

Subject: DIRECT DEMOCRACY**Date:** Sat, 12 May 2001 12:25:25 -0700**From:** "Dave Sadler" <davesadler@telus.net>

To: "Peter Thompson" <bedeconsulting@home.com>, "Allan Orr" <allandorr@home.com>, "chris kwan" <eckwan@radiant.net>, "Tom Kline" <tkline@stantec.com>, "Jean Hodgson" <hodgson.jean&bruce@telus.net>, "Jim Cuthbert" <Jim_Cuthbert@telus.net>, "Councillor Doug MacKay-Dunn" <macdunn@dnv.org>, "Councillor Janice Harris" <jharris@dnv.org>, "Councilor Lisa Muri DNV" <lisa_muri@dnv.org>, "Councillor Bill Denault" <bdenault@dnv.org>, "Councilor Heather Dunsford" <heather_dunsford@dnv.org>, "Councilor Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>, "Mayor DON BELL" <BellD@dnv.org>, "Tom Young" <hangers@canadawired.com>, "Angela Trudeau" <angela@techtrain.bc.ca>, "Bill Tracey" <bill_tracey@telus.net>, "Geoff Thorpe" <mtgg@telus.net>, "Dave Sadler" <davesadler@telus.net>, "Al Price" <alprice@quik.com>, "Francois Du Preez" <richprop@home.com>, "Brian Platts" <brian_platts@telus.net>, "Hugh Murray" <Hugh_murray@telus.net>, "Val Moler" <valeriem@blaze.ca>, "John Miller" <john_miller@ultranet.ca>, "Brent Mayall" <bmayall@direct.ca>, "Corrie Kost" <kost@triumf.ca>, "David Knee" <pairofknees@telus.net>, <johnhunter@idmail.com>, "Liz James" <cagebc@yahoo.com>, "Margaret Fraser" <weemalkies@telus.net>, "FONVCA" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, "Norm Epp" <normepp@home.com>, "Dan Ellis" <dellis@bcgas.com>, "Kitty Castle" <mcastle@istar.ca>, "Eric Andersen" <eandersen@seatradeshipping.bc.ca>, "Cathy Adams" <rmadams@wimsey.com>

Andre Carrel presents his new book "**Citizen's Hall: Making Local Democracy Work**" at **Vancouver Public Library** (Central), on **Tuesday, May 22nd, at 7:30** p.m.

This is the story of how the small B.C. municipality of **Rossland** broke the rules of local government to empower its citizens in local governance. Moreover, it is a guide to the practice of direct democracy in B.C.

Since the new Liberal government will likely be in place, and since they promise to:

" Establish workable initiative legislation, to make it feasible for British Columbians to call for a referendum on issues of province-wide concern that fall within the provincial government's jurisdiction."

(http://www.bcliberals.com/Campaign_2001/Platform/Vision_Statement.shtml)

this is a timely opportunity for all political and democracy junkies to hear the views one of BC's outstanding direct democracy advocates. André is Swiss-born, was Administrator in Rossland for many years, and currently runs his own municipal affairs consulting business.

For Andre's 1997 article "Democracy in Rossland" see:

<http://www.npsnet.com/cdd/carrel.htm>

Here are a couple of extracts from his book, which are also at:

<http://www.npsnet.com/cdd/bibliogr.htm#outstanding>

#1

The idea of truly empowering citizens has more often than not awakened fear in the hearts of politicians and bureaucrats alike. Most of them have traditionally seen the matter of leaving it to the uninformed masses to set policy and make decisions as a risky business. It is as if the society is so dysfunctional that the people at large, given the power to make their decisions about and in their own communities, would act as, or succumb to, a mob of mean-spirited egomaniacs. It is to assume that the bulk of our society is made up of vicious and ignorant bigots.

#2

It does seem that we expect citizens to act rationally and responsibly when we allow them to elect, from their own ranks, municipal councillors. We assume that citizens will elect reasonable, rational, and responsible people, and we are prepared to accept the risk that on occasion voters may not. Why then are we not prepared to accept the risk that, given the power to vote on policy issues, including their own taxes, people will act responsibly? Why are we not prepared to accept the risk that citizens will

consider the community as a whole, given the power to vote on a policy question? Is the decision-making record of elected officials so overwhelmingly rational, thoughtful, wise, balanced, compassionate, and considerate that the empowerment of citizens would constitute a serious risk to the stability of our communities?

Thanks to Colin Stark for this information