



*December 2009*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our beautiful Northwest fall weather is here and I see many of you out walking or running in the rain and wind. Keep up the good work! The air smells clean and fresh and as I run around the Island, I continue to remind myself, Raft Island is a GREAT place to live!

### **Newsletter**

BJ Winter has volunteered to be our Newsletter Editor and thanks to her, we should be able to get out a quarterly Newsletter. Thank you BJ!!

Since the last Newsletter in August, the newly formed Bridge Committee has met two or three times and is making progress on formulating additional information in summary format to present to the membership. Updates on the process from the Bridge Committee should be available via the web hopefully within a month.

### **Website**

The website is currently being redone by Heather Winter with minimal cost to the membership for about \$350. That is a real bargain. Having a current and updated website with content that is positive, informational and accurate reflects Raft Island as a community that cares about where we live, how we live and generally a great place to live should be an asset for us all. A few members have suggested a job board or message board, which we will have and is a good idea. While not all of the content will be available immediately for new categories (like the bridge updates for example), we

are working as best we can to get things current. When there are areas that we are still working on for writing content that will be indicated for that page or link. If any of you see a category or think of a category that you can write some content for, please send an email to [information@raftisland.org](mailto:information@raftisland.org) and let us know. On the existing site, [www.raftisland.org](http://www.raftisland.org) the Board Meeting Minutes are up to date from May to October with the exception of June (which will be posted soon). Of course, the new site will have the same address, [www.raftisland.org](http://www.raftisland.org). We hope to have the new site up in less than a month.

### **Survey & Emails**

I mentioned in August that the Board is reworking a survey and will send that out separately after this Newsletter. After reviewing the first draft, the Board is considering some changes and additions.

We now have around 200 email addresses from our membership thanks to all of your cooperation with Margie Hinton, Trustee. We are in the process of getting your email addresses into Outlook. Only the Board will be using your email address in any kind of a mass mailing. I realize that some of you are also on other "group" lists for Island mailings; however, none of your email addresses given to the Board will be volunteered to any new group as that would need to be approved and given out by each of you.

I hope that you all had a  
***Happy Thanksgiving***  
Wishing everyone a  
***Merry Christmas***  
and a ***Joyous Holiday Season.***

## CCR's

There have been some concerns or issues between members on the Island. In one case, a member was towed because there was no sticker on the vehicle which was parked directly in front of the new sign that clearly states the rules. Parking sticker policies will be reviewed by this Board beginning in January, however, having a parking sticker will remain. A member asked that the current CC&R's be reviewed and compared to other CC&R's in various communities. That is underway, and so far, there have not been suggestions for change. We need to remember to balance living together in this community, yet respecting our neighbors and taking care of our property. *Charlotte Crain - President*

## BRIDGE REPLACEMENT FUND

At the end of last quarter (September 30, 2009), the market value of the investments in this RIIA fund was \$808,559 or 70.4% of the planned June 30, 2010 target amount of \$1,148,732. The allocation percentage goals approved by the Board of Trustees remain 25% Bonds, 28% Large Capitalization Stocks, 22% Medium and Small Capitalization Stocks, 20% International Stocks, and 5% to Money Market. All funds are held by the Vanguard Group. The Investment Committee meets quarterly and provides recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The next special assessment for the fund will be \$384 and due July 1, 2010. *Mike Hirko-Chair*

## RAFT ISLAND BRIDGE UPDATE

Rising maintenance costs, engineering expenses, insurance fees, and repairs needed to keep our bridge safe reveal that no matter which Bridge Management Option is chosen, current RIIA Membership Dues are not keeping up with projected costs for continued maintenance of the existing bridge.

Construction costs have exceeded inflation, banks are not making long term loans for bridges, and

state agencies are enforcing even stricter (more expensive) environmental regulations. Projected higher costs needed to maintain the bridge renewed efforts to investigate other bridge design and funding options. In October of this year, a re-activated Bridge Committee (BC) comprised of new and old volunteers started reviewing all available reports and information (2005 – 2009 Annual Inspections Reports, 1996 and 2005 Feasibility Studies and the 2009 RIIA Project Manager's Summary). The BC continues to research various options for repair vs. replacement or some combination thereof with the committee focusing on what is considered the 3 most viable Bridge Management solutions:

1. Continued RIIA Bridge Maintenance
2. Pierce County Builds a Bridge under a RID
3. RIIA Constructs or Upgrades the existing Bridge.

The September special membership meeting was dedicated to presentation of maintenance and replacement options for the bridge. Despite significant preparation, the meeting was unfortunately not well attended. The Board and bridge subcommittee are in the process of planning additional meetings, and posting information on the website ([www.raftisland.org/](http://www.raftisland.org/)). Again, it is critical that all island members participate in this process, so please plan to attend and get involved. Meetings will be announced on the bridge posting and on the website.

## 2009 Bridge Maintenance Work

Required maintenance work was completed in October and November. This included repair of expansion joints; from the underside of the deck and the south bridge abutment. The cost for these repairs was approximately \$42,000.

## 2009 Annual Engineer's Inspection

The annual engineer's inspection was completed in August 2009 and called for the repair of eight bridge piles. While the repairs are not extensive, current estimates indicate that permitting and

engineering will make up more than half the project cost. The repair expenditure for 2010 is estimated at \$36,000. The bridge committee will continue working with repair contractors and design engineers to lower this cost – particularly the permitting cost.

### **Operating Expenses Increase**

As detailed in regular board and annual meetings, operating expenses for the bridge continue to rise. Maintenance and insurance costs in particular exceed projected dues income and approved budgets in recent year have relied on reserves to cover our expenses.

### **New Bridge Committee Formed – Bridge Replacement Assessment**

Over the last several years, RIIA has researched and documented the Bridge Replacement and Maintenance options. Interest from island members has lead to reforming the Bridge subcommittee to review of the options, assumptions and related costs. The review will address the following:

- Bridge design details and permit requirements,
- Availability of public funding (County, State and/or Federal),
- Availability and cost of private funding,
- Comparison of long term maintenance and replacement options
- Terms of a Road Improvement District (RID).

### **Future Work**

The existing inspection and maintenance program will remain in place to allow safe use of the bridge. Looking forward, it is clear that we are falling behind in meeting the operating costs and longer term replacement costs. Increases to the dues will be necessary to maintain a safe bridge. Please attend the upcoming meetings to learn more about this critical issue and the options being considered.

### **Treasure Island – Mason County**

Treasure Island is a small community very similar to Raft Island. They also rely on a privately owned bridge. They have recently completed very extensive repairs and are facing mandatory bridge replacement. I encourage you to visit the Treasure Island website to see how they a facing some very similar issues.

<http://www.treasureislandcountryclub.org/bridge.htm>

### **Students Crossing the Bridge**

This is a reminder to the island parents that kids crossing the bridge need to walk on the side of the road facing traffic and wear bright colors. Because winter weather is upon us visibility is often poor. Folks leaving the island in the early morning have come upon a number of kids walking with traffic and couldn't see them till they were right behind them.



**Island Officers and Trustees**

President	Charlotte Crain (# 8)	253-265-0980
Vice President	Jeff Davis (# 236)	253-265-3730
Treasurer	Holly Blash-Wood (# 38)	253-509-3743
Secretary	Trish Burnett (# 67)	253-265-3391
Trustee	Rich Swenson /Roads (# 219)	253-265-8090
Trustee	Tina Shoemaker (# 142)	253-265-0216
Trustee	Ann Webb (# 218)	253-265-3804
Trustee	Sarah Brown (# 6)	253-649-0175
Trustee	Jesse Stamper (# 104)	253-265-8242
Trustee	Margie Hinton (# 17)	253-265-0966
Trustee	Cathy Driscoll (# 4)	253-265-8489

**Bridge Replacement Investment Committee**

Mike	Hirko	/	Chair	(#	113)	253-686-5288
Dean			Jaquish	(#		107)
Don			Perry	(#		65)
Rich			Swenson	(#		219)
Dave			Paley	(#		69A)
Christine Stephan (# 25)						

## Bridge Committee

Ted Smith / Chair (# 160) 253-265-8697

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RIIA General Manager  
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Driscoll