

## ***Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program***



**Islands Trust**

### **2012 Nominee Profile**

#### **John Wiznuk, Saturna Island**

**Category:** Individual

**Project:** Fire Chief for Saturna Island Volunteer Fire Department

**Nominator(s):** Saturna Island Fire Protection Society

**Letters of Support:** N/A

#### **Project Description:**

On a Tuesday evening in May 1992, John Wiznuk showed up at the old Fire Hall on Saturna Island. He had been invited there to join in a practice session of the island's volunteer fire department, which consisted of three other residents and a 1950s Dodge fire truck.

What followed were twenty years of service to the community as a firefighter and leadership as Chief. The "Wiz", as John has come to be known, has overseen the steady growth and development of a fire department that, while it remains volunteer, is professional in its training, its equipment and its outlook. Instead of four, there are now close to twenty volunteers. Instead of an aging truck and an old, inadequate fire hall, there are now modern trucks, auxiliary equipment and two brand new, strategically located fire halls. Instead of relying upon the proceeds of pig barbecues, the operations of the fire service are now securely funded by taxes collected from property owners.

John Wiznuk remained a volunteer fire fighter for the next 20 years, with most of that time on Saturna except for three years for North Pender Island. For seven years, until March 2012, John Wiznuk led the Saturna Fire Department as its Chief and he remains a firefighter and a member of Saturna's Firefighters Association.

It is the dedication of individuals like John Wiznuk that enable communities on the Gulf Islands to create and maintain safe, secure environments within which to live, work and play.