



**Landslide Victory**  
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**Opening Day**  
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**Loverboy**  
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# PIQUE

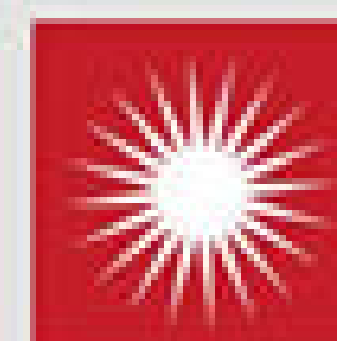
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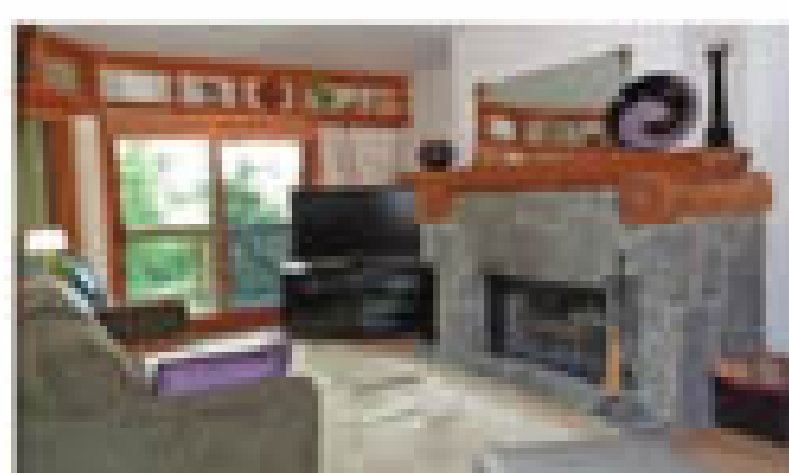
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COVER STORY

## Sleeping around in the backcountry

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# Vision and Teamwork

## BUILDING COMMUNITY FOR THE LONG TERM

### It was love at first sight.

"I came to Whistler with my family for the skiing," says entrepreneur Peter Bruckmann. "But I stayed for the mountains and the wilderness. Actually bought a place here. You see, I was really impressed with the wild beauty of Whistler back then. How un-crowded it was. How young and vital it seemed." He pauses for a breath. Smiles. "And that was very attractive to me."

That was back in 1988.

Much has changed here in the intervening 22 years. A world-renowned mountain resort now – host to the Olympic Winter Games in 2010 – Whistler has become the darling of skiers, riders and mountain bikers from the four corners of the globe. But it has also become bigger. Busier. More crowded. More urban even. "It's still a great place," asserts Bruckmann. "And I still love coming here – year round! But if you're looking for a respite from city life – a mountain home still connected to its environment – well, there's not much left within Whistler's boundaries that will give you that feeling anymore."

Enter WedgeWoods. Just a few miles north of Green Lake, Bruckmann's dream development project is "all about space. Lots of wild space." And he explains his vision for the new mountain neighbourhood. "We want our residents to feel intimately connected to their surroundings – without actually having to go camping in the mountains to feel that." He stops. Laughs. "But

asserts. "Bigger lots means cutting fewer trees. The surrounding terrain remains more natural. More real."

But nothing is ever accomplished alone. And Bruckmann is the first to acknowledge that fact. "With the WedgeWoods project, it's been teamwork all the way," he says. "This is a joint idea. A joint venture. Without David Ehrhardt's input, we'd still be at square one." A Burnaby resident and longtime outdoor enthusiast, Ehrhardt has made a career of bringing unique initiatives like this one to fruition. And he knows all about mountain development: over the last 20 years he has worked on five significant – and successful – Whistler projects.

**We want to give our residents the feeling of being intimately connected to their surroundings – without actually having to go camping in the mountains to find that feeling.**

seriously – I just want people to feel the same things I did when I first came to Whistler."

Quieter surroundings. More intimate setting. Wilder venue. Less crowded. What's not to like? But there's even more says Bruckmann. Turns out his unconventional development philosophy is better for the environment as well. "More space means less damage," he

Concludes Bruckmann: "Together, our goal is to develop something to allows owners to have a generational home in a wild mountain setting just minutes from Whistler. Essential to this is protecting its character for their children." He smiles and just a hint of pride sneaks into his voice. "And I think we will have that type of family home in WedgeWoods."

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# Rome wasn't built in a day....

**A**s Piper got ready to cover last Saturday's election following a feisty mayor's debate Friday night there was a certain anticipation in the air.

Obviously there had been hours of office chat about who would be elected, what skills each person brought to the table and so on. After all, reporters are in



**By Clare Ogilvie**

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a unique position in that we get to ask lots of questions of the candidates and learn about the people running and what motivates them.

It was surprising then, as we headed into the weekend, how reticent we were to actually confirm who we thought would win the seats.

It was obvious that Whistlerites had reached the end of their collective rope when it came to paying taxes, or what some believed was an almost cavalier attitude at the Hall, which may have resulted, for example, in the asphalt plant operating without proper zoning.

But what would that look like at the polls?

Sitting in the conference centre setting up my laptop in preparation for covering the vote counting I watched carefully as people filed in to vote. Were voters excited, triumphant, cautious - what, I wondered, was the mood?

After a couple of hours I was struck with the realization that I was the only excited one - I would describe most people as being determined and perhaps somewhat wary.

It was as if people knew that change was coming and while accepting it needed to happen it was worrisome - perhaps it's

that's old adage "beware the devil you know than the devil you don't."

But in no way was I prepared for the landslide that Mayor-Elect Nancy Wilhelm Morden was handed Saturday night, Nov. 19.

Even as I listened to the count, 2636 votes for Wilhelm Morden, I found myself checking my own notes. Surprising too were the top votes won by Roger McCarthy and Duane Jackson.

These were two men who arrived in Piper's offices just a few short weeks before with a spring in their step and an almost cheeky demeanour that left us a bit perplexed. On paper they looked impressive - no doubt - but pointed questions on the budget and other specific municipality business were answered a bit vaguely.

Nor did they swamp the social network airwaves with messages or comment as the resort revved up for election day. It was low-key - it was a "look to the skills we bring" kind of campaign.

And here is one of the lessons for all of us - people in Whistler understand what skills look like, they understand you've got to have them in tough times.

Being at the council table is not a time to learn leadership or management skills - at least not this time around. We need "proven winners" so to speak.

I do believe that there were people at the council table in the last session who were equipped to make the decisions Whistler needs to move forward but the "community" painted all the incumbents with one brush, for good or bad.

My hope is that the incumbents will stay positive and lend the learning they have gathered over the years to Whistler as it moves forward. There are still plenty of boards and groups that need good leadership as we move forward.

As has been said in these pages before



— small town politics is not meant to be a career.

There is no doubt that Wilhelm Morden ran an organized and clear campaign and I believe voters were looking for some positive and meaningful suggestions about how to keep the resort moving forward.

Her ten campaign promises are:

- No new taxes in 2012
- Zero-based budgeting in 2012. There will be savings and cost efficiencies.
- Pay-parking in Day Lot 1 only (This week she tells Piper that she hopes to have the

at the table. Six others must weigh in on these issues and staff at the municipal level must be engaged. But I do believe those conversations are already happening and we may see some initiatives fairly soon.

But it remains to be seen if Whistler can really afford some of these promises - the income from the pay parking, for example, may be too pivotal now to the financial sustainability of the resort to just cut it off at the knees. Surely, though there must be some reorganization that can happen at muni hall, which will lead to cost savings.

## For now Whistler is waiting with baited breath for a new era on the political front.

pay-parking strategy in place by Christmas).

- Illegal space: Non conforming use properties - bring them in.
- Transit - have to fix it.
- Complete cultural plan
- Diversify the economy through education.
- Management of our forest makes sense. Logging old growth to do it doesn't. Go back to the Victoria to talk about this.
- Reduce the mayor's salary by \$10,000
- Restore trust between Municipal Hall and the community.

Time will tell whether the promises will be met and it must be remembered that Wilhelm-Morden is not the only one

One wonders though if Wilhelm Morden's promises mean that yet more consultants will have to be brought in to investigate the viability of implementing them?

For now Whistler is waiting with baited breath for a new era on the political front.

I would offer these words of caution to my fellow residents: Give it time. This is a big change and our newly elected team will likely need months to get up to speed. And the rest of us can't just shirk off the responsibility of staying engaged just because we voted in record numbers.

As the old saying goes: Rome wasn't built in a day. ■

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