

Summer Village of Itaska Winter Newsletter

December, 2006

Summer Village of Itaska Beach(780) 312-0928



Special points of interest:

- Watershed meeting: January 27, 2007 at 10 a.m. at Ma-Me-O Beach town hall
- Keep Itaska beautiful—make sure your ditch is clean of garbage!

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Garbage

Garbage service is being discontinued around Pigeon Lake by the current provider due to labor shortages. Council, with the other Summer Villages is looking at options which include:

- Front load containers, which would be placed in an area convenient for the driver as well as residents;
- New contractors which may offer door-to-door service;
- Extension of door-to-door service by current provider to allow for proper time to evaluate alternatives, possibly until April 30, 2007.

Regardless of the solution chosen, we anticipate and are budgeting in 2007 for a considerable garbage disposal cost increase next year. More information on this Municipal Service will be provided as we reach closure on our options in the weeks ahead.



NEW-Development Process

An easy-to-follow development process has been completed. One new change includes a \$2,500 security deposit being required.

If you are considering building next year, please APPLY EARLY, as development applications require a number of documents to be completed, and are approved

by Council at their monthly meetings. After approval, there is also a 21 day waiting period.

Please contact the administration office for a copy of the land use bylaw, and the development application.

Taxes

We have received questions on how taxes can be paid. Itaska has chosen to keep the process as simple as possible.

The tax year is from January—December, and taxes are due by July 31.

A one-time payment may be made by cheque or cash.

Please note that the Tax Discount bylaw has been rescinded.

Trees

We had the County of Leduc horticulturalist look at the trees in Itaska. She said that the spruce trees by the boat launch had a severe spider mite infestation (and because of the age of them, have probably seen spider mites before). We let mother nature take care of this, as the frost kills the spider mites. If they come back again next year, we can pressure spray them with water (and even put a little bit of organic soap in it), and that will shake them out of the tree. Apparently, the

spider mites are very common with spruce, and flourished because of our hot, dry summer.

As for the trees along the road, there is some sort of decline, which could be from the calcium chloride application, but during the fall, you will see a lot of problems with polar stands. Council is reviewing options available for the road, including the amount of calcium chloride that is being applied.

“For cabins, septic tanks are not a good idea, unless there are just a few cottages on the lake.”

Lake Quality, by Dr. David Schlinder, September 22, 2006

“I am not optimistic at all about Pigeon Lake. It has had exponentially increasing inputs of nutrients over time.

The reason in all cases is land use change, typically agriculture and poor cottage developments. Typically, changing forests to ag land increase nutrient losses to water by about 2X. Adding manure or fertilizer to the land increase it still more.

Destruction of wetlands and riparian vegetation contributes as well, because these areas trap nutrients.

For cabins, septic tanks are not a good idea, unless there are just a few cottages on the lake.

But sewage alone is not the problem. Roads and streets and lawns leak fertilizer, pet excrement and other nutrient sources as well as herbicides, pesticides etc. into water.

In many parts of the USA, street runoff is as big a contributor of nutrients as sewage.

Then there are changes to fisheries. Removing top predators in Alberta lakes cause smaller fish populations (minnows, etc) to thrive. In turn, these eat the small crustaceans that feed on algae, reducing their numbers, stripping away yet another mechanism that protects against algae blooms.

It is the same story over and over and over again in this province. I'm sorry to say that I see little hope for Pigeon, with the current space of thoughtless development.”

David is a professor at the University of Alberta. His team of researchers recently received a \$50,000 grant from Alberta Environment to study possible scientific methods to improve water quality in some Alberta lakes.

Fertilizer for Lawns and Gardens

We all know that fertilized lawns has a major impact on not only the lake, but our own health. What can you do about it? If you need to fertilize, try to use products that will have the least impact.

We have found a company - Eco Solutions, that offers an organic fertilizer, made from corn gluten, which seems to be safe for people, pets and the environment. For further information, you can go to www.eco-solutions.net, or contact Greg Sutherland at (204) 282-5190.

Stewardship Initiative Planned for Pigeon Lake

It is no secret that water quality conditions at Pigeon Lake this past summer were not ideal. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that this was a one-time event as years of excessive nutrient input coupled with increasing development and recreational demands are not exactly a formula for sustaining long-term lake health. The solution hinges on a more informed, more concerned, more caring public willing to take the actions necessary to protect and enhance their local environment.

porting agencies and policy-setters to develop programs and opportunities to protect and improve conditions within the local watershed.

The government of Alberta, in its Water for Life Strategy, further recognizes the value of stewardship, and encourages opportunities for citizens, communities, industries, and government to work together to monitor conditions within the watershed, and to more effectively find solutions to their

In recent years there has been a groundswell of public interest in watershed planning and management; across the province, concerned citizens are coming together to take a more active role in promoting and supporting stewardship efforts to address their local issues and opportunities. It is at the level of these local community-based stewardship groups that things happen on the landscape, because it is at this level that each of us has the capacity to make that change.

water issues. Currently there are more than 100 active watershed stewardship groups throughout Alberta, established at all geographic scales (watershed, sub-basin, basin); unfortunately, no such group exists for Pigeon Lake and its watershed.

Stewardship is an ethic. It starts with each and every one of us recognizing and accepting that we have a role to play in protecting and enhancing our environment.

Typical activities of watershed stewardship groups may include: enhancing public awareness of local issues and opportunities, monitoring the water quality of lakes and streams; coordinating shoreline riparian assessments as an indicator of shoreline health; promoting and partnering in the implementation of best management practices (agricultural, residential); undertaking hands-on project to restore habitat for fish, ducks, or other wildlife; and working with sup-

If you are interested in doing your part and assisting others to do theirs, you are invited to participate in an organizational meeting to establish a watershed stewardship group for the Pigeon Lake Watershed.

The meeting is scheduled for 10:00 am, January 27, 2007, at the Ma-Me-O Beach town hall (615 – 2nd Avenue). For more information, contact Ruth Harrison at (780) 955-4566 or (780) 789-2181.

“The solution hinges on a more informed, more concerned, more caring public”

Outdoor Fires

When having outdoor fires, we are aware that we always have to be safe, but there are other factors to keep in mind:

- be respectful of your neighbours—watch where you put your fire, and how the smoke could affect the neighbouring homes
- Side effects of fires include:

Woodburning generates smoke, which contains fine particulates. These fine particulates can remain in the air for days and have the potential to penetrate deep into the lungs if inhaled. The potential effects of fine particulates vary from irritation of the eyes and respiratory tract, to more serious disorders, including asthma, bronchitis, reduced lung function and early mortality.

Children, the elderly and people with lung disease tend to be the most vulnerable. Wood smoke also contains a number of compounds, such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) which are also potentially harmful to human health.



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COUNCIL

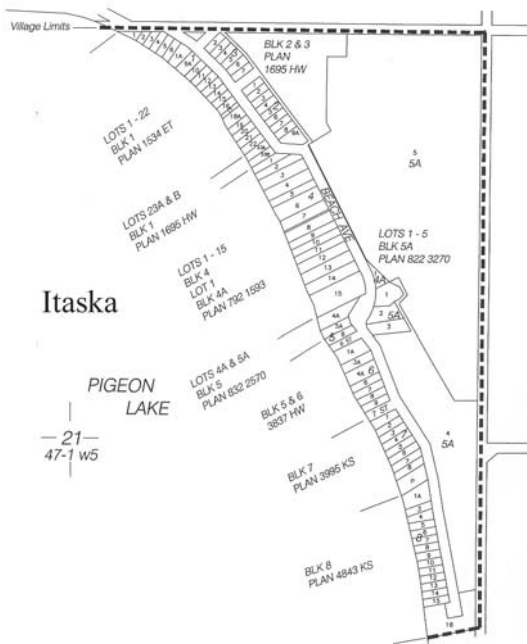
Rick Redl—Mayor
Ralph Johnston—Councillor
Jerry Rudnisky—Councillor

Chief Administrative Officer

June Boyda



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



Chief Administrative Officer, June Boyda

June Boyda was hired as Itaska’s Chief Administrative Officer on July 1, 2006.

June grew up on a farm in the Pigeon Lake area, and spent her summers in Ma-Me-O Beach where her grandparents live.

Her background includes a Bachelor of Science, Specialization in Computing Science, with a Business Minor, as well as a Local Government Certificate with Distinction from the University of Alberta.

June’s municipal background includes acting as the Assistant CAO for 5 of the south side summer villages, as well as most recently the Assistant CAO in the Town of Millet.

June and her husband live in Wetaskiwin, and are kept busy by their ever exploring 15 month old baby girl.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact June at the above information.