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## RNA February 2024 Newsletter

Dear Neighbours,

I have two great pieces of news to impart! Firstly - the city has bowed to the pleas of neighbours to put a crosswalk across Rockland Avenue at Royal Terrace. This has long been a problem area. A crosswalk will not only give protection to the many people who need to cross at that junction, but will serve to slow down the many drivers who continue to treat Rockland Avenue as a race track. Thanks to all the neighbours who wrote in support of this much-needed safety upgrade.

Secondly - yes, Cinderella, you shall go to the ball! Oh, alright.....it's a reception, not a ball, but it's finally going ahead! The RNA will join with Government House in hosting a reception at the end of March. This much-loved community event is normally held biennially, but - as with so much - Covid prevented us. I haven't a lot of details to pass along at this point, but I can tell you that numbers will be limited, and that tickets will be issued to paid-up members of the RNA. As soon as we have the details ironed out, a special notice will arrive in your inbox. In the meantime, the membership renewal emails have gone out. If you haven't followed up, you can find it [here](#).

### Synopsis of the Draft Minutes of the February RNA Board Meeting:

#### Councillor's Report

- Marg recommends that the RNA come up with our preferences for any updates to Rockland Avenue in order to present this to the city.

#### Land Use - a special presentation by Bob June

- Official Community Plan (Bob June)

- Bob attended a meeting about the Official Community Plan (OCP). There is going to be a significant change in how land use operates due to Provincial Gov't's Bill 44. Any rezoning that does not require an official community plan amendment does not have to go before council or have a public hearing. The OCP update is going to have minimal engagement over an exceedingly tight timeline. The concern is that this will be the "Official Council Plan", not the "Official Community Plan".
- Council has directed staff that this plan is to follow either:
  - 1) Bold Vision (allowing up to 4 story multi family buildings across all traditional neighbourhoods or
  - 2) Boldest Vision (allowing up to 6 story multi family buildings across all traditional neighbourhoods)
- Jeremy Caradonna suggested future buildings of up to 15 stories around all villages.
- There is a massive change coming with little public engagement, and no place for neighbourhood associations at the table. Bob suggested we bring this up at the AGM.
- City public services were discussed and whether they will be adequate for the new housing. Marg advised that we have replaced sewers and that this is the least of our issues. She is concerned about lack of parking spaces driving people out of the city.
- The city is talking about linear parks - taking streets and narrowing them or taking them out of commission to create parks. City is talking density of 3 to 1 for the new plan, which is similar to Vancouver or Hong Kong. Marg recommended that someone from the city (Andrea Hudson) Community Engagement come speak at the AGM.
- Marg advised that 4 - 6 story buildings are coming to James Bay.
- The BC Build program requires the use of city land. This is an issue as Victoria doesn't have the empty land that other municipalities have.

#### Environment and Woodland Garden

- Spring is nearly here! Are you ready to get your garden started? Help build a healthy soil base in your garden with free materials from the City. As part of the *Get Growing, Victoria!* program, compost and wood chips produced at the City's nursery in Beacon Hill Park will be dropped off at the Rockland Woodland Garden (corner of Joan Crescent and Craigdarroch Road.) Residential gardeners who bring their own containers and shovels can help themselves while supplies last. The event begins at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 20th (the first full day of spring!)

#### Social

- the RNA has been given a \$1000 grant to use for a block party in the neighbourhood this summer.  
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#### The RNA Annual General Meetin

Our AGM will take place on  
Tuesday, March 5th  
at

Grace Lutheran Church, 1273 Fort Street  
Doors will open at 6:45.

The AGM will begin at 7p.m.

Guest Speaker will be the AGGV's Chief Curator and Director of Collections and Exhibitions,  
Steven McNeil.

Light refreshments will be served.  
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#### In the Neighbourhood

##### Langham Court Theatre

- Murder Weekend takes place in an old country house somewhere in England in February of 1985. The house has recently been purchased by a newly-married couple, Laura and Mark Pendleton, who are running it as a Bed & Breakfast inn. A group of murder aficionados come for a weekend to re-enact and solve an actual murder that took place 20 years before. During the ensuing action, revelation upon revelation reveal that none of the participants, nor the events they re-enact, are as they appear to be. Was a gross injustice committed 20 years ago? And, if so, how will it be resolved? You'll have to see the play to find out all the answers to this engrossing puzzle.

February 21 - March 10 at Langham Court Theatre

Tickets are selling fast, so be sure to get yours soon. Call the Box Office at 250-384-2142 or go online at [www.langhamtheatre.ca](http://www.langhamtheatre.ca)

##### Craigdarroch Castle

- This is the Castle's quiet period before the crowds begin arriving in April. It's open from Wednesdays through Sundays. A leisurely self-guided tour will take you upwards of an hour, but there are also general interest guided tours available. You can find more information on their website (click on the title above), or by phoning the Castle at 250-592-5323.

##### Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

- Remember - thanks to the generosity of TD Bank, every Thursday evening is free at the AGGV!

- Current exhibitions include:

- **Atroquatics:** A Call and Response Below the Surface - an immersive and interactive installation which aims to spark conversation and to challenge perceptions. (to May 26)
- **Crossing:** Art, Heritage, and Personal Journeys - the narratives of three local painters on transformative journeys between Canada and Asia. (to May 26)
- **In the Flesh - the Nude in Art, Past and Present** - Enough with viewing the world on a screen! The AGGV invites you to join them in "a practice that the AGGV is currently embracing: to highlight treasures from the permanent collection and to create opportunities for our communities to experience great art in the Flesh." (to March 31)

##### Government House

- If you've noticed a lot of vehicles around the house and grounds lately, thank Hallmark! Curious Caterer 4 Productions (a BC based production company) booked Government House from February 8-16, 2024 for the filming a Hallmark murder mystery entitled "Sticks & Stones." Roughly 120 cast & crew were on-site each day of filming in various rooms. There's no release date known as of yet, but it will show up eventually and you'll have the chance to see corners of Government House seldom seen by the locals!

- Government House is open to the public via guided tours. Tours give a look into the residence of the Lieutenant Governor and the ceremonial home of all British Columbians, covering history, points of interest, and art and architecture. Tours are free but space is limited, and visitors must register in advance.

Public Tours Schedule: 2024 Winter Saturday Tour Dates:

- February 24
- March 9, March 23
- April 13, April 27

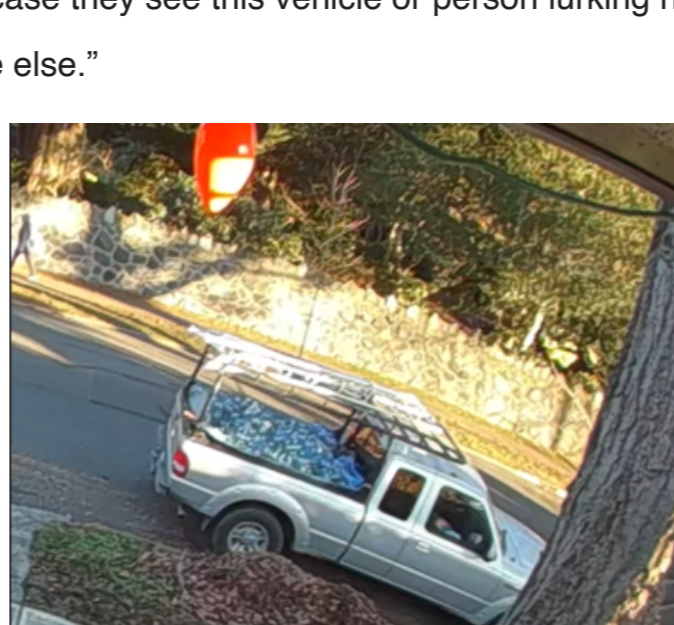
Pre-registration is required: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/o/government-house-49152051653>

Register and select a date and time here, up to two weeks ahead.

##### Opportunistic Crime Redux - From Art Hamilton, the president of the board:

In our last newsletter the theft of a toolbox was reported under the title, "Opportunistic Crime in Rockland". FYI, the homeowners provided the text attached. They also provided pictures their security cameras took of the individual and truck they believe responsible (the picture of the individual picture was too blurred to include).

Text: "I'm passing along notice of an incident that occurred on November 27th at around 3:20 pm. My husband was outside at our front gate stringing Christmas lights and had placed his tool kit and additional lighting on our front lawn. The person in the attached images drove past, parked at the front side of our house and crept along to where the tools were sitting. He stole an electrical tool kit, including the case, and drove away. My husband didn't notice until minutes later but we have video footage from our exterior cameras. Unfortunately, the license plate itself isn't clearly visible. I wanted to make other Rockland residents aware in case they see this vehicle or person lurking near their homes. Hopefully this doesn't happen to anyone else."



#### In the Broader Community

##### My Great Neighbourhood Update

###### Local Champions -

Interested in learning how to improve your neighbourhood? Apply now to join this community-based leadership development program. Twenty-four participants will gain the skills, confidence and connections to become more active and engaged in planning neighbourhood-led projects and activities. Through the program you will:

- Gain on-the-ground experience in community organizing and facilitation
- Develop practical skills, confidence and relationships to put your community ideas into action
- Connect with mentors and learn from other local champions
- Access resources and small grants to undertake neighbourhood projects

**When:** This six-part training series runs from March to September.

**Online Information Session:** On Thursday, February 8 from 7-7:45 p.m. join City staff and recent alumni to learn more about this program.

**Cost:** The six-part course valued at \$2,500, is being offered for \$250. If the cost is a barrier to you, please apply for a limited number of fully-funded spaces. This year the City is also sponsoring five spaces for residents interested in working on climate action projects, related to energy efficient homes.

**Application Deadline:** March 1, 2024

##### Get to Know the Neighbourhood Team

The Neighbourhood Team is committed to supporting community building in Victoria. We are here as a resource for anyone interested in improving their neighbourhood through community-led projects. We love to bring together neighbourhood groups and individuals to collaborate on a shared interest. We're ready to help you map out the best approach for a project or connecting you with the right City staff.

In 2024, Kimberley Stratford and Gary Pemberton will make up the Neighbourhood Team. Mike Hill retired at the end of November. Here are the neighbourhoods Gary and Kimberley support.

- **Gary Pemberton** [gpemberton@victoria.ca](mailto:gpemberton@victoria.ca)
  - Burnside George, Hillside Quadra, Jubilee, North Park, Oaklands, Rockland
- **Kimberley Stratford** [kstratford@victoria.ca](mailto:kstratford@victoria.ca)
  - Downtown, Fairfield, Gonzales, Fernwood, James Bay, Victoria West
- We look forward to continuing our work with Victoria's residents, groups and neighbourhood associations to build even stronger, more connected and more beautiful neighbourhoods in 2024

##### From City Hall

- Just a reminder that the City produces targeted email newsletters on a wide range of topics. The Business Hub Newsletter for February contains information on their new home - 720 Douglas Street (in the Victoria Conference Centre) What is business hub, you ask? It's "a welcoming, first point of contact for business start-ups, relocations, expansions, investors and others interested in creating prosperity in the City of Victoria." Their goal is to make the first steps with your new business as simple and positive as possible. The newsletter also introduces ten new economic development tools for city businesses. Do you need a refresher course in business law? Perhaps even an introduction? You can learn more about that, as well.

- For more information on this and other City of Victoria newsletters, just click [here!](#)

##### The Capital Regional District Newsletter

###### Detect and Save: Fix a Leak Week 2024!

Submitted by CRD Environmental Services March 2024

Did you know that household leaks can account for up to 14% of indoor water use? It's a significant figure but straightforward actions can make a big difference in preventing clean drinking water from being wasted.

###### Easy Steps to Leak Prevention:

1. **Annual Checkup:** Be proactive by inspecting faucets and toilets at least once a year. It's a simple yet effective way to catch and fix potential leaks.
2. **Emergency Preparedness:** Familiarize yourself with the location of your main water shut-off. This knowledge is invaluable in case of unexpected water leaks.
3. **Pay attention to common leaky fixtures:**
  - **Toilets:** Silent water wasters! A running toilet can waste significant water – up to 350,000 liters per year. You can easily check for leaks using a dye tablet, food coloring or instant coffee. If the water in your toilet bowl changes color after 15 minutes, you've detected a leak. Often, simple fixes like replacing a worn-out flapper can often solve the issue, but you may need professional help from your plumber.
  - **Faucets and Showerheads:** Keep an eye out for drips! Even a small, intermittent drip can waste over 35,000 liters annually. Check for worn washers and "O" rings. A leaky showerhead may just need a tighter connection or a touch of pipe tape.

This year, we'll celebrate Fix a Leak Week from March 18th to March 24th. Join us in spreading awareness about leak detection and its role in reducing potable water loss.

Throughout this week, multiple locations in the region will offer free leak detection kits. These kits include toilet dye tablets, a showerhead flow rate measurement bag, an emergency water shut-off tag, and a handy household guide to water efficiency.

Visit [www.crd.bc.ca/leaks](http://www.crd.bc.ca/leaks) to delve deeper into Fix a Leak Week and water conservation efforts in our region.

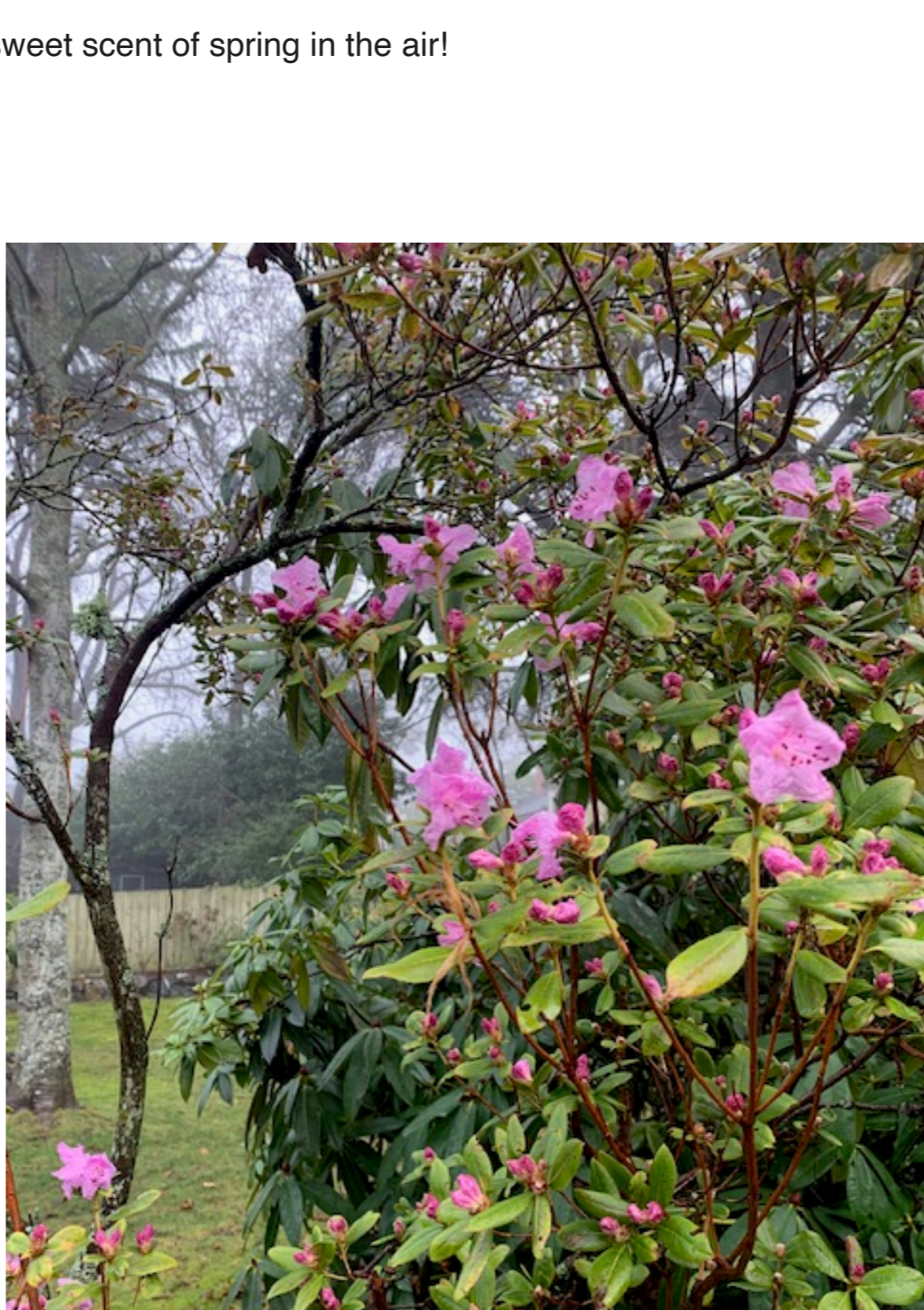
And finally.....

Don't forget that this is an intercalary or bissextile year, aka a leap year. But why leap? The best explanation I've managed to find is that the extra day in February then results in any fixed date of the calendar "leaping" over two days in the 12 months following February 29th. Thus, while Christmas Day 2023 fell on a Monday, this year we "leap" over the Tuesday and celebrate Christmas on a Wednesday. It all has to do with sidereal time and the fact that we like round numbers, which 365,242,190 just isn't.....and so on and so forth.

And while we're on the subject of time, don't forget that the clocks spring forward in the wee hours of the morning, Sunday March 10th.

Enjoy the sweet scent of spring in the air!

Patricia



Early rhododendron, Government House, Victoria  
Image copyright - Patricia Kidd

