

Ridge Meadows Recycling Society

Recycling Report

MARCH, 2015



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Ridge Meadows Recycling Society's 800th Member signed up recently and will receive this gift made from recycled, post-consumer materials.

Thank you for your continued support and see you at our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, April 7!

What is Garbage?

By Leanne Koehn

Each year I visit a local Immigrant Services Society class to talk about the recycling system here in Maple Ridge and environmentalism in general. One of the activities the teacher does with them in preparation for my visit is to list certain items and ask whether they go into the recycling, to second-hand stores, into the compost, or if it's actual garbage.

I always find it interesting to consider that before people really got into recycling, EVERYTHING was considered "garbage," but farther back then that, when we couldn't afford to waste things, NOTHING was. A conclusion the students and I always come to is that **'garbage' is just materials we can't recycle or haven't found another use for yet.**

Unfortunately we are creating more and more "single use" items that are very difficult to recycle or reuse.

Separating and banning recyclable items from the 'garbage' was a good first step. This helped recognize the **value** in these commodities and develop a market for them, which in turn created green jobs.

Separating organics (food scraps and yard trimmings) from 'garbage' is another huge step.

This alone reduces household garbage by 30-40% and diverts these materials to compost facilities, where the nutrients are able to be recycled into new soil. Again, the **value** of organics is recognized and spared from becoming 'garbage' to be buried or burned.

Once recyclable and organic materials are diverted from the landfill or incinerator, what's left? The picture to the right shows Dan Mikolay, our Environmental Educator, after a recent waste audit he did with the School District at Maple Ridge Secondary School. They took after-lunch garbage cans and sorted them into "recyclable," "compostable," and "still edible."

The TWO items he's holding up are the only things they found that actually belong in the garbage. Think of the savings if that much were diverted every day, at every school, in every district. Money saved from garbage disposal fees can instead be used to fund organics & recycling programs. Could you do this kind of money-saving waste diversion at home?



RMRS Environmental Educator Dan Mikolay shows the results of a recent waste audit at Maple Ridge Secondary School

Photo by Amanda de Barros



**Ken Williams, Board Member,
Ridge Meadows Recycling**

Ken Williams Celebrates Nature's Cycles of Renewal

Ken Williams has been a resident in Maple Ridge since 1970. He taught secondary school for 30 years in the community until retirement. A Grade 11 program called Community Studies earned his students at Thomas Haney a Provincial Environmental Award in 2002 and his Envirothon Club represented British Columbia at the 2004 North American competition in West Virginia.

Ken is active in Big Brothers, the Ridge Canoe & Kayak Club, 1stHaney Scouting, and has been on the Board of Kanaka Education and Environmental Partnership Society (KEEPS).

The motto often associated with our segment of the waste industry is "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle". If you are a committed reader of the Ridge Meadows Recycling Society newsletter, you will be aware of the series of articles in the latest issues, that have all been titled with other significant "R" words. Having discussed Rejoice, Re-Think and Respect over the past 3 months, I would like to add Renew to the list.

Renewal is such an appropriate topic for this time of the year. Nature is in full swing with the process of renewing a new cycle of life, now that the dormancy of winter is over. We all know the saying "April showers, bring May flowers" and how true it is that recycled water that falls as spring rain is critical for the upcoming season of growth. Shoots are emerging from the ground, new leaves are appearing and even early blossoms are brightening the landscape. Birds are already building nests, a new army of insects is hatching and salmon fry are rising from the gravel beds of our creeks and rivers. All of this springtime renewal, of course, has made been possible only because of what preceded it during the fall, winter and early spring.

*"Nature is the planet's
ultimate recycler."*

Nature is the planet's ultimate recycler. Water and minerals all have their natural cycles of reuse and nothing shed by living things, including their bodies at life's end, is ever spared the recycling process. Legions of bacteria and fungi tackle abandoned organic material that ranges from the leaves that fall from trees at summers end to the salmon carcasses that litter the banks of our waterways in autumn. It's only from the nutrients released by rot and decay that new generations of living things can be created.

We all can take a lesson from this reality and emulate what Nature does on an annual and ongoing basis and the Recycling Society can give you a helping hand. Firstly, because water is such an essential compound for life, you can help reduce your water use by purchasing a Rain Barrel from our supply at the Depot. Using the Barrel you can intercept water during nature's recycling process by collecting the rain from a downspout that carries the water off your roof. You can then use the water to renew the moisture in your garden's soil during the drier parts of the year.

To renew the growing capacity of the soil itself you can also introduce a Composter to your array of gardening devices. The large, black, plastic containers that are available from the Depot, allow you to effectively recycle large quantities of vegetative material such as grass clippings, leaves, ashes, sawdust and some organic kitchen waste into nutrient rich humus for lawn and garden use.

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Earth Day is Coming!! Enter a Contest, Volunteer, or Set up a Booth!

The annual Earth Day Celebration in Maple Ridge kicks off at 10am on **Saturday April 18, 2015** at Memorial Peace Park, with the theme **“Water, Water Everywhere.”** This fun-filled, eco-inspired family event will include many of the same features it has in the past, with some new ones focusing on water conservation, water pollution, and water scarcity.

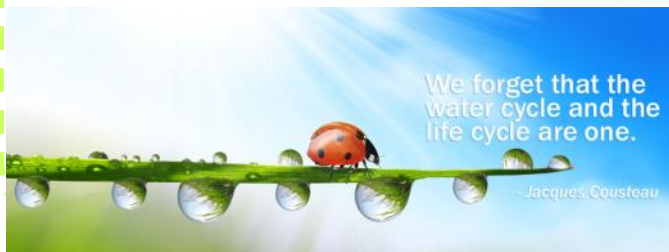
“We are looking forward to having a lot of fun with our theme this year,” says Event Coordinator Leanne Koehn, “We’re working with several organizations who protect our local waterways to help celebrate how we use water, how it affects us, and how we can continue to protect it.”

Earth Day favourites from past years will be back, including the **Cycle Recycle Free Bike Draw**, lots of kids’ crafts, **VEVA’s** electric vehicle display, the **Big Fish Storytelling Tent**, roving entertainers, flash mobs, the **Family Freecycle**, & more. Don’t miss this year’s inaugural **Food Truck Festival** organized by Hunger Management’s Dan Beitel!

This year’s event also features the work of two of the City’s **Artists in Residence**, performing artist Kat Wahamaa’s “WaterBody” project and visual artist Robi Smith creating an interactive recycled art piece on the Bandstand.

The **Earth Day Poetry & Photography Contests** are now accepting entries based on the “Water” theme, see the **Celebrate Earth Day in Maple Ridge Facebook Page** for more details & contest deadlines. Entries can be sent to maple.ridgeearthday2015@gmail.com

Volunteers are needed to make this year’s event another success! **Volunteers should be prepared to do a minimum of two hours**, (but four would be better!) Some may be asked to come earlier or later to help with set-up & take down. Refreshments will be provided! Any potential volunteer who would like more information is welcome to phone Carla at 604-466-8324 or email carlar2@telus.net.



The lineup for community groups and local green businesses at Celebrate Earth Day is growing daily! Local green businesses or community organizations who would like to participate in this exciting day can download a registration form at

www.rmrecycling.org



“Nature’s Cycle of Renewal” (Ken Williams)...continued from page 2

Another composting device promoted by RMRS is the Solar Cone Food Digester. Intended exclusively for household organic wastes, this device eliminates the problem of food disposal. Essentially all of your kitchen scraps, including meats and bones, will be liquefied and pass into the soil through its perforated recessed base.

All three of these products are themselves constructed of recycled plastic. Their faithful use will enable you to play an important role in the balance of the important, limited resources upon which the renewal of our planet’s precious life depends.

Important Dates...

NO BLUE BOX PICKUP, RECYCLING DEPOT CLOSED:
Friday, April 3 - Good Friday
Monday, April 6 - Easter Monday



Spring Chipping Program Set-out Deadlines:

WEST Maple Ridge = Tuesday, April 7 **EAST Maple Ridge = Monday, April 20**

No pre-registration necessary, simply place branches at curbside by set-out deadlines for pickup & chipping. See our website for details regarding set-out.



Earth Hour - Saturday, March 28, 8:30-9:30pm

Switch off your lights for Earth Hour, a powerful message for action.

***Ridge Meadows Recycling Society AGM - Tuesday, April 7**
6:30pm at The Well in Chances Gaming Centre, 22710 Lougheed Highway

LAST Committee Resource Fair - Tuesday, April 14

7pm at Thomas Haney Secondary *For students & young adults with extra support needs searching for career & resource options*

Celebrate Earth Day - Saturday, April 18

10am - 2pm at the Bandstand, Memorial Peace Park, and the Greg Moore Youth Centre, Maple Ridge

Ridge Meadows Home Show - May 1-3

Friday - Sunday, May 1-3 at Planet Ice and the Albion Fairgrounds
For more information visit www.ridgemeanowshomeshow.com



Light Refreshments

LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

TRANSITION RESOURCE FAIR

DOOR PRIZES **Tues. April 14th 2015 ☆ 7:00-8:30 pm**

THIS YEAR: The Ministry of Social Development & Social Inclusion will share important information about the changes to earnings deductions.

AT: Returns of Thomas Haney Secondary 23000 - 116th Avenue Maple Ridge BC

Are you a student or young adult with extra support needs who is searching for career & resource options?

Who will be there?
To help you plan for Life after High School:
Post Secondary Institutions
The Ministry of Social Development & Social Innovation
Community Living BC
Ministry of Children and Family Development
Recreational and Leisure Services
Employment Agencies
Many more Service Providers

Sponsored by: School District 63, Community Living BC, Ridge Meadows Association for Community Living, Maple Ridge Post Secondary Community Services, WestBC, Ministry of Social Development and Social Inclusion, Ridge Meadows Parks and Leisure Services, Ridge Meadows Recycling, Ministry of Children and Family Development and ReSkillBC

For more information or transportation to the event - contact: Dennis Lacroix @ 604-628-1156

Mission Statement

"Ridge Meadows Recycling Society is a community-based, non-profit organization, advocating zero waste, operating responsible waste reduction services and providing environmental education. We employ people with developmental disabilities assisting their integration into the community."

Vision

"A waste free, socially responsible community."



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