

July 5, 2011

Communities in Bloom Community Involvement Team cleans up in Willow Point

The Community Involvement Team is taking their passion for Communities in Bloom to Willow Point streets.

The recently-formed CIT is part of the Communities in Bloom Committee, and the energetic and fun-loving Richard Barry, Carolyn Belanger and Lois Hill have completed several major projects:

- a beautification survey of Willow Point residents
- a Willow Point clean-up day
- a residential curb-appeal award and a best-landscaped business award and
- development of a three-year plan for Willow Point

The vision and efforts of the CIT have already had a ripple effect in Willow Point, which they hope will continue throughout Campbell River. Their model can easily be adopted by other parts of the community, and Carolyn and Lois are willing to mentor and support other areas interested in creating a neighbourhood improvement plan.

Before doing anything, this team surveyed Willow Point residents with the help of the Willow Point Business Improvement Association, to find out what they value about the area. The current “village” feel was named the favourite reason for living in Willow Point. Other questions on the survey gave insights that will guide the CIT’s activities over the next two years. One activity will be the creation of a mural. The survey revealed that residents would favour an ocean-themed mural. The next step will be a mural design contest involving Southgate Middle School students. The winning mural will be painted at a location to be determined. The survey also identified several areas of interest for garden improvement workshops, and we can expect to see a series of workshops being offered in the coming year.

The Willow Point clean-up day was Saturday, June 26 and through the survey, several sites were identified as needing attention. Approximately 25 volunteers turned out to tackle neglected pockets of Willow Point.

What do years two and three hold for this committee? There will be a follow-up survey in year two to monitor the community’s interests and guide the CIT’s activities. In year three, the plan is to see the establishment of a neighbourhood group to take over and continue the work started by the CIT.

The efforts of Carolyn, Richard and Lois to improve Willow Point as a place to live, learn, play and work are well aligned with the Communities in Bloom mission, and this no doubt, will contribute to Campbell River’s standing in the national Communities in Bloom contest.

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Photo: A volunteer takes part in the Willow Point clean-up day.