located at Pearkes Recreation Centre. Photo by Arden Lille.

*Well, the Gorge Pocket Market is off and running!*

Located at Pearkes Recreation Centre, and the first to operate in Saanich, it has started off as a huge success.

Apart from some confused looks from the hockey crowd, people soon caught on to the concept and proceeded to snap up the mostly local organic bread, flour, preserves, fruits, and vegetables. The GTCA has partnered with Food Roots to put on this pocket market. Food Roots is an organization that runs other successful pocket markets in Victoria, including Moss Street (in Fairfield), Vic West, and Quadra/Hillside.

Interesting things were happening in the first couple of weeks of the pocket market running! Some people said that they would change their shopping habits so that they could buy their fresh produce from us on a Saturday morning.

One couple wanted to be sure that they were buying local or B.C. organic food because they were going to a "Sustainable Feast" where all the food had to come from local sources.

(We think this is a great idea, and the GTCA is considering putting on our own "Sustainable Feast" in our community; look for details in the near future.)

Most people either brought their own cloth shopping bags or used our recycled paper ones, and were pleased that we didn't use any plastic bags. Everyone who stopped by seemed to be in favour of our initiative. They were very supportive and were encouraged that this was happening at a grassroots-level in our community. The popularity of books like "The 100 Mile Diet", and the interest and concern in food security and sustainability were recurring comments.

*The Gorge pocket market will operate every Saturday from 9.30am to 2:00pm.*

— Paul Gerrard

**Inside This Issue**

- 2 President's Report  
AGM Notice
- 3 Mall Development Unveiled  
West Gorge Traffic Calming Project  
10th Gorge Canada Day Picnic  
Snippets
- 4 The Green Space:  
Eelgrass in the Gorge  
Styrofoam Recycling  
Letters to the Editor
- 5 Cuthbert Holmes Park  
Gorge Park & Earth Day
- 6 Local Hero - Donna Roth  
Coming Events  
Volunteering
- 7 Of Days Gone By
- 8 GR Pearkes Recreation Centre

NOTICE is hereby given that the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the

Gorge Tillicum Community Association will be held at the Lam Room. G.R. Pearkes Arena Thursday, April 10, 2008, 7pm.

All members and residents of the community are encouraged to attend. MLA David Cubberley will be our guest.



GORGETILlicUM

Neighbourhood News

We welcome comments—please let us know what you think of your newsletter!

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Unsolicited Articles Welcome.

The deadline for submissions and advertising for the next issue is May10th.

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Go West Design Group Inc. www.gowestgroup.com

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Distribution:

All 4000 copies of this newsletter are delivered by volunteers and we could always use more help. Please contact Ray Farmer 382-1122.

Carriers needed along Admirals Road - Contact Ray Farmer

a word from the president

The GTCA has asked Saanich to turn over a parcel of land that the municipality owns off Burke Street and Admirals Road, so that a community garden can be established on the site. The land used to be part of the Craigflower Farm, and seems ideally suited to be converted back to agricultural use. The site is relatively level, sloping slightly to the Colquitz River, and with luck, has not been exposed to pesticides, which would mean that organic produce could be grown. Saanich had intended that the property be incorporated into Cuthbert Holmes Park, but the GTCA board thought that a community garden would be a better use for the land. Saanich Parks Department agreed with us, and supports the concept.

There is a huge interest in food security and local produce, as our new "Pearkes Pocket Market" has shown, with many people encouraging the GTCA to develop a community garden when they hear that the possibility exists. So, knowing only a little about the subject (that is, practically nothing!), I spent a weekend some time ago attending a Community Gardens Workshop at Glendale Gardens, off Quayle Road, with Ray Farmer (really!), a fellow GTCA board member—and actual gardener! The facilitator was Christine Pollard, who developed the Horticultural Therapy Programs at Providence Farm in Duncan, which has become a successful and sustainable enterprise under her guidance.

Apart from the nuts and bolts of starting a community garden, one of the most positive aspects that came out of the workshop was the affirmation that the project is a terrific way of "building community".

Some people were planners, some diggers, some craftsmen, some gofers, and so on. They all were contributing to the common goal of developing community gardens, and building relationships and friendships. I think it is a wonderful idea, and very timely. We will be looking for community support. Stay tuned for more details! — Paul Gerrard

Gorge Tillicum Community Association www.gorgetillicum.ca



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GTCA Board of Directors 2007/2008

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The Board meets the first Thursday of each month, September to June, at Pearkes Recreation Centre. All members are welcome to attend!

# Of Days Gone By

continued from page 3...

## Snippets

With regard to our AGM, we do want to encourage new people to join the Board. We would particularly like someone from the area between Battleford, Harriet, Burnside and Tillicum. So, if you are a 'doer' and can attend monthly Board meetings, come aboard.

\*

Interesting comment by Ray Roer, Saanich's Parks Manager, that he rarely gets calls from folks in this neighbourhood telling him about damage to Cuthbert Holmes or Gorge Park. So, if trees are down blocking the trails, or there are other things needing attention, let Parks know. They are very good at responding. And, similarly, if you see or experience anything in the Parks which offends or concerns you in any way, let the Police know. They need this information to better control the less savoury activities in the parks.

\*

For those drivers who are in the habit of proceeding headlong through the intersections of Vincent, Walter, Obed and Davida, and Dysart, the STOP signs are not suggestions!

\*

If you feel like volunteering for a good cause, but prefer to stick close to your neighbourhood, you might want to contact the Canadian Cancer Society, which is conducting its door to door campaign in April. If you do, however, be respectful of the many people who do not like to be canvassed in this way.



*Much has changed at the Tillicum/Burnside junction since this aerial photograph was taken in the 1950s.*

Back then the corner property—occupied since 1982 by Tillicum Mall—was home to the Tillicum Outdoor Theatre. When it opened in June 1951, the drive-in boasted the largest screen in Canada, 620 car speakers, outdoor seating in Cape Cod style chairs, plus an indoor viewing room for the comfort of 132 movie fans. One-half mile of fencing enclosed the grounds, with extra security provided by a Bull Mastiff guard dog. Current showings were advertised on a marquee attached to a “neon skylon” rising 60 feet high at the corner of Tillicum and Burnside roads. Public flea markets brought in extra revenue on Saturday mornings.

The surrounding hay meadows visible in this photo echo the site's earlier function as farmland, dating back to the late 1850s when owned by former Hudson's Bay Company employees Dr. John Kennedy and Jean Baptiste Jolibois. The latter was granted his portion of the property by James Douglas in return for service in the local militia, known as “Victoria Voltigeurs”. Later, 19th century owners included Robert Ker and Mathius Rowland. After the First War, the Rowland family leased the corner property to a series of farming tenants, including Jenkichi Nishimoto, who resided at 3080 Albina Street. Trained as a shipwright in Japan, Nishimoto used the farm as a market garden and boatyard. A team of horses towed his newly-built boats down to the Gorge for launching. A Japanese-styled barge, utilized for public cruises along the waterway, was one of his creations. At that time, the northern end of the corner property was rented to Rinzo Ono. By the 1930's, Ono had expanded his leased holdings, known as Tillicum Dairy, northward to include property now occupied by Colquitz Middle School. The Ono family home still stands at 572 Whiteside Avenue, albeit without the small steam-heated bathhouse that the Onos once enjoyed.

After all of the Japanese Canadians were expelled from the coast in 1942, part of the farmland was handed to a Victoria West dairyman named McKay, remembered for using Tillicum Road as the quickest way to drive his livestock—both cows and workhorses—from one end of the farm to the other. At other times, he would tether his grazing milk cows in empty lots across the road, where neighbourhood children frequently played golf and ball games. A residue of cowpies somewhat dampened their fun. The final tenant was Bill Mattick, who raised daffodils there before construction of the drive-in theatre.

— Dennis Minaker,  
author of “The Gorge of Summers Gone”

## Serving Our Community



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Rob Fleming, MLA  
Victoria - Hillside

## Coming Events

**FREE GWI Presentation:** "Eelgrass in the Gorge". Monday, March 17, 7:30-9:30 pm, Burnside Gorge Community Centre, Community Activity Room, 471 Cecelia Rd.

**Saanich Silver Threads Special Easter Dinner:** Tuesday, March 18, 12 pm, Les Passmore, 286 Hampton Rd. Register at 382-3151

**Gorge Tillicum Community Association AGM:** Thursday, April 10, 7-9 pm, Pearkes Rec. Centre.

**Annual Earth Day Gorge Park Clean-Up:** Saturday, April 19, 9 am-1 pm, Gorge Park (across from Fairway Market).

**B.C. Arts and Culture Week:** April 20-26 For more information, please visit [www.saanich.ca](http://www.saanich.ca), [www.bcartsweek.ca](http://www.bcartsweek.ca), or [www.cacgv.ca](http://www.cacgv.ca); or contact Diane Thorpe at 475-5558.

**The Hampton Concert Orchestra Spring Concert:** Monday, April 28, 7:30 pm, Les Passmore Centre, 286 Hampton Rd. More information at: <http://hamptonconcertorchestra.ca/>

**Saanich Youth Arts Fest:** Friday, May 2-Saturday, May 3, all day, at Pearkes Rec Centre, Spectrum Community Theatre, Tillicum Mall Parkade and Silver City. For more information please contact Adam Richards at 475-5427 or [adam.richards@saanich.ca](mailto:adam.richards@saanich.ca)

**Move for Health Day—Toonie Day:** Saturday, May 10. Any Greater Victoria Recreation Centre

**Choir Concert:** Tuesday, May 13, 1 pm, Les Passmore Centre, 286 Hampton Rd. More information: 382-3151.

**Saanich Trails & Treks:** Gentle Walk & Talk—Colquitz Creek to Cuthbert Holmes Park: Thursday, May 29, 9:30-11:00 am. Meet at Colquitz Creek Park sign beside Silver City Theatre. No registration necessary. Free.

**Preschoolers in the Park—Gorge Waterway Park:** Thursday, June 5, 1:00-2:30 pm, Gorge at Tillicum Road. No registration necessary. Bring a stroller or backpack carrier for the walk. Free.

**Bike to Work Week 2008:** Monday, June 2-Sunday, June 7. Check out: [www.biketoworkvictoria.ca](http://www.biketoworkvictoria.ca)

**10th Gorge Canada Day Picnic:** Gorge Waterway, Tuesday, July 1, 9:00 am-6:00 pm

## LOCAL HERO Donna Roth



Donna remembers the first meeting of the fledgling Gorge Tillicum Community Association in 1999 when the Canada Day Picnic idea was first discussed. Her immediate reaction—"that sounds like a great idea"—and she's been a supporter ever since. Not just a supporter, but the main driving force behind the Strawberry Tea that's held every year at the Canoe and Kayak clubhouse. This event proves to be one of the most popular on July 1st, selling out as the lovely local berries disappear quickly. It is thanks to Donna and her team of helpers that this Canada Day tradition is now so well established.

Donna is also active in other local issues. She chaired the West Gorge Transportation Committee that has been working with the community and Saanich staff to come up with traffic calming measures to make our roads safer for all. (We hope to see some of these measures implemented in 2008.) She also finds time to coordinate Block Watch in her neighbourhood, deliver the GTCA newsletter, to campaign on behalf of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and to keep her garden in tip top shape. We're very lucky to have Donna Roth living in our community; hats off to this Local Hero!

— Harry Lewis

## Volunteering

When you volunteer, you give your time, energy, and skills to your friends, family, and neighbours. As a completely volunteer-driven organization, the GTCA depends on the involvement of people in our community to function effectively, achieving improvements across our neighbourhood. A continued influx of new people is vital to any organization, as they bring their enthusiasm and new ideas, moreover energizing the "old guard".

You may have particular issues regarding the Gorge Tillicum area. Perhaps you are concerned about traffic, or wish we could attract a certain type of development. Maybe you find our parks to be less attractive than they could be, and worry about homelessness in those same parks. The GTCA is your best advocate, but we need your input.

I got involved because I was bothered by the lack of a sidewalk on Obed Ave. between Tillicum and Harriet Roads. Initially, I joined a traffic subcommittee, as a way to make my concerns known. After a long, educational, and sometimes frustrating process, we achieved traffic calming measures, including the sidewalk. Participation in the process taught me that success is possible, and that the GTCA board is a dedicated group of volunteers, committed to improving our neighbourhood.

There are many ways you can contribute to the GTCA. You could attend board meetings, held the first Thursday of each month at Pearkes. You could become a member of one of our committees, or join the board itself. You can deliver our quarterly newsletter, or participate in regular park cleanups. Please consider these opportunities.

— Arden Little



## David Cubberley MLA, Saanich South

### Need help?

Please contact my office regarding any provincial program or matter

David Cubberley's  
community office:

301-3939 Quadra St. Victoria V8X-1J5  
Phone: 952-4418 Fax: 952-4566

Mon - Fri 10 - Noon and 1 - 3pm  
[david.cubberley.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:david.cubberley.mla@leg.bc.ca)

## Mall Development Unveiled

**A**t a lively, well-attended meeting at Pearkes Arena in February, Rio-Can introduced its proposed mixed-use development for the site presently occupied by Kelsey's and Montana's.

The planned 12-storey building, with 300,000 square feet of residential units and 40,000 square feet of retail space, would be 130 feet high, more than twice the presently permitted maximum. Rio-Can will need the approval of Council to this variation, and also to an easing of the required parking ratios.

Comments from the public centred around traffic and environmental issues, the effect on Cuthbert Holmes, and the impact of what would be the largest building in this area.

Rio-Can will work with a partner, as yet unknown, in this venture.

There will be further opportunities for public input and comment as (and if) this project moves forward. — John Hoole

## West Gorge Traffic Calming Project

**T**he West Gorge Traffic Calming project continues to take tiny steps forward. Work on the sidewalks along Bodega is now complete — it was originally scheduled for last November. Other pieces that will be undertaken this year are the new sidewalk at the hill on Davida, and the sidewalk at Austin/Ker joining up with a raised crosswalk at the entrance of Cuthbert Holmes. There is a sewer pump station being completed at this intersection and this work will precede the building of the sidewalk.

The other measures will wait until the effect of closing Colquitz at Admirals is known — and this has now been postponed until final decisions are made regarding the siting and schedule for the new bridge. We will keep you posted....

## — Snippets —

Have you noticed the emerging blossoms on the boulevard trees lining such streets as Vincent, Earl Grey and Heath? They make quite a show. If you would like your street to be similarly adorned, contact Saanich Parks for the latest on costs, upkeep, and what type of tree would be suitable—and then get on to your neighbours.

\*

Good news about local concerts in the Park. There will be two this year, one at Rudd Park on July 29, and the other at Meadow Park on August 26. These free concerts are a great opportunity to enjoy our parks in a family event. The GTCA contributes to the cost and provides the needed volunteer help, but our thanks to Saanich for being the major sponsor and organizer. More details will follow.

\*

Here's an opportunity to support Craigflower Elementary School at the soon-to-be-opened Starbucks in the Gorge Shopping Centre. The Friends and Family event will be on March 26, from 3:30pm to 7:30pm, and all food and beverages will be by donation with all the money raised going to the school to generate funds desperately needed for its programs. Through Starbucks' program to support literacy, this store location has adopted Craigflower School.

*continued on page 7...*



The popular family bike parade from last year's Canada Day Picnic. Photo by Karen Laberee

## 10<sup>th</sup> Gorge Canada Day Picnic!

**I**t's with equal degrees of pride and astonishment that I sit down to write about the tenth Gorge Canada Day Picnic. That your community association has been able to establish one of the premier Canada Day events in the capital region is no small feat, and we are again in the picnic planning process for a landmark #10 on Tuesday, July 1st.

Each year, right from the beginning, we have enjoyed not only great support from people in Gorge Tillicum, but also tremendous help from the Municipality of Saanich and local businesses. The event has also been quite blessed by the weather, and so we are hoping that all of these factors will converge again to make this year's picnic another very special day.

As we organize for this year, it is time again to invite your participation. Ideas and energy are always needed, as this is a volunteer effort from a small group of your neighbours, so please connect with me if you are keen to join this winning team.

I'd also like to hear from you about the Picnic. What do you like? What could be improved upon? What memories from our first decade do you have? Let me know!

Here's hoping for another great Canada Day on the Gorge.

— Harry Lewis

### Deanna Noyce & John Francis

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**The Gorge Waterway Initiative is pleased to announce the next presentation in their free Speakers Series.**

## **Eelgrass in the Gorge**

Date: Monday, March 17, 2008 Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Place: Burnside Gorge Community Centre,  
Community Activity Room, 471 Cecelia Road

Nikki Wright presents images and information about the thriving eelgrass meadows beneath the Gorge waters. Learn about this vital seagrass environment and its' inhabitants. The presentation includes a "living aquarium" for inter-active participation.

## **At Last! Styrofoam Recycling!**

For many years I used to despair at throwing away Styrofoam packaging, but now there is a business that is taking it for recycling—Pacific Mobile Depots. And, it's more than just Styrofoam, they also take hard and soft plastic, drink cartons, polystyrene and electronic items. While we are hoping in the future to have a depot in our area, for now the closest drop points are in Esquimalt behind the Tudor House Pub, and at Reynolds Secondary School (Borden/McKenzie) on the fourth Saturday of each month, 9am-1pm. For full details, including other drop-off dates and locations, check out their website: [www.pacificmobiledepots.com](http://www.pacificmobiledepots.com).

— Harry Lewis

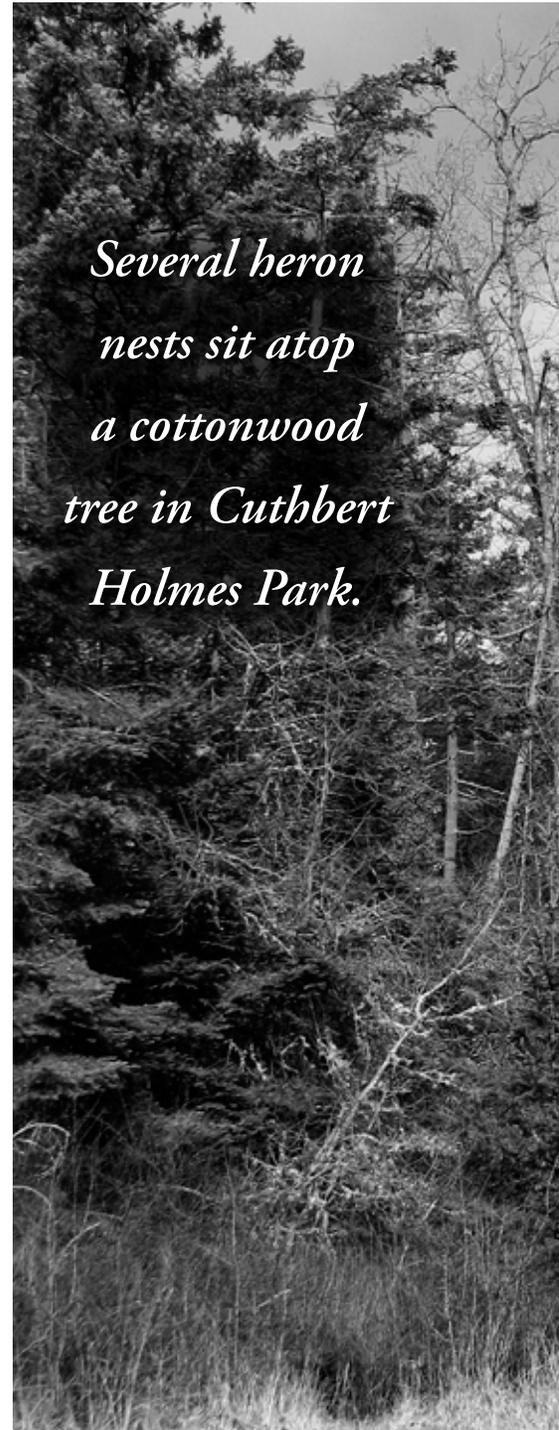
## **The Editor...**

Regarding the letter 'save Cuthbert Holmes Park', my dog and I walk the park at least once a week, and I have never seen the drug-related interaction, garbage and human waste that the writer mentioned. In fact, it is one of the few places I have walked where there is no broken glass or dog waste. I keep to the trails and go in the day time. I find it a nice short walk, as do other people with dogs I meet.

— Iris Nunn

Regarding the letter concerning the declining condition of Cuthbert Holmes Park, I am most concerned at the unchecked spread of scrub trees, ivy and other invasive vegetation. I suggest that Saanich Parks, the GTCA and the community get together to try and sort out some sort of vegetation management plan for the park, and a timetable for achieving it. I know the GTCA has spearheaded the excellent work that has been done on Gorge Park, and perhaps it is time for a similar effort being made for Cuthbert Holmes. I am sure that there would be a great deal of community support for this.

— Agnes George



*Several heron  
nests sit atop  
a cottonwood  
tree in Cuthbert  
Holmes Park.*



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Photo by R. Burman

## Cuthbert Holmes Park

On February 5, 2008, 21 stakeholders from the Saanich Community gathered to discuss the current conditions of Cuthbert Holmes Park. All interest groups were represented, including Saanich Police and Fire departments, Spectrum and Colquitz Schools, Silver City, RioCan, Pearkes, the province, the GTCA, park users, and Friends of Cuthbert Holmes. The meeting was an opportunity for everyone to put issues and ideas about the future of our park on the table, and all participants expressed an interest in pursuing solutions.

*This park has a long and storied history for our community. Everyone agreed that it is somewhat of a hidden jewel, but that it is now time to work together to create both short and long term visions that will improve the sustainability of the property for our community.*

Ray Roer, of Saanich Parks, suggested a community development model which sets tasks for each stakeholder in partnership. Julian Anderson has started a group, Friends of Cuthbert Holmes, which is particularly interested in the ecology of the park. Anyone interested in finding out more about this group should contact Julian at [cuthbertholmes@telus.net](mailto:cuthbertholmes@telus.net) (or 388-3115).

— Rob Wickson

## Gorge Park & Earth Day

It is that time of the year again when spring brings us back outdoors and into our gardens and parks. Those of you familiar with Gorge Park will notice how much things have changed over the last few years. The park is more open and feeling safer. There are more places to sit and enjoy a snack or picnic lunch. The Gorge Waterway is also more visible and the trees planted at the Centennial celebrations are growing nicely. All of this is a result of work by Saanich Parks and the Gorge Tillicum Community Association volunteers and supporters.

There is still much work that needs doing, and as such, we are happy to have another park clean-up in conjunction with Earth Day. Of course, that work involves cleaning out those invasive brambles and persistent ivy that manage to work their way into the environment of the park.

**Our Earth Day work in Gorge Park will take place Saturday, April 19, 2008, from 9:00–1:00. We will meet in the usual spot across from Fairway Market. Saanich Parks will provide the tools, and Tim Horton's the treats.**

We hope to see all of you once again, and please bring a friend. Don't forget to wear your work boots and bring your thick work gloves, as you join us for another work out in Gorge Park.



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**Become a member of the Gorge Tillicum Community Association TODAY!**

**Why become a member?**

- Membership dues are only \$5.00 per person (\$25.00 per business).
- Your fee will help support our Annual Canada Day Picnic.
- Your fee also helps fund the publication of this quarterly newsletter, a valuable information link to the community.
- You will become part of a very active group of community-minded people, who care about the Gorge Tillicum Community and its neighbourhood.
- **Be eligible for draw prizes at the Canada Day Picnic.**

**Don't Delay! Send in this form TODAY!**

Mail to:

Gorge Tillicum Community Association,  
P.O. Box 44152, Victoria, BC V9A 2A0

**2008 Membership Application/Renewal**

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A brand new facility in your neighbourhood has opened at G.R. Pearkes. The newly renovated Fieldhouse at Pearkes is ready for a multitude of uses. The building has been transformed in order to house four programs, all at the same time! Curtains have been hung, the floor has been remodelled—and, just like that we have a wonderful space to house all our programs, trade shows, and special events.

The Fieldhouse has been very busy this February with lacrosse, baseball and birthday parties. On an average night (for example, Tuesday) we have seen 300–400 people use our new space. Sport groups, trade show professionals, and private users have complimented us on the transformation and how the space is now more user-friendly.

We continue to improve our facility and programs to better serve the community, and hope that all our neighbours in the Gorge Tillicum community will visit us soon. The space is approximately 25,000 square feet, and is limited in function only to the extent of your imagination!

**For more information on rentals, please call 475-5400.**



**Facility & Registration Hours:**

**Jan 5<sup>th</sup> - July 1<sup>st</sup>**  
Mon-Fri 6:30AM- 10:00PM  
Sat-Sun 7:00AM - 10:00PM

**Stat Holiday Hours:**

MAR 21 – CLOSED  
MAR 24 – CLOSED  
MAY 19 – CLOSED  
JULY 1 – CLOSED

**Special Events:**

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KIDS MEGA SALE, MAY 24



**PARKS & RECREATION**  
Pearkes Recreation Centre

PEARKES RECREATION CENTRE  
3100 Tillicum Road  
Phone 475-5400



24 hr info:  
475-5576  
www.saanich.ca