

Letter: Applauding the Strathcona Gardens Staff

Kudos to Strathcona Gardens staff

BLACK PRESS SUBMITTED / Nov. 24, 2021 1:30 a.m. / LETTERS / OPINION



I am writing to highlight the excellent work and commitment of the Strathcona Gardens pool staff during the pandemic.

I moved to Campbell River in the fall of 2019, and was soon registered in some of their quality pool programs. I knew I would be needing a hip replacement, and needed to get physically prepared for that surgery. We all know what happened in March, 2020. Pool staff was reduced to the bare minimum, and classes necessarily cancelled. Without a pool, many of us needed to find other covid-safe ways to rehabilitate from, or prepare for, surgeries.

The pandemic abruptly brought our attention to the wider health support network in our community, such as the highly trained fitness instructors, employed by Strathcona Regional District. Understandably, program cancellations were necessary at that time.

In the fall of 2020, when the province began allowing pools and fitness facilities to carefully reopen, the Strathcona Gardens Complex brought staff back into the fold. They were extraordinary in their commitment to their objectives — COVID-safe spaces for everyone — throughout the facilities.

It wasn't easy, and meant lots of inconvenience for both patrons and staff. For example, the change rooms were off limits for changing into or out of swimwear, so we needed to come to the pool already prepared to swim. Staff needed to clean equipment, with each individual use. Bathrobes and beach towels replaced outerwear for pool sessions. Not fun when the days were cold and gusty! Yet, the need to stay mobile and active kept class attendances as high as could be safely managed. Then another wave of the virus swept the world in the winter of 2020, and the aquatic fitness classes were cancelled once again. Staffing was once again reduced to a minimum level.

Vaccines changed things immensely! Rehabilitation classes are filled again, and with only vaccinated people allowed entry to the premises, it almost feels like a pre-pandemic world again.

I am so thankful for the team of people that keep us moving and want to applaud them publicly. Thank you, Strathcona Gardens lifeguards, fitness instructors, registration staff, security, and cleaners.

To the Strathcona Regional District Board of Directors, please note the critical nature of the work Strathcona Gardens staff perform, and the appreciation they have earned in our community.

Pam Gregg

OPINION