
LUD TIMES

(Lorette)

Spring 2004

In this issue

- LUD Committee/Village Update
- Public Works Update
- West Nile
- 2004 Taxes
- Village Policing
- Parks and Recreation Update
- Community Groups
- Lorette Incorporation

LUD Committee/Village Update

Spring is here and it's time again to give the community an idea of what's planned for this year. If the first few months are any indication it's going to be another busy year for our community.

The new grocery store is well under way and Federated Co-op indicates that they expect to be open for business at their new location in July. This project not only provides better service to the area, but will also bring some new job opportunities. The owners have indicated that their staff could double.

Did you know that the developer of the new "la Seigneurie" Development has sold all of his lots? That's not to say that there are no new home opportunities available. On the contrary, several big name builders have purchased much of the inventory and are confident enough in our community that there are now several show homes already available for viewing. There was also very good demand from private buyers; in fact the developer has indicated that there was more interest than lots.

This development was so successful that the committee has been approached by at least two other developers looking to do business in our community. These are exciting times for our community, as steady managed growth will mean better services and possibly new businesses looking to locate in our community.

A public meeting was held this spring to unveil the vision study for Lorette. The study was compiled by Gaboury Prefontaine Perry Architects, and is a growing document designed to give direction and ideas for the future. The study was well received by those residents

in attendance, and many other good ideas were brought forward by the public that evening and will be incorporated into the vision. We expect that copies will be available to the public for a nominal fee to cover costs. We expect to have both this info on computer CD and in paper format at the RM Office shortly. In addition, this information will likely also be available for viewing online at loretteonline.ca. This is a working/growing document and your input is welcome.

With the majority of the vision study being completed the focus will shift to establishing a Community Development Corporation. This will help the community access funds and professional advice that could bring new industry and businesses to our community. If you'd like to have some input please call Ross at 878-2052 or 878-2884 for more information.

We know there hasn't been much said but we want you to know that the 55+ Project is still very much alive. We have been working with the developer and investors to find a concept that will work for Lorette. Stay tuned; when we have plans solidified we'll let you know.

Public Works

This year it will be business as usual for our public works team. Sand has been removed from all of the boulevards and street sweeping will soon be under way. We are planning the usual road maintenance projects and are investigating a couple of options to handle the heavy loads and dust in the Station Road area.

Last fall the Committee acquired a good used one-ton truck with a sander, dump box and plow. We were able to deal with light snow plowing and all of our sanding needs. We never intended to look after the major snow removal needs and were quite happy to put that work in the hands of local contractors. We however were very satisfied with the results from our equipment and the savings we were able to obtain by doing some of the winter work ourselves. The dump box will also allow us to get year round benefits from this equipment.

2004 Taxes

In past years we have been quick to point out that the school divisions and RM have raised the mil rate and ultimately the taxes. Since being elected the LUD

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Committee has worked hard every year to provide better service with no increase in taxes. In fact over the past six years we have lowered the village mil rate/taxes. To the community's credit, in 2002, our community had even been cited by The Canadian Taxpayers Federation as the least expensive community to own a home in the Winnipeg Capital Region.

Unfortunately, this year we will be seeing a slight increase in the village mil rate. The increase will be approximately 1.22 mils and brings us back up to where we were six years ago when this committee was first elected. This decision was not made without a good bit of debate. The committee is confident that when the taxes and assessment generated from new growth in the community kick in next year we will be able to get back on track with tax reductions. We encourage you to check the sheet enclosed with your tax bill to see changes to the RM mil rate and a comparison from last year.

Ditches and Drainage

Do you have a ditch in front or along side of your home? Have you noticed that the LUD has been making great efforts to cleanup neglected ditches in our community? Ditches cluttered with trash, weeds, grass clippings and bulrushes are an eyesore and breeding ground for mosquitoes and possibly the West Nile Virus.

If the Village had to look after every ditch in the area the costs to the community could be enormous. Everyone can help by maintaining the ditch in your area. By doing our own little part we make our community more attractive, safer, and help keep our taxes some of the lowest in the area.

Parks and Recreation

This year's parks & recreation planning is less ambitious than in past years. We intend to fence along some of the waking trails installed last year. Install some additional benches and trash containers along existing paths, and maybe add a sand box to the Carson Park Tot lot.

We have joined forces with the Lorette Optimists and have constructed some skate board/BMX ramps which are now in use at the west side outdoor rink area. The ramps were an immediate hit with local youth as they were in use even as they were being moved in. Thank you to C.J. Kroeker of Landmark, the Katimavik group and the Lorette Optimist Group, for helping to make this happen.

Skate Boarders Take Note

- **You use this equipment at your own risk.**
- It is your responsibility to wear protective equipment.

- There are trash containers on site, please keep your area clean. Please no glass bottles in the park area.
- You are asked to be good neighbors, so we are asking that you respect the closing time of 10 PM, weekdays and 10:30 weekends.
- Please respect less experienced skaters.
- Play Safe and Have Fun!!!

If you're interested in painting designs or logos on the equipment we'll supply the paint and brushes. Please submit a sketch of your design along with your name and phone # to the RM Office. No profanity will be allowed. It's yours so please respect it!

SUMP PUMPS

Are you contributing to basement flooding? If your sump pump is connected to the sewer system the simple answer is **yes**. While this might not affect you directly you should realize that your actions could be placing your neighbor's home downstream in jeopardy.

The sanitary sewer system was never designed to handle runoff and sump pump water. Over the past few years the Committee has implemented a sump pump/backup valve program to help protect residents from sewer back. We have also raised numerous manholes in the community to prevent runoff water from entering the system.

This spring we experienced three inches of rain combined with frozen culverts and a quick thaw. For many communities this was a disastrous combination. Our crew worked a shift in excess of 24 hours straight without complaint and thanks to their hard work and Mother Nature giving us a break Lorette faired quite well. Way to go Ray and Gilles!!

This spring's experience has taught us another valuable lesson about sump pumps. We noticed that in many cases culverts were frozen solid and it seems that sump pumps were again the culprits. Pump discharges directed to the front ditch had many culverts frozen completely solid. This made it a long job to steam open culverts and in a quick melt/heavy rain runoff water was running into the sewers.

In both cases your proper handling of your sump pump can help prevent disaster for you and your neighbor. **Your sump discharge should never go into the sewer system under any circumstance.** In the fall, directing the discharge away from the front ditch will help prevent your culvert from being frozen in the spring. These simple steps could help prevent basement flooding. Residents are advised to take the necessary precautions to protect your home against sewer backup and flooding, as the Village is **NOT RESPONSIBLE.**

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West Nile Virus (details from www.gov.mb.ca)

With spring comes the inevitable mosquito!!

West Nile virus (WNV) is a relatively new infectious disease. In Manitoba, the risk of WNV so far has been low, but it may increase over time. For individual Manitobans the risk of infection is expected to remain low and the risk of serious health effects, even lower.

The virus is transmitted by mosquitoes. Most people who are bitten by an infected mosquito do not become ill. For those who do, the symptoms are usually mild. In some cases, serious illness and death can occur.

Most of the time, people infected by West Nile virus have no symptoms and do not become ill. Of those who do become ill, most will have a mild illness with symptoms such as fever, headache and body aches.

Less frequently, the virus can cause encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain. This is more likely to occur among older adults (50+) and people who have weakened immune systems. Encephalitis has serious complications and can be life-threatening. These complications include weakness, paralysis, confusion and coma.

You can help to reduce mosquito numbers by reducing mosquito-breeding sites around your home.

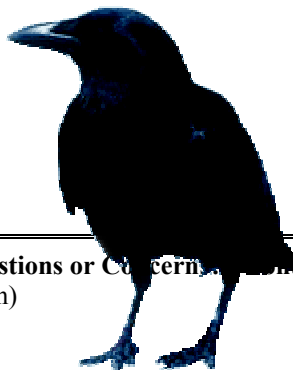
- You can minimize your exposure to mosquito bites.
- You can help detect the West Nile virus in your area by helping with bird surveillance efforts.

Birds from the crow family (corvids) are very susceptible to WNV. Many die soon after becoming infected. Testing dead crows and other corvids provides an early indication of the presence of infected mosquitoes in an area.

You can help detect West Nile virus in your area by reporting dead crows, blue jays, magpies or ravens to Health Links at 788-8200 in Winnipeg (outside Winnipeg toll-free 1-888-315-9257).

Not all reported birds will be picked up for testing. The type and condition of the bird, and whether a positive bird has already been identified in the same area, are factors that Health Links will consider when you call. If appropriate, arrangements will be made to pick up the bird for testing. Health Links may offer alternative advice, including precautions you should take to handle a dead bird safely:

- Don't touch the dead bird with your bare hands.



- Take care not to scratch or puncture your skin while handling the bird.
- Use a shovel or a plastic bag to pick it up.
- Promptly wash your hands well with soap and water. To reduce mosquito-breeding sites around your home, eliminate unnecessary standing water by:
 - cleaning and emptying your eavestroughs, pool covers and other items that might collect water regularly;
 - cleaning and emptying bird baths weekly;
 - ensuring that openings in rain barrels are covered with mosquito screening or tightly sealed around the downspout; and
 - making sure your yard is clear of old tires or other debris that collects water.

Earlier this year the LUD Committee requested that council participate in a program with the City of Winnipeg to larvicide in our area. Unfortunately council declined this request as it would have been limited to the western wards of the RM and Village of Lorette. We have been fortunate that mosquitoes have not been a big problem this year, but hopefully Council will reconsider for next year, as it's obvious that this problem is here to stay. In the meantime we must all take action to help protect ourselves. For more information go to www.gov.mb.ca or call 788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 for more information.

Service Groups/Upcoming Events

Seine Singers

If you've never attended the Seine Singers Dessert Concert, you don't know what you've been missing. Every year The Singers put on this concert and bring in a special guest group. The entertainment is first class and the desserts are fabulous, it's just an excellent event for a very worthwhile cause.

You see The Singers put on this event as part of fund raising efforts to purchase a grand piano for use in the community. If you'd like to help out you can send a donation to Seine Singers, Box 334 Lorette, MB R0A 0Y0, or plan to attend next spring's concert.

Optimist Club

When: Monday nights, 7 PM

Where: Lounge, Dawson Motor Inn

Are you interested in getting involved in a service club dedicated to helping youth in our community? Then you need to check out the Optimist Club. If we all do our own little bit, we can make a difference. Come out or call Anna at 878-4277.

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Lorette Communiqué

Published bi-weekly by local volunteers and supported by the LUD Committee, the Communiqué is an excellent source of local information. This local newsletter is available at most businesses and can also be found in electronic format at www.loretteonline.ca. You can email your upcoming event to news1@mts.net or news2@mts.net. Of course the phone works too, just call 878-2353 or 878-3547.

Beautification Committee

Have you ever come across something in your travels and said, *We should do that in Lorette?* Ever wanted to get more involved in sprucing up the community? Do you have ideas and suggestions that you'd like to share?

If you answered yes to any of these questions you should consider joining the Beautification Committee. Meet once or twice a year with likeminded people, plant a few flowers or trees and make a difference. Contact: Chris at C&S Garden Center 878-3454 or Ron Tardiff 878-9585.

Citizens on Patrol Program/Community Policing

The C.O.P.P. Program has a new ally this year, in the newly hired Peace Officers. Both Lorette and Landmark have contracted policing duties to Prairie By-law Enforcement. These are peace officers with the powers to enforce traffic violations, parking violations, municipal by-laws, deal with ATV and snowmobile complaints, and so on. The peace officers are here to do a lot more than just traffic duty, they will also help to supplement the RCMP and work with residents through the C.O.P.P. program, ultimately making our communities safer. The Peace Officers are recognized by the department of justice and the provincial courts so please take them seriously.

Do you know that the average speed in the 50 KM zone was 76.2 KMPH, or that 29 tickets were handed out in the first 10 days, as well as 15 warnings. Some of the offenses were as serious as driving under the influence and open liquor in a vehicle. We all know that these can be a deadly combination and not just for those in that vehicle. It's obvious by Prairie By-law's first report to The Committee that some attitudes will need to change.

We know that the RCMP can't be everywhere, but with help from the Peace Officers and members of the public through the C.O.P.P. Program we can all help to make our community a safer place to live and raise a family.

To get involved with C.O.P.P. contact Dave or Marg MacDonell at 878-2353.

Lorette Incorporation

You've probably heard the rumors and read in the Carillon that the LUD of Lorette has been trying to negotiate a better deal from the RM of Tache. The facts are that last December we hired two recognized experts in the field of municipal affairs and commissioned a study exploring the incorporation of Lorette.

Our position with council has been clear from the very beginning. That is our intention to bring all of the facts before the residents of Lorette through open public meetings and then the residents will decide. These meetings will likely happen this fall.

It is the perception in the outlying areas that their taxes go to support the settlement centers. However, that couldn't be further from the truth. In 2003, \$375,700.00 left the Village of Lorette as our part of Municipal at large expenditures. Our Councilor's budget was \$12,000, that's a whopping \$363,700.00 that left this community for at large RM services. In 2003 it cost the Village of Lorette over \$52,000.00 to dump our garbage at the municipal nuisance grounds. That was over and above the cost of collection. Do you know that it would have only cost \$23,868.00 to haul and dump in Steinbach? That's less than half the cost. In 2003 the Village contributed \$21,430.00 to the cost of the RM's high-speed internet project to provide high-speed internet service throughout the RM. This was done despite the fact that the Village has had high-speed internet available for several years through MTS at no cost to the taxpayer.

Do you know that 7 of the last 10 years the RM has run a deficit and that these deficits, typically for works outside the Village have cost the tax payers of Lorette approximately \$194,000.00. Some of these deficits we as a result of legitimate emergencies like the floods in the late nineties. We have no problems in paying our share of legitimate unpredictable over expenditures and we're sure you don't either. However, the residents of Lorette pay for the public works conducted in the village with no support from the RM at large, and it's galling to pay for deficits created through careless overspending on public works in the outlying wards.

These are just a few of the issues that are driving the current probe into the incorporation issue and not necessarily the most important. By all accounts we believe the Village could easily do quite well on our own, especially given the current growth in the community. The RM has the summer to come up with a fair proposal that could also be presented at the fall meetings; the ball is in their court.

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