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# LUD TIMES

(Lorette)

Spring/Summer 2006

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## ***Stay Informed, Get the Facts!***

That was our slogan almost 8 years ago when we sent out our first publication. As elected representatives of the Village of Lorette we felt there needed to be more communication with the public so we created the LUD Times. It started as a quarterly publication but as time went on we moved to Spring & Fall publications to keep the public up to date during our busier seasons. The intent of this publication is to let the community know what is happening with local government first hand rather than through the rumor mill. Since we know not everyone will agree with our efforts the Committee Members have always paid for this publication out of their own pockets.

## ***Law & Order!!***

Three summers ago we hired Prairie By-Law Enforcement to deal with local by-laws and enforcement of the Highway Traffic Act in our community. We were not alone as several other communities and municipalities were also involved at the time. The program was very successful in curbing speeding and other offences, and was very popular with most residents. Unfortunately there was a snag in the legislation and the program was discontinued.

Since that time we have continued to budget for additional policing in the hopes that an agreement to reinstate the program could be reached. It is our understanding that an agreement has recently been reached between the province and municipalities and the LUD would like to thank our MLA, The Honourable Ron Lemieux for his support and efforts in keeping the issue on the Provincial Government radar. The LUD Committee will examine the agreement to see if the program can be reinstated in our community in the future.

## ***Parking Signs***

The LUD has concerns that the old habit of parking on both sides of our residential streets could lead to a serious situation in an emergency. With vehicles parked on both sides of the street emergency vehicles like an ambulance or fire truck might not be able to get to their call in a timely manner. Therefore we will be posting one side of all residential streets as **NO PARKING**, please respect this decision, it could save a life.

## ***Citizens on Patrol***

This is a volunteer program where local residents patrol our streets acting as the eyes and ears for the RCMP. When suspicious activity is noted the volunteers contact the RCMP on the cell phone provided and the police are dispatched. Over the years this program has been very successful in reducing crime in our community and new volunteers are always needed. Last year 80 volunteers helped to keep our community safe.

Congratulations to all of the volunteers and especially the organizers. If you can spare an evening or would like more information regarding the program please call Dave or Marg at 878-2353, or Ross at 878-2052.

## ***Sump Pump/Backup Valve Program Extended Again this Year!!***

In 2003 we implemented a program to encourage all homeowners to **upgrade and protect** their homes by installing a sump pump and proper sewer backup valve. The program helps pay for the majority of the materials required leaving the homeowner responsible for the labor and inspection.

By upgrading, not only will you be protecting your home from sewer backup, you will also be helping to eliminate unnecessary water being pumped to the lagoon thereby extending its life.

You might say "who cares, I've never had a problem." Well you should know that this is an issue that affects us all. Homes without sump pumps discharge their weeping tile water into the sewer. This drives up pumping costs at the lift stations, uses up valuable storage space at the lagoon and puts other homes at risk by overloading the sewer system during heavy rains. You may have never had a problem before but with the increasing occurrence of extreme summer storms, your luck may be running out. **Also, if you have a sump pump and discharge it into the sewer you are in violation of the building code and are at risk of being fined.** Please take this matter seriously it affects everyone.

## ***Public Works (summer projects)***

1) This year there will be a much needed face lift of Station Road. The LUD has requested our

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engineers to come up with a staged plan and have budgeted funds in excess of \$150,000 for this year. In addition, with support from our MLA, the Honourable Ron Lemieux, we have been successful in having the road designated as eligible for Grant in Aid thereby securing some grant funding. These funds will be added to this project and we intend to go as far as we can with available funds this year.

2) The walkway in the Lajoie/Belanger area will be completed linking this area to Community Spirit Park and the community foot path system.

3) Chain link fencing will be installed in the area of the new walkways and existing fencing will be repaired where necessary.

4) As usual, general maintenance will be carried out on all roads within the community.

5) A new Timber Frame picnic shelter has been added to Community Spirit Park and some minor items need to be completed.

6) The LUD is working with the City of Winnipeg and a private firm to deal with mosquito larvaciding. This is an attempt to deal with the spread of mosquitoes carrying the West Nile Virus; the effectiveness of the larvaciding will be monitored.

7) A Red River Cart has been donated to Lorette by the Manitoba Métis Federation and we will be incorporating it into our ongoing street scaping plans.

8) We have recently completed the drilling of a new test well for the proposed new Village water supply. This test well is approximately 420' deep and preliminary reports estimate that water volumes of 450 gallons per minute are possible, that's more than three times our current output. In addition, the water is very soft and could eliminate the need for water softeners. On the negative side the water is somewhat saltier than the engineers had hoped for, but likely not noticeable. Discussions and investigations are ongoing.

## ***Boil Water Advisory***

As mentioned in our last news letter and in several direct mailers sent to all local residents, there is still a **Boil Water Advisory** in effect for the Village of Lorette and surrounding area. The problem occurred due to the extreme rains of last June & July, and likely as a direct result of overland flooding contaminating a local private well or wells.

As an update approximately 1130 residents in the LUD of Lorette are serviced by the municipal water system while the remaining residents, approximately 950, are serviced by private wells. In general terms we all access the same underground water supply or aquifer as our water source. Those residents on the municipal supply have the benefit of knowing that their water is chlorinated and tested weekly for

bacteria, while the residents on private wells are left unprotected.

The boil water advisory is still in effect because the aquifer has shown that it is vulnerable in extreme situations and the advisory will likely not be lifted until steps have been taken to prevent the possibility of a catastrophe like Walkerton. So even though the system operated by the LUD is not the source of the problem, the local government has been tasked with the responsibility of dealing with this problem for all residents including those serviced by private wells.

So you might ask, What's Next? Well since last fall the LUD has inspected almost every private well in the district. We've identified 40 or so private wells that need to be upgraded or decommissioned (shut down) and have secured some funding for decommissioning. We are working with these well owners to help them repair or upgrade their system.

We have also commissioned an engineering study and formulated a plan to permanently deal with the issue. This plan consists of three phases.

- 1) The first phase will be to build a water reservoir, treatment facility, and pumping station large enough to service all residents. We are planning to access a deeper soft water aquifer so this facility would not only deal with the issues of demand, treatment and pressure, but would also deal with the **Hard Water** issue and could provide the opportunity for fire protection in the future.

The addition of fire hydrants would result in lower insurance premiums for residents while the soft water aquifer will eliminate the need for water softeners and reduce the amount of sodium that finds its way into our rivers and lakes. That's not only good for the environment, but the savings to property owners on insurance premiums, softener salt and hydro will help offset the costs to build this first phase.

- 2) The second and third phases are linked and would include running water mains down all streets not now serviced by the municipal supply. Homeowners would be encouraged to connect to the municipal system.

- 3) In the third phase we would be working with homeowner to decommission the remaining private wells, or at the very least making certain that there is absolutely no possibility of cross feeding between systems. This is extremely important to safeguard the quality of the new system and prevent contamination.

So if you're on a private well and it hasn't been identified as a problem, you might be asking, ***Why should I connect to the new water supply?***

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**Well no one will force you, but are you sure that the water you're using is safe?**

It's not tested weekly and it's not chlorinated. remember your well might be in good condition, but there could be a well near you that could be making you sick and you'd never even know about it. Some of the private wells causing the problems have water quality poorer than untreated river water!!

The municipal system will be safe and clean, and will be monitored by the Town and Province weekly. We believe the benefits are obvious and hope you will agree.

We've met with our local MP, Justice Minister Vic Toews, our MLA, The Honorable Ron Lemieux, and the RM Council and are confident we have their support on this very serious issue. We've also applied to the Canada/Manitoba infrastructure program for funding and believe our project will be recognized as a top priority.

We'll keep you posted, but in the meantime, please continue to follow the recommendations on the advisory.

***“Come Grow With Us”***

We've branded this slogan in the advertising and promotion of our community. Most recently Adler Properties, the developer of Serenity Trails proposed that The LUD participate in the production of an information and services magazine to promote the community and its businesses. What developed was a high quality 24 page promotional magazine that highlights local services and amenities.

We're really happy with the way the magazine turned out and are pleased to report that a French version is in the works and should be available soon. Copies are available from most local businesses and at the RM Office. Please pick one up and pass it on.

***Village Incorporation***

Over the last few years we've reported that the LUD Committee was seriously looking at the possibility of incorporation. The committee felt that the needs of Lorette would be better served by electing a Mayor and town council rather than the current system of electing a committee that is part of the RM Council.

There were and are a number of issues of contention and the LUD Committee proposed 10 items that they felt needed to be addressed.

These items were primarily issues of taxation and revenue sharing as well as effective representation for Lorette.

The RM Council asked the LUD to delay their plans for incorporation until the RM could prepare a

response to our concerns. Several meetings ensued and a compromise was struck.

So, why did we agree to a compromise when we stated we believed it was in the community's best interest to incorporate and become a town? Well the simple answer was time. Incorporation is a lengthy process and one that could have serious financial implications for both parties. The community would have to have reached a consensus and have all of its plans in place a minimum of 6 months prior to elections and we weren't comfortable rushing into it.

In addition, we believe the RM recognized that there was strong support in the community for incorporation and so they offered a better sharing arrangement with the LUD of Lorette and Landmark. As well, in the next elections residents of Lorette will be electing **TWO** councilors for Lorette (ward 4) instead of the single councilor elected in past elections.

This additional representation is crucial if the urban centers are to have effective representation at the council table. Currently you have four councilors representing 4 rural wards and two representing the 2 urban wards. The needs and concerns can be vastly different and often the needs of the urban areas are not met as the urban councilors are simply outvoted. Assuming the Reeve is elected from an urban center and there are 3 councilors from the urban areas there will be a more even representation for all.

This means that there will have to be negotiation or compromise between the parties. It will no longer be possible for one faction to simply outvote the other and isn't that a fairer arrangement. Especially when probably 40% or more of the RM's tax revenue is generated in the two urban centers?

We felt that this new structure was worth a try before we moved to a full scale change such as incorporation.

By the way, rumor has it that Ross Deschambault and Ron Tardiff are considering running for the two council positions for Lorette. Jeff Norman, has worked very hard for the community but with the addition to Jeff and Jill's family he's hoping to spend a little more time with family. Rumor has it he's considering running for LUD and so is Carol Laramee. It's already shaping up to be an interesting election, let's see what the fall brings!

***Utility Rate Review in the Works***

Sewer and water rates in this community have not changed since the early 90's and every year it's becoming more difficult for the Utility to balance the budget.

The Utility, by municipal law must run on a balanced budget. That is to say that the total income must

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balance with the expenditures, with only a small margin (profit if any) being allowed to go into a reserve.

Over the last few years expenditures have out paced income and utility reserves have been used to balance the books. A utility is allowed to build reserves for those occasions when unforeseen expenditures occur and to help with future upgrades to the system, but not to balance the books year after year.

In Lorette, it's not uncommon for a family of four to have a quarterly water bill of \$30 to \$50, while the average bill per household is typically as much as a \$150 per quarter higher in other municipalities. It's obvious that the current rates simply no longer realistically reflect the cost of providing the service.

The LUD Committee is concerned that the continued use of reserves could leave the utility in a serious financial crunch should an emergency arise. While the good news is that the utility is in relatively good overall condition and no major repairs are foreseeable in the near future, we need to be prudent and plan for the future.

As with all utilities, the sewer and water utility must report to the Public Utilities Board, and ultimately they will decide what rates are necessary for a viable utility.

### ***Well, Here We Go Again!!***

Last year we had 8 flags stolen from the center boulevards as well as several arsons. It seems the flag thieves are back as 4 flags were taken from the boulevards recently.

It's been suggested that we should just give up. Why keep putting the flags out if they're just going to be stolen, for that matter why try to beautify the community if vandals will trash it? Of course we're not going to give up and those who have made the suggestion aren't serious. They're just frustrated by the irresponsible behavior of a few bored kids.

We think the real questions should be directed to the parents. Do you know where your young person is at night? And do they have so little pride in their community that they feel the need to damage personal and public property.

If your young person has a new flag you might want to check and see if it's marked with "Property of the RM of Tache" or LUD. If it is, maybe you need to have a serious talk with your young person before petty crime turns into something much bigger. Hopefully these young people will smarten up before someone gets hurt or ends up with a criminal record.

By the way, it seems a local business has captured a photo of one of the thieves on video surveillance.

Parents, you should know that we intend to have the RCMP look into this matter. Maybe you and your young person should come forward before the RCMP show up at your door as we intend to take this matter seriously.

### ***Volunteers Needed***

In past years Ron Tardiff and Ross Deschambault have organized the Christmas Tree Lighting and Remembrance Day Ceremonies. Both events have been very popular and have grown to the point where it is no longer possible for two people to effectively do all that is necessary to ensure that the events are both safe and successful.

Therefore we are looking to organize community volunteers who would be interested in helping with the planning and implementation of both events. Ron and Ross will be happy to continue working on both events and look forward to hearing from interested parties. When we have a group of volunteers we'll call a planning meeting and move forward. If you're interested in helping out please call Ron Tardiff at 878-9585 or Ross Deschambault at 878-2052.

### ***Lorette Beautification Committee***

If you're interested in beautifying the community then the Lorette Beautification committee needs you. This committee meets at the most twice a year and plants all of the flowers that you see on public property. They also make suggestions to the LUD Committee for future projects. It's a fun group and it seems that everyone has a special talent they bring. Maybe you have a talent you'd like to contribute or you'd just like to help out.

Next year the committee is hoping to enter the Communities in Bloom program. This will require a large commitment of time and effort on the part of the committee, but the results should be incredible!

If you think you might be interested call Ron Tardiff at 878-9585 or Marg MacDonell 878-2353 for more information. The Beautification Committee is a great way to meet other community minded people and you'll love the results. Why not give us a call?

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