

# Barrhead judged for Communities in Bloom



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1 / 3 Communities in Bloom judges, Sherry Cote and Maureen Sexsmith-West were in town to assess Barrhead in the annual Communities in Bloom Society judging. | SANDY DOUCET/Barrhead Leader

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Communities in Bloom judges Sherry Cote and Maureen Sexsmith-West were in town on July 26 to assess Barrhead in the annual Communities in Bloom Society judging.

"We are delighted to once again display some of the outstanding gardens, parks and landscaping in the community," began Doug Drozd, County of Barrhead Reeve.

"Hope you are able to soak up the beauty and natural splendor that makes our community so special to us."

Residents have participated in the Community in Bloom events since 2014.

The County of Barrhead has a rural beautification program where awards are presented.

Mayor Dave McKenzie welcomed the judges, "We are extremely proud of our community and our residents and the continuous efforts that is put in to make sure our community exhibits everything that we have to offer."

"We have gone through great lengths in the design and creation of our recreational spots where we have used crime prevention through environmental design to create a safe and appealing community."

The judges went through a number of categories, asking questions of the attendees and committee members.

County of Barrhead has a shelterbelt program.

The ALUS program is a land stewardship program to make use of lands that may not be great farmland or to protect pollinators, wildlife, healthy waterways and sustainability.

There were 17 ALUS projects that came in this year according to Nadine Quedenbaum, CiB member and ALUS program committee member.

It works with the producers where acres that are taken out of production to protect and benefit the environment.

There are payment models set up where there is an acreage payment annually once the projects are complete according to Drozd.

Quedenbaum stated that Alberta has the most ALUS communities in Canada.

Weed control is an activity that the Town of Barrhead and County of Barrhead partner on, sharing resources.

Barrhead Communities in Bloom are provided a \$1500 allotment from both the Town of Barrhead and the County of Barrhead.

Residents often donate plants, pots and shrubs.

There is also services in kind by providing use of town equipment.

Youth involvement has included herb garden tutorial sessions for Mother's Day and providing seeds to Dunstable school for their garden tower program.

A ladybug release is planned.

There is a Forestry management inventory in progress with the Parks and Recreation staff.

There is some black knot disease in the county but there is not any other significant challenges.

Healthy community walking trails with benches and shade trees have been investments.

The Skate board park is state-of-the-art.

“We have only cemented pump track in western Canada,” commented Mayor McKenzie.

“We are planning to build on that with a bicycle skills track.”

Cut out maple leaves are the newly installed bike stands through-out Barrhead.

Solar outdoor lighting is used and the entire roof of the pool is solar with the majority of indoor lighting is now LED according to Nick Carlson, CiB committee member.

Recycling programs happen through-out the year including a toxic round-up program which was held in June.

Bylaw community standards in the cleanliness of properties was discussed and activities up to court actions have been taken to address issues.

Drozd clarified that the county standards bylaw has not been passed as of yet and the municipal act is followed which is driven by complaints received.

Community communication happens through the BARCC (Barrhead and Area Regional Crime Coalition) program which sends out notifications to residents by text or email.

It is an award-winning program acknowledged by the Minister of Corporate Affairs.

A tour of the Town of Barrhead followed the presentation.

Sites that were visited included the Splash Park, Agrena, Zen garden, the Community gardens, Main Street, the gazebo and heron.

Neighborhood tours followed showing what Barrhead residents have done with displays, conservation and environmental impacts.

De Herdt's Gardens was the another stop on the agenda.

The afternoon activities after lunch included a tour of the County of Barrhead.

Shelley Batdorf, Barrhead chairperson for Communities in Bloom launched the day's activities.

In attendance for the judging were Shelley Batdorf, Communities in Bloom (CiB) chairperson, Nadine Quedenbaum, CiB member, Diana Layton, Retired Enbridge pipelines, risk management, and Dave McKenzie, Mayor of Barrhead.

Doug Drozd, County of Barrhead Reeve, Don Medcke and Ag Fieldman with the County of Barrhead, Nick Carlson, a Town of Barrhead Lifeguard instructor, and Renee Layton were also in attendance.

The Barrhead CiB committee prepared a professional brochure that outlined the day's schedule of activities, messages from Drozd and McKenzie.

The brochure also included maps, an array of photos and explanations about Barrhead's contributions in conversation, environmental activities, programs and events.

Although our community was not officially participating in the competition, the local committee members hosted a professional and well-rounded presentation of all Barrhead has to offer.

Judges are to prepare a report of their findings.



***About the Author: Sandy Doucet***

Sandy Doucet joined the Barrhead Leader as a reporter in May 2024. Sandy is always interested in hearing your stories and news tips  
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