

Subject: Two classes of citizens;

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A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

North Van District taxpayers own most of the public recreation facilities on the North Shore but, up to September 2001, Seniors and Youth who reside in the District had to pay more for the use of the same facilities than their counterparts who reside in the City.

Indeed, we now have two classes of people on the North Shore and it is the District Youth and the District Seniors who have been treated as second class citizens. Both Seniors and Youth in the District had to pay more for their annual passes to the Rec. facilities even though the City is not contributing a single penny towards the upkeep of District facilities.

The North Shore Recreation Commission, within the span of one single year, has raised recreation fees for both Seniors and Youth by a staggering 54 % while fees for everybody else during the same period were raised by 34%.

But when Seniors and Youth in the City complained to their City Council about what they charged was discrimination by the Rec Commission, the City agreed to give them a refund to bring their fees back to what they would have been, had they not been treated unfairly. As one City Senior stated, I have only my old age pension and it certainly did not go up by 54 %. Both Youth and Seniors, who had already paid the increase, received a refund for the difference charged.

During the months of July and August, the Rec. Commission, after raising fees from the previous \$135 to \$ 209 this year, reduced them to \$ 179 in a special promotion. This applied only to new registrations and seniors and youth who renewed during these months. Of course many people were out of town during the summer months and could not take advantage of this and many were not even aware of the "deal" concocted by a 'spin doctor' to divert attention from the steep increase in the first place..

In any case, It occurred to me that it was only fair that in the District we should also give our seniors and youth a refund similar to what the City had done. But when I made a motion on District Council to that effect, District Council refused. Instead of debating the real issue of discrimination against our District Youth and Seniors, there was a great deal of breast beating about the wonderful job the Commission is doing, even though the Commission had singled out the Seniors and Youth to pay 54% more than they did a year ago. Both District representatives to the Rec Commission who receive a free Rec. Pass, both for themselves and members of their amily, voted against my proposal.

Ernie Crist