

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Your Board enjoys this opportunity to meet with members of the Society, share plans for the coming year and hear your ideas for the Park. The members of the Board for 2019 will be selected at the meeting. Please join us at 7:00 p.m., April 17, 2019 - In the Pavilion (Building 21) 8801 East Saanich Road.

GEOCASHING AT THE PARK!

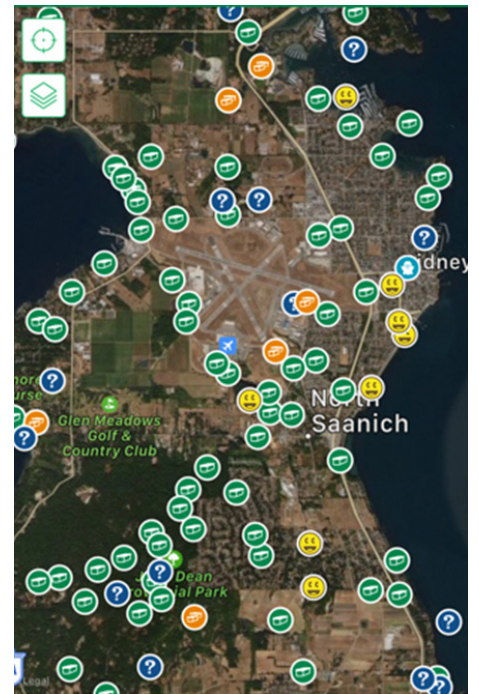
The Dominion Brook Park Board is placing two geocaches in the Park to encourage visits by people who might not otherwise drop by. The Geocaching website www.geocaching.com gives the best definition of this popular sport: "Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location."

You can play for free if you have a smart phone. Just create an account at the Geocaching website to view the map of geocaches in your location and download the Geocaching® app on your smart phone. The app will give you a direction and a distance to the geocache coordinates that you have entered. Once hooked, many geocachers purchase a more accurate GPS unit, and opt for the paid membership for easier searching of preferred types of geocaches.

The actual geocaches are in waterproof containers of any size. Inside the containers is a log book signed by the finders. They are often disguised or hidden in rocks or trees. While there is no real treasure in the geocaches, people often leave or trade trinkets, such as pins or keychains. This makes them extra fun for kids, although the challenge of finding difficult geocaches and creating geocaches for others makes geocaching fun for adults, too.

Two new geocaches will be hidden in Dominion Brook Park this month. One is easy to find and full of trinkets for the kids and the other is a smaller more challenging geocache. Both can be reached from the grass or the path to keep the foliage safe. Please be mindful of surrounding vegetation. You may see people in the park looking for them and maybe you will try to find them too! Please visit the Geocaching website at www.geocaching.com or contact Karen at geocache@dominionbrookpark.ca if you want to learn more about it.

Geocaches in North Saanich and Sidney



FIELD WORK COORDINATOR

We are looking for a volunteer, or volunteers to help plan and guide the weekly and seasonal maintenance work in Dominion Brook Park. For many, many seasons, Joan Gibb has provided exemplary leadership in this role and she wishes to retire. Maybe several people could share this job?

What is involved?

- assessing the maintenance needs in the Park
- setting priorities in line with the mandate set out in the Stewardship Agreement with the District of North Saanich, the Centre for Plant Health and the Friends of Dominion Brook Park
- working with and assisting the District of North Saanich Parks Department with care and maintenance of the Park
- assigning and guiding the work of 8-15 volunteers at the weekly work party (March to October)
- working with professionals, e.g. arborists, pruning specialists, etc.

Experience working with volunteers and gardening knowledge would be an asset.

Don't be scared away by the size of the job or the time commitment. We would like to look at different ways to fulfill these needs and all the work does not have to all fall to one person.

If you are interested in helping out, want more information or have ideas to share please send an email to contactus@dominionbrookpark.ca.

EASTER EGG HUNT

The Peninsula Celebrations Society is organising the annual Easter egg hunt at Dominion Brook Park on Sunday, April 21, 2019. Children are invited to join in the hunt which will begin at 1:00 p.m. and run until 2:00 p.m. At the end of the hunt, children can trade their eggs for treats from the Easter Bunny!

THANK YOU SO MUCH ♥

THANK YOU FOR THE WINTER HELP IN THE PARK. Dominion Brook Park is popular with dog walkers and many are daily visitors to the Park. We greatly appreciate the responsibility of the regular dog owners to keep the Park clean. In particular, thanks to Jeff Lambert, who has again looked after the doggy waste bags this past winter.

SOME THOUGHTS ON DONATING TO THE PARK

Dominion Brook Park has lots of expenses, and limited sources of income. Projects cost money. The cost of restoring the ravine was in excess of \$130,000 and building the stone bridge cost \$30,000. Annually the Society spends \$2,500 to \$4,000 on maintenance, pruning, and general upkeep.

We partner with the District of North Saanich who are co-stewards of the Park. They provide labour, cut grass, and carry out the larger maintenance tasks in the Park. We have been fortunate to receive a grant in aid of between \$2,000 to \$3,000 from the District each year to support our work in the Park. Memberships account for about \$1,200 per year. Donations and other grants have helped support specific projects.

Fund raising is an ongoing need and activity for the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society. If you think the Park is of value to our community and believe it should continue to be a feature of the Saanich Peninsula, consider a donation to the Park.

When asked for a donation, most of us think of pulling out our wallet, our cheque book, or plastic or these days using PayPal or e-transfers. All these work well for us, but there are other ways that we have received donations that you may not have considered.



If it is the end of the year and your portfolio has done well, consider giving the Park some stock that has risen in value. For a charitable donation of securities or mutual funds, capital gains tax does not apply, allowing you to give more and avoid paying capital gains taxes. By donating shares directly, you get a larger tax credit and can give more.

Consider mentioning us in your will. Or, if you are writing the obituary of a loved one, consider adding, "In lieu of flowers, a donation to Dominion Brook Park would be appreciated."

Or give a membership as a gift. \$20 buys one household a membership, which may prompt someone to come and see the Park, and who knows where that will lead? Contact us at contactus@dominionbrookpark.ca to learn more

WEDNESDAY WORK PARTIES RESUME

Weather permitting, volunteers will meet on Wednesday, March 27 at 9:00 a.m., for the first work party of the 2019 season. Bring a friend and muster at the Park gate by Marshall Road. Volunteers work in the Park every Wednesday morning through to October.

FEATURED PLANT

Wollemia nobilis – Wollemi pine

When you look at the *Wollemia nobilis* in the Park, imagine a forest of them towering 25–40 m (82–131 ft) high with dinosaurs roaming nearby. This plant is a rare survivor from the Jurassic period, only recently discovered still living.

In 1994, while exploring new canyons in Wollemi National Park in Australia, a few unusual trees were found by David Noble, Michael Casteleyn and Tony Zimmerman. Noble brought samples to his colleagues at the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. Despite its common name, it is not a true pine. They declared it a new genus in the family Araucariaceae, a very ancient family of coniferous trees. The exact location of the wild population is a closely guarded secret to protect the few plants that remain.

Despite its threatened status, the *Wollemia nobilis* is easy to grow. It tolerates a range of temperatures, full sun and shade as well as different types of soil. Throughout its life you will see changes in foliage type and colour. New juvenile leaves are frond-like, starting out apple green and changing to blue green. Mature foliage has two rows of leaves on the branches. In colder months the foliage takes on a bronzy hue. Cones appear when plants are 12 to 15 years of age.

Plants are propagated in Australia and royalties from the sales help to conserve the Wollemi pine and other endangered plant species. In Dominion Brook Park we have two *Wollemia nobilis* – have you been able to find them?



Staff this issue: Jody Aylard, Karen Mervyn, Ian Cameron, Dawn Gould