



Youbou Community Association

2020 Year in Review March 2021

Mission Statement: We provide a forum to advance the social, safety, environmental and economic interests of the community of Youbou and its residents.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and government-mandated limits on gatherings and personal interactions, our activities throughout 2020 were very limited, with cancellations starting in March and continuing throughout the remainder of the year.

The board met every month of the year, sometimes in person when permissible, but most often remotely on zoom.

Calendar of Events

January: Littlehead from Nanaimo returned to Youbou to play to our third-annual New Year's Eve party on December 31, 2019. The hall looked great, being freshly painted and decorated with lights, balloons, and a dress-up photo booth.

On January 13, the YCA held its annual general meeting. Re-elected were: Spencer Day, Allan Gott, Eva Fearon, Garry Fearon, Lori LaFave, Julia Martinusen, and Randall Wilson. Newly elected were Jill Bradley, Cheryl Morgan, and Debbie Smith.

We conducted a paper and online survey of members to gauge interest in events and initiatives to help with our year-long YCA planning. A record number of residents responded.

Euchre afternoons: Once a month in the winter, the YCA hosted Euchre afternoons at the Youbou hall. Interested community members played on January 28 and February 23, however, the March Euchre event was cancelled due to Covid safety concerns.

February: Volunteers met at Mile 77 Park on leap day to attack invasive species—mainly broom and Himalayan blackberries—under the direction of the CVRD.

April: The YCA donated \$500 through a local Virtual Bottle Drive campaign to specifically benefit Youbou residents experiencing hardship due to the pandemic. Later, when it turned out that no community members applied for help, the funds were returned to the YCA.

July: The town celebrated a virtual Canada Day with residents hanging their flags high along the main road. The Youbou Volunteer Fire Department and YCA volunteers rode through town in a showy display of red and white. Volunteers decorated the Youbou welcome signs and other points throughout town. The

Youbou Community Church Society led a socially distant singing of “O Canada”. In the afternoon, a historic World War II vintage Catalina airplane provided an aerial show of landings and take-offs.

October: With the haunted house and related events cancelled, the YCA again teamed up with the Youbou Volunteer Fire Department for a haunted drive through town, using props from the haunted house storage room. The Youbou welcome signs were again decorated in a spooky way. The YCA sponsored a pumpkin carving contest, with gift cards from each of our local businesses as the prizes in four categories. The CVRD sponsored a virtual costume contest and a yard decorating contest. Residents got creative with safe tricks for delivering socially distant treats to little goblins and princesses.

December: Once again, the YCA board decided to donate \$500 to the Cowichan Lake Community Services Hamper project, which supports needy families in Youbou. Because of Covid concerns, gift cards were given this year, so volunteers would not have to gather to create and distribute hampers.

The CVRD again offered a virtual holiday decorating contest. The Youbou Volunteer Fire Department escorted Santa and Mrs. Claus on a pre-Christmas inspection tour through town.

Let’s hope 2021 offers us an opportunity to return to at least some of our fun annual activities, such as the regatta and haunted house!

Annual Events Cancelled throughout 2020:

Garage sale

Yard clean-up

Lake Days parade

Youbou regatta, pancake breakfast, parade

Haunted house, fireworks, costume contest, kid’s crafts

Christmas craft fair

New Year’s Eve party

Ongoing Projects

Emergency Preparedness: Due to the pandemic, work on preparing Youbou Hall to become a level one Emergency shelter has slowed significantly. While the YES (Youbou Emergency Shelter) team has the enthusiastic support of the CVRD emergency support team, we cannot move forward without a hall use agreement in place. We are waiting for a draft agreement to come from the CVRD hall management team and hope to see that agreement early in 2021. Once the agreement is in place and we can return to more normal times, we look forward to fund-raising and implementing the plan.

On the positive side, six Youbou residents have undergone training to become Level 1 ESS responders. These volunteers will play a key role in the community being able to open a shelter.

CVRD partnership: While our annual clean-up was cancelled due to Covid concerns, we've worked with the CVRD to address resident concerns over roads, derelict boats, lakeside trash, invasive species, and other issues. We look forward to working with the CVRD on the regatta, haunted house and other programs in 2021.

Public Lake Access: A new group has formed to address the important and time-consuming issue of public lake access. Look for initiatives to come from ROWLAC (Right of Way/Lake Access Committee) in the future. YCA looks forward to supporting this new team as appropriate.

Excessive Boat Noise: The YCA joined the Decibel Coalition, a national organization that is committed to establishing and enforcing standards for lakes regarding boat noise. We have also supported concerns voiced by lakefront property owners about boats speeding to close to shore by publicizing the availability of speed signs and supporting enforcement standards.

Communications: Our board continues to meet monthly, maintain a Facebook page with over 700 members and publish a monthly newsletter which is sent to over 150 member households, plus the businesses in town. We also update the **youbouyca.ca** website on a monthly basis.

Appreciation

Our thanks go to many community residents who may not be board members, but still continue to contribute in valuable ways. We thanked many of them publicly in our February and March 2021 issues of our newsletter.

We also appreciate our Youbou businesses—Cassy's Coffee House, Daly's Auto Centre, the Youbou Pub & Grill, and Shop & Save—for staying open to serve us all safely during these difficult times. Let's continue to show our support.

Looking ahead to 2021:

2021 Survey: We are repeating our annual member survey to benchmark any changes in direction on how we allocate valuable volunteer and financial resources as we offer social events and address issues in our community. While new questions are added each year, we continue to ask some of the same questions, so we can see if attitudes on certain issues are changing over time.

We look forward to resuming some of our favourite community-building activities in Youbou, when it is deemed safe to do so.