



News from the Lodge



Autumn, 2017

All the News that's fit to Point...

...by Richard Hill

Tell Me More About The...

Watershed Petition

Posted in the Lobby.

A number of guests have asked me about this situation, with some apparent confusion between the property in question, and the property next door (*see related article, page 2*).

The petition in the lobby was provided by some concerned neighbours and it regards a 60 acre parcel of land in the middle of the Yellow Point neighbourhood that is located on the back side of Yellow Point Park, (3 km. from here). It is in and around the watershed area that feeds the lakes and creeks that eventually flow through our property on their way to the ocean.

Several months ago, the land was owned by a numbered company that was owned by Coastland Wood Industries, of Nanaimo. Their job is making stuff out of trees, so they were going to log the property in order to supply their mills with roughly two days worth of fibre, for their production.

This got the neighbours worried about what effect the clearcutting would have on the properties ability to collect and deliver water to the groundwater system, which is sensitive in this area, to say the least, because of the shallow soil and ever present sandstone bedrock.

They started a campaign as the 'Yellow Point Community Forest Society', with a significant Facebook presence and did their best to try and persuade Coastland to sell the property to a more benevolent buyer in order to have the land treated in a, still profitable, but gentler fashion.

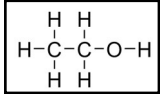
However, public campaigns being what they are, the two parties were at odds and Coastland led people to believe they had sold the property to the Snuneymuxw (*Nanaimo*) when in fact, they still have title and appear to be surveying for logging road construction. When this will happen is anyone's guess.

The petition isn't worded as well as it could be, in my opinion. It doesn't ask a specific party to take or avoid a specific action and appears to be a 'show of support' type of document. Therefore everyone, including our American friends and people from outside the area, are welcome and encouraged to sign it.

What's the Latest on the...

Liquor License

review and update?



Ethyl Alcohol

In the last issue I reported that our liquor license had to be updated to reflect the size and shape of the current lodge, as well as addressing how we serve liquor. Specifically, the lobby has to be part of the 'licensed' area, since you have to walk through the lobby to get from where you buy your adult beverage (*the office*) to where you'll most likely be enjoying it (*the dining room or lounge*).

So I dutifully assembled all the application forms, compiled the floor plans, paid the money and sent it all in last May.

I recently heard back from the 'license analyst' with a number of questions regarding how we carry on our operation (*ie: what is a 'guest fridge' for?*) and informing me that the lobby can't be licensed, because it's a lobby.

Now I understand that it's a big province, and this person sees countless applications and there have to be rules and standards that are applied. Therefore, my challenge will be trying to communicate the nature of the operation, so the analyst can understand that people usually pick up their drinks and proceed into another room or that the lobby is not a classical 'hotel lobby' in the usual sense of the word, but really an extension of the existing lounge (*or 'sitting room' as we're calling it, so as not to confuse them with the word 'lounge'*)

The root of my problem is that 30 years ago we were granted a 'food primary' license to get things tidied up and because everyone who was staying here was automatically eating. Now there are regulations about availability of food when a 'food primary' place is open, and the term now is more in line with a restaurant, in order to differentiate it from a 'bar'.

That introduces complications like the fact the ping-pong table is not permitted in a 'food primary' location because it makes you get up from your seat.

I'll keep you posted after I hear back from them, and there is still the distinct possibility of a reasonable solution. However, if you ever see a round indentation on any of the walls in the building, it's probably from me banging my head against it.



Okay, so what is going on with the...

NEXT DOOR SUBDIVISION?

First, some quick background information for new readers: The property next door used to be a 140 acre, perfectly square, farm lot, owned by our neighbours the Rice Family. (*Tara and Colleen, granddaughters, lead the kitchen and I grew up with their uncle Joe, his brother, Frank was a friend during the rebuilding*). One corner of the 'square' is the only part of the property that touches the waterfront. After Mrs. Rice passed away, the property was purchased by a consortium of neighbours with the plan of sub-dividing the property into building lots (*ranging from 2.5 to 17 acres*) and making a profit by selling them. This was several years ago, when guests started noticing the real estate signs along Yellow Point Rd.

The project was divided into three 'Phases' presumably by the Dept. of Highways, which oversees all subdivisions.

'Phase One', has finally sold, mainly being the lots along the road, which opens the door for 'Phase Two'. Due to the heavy handed approach that was taken by some of the buyers of 'Phase One' (*ie: giant clearcut along the trail and the excessive blasting and half completed project known to neighbours as the 'rock garden'*) we are naturally concerned about what could happen as the rest of the project sells. Okay, that's the background information.

There are two more lots that border our property, down the trail from the clearcut and right next to our house. However, they are not included in 'Phase Two', but are two of the three remaining lots that will comprise 'Phase Three'.

'Phase Two' has to sell out before they can commence sales on that, according to my understanding, and that probably won't occur too quickly, according to one of the developers.

'Phase Two' also, by Dept. of Highways mandate, includes a couple of larger lots, (*9 and 17 acres*) and I would imagine that would narrow the field of prospective buyers somewhat, leading to a longer timeline.

I have indicated my interest in purchasing the border properties to the real estate agent (*also a friend and neighbour*) and he has indicated not only his interest in seeing them sold to the lodge, but also the sellers willingness to consider the possibility. The financing is in place already as well, however, things change over time, nothings done until it's done and I've always said that you don't know the weather 'till you stick your head out the window, so we'll see.

However, things look as good as they can as far as preventing any more giant clearcuts right next door. There is one lot in 'Phase Two' that could be visible to us, as it borders the existing clearcut, but it won't be right in our face, if it also gets logged.

So, as usual, keep your fingers crossed and I'll keep you posted with any developments.

Here's a little background / Primer
on our somewhat quirky

RESERVATION SYSTEM

There is a little paragraph on the back of each newsletter about getting your own reservation, re-booking and what have you, but every time I get a lot of questions on any given topic, I figure that it's probably a good time to devote a little newsletter space to it, so here we go.

The three main drivers of our policy are the facts that *we're* not that big, Vancouver and Victoria *are* and you nice people seem to want to come and stay here quite a bit.

Because we get so many regular and repeat guests, we have a reservation system that only works for one year ahead of the current day. That means that if you always come here for your anniversary, birthday, or just the same time each year to see your friends, nobody can call us 14 months or two years ahead and bump you out of your spot. We love our regulars, and that's how we protect them.

We also have lot of people that would like to come and spend a few days here with their friends, that is why were a bit hard-nosed about people missing years, or sending people in their spots and wanting us to re-book them for the following year.

If someone is earnestly trying to get a spot and wants to be a regular guest, and someone else has a spot, but keeps wanting to miss their dates, or send other people, we are going to look more favorably on the people that want to be guests. That explains that policy that states that unless there is a legitimate medical emergency, you can only send substitute guests in your place once and have your room re-booked. If its been a long, long time since you've last sent 'subs', we'll review your request on a case specific basis.

Also, please note that unless it's a booking date for surgery, you probably won't know about a medical emergency three months ahead of time. It's been tried.

So, enough of the cranky, official stuff. If you would like more, or another stay, or have friends or family that you'd like to get a spot for, please review the little paragraph on the back page, it explains the steps to take with our office. (*read it quickly right now, I'll wait*)... *...(done? good!)*

The reason this works is that when we get a cancellation, the first thing we do is look up and down the big white reservation boards to see who has a note on their little square about wanting an 'upgrade' or a longer stay or even another room for someone else. We then contact them and if they don't take the spot, we'll post it on our website, or in the case of last minute or significant vacancies, on our Facebook page.

With the number of guests we have, I'm afraid that, in the interest of fairness, we are really not able to consider 'exceptions' to our rules. You'd not like it if we said 'no' to you and 'yes' to someone else. I hope this clears up our procedures a bit, thanks for being here!



Over Half of our
55 Staff People
have received
**First
Aid
Training!**

Since June we've had the good people of the St. John's Ambulance Society in to the Rumpus Room to certify as many staff people as possible with their 'Level 1' First Aid training.

It's something we've been doing for decades here, but this is the highest number of people we've had with current tickets at any one time since we started.

The training is a combination of video, live instruction, hands on practice (*see photo*) and takes a full eight hour day to complete, with certification being granted after the successful completion of a multiple choice examination.

It is basically a course in how to keep somebody alive until an ambulance arrives, but is tremendous knowledge for anyone to have, especially at a place like ours where there a lot of active people doing active things, and folks that are more mature, facing different challenges.

It also included a section on the proper operation of the A.E.D. (Automatic External Defibrillator) that is mounted on the wall, in the kitchen hallway, across from the ice machine. These are now regarded as the most significant tool available to increase someone's chances of survival during a cardiac emergency.

I found it very interesting and informative. It is also a good way to ease your mind as to how prepared you'd be in case of an emergency, because you've just prepared yourself.

The training has been used by various staff numerous times since it was completed, with no really serious injuries or incidents, I'm happy to report. Please see the reference to said training in Mr. Kennedy-Macneil's submission to 'Poetry Corner' on this page.

You'll be happy to hear that everybody passed the exam and we now have 35 trained first aid people on staff, which means that there will always be more than one person (*more like five or six*) with the training and ability to help you or your loved ones as healthy as possible in case of a, hopefully never occurring, emergency.

This is not a reason to be less careful, drink more, or do anything we would deem as 'silly'.

External Factors that Cost More...



HOTEL TAX

and the

MINIMUM WAGE



Whenever it is necessary for us to raise our rates a bit, which we try to keep reasonable, I am frequently mocked and ridiculed by our guests, in a friendly manner; 'Oh no Richard, it's going up by a latte!' they may exclaim, 'and you're only giving me a years notice!'. Well, that's the way we like it. Nice and reasonable, we hope, and not too many increases so things stay the same and nobody gets too excited.

However, we just had to deal with the addition of a 'destination marketing fee' (*see previous issues*) and the next unexpected thing on the horizon is the upcoming big jump in the minimum wage.

We don't have many staff at that level, but when the minimum goes up, and you have valued people, it tends to push the numbers up, because the message you send to people with the minimum wage is, 'I'd be paying you less if I was allowed to'.

With the minimum scheduled to go up to \$15 per hour in the next couple of years, this could be significant. We certainly don't begrudge people a good living and actually pay a bit higher than the industry average. This is just part of the landscape to consider if your bill goes up by another latte in the near future.

People Seen Waiting Outside
Beach Cabin
Actually Wanting to Buy Fruit:



After noticing some people standing outside their Beach Cabin for several minutes, the guest staying there finally asked them what was going on. They said they'd just been up in the Okanagan, had a hankering for some peaches and were waiting for the stand to open. When they realized the guest was paying *good money* to actually stay there, they left without saying anything further.

Erratum: the diagram of the alcohol molecule in last seasons newsletter was not the 'ethyl' alcohol that we consume but actually a very poisonous benzene based version. That has been corrected, thanks to Bill Twaites.

Poetry Corner

nanaimo bars

hearing the possibility
of nanaimo bar foursies
causes mad dash
from hot tub ecstasy
on tipsy new travel scoot
resulting in tight corner spill
with bloody foot results
making me glad
that Ilse is one of thirty five
first aide attendants

on staff
at yellowpoint

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New Guest Information:

...on reserving and re-booking.

Re-Booking Your Room: In order to support as many of our guests who wish to be regular guests as possible, our reservation system only works for a period of **one year** in advance of today's date. So if you want to come at the same time, year to year (*for whatever reason, and we hope you do*) you can, because nobody can book 14 months ahead, and take your spot.

Getting Your Own Reservation: We have tried, and it is nearly impossible to maintain a regular 'Waiting List' because there are too many different dates and accommodation types.

If you're in someone else's spot (ie: *holding a friend's reservation for them*) we will be re-booking the spot for them, but you can ask them to put a '*would like another reservation*' request on their reservation, so if we get a cancellation we call them and can get you in.

If you call the office and we don't have the room you'd like, it's suggested that you book whatever we have and ask that a '*would like upgrade*' be noted. If a better room comes available, you'll have a chance at it, depending on who requested an upgrade first.

Try calling us two weeks ahead of your preferred date, that is when lots of people cancel because they can still get their deposits refunded if they give us that much notice.

Don't forget to check the website for our 'post it note' vacancy page, at yellowpointlodge.com and keep your eye on our Facebook page, as well.

...and on more general policies.

Cellphones and Laptops: are fine anywhere *except*, at the request of a lot of guests, in **the main lounge and dining room**. The lobby is fine, and the downstairs lounge is encouraged. However 'E-readers' and 'tablets' are okay in the big, main room (*they're more discrete*). We don't have wi-fi, and probably never will.

Drinking in the Hot Tub: is a big health and safety risk, and, I'm afraid has to be on our 'strictly prohibited' list. This is for everyone's well being. Please enjoy beverages before or after, but not *during* your visit to the hot tub.

Really general policies: are probably defined as 'the Golden Rule'. We don't have a ton of specific rules around here, (*exception: above*) and since we seem to attract a fairly well behaved, top quality group of guests, rules and regulations are seldom an issue. We like people to have all the fun they want (*hence the sprung dance floor*) but not at the expense of the other guests ability to relax and enjoy themselves.

F.A.Q.

...frequently avoided questions

How come I can't bring my own wine into the lounge or dining room?

Basically, it's because we have a liquor licence. We are permitted to sell alcoholic beverages to our guests for their enjoyment in our public areas, but if you wish to furnish your own drinks, they'll have to be enjoyed in the comfort, or Spartan surroundings, of your room or cabin. We are not participating in the 'corkage' program, due to the difficulty of monitoring and the fact that our liquor pricing 'mark-up' policy is very modest.

Why are you so particular about what my special diet is?

Firstly, if you have a serious allergy or medical condition, we want to make absolutely certain that we get it right. Secondly, one way that we maintain our fairly reasonable rates is by serving our meals 'banquet' or 'boy scout camp' style. If you have a serious dietary condition or are a committed vegetarian, for example, our staff will do everything possible to accommodate you. On the other hand, if your diet is optional, or a preference it makes it a lot harder on the kitchen. The bottom line is: if you've told us you don't eat pork, then order bacon, we will gently ask you to reconsider your dietary request.

What's the deal with live music here?

The owner of the lodge, Richard Hill (*me*) played a lot of music earlier in life and has some talented neighbourhood friends. On most Friday nights there is an informal 'acoustic jam' in the lobby and, on Saturdays at 9:00 a swinging, vintage styled, rock 'n' roll dance party (*complete with trophy*) in the main lounge (*always done by 11:00*). However, sometimes my friends have an 'off site' gig with their Beatles tribute band, the Deafaid, so I can't guarantee music every weekend.

On any day of the week, any guest who entertains the other guests with any form of musical talent, will receive at least one complimentary beverage. I always said "*If I ever get to be the boss, I'm going to give the band free drinks!*"

Do you mind if I feed the dogs?

Since three out of the four dogs are so tiny, and the fourth one is a junior, we kindly request that, no matter how 'persuasive' (*ie: mooch-happy little bums*) they are, please don't ever feed the dogs even the tiniest little bite. They really add up (*one little bite X 95 guests = puppy cardiac*) and most of the snacks that they would mooch off of you are not healthy for them, at all. They get fed plenty at home, no matter what they tell you.
