

The GRADUATE

By
Bob Buckland, ASCTT

Laura Walton

**Supervisor of Building Inspection Services
Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
Regional District (RDOS)**

A few years back, 2003/04, while employed as a temporary building inspector for the RDOS I had the pleasure of working with a personable young woman known as Laura Walton who at that time was employed as a building clerk for the district. I found Laura was a very helpful colleague during my brief employment with the RDOS.



**Laura Walton
Ironman-2012, 42-Kilometer Run**

Laura was born March 10, 1966 at Quesnel, BC, to a family that was in the building contracting business. She had gained building experience over the years while working with her father and mother, plus 3-brothers. Laura and her husband at that time built a house in Quesnel under her father's expertise and guidance in 1990, and also assisted with construction of houses for other family members.

Laura's present family consists of 1-daughter age 30-years, 2-sons ages 18 and 20-years, and also, 2-grandchildren. Family holidays are lively events!

In private employment Laura has worked as a Legal Assistant for a General Law Practise firm which was involved in ICBC defence, Family Law, Civil, Will, and Estate Litigation. Currently, Laura is studying for a "Local Government Administration Certificate" by way of Capilano College. Her past Legal Assistant experience has been valuable to her in her present assignments for RDOS such as writing policy, bylaw amendments, and understanding of the legal system for enforcement of district bylaws.

Laura moved to Penticton in 1999 and obtained employment as a "Building Clerk" with the RDOS in August 2000. In 2005 she successfully completed a Part-9 BC Building Code course through BCIT, (BC Institute of Technology) and successfully wrote her BOABC, Level-1 exam in 2005. This enabled her to qualify for employment with RDOS as "Plan Checker" in the same year. Laura successfully completed the BOABC Level-2 exam in the fall of 2006.

BOABC Level-3 exams were the next challenge. Laura has successfully completed the series of exams and became certified as a Registered Building Official in February 2010.

In respect to the BC Plumbing Code, Laura has successfully completed Level-1 of the POABC exams. (Plumbing Officials Association of BC)

All of the foregoing are accomplishments made while being fully employed with RDOS. In January 2007 Laura was promoted to "Building Inspector" and in August 2012, to "Building Inspector Services Supervisor" with a team of 4-Building Inspectors and 2-Clerical staff. Additionally, she holds a

position on the "Bargaining Committee", and also sits on a "Job Evaluation Committee".

Laura is a member in good standing of 4-professional organizations, namely:

BOABC (Building Officials Association of BC)
POABC (Plumbing Officials Association of BC)
ACBO (Alliance of Canadian Building Officials)
WETTBC (Wood Energy Technology Tran. of BC)

Laura would like to be more active in BOABC now that her children are grown and she is not so busy with their activities.

In respect to her "Local Government Administration" program, Laura has recently written a research paper on the effects of medicinal marijuana on a local government building department. She has shared this paper with fellow zone members.



**Laura Walton
On Vacation in Jamaica
Checking out Building construction**

Community Activities:

Laura has a number of activities that keep her busy outside of work, namely:

Cycling, Running, Swimming, Cross Country Skiing, Curling, Golf, Slo-pitch Baseball, and past involvement in the local Hockey and Lacrosse community when her children were involved.

Achievements and Extracurricular Activities:

Laura participated in the Ironman Triathlon completed in 2012. This event was a challenge because the start was a 3.8-Kilometer swim.

Although Laura had taken requisite swimming lessons when a child, and very likely could swim to save her life, she had to relearn swimming and get over a low grade anxiety when she was in water depth over her head. Going from that to swimming 3.8 Kilometers in open water in the company of 2500 other athletes splashing about was the most difficult obstacle to overcome. Overcome the obstacle she did, and completed the swim successfully. She went on to complete the 180-kilometer bike ride and also the 42-kilometer run, thus successfully thus completing the Ironman Triathlon and earning the title of Ironman



**Laura Walton
Week End Fun**

Presently, although she says fun stuff such as winter travel plans and taking the truck and trailer for summer exploring are extracurricular activities, she would like to be more involved with BOABC.

She has a suggestion for the BOABC website regarding past interpretations of the BC Building Code. She envisions a searchable data base by code topic, article, sentence, or clause. Presently, locating interpretations is a huge time commitment and one does get side tracked by reading interpretations that are not related to the one she was looking for. Further, she would be glad to help with creating such a database.

As a closing comment on this column I am of the opinion that Laura Walton has a very keen interest in the building industry and has the ability to offer new and original thinking. I hope she does become more involved with BOABC.

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