

2009 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

MURRAY DROPE

Gibsons Recycling Team



Murray Drope is retired mining engineer who has lived on the Sunshine Coast for 16 years. He has a grown family and a long term spouse, Pat, who also is an outstanding volunteer on the Sunshine Coast. Murray is one of those individuals who, when he commits to doing a job, he follows through with a single mindedness and commitment that

astonishes lesser folk. Murray is now volunteering with the recycling program.

Those of you who know about our development as an affiliate, know that the recycling program was instrumental to growth and success. For three straight years, HFHSC won the Alcan award of \$60,000 for being the top recycler of aluminum cans per capita in Canada. Alcan no longer gives out that award but recycling revenue continued to grow until it reached \$95,000 in 2009. Our outstanding success in 2009 was the result of hard work by many volunteers. However, without Murray Drope, results would have been far different.

To understand Murray's accomplishments in 2009, one has to understand the recycling program.

The HFHSC recycling team operates out of two locations: Sechelt and Gibsons. Each of the two depots is located at the site of the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) depots. Murray is a volunteer for the Gibsons recycling team.

People in Gibsons donate their refundable items to by bringing their donation to the SCR D site and dropping it into two open bags in a bin designated as an HFHSC bin. During working hours, the employees of SCR D remove the full bags and deposit them in a large locked storage bin (Big Blue). Any donation left after working hours is vulnerable to theft. Every Tuesday and Friday morning, a team of volunteers arrives at the depot, removes everything from Big Blue and then sorts, counts and delivers the refundables to Gibsons Bottle Depot (Sandy's). It is from Sandy's that we get paid for our efforts.

In the Spring of 2009, a major recycling organization in Gibsons announced that they were no longer accepting refundables. Immediately, the volume of refundables donated to HFHSC in Gibsons rose by 40% to 50%. The volume was overwhelming. That's when Murray leaped into the breach. He took the following steps:

1. He visited our depot on a daily basis, delivering all glass refundables in his personal truck to the main depot. On weekends when the main depot was closed and Big Blue was overflowing, he transported everything to his own garage, emptied his truck into the garage and then came back for another load. Often there were eight to ten trips on a given weekend. At the end of the weekend, he then reversed the process and transported everything back up to Sandy's.
2. Each evening he visited the HFHSC depot to lock away any refundables that had been left by people after 4:00 PM, thereby avoiding the loss by theft that had been occurring on a regular basis.
3. He negotiated with Sandy to allow us to bypass sorting and bring all bottles to the main depot unsorted. This saved us many hours and much money.
4. He arranged to get a second "Big Blue" to double our storage and save the back and forth trips in his truck.
5. He and his son installed a shelving system in one of the Big Blues so that the bottles could be handled more safely. This has been much appreciated by the employees of the Sunshine Coast Regional District.

6. He negotiated an arrangement with the Bonniebrook Lodge to pick up all their refundables on a periodic basis, which has increased our revenue beyond expectations.

In addition, Murray is a contributor in other non-profit organizations, serving as Treasurer of the Gibsons Public Art Gallery and doing other ad-hoc volunteer jobs. He is well known and well liked throughout the community. For many people, he is the face of Habitat. To summarize Murray has saved our most important revenue stream while increasing revenue, all by his amazing personal effort. To everyone on our team, he is the Most Valuable Player for 2009.

Murry and the Gibsons Recycling team dressed in rain gear supplied by a donation from the Rotary Club of Gibsons.



2009 FEATURED HABITAT HOME-OWNERS

In celebration on April 4, 2009, Shayla Keelan and Irene Bremer and their children moved into their individual units in a duplex on Reef Road in Sechelt. Shayla remains grateful to Habitat, saying "It puts a real smile on my face to know my children and I finally have a place we can call home ... it was amazing being there every step of the way and actually building my own home," says Shayla. Both women continue to build more security and a better life for their family by working hard, ensuring their children's education and enjoying the nearby Sechelt Aquatic Centre.



from house to home for Shayla Keelan and Irene Bremer and their children . April 4, 2009

Home ownership came after two years of partnering with Habitat in its Recycling and ReStore operations thereby completing their respective 500 hours of "sweat equity." The celebration was attended by family, friends, Habitat volunteers, Mayor Darren Inkster and several community representatives, including the District of Sechelt. Both these new Habitat home-owners have enjoyed a greater sense of stability and grounding. Even the vegetable and herb gardens are flourishing.

The first families have already qualified to inhabit the first of seven duplexes to be located at Habitat's Sunshine Coast Village in Wilson Creek. As these families are busily engaging in their volunteer commitment, Habitat is keeping its promise of completing the first duplex by the end 2010. The Village is an exciting and innovative project which will showcase Habitat's investment in building hope for hardworking families on the Sunshine Coast.

Family photo courtesy Duane Burnett



Proud Volunteer and Supporter of Habitat for Humanity on the Sunshine Coast.

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