

# SOUTHAMPTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



**PO Box 1081 Southampton ON NOH 2L0 Email:southamptonontario.org**

## December 2006 Newsletter

There are several activities and significant events occurring in Southampton and Saugeen Shores. So, this extra newsletter will help members to keep up to date even if some of you are now far away. **For those who have forgotten to rejoin the SRA, please mail your check immediately otherwise you will be taken off the mailing list on December 31<sup>st</sup>. This could affect those of you who expect winter patrols.**

### Municipal Election

Voting on November 13<sup>th</sup> has resulted in quite a different council. There was little debate on issues as the top three positions were by acclamation and the single All Candidates Night did not allow much debate amongst the sixteen hopefuls. Hopefully a better way can be developed next time. Some of the platform positions of the winners are summarized here from the meeting and The Shoreline Beacon, on our best effort basis!

Mike Smith is the new Mayor and has been on Council for 16 years and Deputy Mayor for 6 years. He has recently retired from Bruce Power. He is looking forward to implementing the new Official Plan and by-laws and is anxious to tackle the challenges due to growth of the community, including commercial development and traffic issues.

Doug Freiburger is now the Deputy Mayor and previously was Vice Deputy Mayor. He is the owner of Groundhog Divers and has been on Council since before amalgamation. He is chair of Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority and now chair of the Source Water Protection Board for the area. He supports controlled and logical growth in the commercial or industry base to offset residential taxes and to strengthen the community as a whole, while maintaining the unique character of all three wards. He wants to revisit the development charge issue.

Doug Gowanlock is the new Vice Deputy Mayor. He retired from Cooperators Insurance in Port Elgin in 2005 and has been on several volunteer boards for the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. He and his wife Linda operate Beagle Run Nursery and Orchard. He sees a need to work on some of the continuing problems created by growth in the community and by changes in provincial guidelines.

Thead Seaman was re-elected and has been on council since 1992. In addition to being a builder, he is active as a volunteer fireman, a captain of the Chantry Tour boat and is a member of the Southampton Friends of the Flag. He supports continuing to upgrade our beaches and waterways as they are our biggest assets for our tourism base. He would support development charges as long as they cover both residential and commercial/industrial concerns.

Diane Huber was elected as Southampton's second representative. She has degrees in public administration and planning and moved here four years ago after 20 years working in university administration. She has been chair of the Planning Advisory Committee. She would like to see a tree by-law enacted to protect trees and enhance the character of our community. She would like to see a comprehensive shoreline management strategy between governments, agencies and residents to protect and improve the beaches and dunes.

Luke Charbonneau was elected on his first try and is a familiar face at Hi-Berry Farms. He is on the Chamber of Commerce Board and vice chair of Pumpkinfest. He believes in good, reasoned planning to preserve our

agricultural heritage, support our local businesses and protect our beaches. He feels steps should be taken to beautify signage in the community.

Jane Barber was also elected for the first time. She operates the Wired Mouse and publishes Due North, building on her graphic arts background. She would like to develop a vision for fiscal responsibility combined with aesthetic vision.

Fred Schildroth was returned for a sixth term and works for Ontario Power Generation. He would like to improve signage and revisit development charges.

Victoria Serda was elected for the first time. She has an education background and experience in environmental issues, disabilities and the performing arts. She is a core member of the Creating Community Network and the Lake Huron Learning Collaborative.

We were sorry that Dunc McCallum decided not to run for a second term. He worked long and hard for the benefit of Southampton and Saugeen Shores and we owe him a big debt of gratitude. Thanks, Dunc.

### **Phragmites**

This foreign and invasive plant, known as Common Reed is rapidly spreading up the Lake Huron Shoreline. It can grow to 6 to 10 feet high and can spread 3 to 6 feet along the beach every year. It could potentially take over the entire beach as we now know it. It is well established in Eids Grove and Gobles Grove but is also been seen in many other places. Geoff Peach from the Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation has received a grant from the Federal Government to establish the best method to control and destroy this invasive plant. Saugeen Shores has been selected as the test site for this work. The Town is looking for our support in working on this problem next summer as procedures are developed. Gord Boyd, a director for the SRA is working hard to co-ordinate efforts with the Town. Attached to this newsletter is a letter from Mike Myatt of the Town describing this project and also a technical description of the Common Reid from the Lake Huron Centre. To help everyone understand this problem, we are also sending it out with this newsletter. The Port Elgin Beach Association is also very interested and totally involved in this program. It is very positive that the Port Elgin Beach Association and the SRA are working closely together with the Town on beach issues.

### **Dune Protection**

Several meetings have been held with officials from the Town and the Conservation Authority on the issues raised from the Peach Report. These are on-going. Changes have been made to the snow fencing layout in several places, going to a three row layout and these will be monitored to see if the desired effect is attained. The Town purchased another 2000 ft of fencing for this purpose.

A program has been started to transplant dune grasses from Gerry's Fries where there is an excess and plant them in the embryo area of dunes in front of Harmer St. The object is to develop these embryo dunes and hence reduce the growth of the main dunes, which are adversely affecting the sight lines of the well established cottages. November is the best time to transplant the grasses as they are dormant. Gord Boyd is coordinating this planting project and the Town is very appreciative of the volunteer support as it has greatly accelerated the project. Geoff Peach has provided class training in grass planting and education in preservation of the quality of our beaches to 23 students from GC Huston School. These students planted 3400 shoots over the area on November 24<sup>th</sup> assisted by Gord and a number of other volunteers. They were very enthusiastic about the planting and did an excellent job. We look forward to more plantings next year as well as progress on the other issues we raised with the Town.

### **Around Town**

The new streetlights are being installed along High St and hopefully will be decorated and lit up for the Christmas Season.

Compliments of the Season to one and all.

Tim Andersen for the Board



**Town of Saugeen Shores**  
600 Tomlinson Drive, P.O. Box 820  
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November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006

To: Residents of Saugeen Shores

The Town of Saugeen Shores have received numerous concerns regards the invasion of an alien, invasive plant now showing up along the Lake Huron Shoreline stretching from Huron Kinloss northerly to Tobermory.

This plant known as Common Reed or ( Phragmites Australis) is starting to cause major concern for our beach front mainly due to the height and the rapid pace of growth. Common Reed generally has annual cane like shoots that reach heights of 2 to 4 meters and disperses by seeds or rhizome fragments. Rhizomes are responsible for renewing and maintaining the population; a single plant spreads at a rate of 1-2 meters per year. Further details in regards to this invasive plant can be obtained at the following site:

- [www.lakehuron.on.ca](http://www.lakehuron.on.ca)

Geoff Peach from the Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Preservation was recently successful with receiving funding from the Federal Government to address this situation. Saugeen Shores has been chosen as test site for exploring various options in regards to the controlling and eventually destroying completely this invasive plant.

Three test sites have now been established.

- 1) Gobles Grove at the bottom of County Road 25 next to CAW lands. A 10 meter X 13 meter site has been mowed and covered with black plastic with plant materials left beneath the cover
- 2) Eids Grove Beach area (Two sites have been put in motion) One area includes a 10 meter X 13 meter sight covered with black plastic with plant materials moved off site and covered at landfill and the third site is a area 20 meter X 20 meter which has been mowed with materials left on the ground.

These three sites will be assessed in early spring and early summer at which time, procedures will be finalized outlining the steps to be taken by the municipality in regards to handling this situation.

It would appear the most practical and environmentally safe procedure would be to cultivate through a mowing or hedge trimming manner. The hedge trimming procedure may not be practical due to the volume of land coverage, however, this will be determined prior to next summer with procedures to follow soon after.

A meeting was held recently with representatives from the following organizations in attendance.

- McGregor Point Provincial Park ( Chris Tomsett)
- Port Elgin/Saugeen Beachers Association ( Larry Main)
- Southampton Residents Association ( Gordon Boyd)
- Saugeen Shores Waterfront Committee Chair ( John Sturgeon)
- Town of Saugeen Shores Director Community Services ( Mike Myatt)

Discussion included the outlining of problem and potential solutions pertaining to the removal of this plant from our beach areas. The Town of Saugeen Shores would be appreciative of your support in a volunteer manner. This would include the raking of the invasive plant and removing from site in one of two ways:

- 1) Bagging and transporting to Landfill for burying
- 2) Raking and depositing on to waste disposal truck and transport to landfill for burning

Larry Main and Gordon Boyd have agreed to spread the word through your associations with the hope that your assistance can be called upon. Larry can be reached at 1-519-389-4070 and Gordon Boyd at 1-519-797-3436.

Thank you for considering this request for assistance which is likely to be required next July which is just before this plant turns to seed. It is hoped that through yearly cutting, the root system will eventually starve itself and thus prevent future regeneration of this plant.

This could take up to three to five years. If we are able to cut “some” of the areas in the next few days, volunteer assistance would be appreciated.

In the meantime Geoff Peach will continue to determine the preferred methods of preventing future growth and working towards eliminating this plant.

Mike Myatt  
Director Community Services  
Town of Saugeen Shores

cc Ron Brown, CAO  
cc Dave Burside, Acting Director Public Works

## Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*)

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### Description and Biology

Common Reed, or *Phragmites australis*, is an alien, invasive plant with origins in Europe and Asia. While there is a native variety, it appears to be much less aggressive and harmful than its alien counterpart. Common Reed has recently found its way to some of Lake Huron's beaches and has raised much concern amongst the public and the scientific community.

Most frequently, Common Reed colonizes a new area from small fragments of rhizomes, dispersed by water, animals, machinery and humans. Once established, new upright stems grow from underground rhizomes and a colony begins to spread vegetatively.



Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*)



**Do not disturb** the rhizomes. Breaking them up may result in an increased population and encourage its spreading.

Rhizomes spread horizontally in all directions during the growing season. Flowering begins in late June, and seeds are formed by August. In early autumn, food reserves move from leave and stems to the rhizome system. The leaves die and fall off, with only the dead brown vertical shoots remaining. The accumulation of dead leaves and stems, as well as the pervasive rhizome system, prohibits the growth of desirable plant species.

In a recent study of this invasive plant at Long Point on Lake Erie, Common Reed abundance increased with lower lake levels and was reduced with higher water levels.

Also, air temperature played an important role in Common Reed abundance. Higher air temperatures led to increases in abundance. Air temperatures over the last decade have been on an upward trend in southern Ontario.

Common Reed expansion in the past 4 years on Lake Erie was exponential. Reasons for the rapid growth are unclear but lower water levels and a warmer climate may explain the change.

### Threats

Scientists are concerned that the growth of this plant in beach areas could negatively alter dune ecology and displace the rare native species found in Lake Huron's dunes. The displacement of native species and the formation of dense monocultures also have negative impacts on insects, birds and other species that rely on intact dune habitats.

### Control

Illustration provided by:  
IFAS, Center for Aquatic Plants  
University of Florida, Gainesville, 1996



Common Reed generally has annual cane like shoots that reach heights of 2 to 4m and disperses by seeds or rhizome fragments. Rhizomes are responsible for renewing and maintaining the population; a single plant spreads at a rate of 1-2m per year. The dead canes remain standing for 3 to 4 years before becoming part of the slowly decomposing litter layer.

Once established, common reed is very difficult to completely eradicate. However, careful planning and long-term management can produce satisfactory results. Invasive populations of Common Reed must be managed in order to protect rare dune plants that it might outcompete, valued plants and animals whose habitat it might dominate and degrade, and healthy ecosystems that it might greatly alter.



Flower cluster

Cutting has been used successfully to control Common Reed. Since it is a grass, cutting several times during a season, at the wrong times, may increase stand density. However, if cut just before the end of July, most of the food reserves produced that season are removed with the cut portion of the plant, reducing the plant's vigour. This regime may eliminate a colony if carried out annually for several years. Care must be taken to remove cut shoots to prevent their sprouting and forming stolons. Stalks and seed heads must be either bagged and removed from the site, or burned to ensure that seeds are destroyed.

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*The Centre for Coastal Conservation and some area municipalities are investigating best management practices to control existing populations and minimize the introduction of future impacts for Common Reed.*

