



Shawnigan FOCUS

"Our Voice - Our Thoughts - Our Community"

Acacia Employees Hopeful for Resolution

By Elijah Fraser

The Hospital Employees Union (HEU) is hopeful for a resolution to the Layoff of 49 employees from Acacia Ty Mawr Lodge, one of Shawnigan Lake's largest unionized employers. On the 23 of January management of the facility gave 60-day layoff notices to 49 of its employees, in preparation to contract out the jobs. Trillium which purchased Acacia Manor four years ago, also recently laid off workers at a seniors care facility in Nanaimo.



Hospital Employees Union members and supporters engage in a protest at the main intersection in Shawnigan Lake

More than 25 members of the Hospital Employees Union held a rally in Shawnigan Lake Village on Saturday the 4th of February. Most of the employees are local residents living in Shawnigan and the Cowichan Valley. When asked about the goal in staging the rally in Shawnigan, one local resident who is a care aide at the facility said, "We want to let the community know that this facility is important and to make sure the quality of

care stays the same or better for our residents." Acacia specializes in care for Alzheimer's and dementia patients, although most of the residents are not cognisant of the issue, families are all quite concerned, she

said.

"This is a drastic move because it affects everyone in the facility," said Marge Blamey, an HEU communications officer on the Tuesday the 7th of February. "They actually issued the layoff notices before telling the union or the employees (of plans to contract out). This creates instability and has a ripple effect on the community."

A meeting took place between the employer and the HEU on Wednesday and Blamey was optimistic on Thursday. "There seems to be an appetite to negotiate a resolution. The employer has not yet rescinded the layoff notices, but we are hopeful we can negotiate a resolution so that the community is better served." Acacia employees are under the HEU's master agreement which provides the same pay and benefits scale as hospital workers. Trillium Care Services operates facilities throughout the province both under the private contract model and independent agreements with the HEU.

There are still plans to hold another rally on Saturday February 11th on the corner in the village. Calls to Acacia management were unreturned at the time of submission.



4.9 More Weeks of Winter... maybe!

Shawnigan's own "*Giordano the Groundhog*" came out of his art-deco, split level groundhoggy condo at the back of West Shawnigan park to count snowdrops and concluded that since the number of snowdrops per square metre exceeded the thickness of the moss on south facing stones under one kilo in weight, there would definitely be 4.9 more weeks of winter . . . unless, of course, spring shows up early!



Snowdrops (Snowdropus Predictabilus)

Shawnigan Really Counts Shawnigan Lake and Census 2011

by Brent Beach

The most recent census numbers are in. Cowichan Valley - Shawnigan Lake, Regional District Area B

Population and dwelling counts

Population in 2011 8,127

Population in 2006 7,562

2006 to 2011 population change (%) 7.5

Total private dwellings 3,421

Private dwellings

occupied by usual residents 3,066

Population density per square kilometre 26.5

Land area (square km) 306.50

That population change (%) is for the 5 years, not per

year. The year over year growth rate is only 1.45%.

There could be an interpretation problem with these numbers. You will notice that there are 355 homes not "occupied by usual residents". It is presumed that this means the owners have a permanent residence other than the home in Area B. It is not clear if the numbers in the OCP - which are obtained from BC Stats, not Stats Canada - count non-residents as well. The population of Area B reported in the OCP for 2006 is 7,723, which is 161 more than the above number.

The OCP projected a population increase of 885 people. The census is reporting an increase of 565. The actual growth rate is substantially lower than estimated. Even if the underlying model is different, the rate of change should be roughly the same. The fact that it is much smaller does indicate growth is occurring less quickly than expected.

The census numbers for Electoral area A (Mill Bay and vicinity): population is 4,393 up from 4,073 in 2006, an increase of 320, compared to an OCP estimate of an increase of 624.

For Electoral area C (Cobble Hill and vicinity): population is 4,796 up from 4,520 in 2006, an increase of 276, compared to an OCP estimate of an increase of 292

South of us, Langford grew from 22,459 in 2006 to 29,228 in 2011, for a cumulative growth of 30.1%. It is possible that the rapid increase in Langford has lessened the growth pressure in our area. The combination of lower prices there (smaller lots) and a reduced commute (no Malahat) may be redirecting growth. The capacity of Langford and Colwood to absorb growth - billions of dollars in development planned - may continue to tame growth pressure in our area.

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Our Opinion: Subdivision Decision Is Wrong

The Provincial Approving Officer made a mistake when he did not heed the CVRD recommendation to deny approval of the sixteen-lot Worthington Point subdivision.

The Approving Officer is an independent decision maker, employed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and is responsible for ensuring that development of land within the province considers the public interest. "Public Interest" is a concept fundamental to the democratic process and basically concerns people's general welfare and well being; something in which the populace as a whole has a stake. Most decisions result in some people gaining while others lose. The overall gain should outweigh the loss however measuring this is not always straightforward.

The benefits, in this case, are fairly clear. The developers stand to gain. The construction of sixteen new homes will provide employment and retail opportunities. New families will enjoy their lakefront properties, pay taxes and shop locally. Growth and progress as it is meant to be.

What are the costs though? Community unease over density, destruction of the natural shoreline, threats to water quality, and sewage disposal standards appear to have been ignored. The health of the lake and surrounding watershed is being jeopardized on several fronts. There are many in the community who are aware of this and who have made their concerns known to the Advisory Planning Commission (APC), the CVRD and the Ministry. The costs are unknown but are potentially significant. No proper analysis has been performed.

The APC and the CVRD listened but the Approving Officer was apparently deaf to these concerns. No options for a site-plan with fewer lots were considered. Requests for a public hearing were ignored.

Approval has been granted and it is likely that the property will be developed as planned. The CVRD request to deny the proposal was clear and provided ample justification. The Approving Officer should be required to explain the basis for his decision.

High-Density Lakefront Subdivision Approved Despite CVRD Concerns

by Dave Hutchinson



Worthington Point – Photo by Al Brunet

As reported in previous Focus issues, there are significant concerns about the proposed subdivision at Worthington Point. Public outcry and scrutiny by the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) resulted in a CVRD recommendation that the Provincial Approving Officer deny the application. Despite this, the developers have recently received approval from the Province to proceed.

The 32,420 m2 (8 acre) development area will be divided into sixteen lots however, due to the lot averaging provision of the Strata Property Act, ten narrow lots will be squeezed along the waterfront. CVRD and APC documents from last July and August cite concerns which include excessive density, sewage disposal standards, potential threats to lake water quality and riparian areas, and a lack of community consultation.

The following is a summary from a CVRD staff report:

The proposed subdivision is impressive in that it has taken full advantage of available bylaw and regulation provisions to maximize the lot yield and market value of the subdivision. While it is understandable from the owners' perspective why this approach was taken, the intent and objectives of the CVRD's land use policies and regulations and community concerns about development on Shawnigan Lake should be considered. It is unusual for the CVRD to appeal to the Provincial Approving Officer to not approve a subdivision application due to it being against the public interest, but the proposed subdivision appears to be a case where such an appeal is justified. Staff is recommending that the Provincial Approving Officer be requested to deny the subdivision application due to it being against the public interest for the reasons described in this report and in the recommended option.

The Provincial Approving Officer from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) is the final authority on whether subdivision applications are approved in rural areas including the CVRD. Section 77.1 of the Land Title Act allows for Regional Districts to have their own Approving Officer however currently none do. Municipalities appoint an Approving Officer and are thus able to ensure that local interests are considered. Perhaps the CVRD should pursue establishing this important position.

Lakeshore Natural Boundary From 1893 In Error

by Dave Hutchinson

One interesting fact to come out of the Worthington Point subdivision process is that the natural boundary from the original 1893 survey is evidently in error.

The provincial Land Act defines "natural boundary" as ***the visible high water mark of any lake, river, stream or other body of water where the presence and action of the water are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, as to mark on the soil of the bed of the body of water a character distinct from that of its banks, in vegetation, as well as in the nature of the soil itself.***

etation, as well as in the nature of the soil itself.

Surveyors working for the developer have determined that the true natural boundary along the Worthington property is a considerable distance lake-ward of the old one depicted in Plan 218A. The site plan reveals a strip which appears to be 10-15 metres wide that, when added to the upland property, would enable the creation of at least three additional lots (about 5,500 m2). The Surveyor General's Office has apparently approved this change recently. The process may have been

complicated somewhat because the lake-bed is not Crown Land but was included with the original E&N Land Grant. Timberwest currently has certain rights to the lake-bed however it is not known whether a transaction with the developer has occurred.

As a result of this determination we now appear to have a disjoint natural boundary on either side of the subject property. It also begs

the question of whether the natural boundary is in error in other locations. Perhaps there will be a spate of waterfront owners hoping to enlarge their property through a similar process.

The Surveyor General's Office states that: ***Determining the lake-ward ownership***



January 2012 water line at Worthington Point (lower than most winters)



of a parcel of water front parcel is complex and it is necessary to review each situation individually. A British Columbia land surveyor is the appropriate expert to provide an opinion in such matters.

It is worth noting that for a few lakes in BC the natural boundary is determined by a specific elevation of the water level rather than by a survey

process. Osoyoos Lake is an example where it is set at 278.28 metres. If the natural boundary for Shawnigan Lake was set to correspond to a lake level of about 116 metres it would eliminate inconsistencies like those described above and hopefully make the process of determining property lines a simpler and more accurate process.

We encourage you to send us letters...

The Focus will publish your thoughts on Shawnigan issues; bouquets you would like to offer to special people; things that strike you funny; challenges you want our civic leaders to consider; and/or ideas that would better our community. Letters to the Editor must be accompanied by the author's full name, address and phone number, but the contact information, other than the name, will not be published. Letters should be limited to 300 words and we reserve the right to edit for brevity or to refuse inappropriate or abusive language. Letters can attack issues - not individuals. Send letters to editor@shawniganfocus.ca

BRING BACK THE RAIL SERVICE

I miss the trains travelling through Shawnigan. I miss the sound of the whistle, the clicking of steel wheels on the rails and the exchange of a friendly wave with smiling passengers on the Dayliner or with the engineer on a freight train.

The railway and train service are historic to Shawnigan Lake - they have been a vital connection between communities up and down the Island and could be again. What a great way to travel - it's reliable, safe, stress free with someone else doing the driving and the scenery is breathtaking. I would like to see the return of rail service

I believe a passenger train could provide commuter morning travel to and evening service from Greater Victoria as well as the popular daily up-island run, and I also believe that ridership would be at a maximum.

Commuter rail service is a popular choice of travel throughout Canada and the US, and there is an increasing need for it here on the Island. The volume of highway traffic on the South Island continues to grow; rail service would help alleviate that.

In the Greater Vancouver area, millions of dollars have been, and continues to be, spent to construct the popular Sky Train rail system. We're fortunate to already have the railway line in place - yes, it's in need of upgrades and repairs, but the basics are here.

The January 2012 update on the Island Corridor Foundation website reports continuing progress and that it could be close to a federal funding decision.

If the rail service is permanently discontinued we lose, sadly, yet another jewel of our history and a vital link of travel in our future. I remain optimistic that the trains will return to Shawnigan.

Heather Plumb

Going in the Exit!

by Al Brunet

I recall a popular poster in the '60s & '70s that stated, "War is not good for children and other living things!" Besides the usual Bang Bang-Shoot 'em up wars, the definition of War has now been expanded to include "War on Drugs", "War on Poverty" . . . terror, prostitution, illiteracy, sexual abuse, crime, violence (now that's a weird one) . . . you name it, we have a war for it.

The common denominator for all of these wars? **We have lost, or are losing, every one of them.**

When it comes to drugs, we can measure the failure of that war even by looking around Shawnigan. The number of people who smoke pot, do crack/cocaine or have prescription drug or alcohol addictions as a percentage of the population is probably as great as the rest of the country, and that is staggering. Students can score drugs as fast as I can get a coffee.

At a recent convention of the federal Liberal party, a successful vote to legalize/de-criminalize marijuana was registered as policy. This is a big step in recognizing that prohibition as government policy does not work, never has and never will. They did not go far enough though, because they did not address how to stop the drug trade or how to re-claim our friends, family and children from all of these addictions.

How would I do it?

- 1) I would hire and train thousands of drug and alcohol counselors/nurses, at least one for every drugstore in the country.
- 2) I would have a voluntary registration of all addicts so that they could then receive very cheap drugs and counseling. Lower drug prices would take the profit out of drugs, negating the reasons for criminals to be involved or to recruit kids into the drug world.
- 2) I would mandate every drugstore to create space for the purpose of counselling and dispensing, staffed by the above, and provide controlled, ever-decreasing doses of safe drugs with the aim of helping people kick the habit and put their lives back together.

All of this would have the effect of lowering policing, prosecution and jailing costs. That savings would pay for the program. In time, fewer addicts would be created, society would have a much healthier population and health care costs would also come down.

I realize that there are many details that would need to be addressed and that nothing is as simple as it first appears, but you have to admit that this is no worse than what we are doing now.

And, consider this.

There are gazillions of examples in history where guidance and education has worked to make life and society better. There are no examples where repression, coercion or prohibition could claim the same.

Or, as Will Rogers is quoted as having said, "When you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop digging."



Al Brunet



Follow up to "I Have a Friend"

By Farrell Magnusson

I am proud to be a part of our caring Shawnigan Lake community. I was touched by the many people that read my letter in the last issue and offered hope and support for my friend and I thank all of them for their kind words.

I was especially moved by the woman that phoned me and offered to donate her bone marrow without knowing anything about the procedure or the person that would benefit from it.

I am happy to report that my friend will undergo a bone marrow trans-

plant on February 10, and he is hopeful for the future. His positive attitude and outlook will surely help with his recovery

Farrell Magnusson

Missed Celebration

We have just found out that a celebration was instigated by several of our new friends in the village/SLBA for January 10, 2012 in connection with our new status as Canadian citizens. There was even a flag from our local MP and pins from the South Cowichan Chamber of Commerce. We would like to place on record that we were extremely moved by this gesture and had we had any suggestion that this was taking place we would have got out of our

sick bed and made our weekly pilgrimage to Moziro's coffee house without any shadow of a doubt. But the fact that this was a surprise meant that we had no idea.

It goes to show just how important village life is and in particular how we have been received into the community.

Thank to all those that participated

Vicky and Richard Wood
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Old or New Ideas

Why???

(see page 4 "Come one, Come all")

Doing More with Less

By Elijah Fraser

Approximately 35 people packed an Elsie Miles classroom to meet recently with elected Area B Director, Dr. Bruce Fraser. There was excitement about many new initiatives, but also tension and concerns about the costs to area taxpayers. Concerns over rising property taxes were voiced early in the meeting.

Mike Hanson of the South Cowichan Chamber of Commerce spoke to the Proposed Visitor Centre at the Forest Discovery Museum. Aimed at promoting tourism, the centre's application for two million in funding comes before the CVRD board for approval on the 22nd of February. Cowichan Valley residents will be required to shoulder the cost of \$1.63 per \$100,000 in property value. Much concern was expressed as to the cost of the centre; it's relevance in relation to tourism in South Cowichan, and whether it is keeping with the times as more tourists turn to digital media for information.

The source of tension in the room became apparent when former Fire Chief Glen Sanders, on behalf of the Shawnigan Lake Improvement District, provided information in regards to their proposal for a 3rd Fire Hall. The new hall is to be located near the Sooke Lake Rd and Shawnigan Lake Rd intersection, located just less than eight kilometres from the Malahat Fire Hall. Sanders explained that the continuing development in South Shawnigan has made a third station a critical asset. The move is also meant to be proactive as develop-

ment continues both within and just outside the current boundaries.

"There are people all throughout the province who don't have fire protection," one concerned resident objected, "People moved to that area because it was cheap, knowing full well their insurance would be higher, now you're asking me to spend my money to put facilities there." A petition by South Shawnigan residents in 2008 resulted in the Shawnigan Station Estates inclusion within the Shawnigan Improvement District Boundary. Properties within an eight kilometre radius of the new hall could see a significant decrease on their house insurance. The two million dollar hall will result in a 25% increase in the Shawnigan Lake Improvement District fee on property taxes: \$11 per \$100 000 in property value for all properties within the district.

Public notice of the proposal was posted in local papers on the 13th and 20th of January and property owners have only until the 20th of February to counter petition the proposal. The same resident was clearly frustrated in regards to the approval process, "I live in a trailer park," he said, "Tax costs are put through to all residents and yet the petition only allows for land owners to object." An estimated 513 signatures from land owners are required for a counter-petition to be successful. Petitions and more information can be found on the Shawnigan Lake Fire Department website (www.shawniganfire.com).

Incorporation of Shawnigan Documenting the Past

By Brent Beach

Over the last 20 years, the incorporation of Shawnigan Lake either by itself, or as part of a larger community, has been a regular topic of conversation.

The province has defined a process through which an area can incorporate - can become a town or a city. The provincial government has published a number of documents outlining the process over the years. These documents were available on government web sites until recently. The ministry is writing a new version, bringing it into conformance with current government policy. In the meantime, the 2003 version titled A Guide to Municipal Incorporation, is well worth reading. (Link to a copy below.)

While neither guide explicitly requires it, the incorporation process usually involves two studies. In the first study, the candidate for incorporation is identified and the nature of the area described. In the second study, the full implications of incorporation are examined as well as very firm boundaries. If there is sufficient interest a referendum follows.

In 1992, an incorporation process began with the publishing of an initial study - South Cowichan Restructure Study Final Report dated July 23, 1992. It outlined the services provided to residents in the area, the costs of those services, and possible revenue sources. It also specified 8 possible incorporation candidates by combining the 4 southern electoral areas - Cowichan Bay, Mill Bay, Cobble Hill and Shawnigan Lake in different ways.

That led to a larger second

study called South Cowichan Restructure Study Final Draft in March 1996. Cowichan Bay had dropped out of the process before completion of this study. It outlined 6 different incorporation boundaries, discussed service provision costs and revenue sources for all 6 options.

This led to a referendum in November 1997 when the option of forming a combined community including Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill was soundly defeated.

In 2007, the Ministry turned down a request by the Shawnigan Residents Association to start the incorporation study process for Shawnigan Lake. A similar request from Mill Bay in 2008 was approved and a study was undertaken for the same three communities. That study was completed in 2009 and a number of documents produced. While the request originated with Mill Bay, the study again decided to go forward with a second study on a combined south Cowichan community.

Funding for this second study disappeared, the documents vanished, and there is no current Ministry plan to continue.

That is the short version.

While many of the studies mentioned in this article have disappeared from the Net, I have copies of most of them. Reading this historical material provides essential understanding of the incorporation process and the implications to us as residents and taxpayers. If you are interested in the implications of restructuring you can find links to copies of the documents at "BrentattheFocus.blogspot.com".

Come One-Come All

The April 2012 issue will be the 1st Anniversary of Shawnigan Focus !

We have arranged a Meet and Greet at the West Arm Grill on March 18th at 1pm. The purpose is to celebrate our great adventure in journalism, thank all of the people who got us here and to hear feedback from the community about the paper and to encourage more participation.

Everyone is welcome. We hope that current and potential volunteers, writers, readers and ad clients attend so that we can consider suggestions for new features, and to hear a range of beefs and bouquets from our first year.

The West Arm Grill will have a lunch special that day to encourage you to come early and enjoy lunch prior to the gathering/meeting.

Hope to see you there!

Questions? Email editor@shawniganfocus.ca

West Arm Grill

March 18th 1pm.

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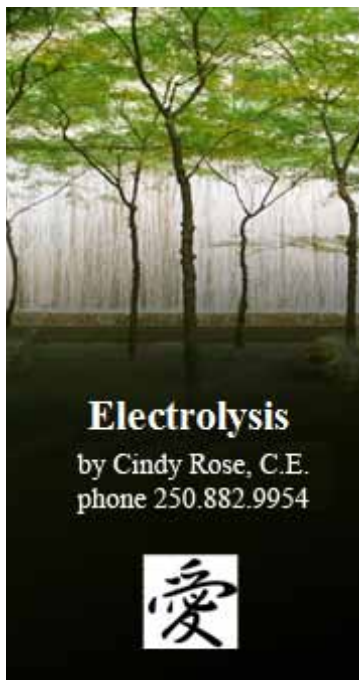
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Hib Tupper

Photo by Janet Neilsen

Farewell Hib

After seven years of topping up our tanks and checking our vehicles, Hib Tupper is moving on. Well, he will still be living at Shawnigan, but he is going to a new job caring for mentally challenged adults in the Cowichan Valley.

The Shawnigan Garage (now Shawnigan Lake Automotive Marine) is one of several establishments that have defined the Village over the years. How many gas stations still provide full service without an extra charge? People like Hib help make Shawnigan a place worth calling home.

We will miss his happy nature and intelligent comments. Our dogs will miss him too as he always gave treats to the ones that stopped by for a fill-up. Best wishes Hib.

Shawnigan Lake Parks Commission

by Margaret Symon

Dusky Evening Owl Sortie

Welcome! So nice you could join us! We've mustered at the Kinsol Trestle parking lot off Gleneagles Road before heading out on a dusky evening sortie in search of owls. How many are here tonight? Better take a tally, just to make sure we don't lose anyone in the darkness. Is everyone dressed warmly? It's a murky night; we'll keep flashlights handy in our pockets, to be used in an emergency. And while it's fun to chatter, we must try to be quiet so we can hear the owls calling.

We're fortunate this evening to be joined by one of our local naturalists. I'll readily admit I'm a rookie when it comes to owl sounds, but Dave has mastered the art of owl calling. Before we set off down the trail, Dave gives us a brief introduction to the owls we're likely to encounter in the Shawnigan area. He reminds us owls are large-headed, short-necked birds of prey. Owls are mostly nocturnal, so they're usually heard, rather than seen. Owls are frequently heard at dusk; hence the timing of our dusky hike.

Probably the most common owl at Shawnigan is the Barred Owl (that's "barred", not "barn" owl). Barred owls, named for vertical bars on their lower breasts, are about 40-60 cm in height, with a whitish-brown facial disk. Not long ago, barred owls were far less common on Vancouver Island. Like most owls, Barred Owls are opportunists. Of all the owls in our area, Barred Owls have become experts at surviving in diverse habitats, displacing other owl species. Barred owls prefer forested areas close to open water, but are widely found now in urban and rural areas, wherever rodents, smaller birds, insects, and even fish are available. Barred Owls locate their nests in hollowed-out tree tops or natural cavities of living or dead trees.

Besides the Barred Owl, other owl species that inhabit our part of Vancouver Island include the small woodland Western Screech Owl, the elusive Northern Pygmy Owl, the tiny Northern Saw-Whet Owl, the light-coloured, less common Barn Owl, and the much more common Great Horned Owl, which is about the same size as the Barred Owl.

Owls are usually solitary birds, and rarely gather, except for mating pairs. During the daytime, it's not unusual to see barred owls resting in trees or other sheltered perches high above the ground. At dusk, Barred Owls become active as they look for prey near open fields and streams and wetlands. Mating season takes place in late winter and early spring, so we're

more than likely to hear owls calling tonight.

Just as we set off down the trail we hear a deep voice from the woods saying something that sounds like, "who, who cooks for you?" My sentiments indeed, as I skipped dinner after work to arrive on time for this evening hike! While I'm visualizing what a late dinner might entail, Dave appears quite excited. "That's a barred owl calling", he whispers loudly! Once again we hear the call. This time, though, it's Dave mimicking the owl. Sure enough, we hear the owl calling back "who, who cooks for you?" As we saunter down the trail to the Trestle, we listen for the "cooking" call of the barred owl. Dave tells us that the calls of other owls can sound very different. The Northern Screech Owl pips; the Barn Owl hisses; the Pygmy Owl whistles. The hoots of the Great Horned Owl are somewhat similar to the Barred Owl.

What we don't hear, however, are sounds of other owl species. Dave explains that due to direct predation from the larger Barred Owls, other owl populations appear to be on the decline. Exacerbating the impacts from Barred Owl competition are disturbances from urban and rural development, and logging, and competition for nesting cavities with other introduced species, like the Eastern Grey Squirrel and European Starling.

With the sound of "who's cooking?" hooting through my head, we conclude our evening owl sortie, bid adieu to the owls and thank our obliging naturalist, and head home to rustle up a late dinner.

If you're out and about at dawn or dusk, listen carefully, and you, too, might hear the owls calling.

Good night! See you in the next issue of the Focus!

Margaret is the chair of the Shawnigan Lake (Area B) Parks and Recreation Commission



Shawnigan Residents Association

CREEK CLEAN OUT

By Grant Price

The CVRD will shortly be asking property owners around the lake, and those nearby who draw their drinking water from the lake, to approve a small tax increase to ensure the creek at the north end of the lake is kept clear of sand, rocks, vegetation and

ment activities in the watershed have increased runoff;

- sand from Masons Beach is making it's way into the mouth of the creek reducing flow;
- rocks are dislodging or deliberately being moved into the bed of the creek around Halhed Bridge, also reducing flow;
- and vegetation is continuing to grow in front of the mouth of the creek.

also affect public property, including damage to parks and beaches. Roads close to the lake could be undermined or underwater ultimately costing taxpayers big money to fix. All for the sake of making sure the water that enters the lake has the opportunity to leave at a desirable rate. While keeping the creek clean and clear won't guarantee against flooding, it will certainly help minimize the possibility.

The work the CVRD plans to do will initially focus on the mouth of the creek, up to and under the Halhed bridge. The funds requested will create an annual maximum budget of \$18,000. While most of this will be used in the initial clean up, future years may use only a small portion of this fund, depending of the work required. The funding model used by the CVRD for this type of project allows them to only spend the collected funds on this initiative. In other words, if approved they can't spend more than the \$18,000 per annum, and they can't use any excess funds on another



North end creek and the Halhed Bridge

debris. The cost to property owners will be a maximum of \$2.30 per \$100,000 of their assessment property value. The Shawnigan Lake Residents Association Directors, and the newly elected Area Director, Dr. Bruce Fraser support this initiative. Why?

While there are several small streams that feed the lake throughout the year, there is only one creek, at the north end, where the water leaves the lake and eventually makes its way down to Mill Bay. On its way downstream, a weir helps control the level of the lake during the summer months, but for much of the fall, winter and spring the weir is wide open, allowing as much water as possible to continue on it's way. The following changes have all contributed to more water trying to leave the lake through a smaller opening:

- changes in weather pattern have produced steady increases in rainfall over the past several years;
- logging and develop-

With the increased possibility of flooding comes the greater risk of lake water being contaminated from a number of sources. Several homes around the lake are on a flood plain and their septic fields and tanks can and do go under water, depending on the lake level. Significant or prolonged high water levels would most certainly have a negative effect on the quality of our lake water. In addition to the primary concern of healthy drinking water, are the financial risks associated with the lake level being too high. It only takes one "perfect storm" to generate lake levels that could result in thousands, if not millions of dollars of uninsurable damage. Image two feet of water in your newly renovated cabin; or your wharf rising above your pilings and crashing into your neighbours, or worse, settling back down on top of another piling when the water drops, ripping it apart. While some may not have sympathy for the property owners around the lake, the damage wouldn't be restricted to private property, but could



Mill Creek

project. The excess funds not needed for any given year's clean-up will mean less taxes the following year.

We hope you will support this initiative when the CVRD makes their published announcement. We believe the cost is minimal in relation to the potential for serious health problems and property damage (both private and public).

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- Shawnigan Lake -



The Wild Side

By Brian Jackson

Like many of you, I also like to keep a watchful eye on development in the area, just to know what’s going on. The FOCUS has kept me informed on the various agencies, departments, commissions and residential groups involved in one way or another in monitoring area development.

However, it has come to my attention that one family, already living around the lake, seems to have chosen to ignore all this bureaucracy and decided to do their own thing. Lakefront property was their choice, of course, and they didn’t waste any time developing it. They probably decided to do this during the winter so as to hide their activities. The CVRD, says they must have a permit. . .I don’t think so. If they had, then the Advisory Planning Commission would have it on their agenda. . .again, I don’t think so.



If it’s going to be a large development, the Parks and Recreation Commission would have been informed of their entitlement to some park land. . .once again, I don’t think so.

The neighbours know what’s going on, but are reluctant to stir up the “muddy waters” in fear of some sort of retaliation. And since the Bylaw Enforcement Officer is complaint driven, do you think we will see any action? . . .I don’t think so. I wonder if the Vancouver Island Health Authority has been contacted about their drinking

water and who knows what is planned for their septic field? Apparently, the family has been planning this for about 3 years - they have been spotted sneaking around the property for some time.

The trees are being removed one by one and construction has started. But, I guess we shouldn’t really worry about it. We might as well carry on being complacent and hope someone else will look into it. . .or will they? As for Mr. and Mrs. Beaver and their family of four, they will likely be very happy in their new abode. They started by taking down the large willow (shown in the last focus) and you can see the “milling” taking place on site. Construction is well underway under the existing dock. I wonder if we should be sending them the Welcome Wagon and encouraging them to join the Shawnigan Residents Association? Or better yet, since they are such good swimmers, maybe they would be inter-

ested in volunteering for the Triathlon, or better yet, be a local resident as a participant. Watch for a rental opportunity this summer, after all, it is as “waterfront accommodation as it can be.

I write this in jest, of course, to encourage you to learn what is going on in your area. Go to a meeting or two. There are many to choose from, whatever your interest. They can be very interesting. You don’t have to volunteer or say anything but, if you want to, you have the opportunity to express your point of view.

Take a Hike!

By Robin Massey

I know you are just dying to know! Where on earth did the Iron Butts explore last time?

Well, we took our butts, boots and poles out to relish in the beauty of Maple Mountain located in Maple Bay (I love how the mountain names fit so well here in the Valley). It is truly amazing how quiet it is driving through Duncan at 7:30ish on a Sunday morning, it’s peacefully relaxing and the windy roads through to Maple Bay is a treat for the eyes, even if they are half open.

For this day our chosen route was to enter the mountain from the Maple Bay side, however you can also enter via Crofton as well. Getting there: After making your way to Maple Bay, take a moment to inhale the freshness of the ocean air at the waterfront, then when ready go left (or right if your back is now to the ocean). Stay on the main road curving from right to left, left to right through beautiful homes built upon the ridges overlooking Maple Bay. Soon enough you will see Maple Mountain Road to your left, you guessed right – take that one.

Stay on this road through the residential and go uuuuuuuup that steep hill to reach the round at the top, this incidentally is the trailhead. There are several trails available and if you use your Google power well, you’ll find them online. This particular day it was wet and rainy therefore we took off on Trail Blue (Honorable mention: Pink is fun if you like a good butt blaster). Don’t let the start of the trail scare you off. I cannot tell a fib, the first bit is steepish but after about 10 minutes (depending on the speed), that warm up is behind you. Thank goodness a switchback was put in last year. Phew! Trail Blue is

a medium level and grade but easily can be done by beginners who watch their step and take their time. Maple Mountain provides an amazing view of the narrows, lush green moss and trees, a few babbling brooks for the puppies and a lovely meadow of Garry Oaks.

Heed my warning as I speak from experience when I say, be careful on this trail! Know your route or know when to call Uncle and turn around because what you think might be a loop back – may not be a loop back at all! Ask my companions about spending 7 hours on Maple Mountain a couple years back before I knew the trails! Oops.

Shout out! The weather is going to get nicer one day. Please accept our invitation to join us anytime! The more always means . . . well more!



Robin Massey



Robin Massey plays on various trails in Cowichan Valley with her hiking group The Iron Butts. www.theomtree.com



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Principal & Interest	\$917	\$888	\$837	\$773
Condo Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Property Taxes (Estimated)	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Total Monthly Payment	\$1,017	\$988	\$937	\$873
Annual Income Required*	see below **	see below **	see below **	\$32,722
Estimated Closing Costs*	Payable on or before closing			

This chart is for illustrations purposes only.
*Rates may differ for smaller mortgage amounts. Interest rates effective as of January 31, 2012. Rates are subject to change without notice. Interest is calculated semi-annually, not in advance. For the purpose of this illustration, the interest rate and annual percentage rate (APR) are the same assuming no cost of borrowing charges other than interest apply. All mortgage products are offered by Royal Bank of Canada and are subject to its standard lending criteria. This is the list price supplied by the builder or real estate professional shown above. Sample calculations are based on the assumption that the property is purchased for the full list price and will differ depending upon actual purchase price. **For the Annual Income required where the down payment is less than 20% of the purchase price, please speak to your RBC Mortgage Specialist. All mortgage applicants must meet Royal Bank of Canada standard lending criteria for residential mortgages. The Annual Income required is only one indicator and does not guarantee mortgage approval. Actual cost may differ. This sheet does not imply any endorsement nor approval by Royal Bank of Canada of any third party or their advice opinions, information, products or services. © Registered trademark of Royal Bank of Canada. RBC and Royal Bank are registered trademarks of Royal Bank of Canada. ™ Trademark of Royal Bank of Canada.

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The Sound of Music



Shawnigan Lake was well-represented in the South Island Musical Theatre production of “The Sound of Music” at the Island Savings Centre in Duncan over two weekends in February.

Veteran actors Marena Hunter, Phaedra Fairwell, Angie Brockhurst and Bo Light were joined on stage by “Von Trapp” sisters played by Kelly Kumbruch and Alice Tillie Fowler in lead roles.

Ken Waet, and Mary Harrison added their acting and dancing support . In the orchestra pit was cellist Paul Sparrow, on trumpet, and Trisha Daniell violinist. Behind the scenes, Shannon Brockhurst took a break from acting and helped with make-up.

What is it?
Where is it?
Why is it?



First correct answer sent to:
editor@shawniganfocus.ca
wins two specialty coffees,
compliments of Moziro’s

WHAT IS IT?
CONTEST
WINNER
January



Emily Black had the most correct answer for our January “Where is it? What is it?” Contest. The picture is of an old key pad at the Rock Quarry, about halfway down the pavement on the left hand side when walking towards the water. Emily wins two specialty coffees from Moziro’s.

SHAWNIGAN FOCUS
February 2012

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ABOUT THE FOCUS

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Note: Views expressed by individual authors are not the opinion of Shawnigan Focus, but of the comment writer.

Additional copies are available at: Style Centre Barber Shop, Subway, Village Chipperry, Moziro’s Coffee Shop, Aitken & Fraser Store, Mason’s Store, Kinsol Market, Cafe Crème, West Arm Grill and Olde School Coffee.

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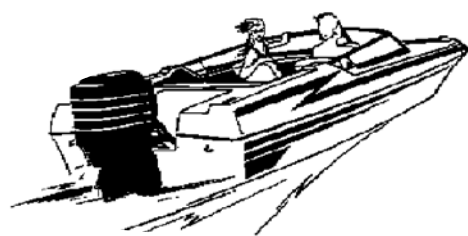
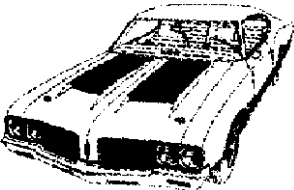
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Shawnigan Weather for January 2012
(stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network)
compiled by Grant Treloar

	Shawnigan Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay	Discovery School	Museum	Kelsey School
Avg High	5.6	4.8	4.7	5.1	5.9
Avg Low	-0.3	-0.2	-1.1	-0.4	-0.2
Extr High	14.5	9.6	9.3	10.3	10.6
Extr Low	-21.1	-5.4	-6.7	-5.9	-5.1
Precip	198.3	245.2	213.2	195.1	124.5
Days with Precip	19	24	24	25	22

Lake Temperature: Jan 1st: 3° Jan 8th: 4° Jan 15th: 2° Jan 22nd: 2° Jan 29th: 2°

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Wed 15 Feb	00:39	9.2H	03:29	8.9L	09:20	11.0H	17:35	2.7L
Thu 16 Feb	02:17	9.8H	05:09	9.5L	10:06	10.7H	18:39	2.4L
Fri 17 Feb	03:14	10.3H	07:03	9.6L	11:09	10.4H	19:37	2.3L
Sat 18 Feb	03:53	10.6H	08:23	9.2L	12:26	10.0H	20:29	2.3L
Sun 19 Feb	04:26	10.8H	09:20	8.6L	13:43	9.8H	21:15	2.5L
Mon 20 Feb	04:55	10.9H	10:06	8.0L	14:52	9.6H	21:57	2.8L
Tue 21 Feb0	05:22	10.9H	10:47	7.3L	15:54	9.5H	22:36	3.3L
Wed 22 Feb	05:47	10.9H	11:27	6.6L	16:50	9.4H	23:13	4.0L
Thu 23 Feb	06:12	10.8H	12:05	6.0L	17:45	9.3H	23:51	4.7L
Fri 24 Feb	06:37	10.6H	12:44	5.5L	18:41	9.3H		
Sat 25 Feb	00:28	5.6L	07:00	10.5H	13:23	5.0L	19:39	9.2H
Sun 26 Feb	01:07	6.4L	07:24	10.3H	14:05	4.6L	20:44	9.1H
Mon 27 Feb	01:47	7.3L	07:47	10.1H	14:49	4.3L	22:01	9.0H
Tue 28 Feb	02:31	8.0L	08:09	9.9H	15:39	4.2L	23:36	9.1H
Wed 29 FebG	03:28	8.6L	08:33	9.7H	16:34	4.0L		
Thu 01 Mar	01:19	9.3H	05:07	9.0L	09:02	9.5H	17:33	3.8L
Fri 02 Mar	02:29	9.7H	06:53	9.1L	09:48	9.3H	18:32	3.6L
Sat 03 Mar	03:08	9.9H	07:58	8.8L	11:01	9.2H	19:24	3.3L
Sun 04 Mar	03:36	10.0H	08:38	8.5L	12:24	9.1H	20:10	3.1L
Mon 05 Mar	03:58	10.1H	09:09	7.9L	13:39	9.2H	20:52	3.0L
Tue 06 Mar	04:19	10.2H	09:40	7.2L	14:47	9.3H	21:32	3.2L
Wed 07 Mar	04:41	10.3H	10:13	6.3L	15:51	9.5H	22:11	3.6L
Thu 08 Mar@	05:03	10.3H	10:51	5.3L	16:52	9.7H	22:51	4.3L
Fri 09 Mar	05:27	10.5H	11:32	4.4L	17:54	9.8H	23:32	5.2L
Sat 10 Mar	05:51	10.6H	12:16	3.5L	18:58	9.8H		
Sun 11 Mar	00:14	6.2L	07:18	10.7H	14:04	2.9L	21:06	9.8H
Mon 12 Mar	01:59	7.2L	07:46	10.8H	14:55	2.5L	22:22	9.8H
Tue 13 Mar	02:49	8.1L	08:17	10.7H	15:50	2.4L	23:46	9.8H
Wed 14 MarT	03:49	8.8L	08:53	10.5H	16:51	2.6L		



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Voices from the Past

**Nature's winter is, alas,
man's sorrow**
by Bruce Hutchison (Sept 1989)

A melancholy business, the closing of a summer cabin, but the forest rejoices in man's retreat to winter hibernation. Melancholy and strenuous, too, full of vain regrets and the failed hopes of summer, as no city dweller can understand.

To prepare a camp for the months of rain, snow and howling storm, to enclose the porches with sheets of tin, to store furniture, wrestle with mattresses, drain water pipes, sweep pine needles from slippery roofs, and replenish the empty woodshed - this is a job demanding as much physical energy as climbing Mount Everest or boxing 10 rounds with the world's heavyweight champion.

Only a fool or a lunatic would voluntarily endure such autumnal anguish of mind and body for reasons quite incomprehensible to anyone but himself. Enough that he has lived these several months in solitary madness, with at least the pretense of insulation against the world even crazier. Nevertheless, to that world he must return, behind a false front of sanity, the winter bluff.

What will happen before the camp reopens, if he survives the winter to face the equally strenuous labours of spring? Many things will happen, all unforeseeable, as in human affairs.

Great trees, outwardly sound, will crash down, their roots broken by the spreading disease of inner rot that afflicts the noble Douglas fir species. Young trees will take their place, competing fiercely in the market for a limited supply of space, nourishment and light.

Squirrels, rabbits, toads, and garter snakes will spend the winter, life half suspended, in their chosen hollows. Under the earth's surface the intricate root web will keep growing without a moment's pause, though the visible trees seem idle. Worms, insects and microscopic bacteria, the countless billions of nature's household, will take no holiday.

Many things will happen in the cabin also. Mice will thrive on the tidbits of food always left by the experienced camp man to distract them from edible blankets and pillows. A wise old raccoon, veteran of many comfortable winters will occupy the best bed, leaving certain traces of his presence. Now and then a wandering burglar will enjoy a night or two of free lodging.

Against the burglar we make careful preparation with a note on the doorstep advising him where to find the key and thus saving him from the crime of breaking and entering.

In these parts the burglars are generally honest fellows who use the key, refill the kitchen wood box, even wash the dirty dishes before

they depart without the theft of anything. There is nothing worth stealing anyhow, only some hand-carved artifacts, the clumsy work of the owner, unsaleable at any price. Camp burglars, unlike the urban sort, have their own refined ethics.

These visitors are rare nowadays. In the age of high living standards the competent burglar will disdain a cabin worthless, except to the owner, and its door will probably remain sealed until spring. Lacking an audible voice, it cannot complain of neglect but the inaudible are speaking within it, all the same, the voices of companies who will never come again to speak aloud.

Every old cabin is inhabited by friendly ghosts and memories too deep for tears. In a fashion unknown to city folk or scientific investigators it becomes a living thing, feels the loneliness of winter shudders in the cold, every wooden joint creaking under the demented winds, and it yearns for man's return. Or so the man learns to believe, in a curious mutual affection, though no one else will believe him.

No one except Archie, the familiar spirit of the wilderness, who hates the summer because it brings men, and worse, women to this region and disturbs his hermitage. He turned up today, with sure instinct and obvious relief, to bid us farewell. As a special favour he accepted some bottles holding the remains of summer's liquid stimulants.

For this payment on account, with additional rewards promised at Christmas time, he keeps an eye on the cabin, reports burglaries, leaks, accidents and village gossip. But without reading Shelley, he fears the inevitable recurrence of summer, knowing alas that if winter comes spring can't be far behind.

"Oh yes," he said, "even with a government like Trudeau's, spring is coming back. And you, too God," he added in his unchanging autumn prayer, "how I dread it!"

After that cheering adieu he paddled up the lake in his flimsy canoe, the bottles stowed beneath the seat, for future reference.

When Archie had gone the camp man took a last look around, surveyed the cabin's seasonal chaos, spread some oatmeal and macaroni for the mice, closed the door and locked it - an ancient and poignant ritual not to be repeated in many more autumns.

Having placed the key where any burglar could find it, he walked down the trail without pausing to look behind him lest he remember too much. Now the forest and the cabin were alone. So, in his secret life, is every man.

The family of Bruce Hutchison has owned property at Shawnigan Lake for over a century. Reprinted with permission from The Vancouver Sun

Police Report

RCMP Shawnigan Lake Detachment

By Sergeant R.E. (Rob) Webb - Detachment Commander

Shawnigan Lake RCMP members were busier than normal over the holiday season this year, and the trend has continued into the New Year. Although the holiday season is always stressful, this year we noticed a marked increase in domestic violence and mental health issues.

These types of calls for service are always potentially dangerous for those involved and the officers attending. Police suspect that victims, through education and awareness, know that this type of violence cannot be tolerated and do contact police more often than in the past. The recent downturn in the economy unfortunately always seems to play a part as well. By these types of crimes being reported and our early action, this allows for other agencies to get involved such as the courts, victim services, and others that can hopefully offer help in getting families and or persons back on track.

On a more positive note, RCMP in Shawnigan are pleased with the overall decrease in property crime over the past several months. We continue to work with various police departments regarding traveling criminals and have had some success to date in preventing crime and or arresting suspects involved in thefts, whether it is from vehicles or property itself. The RCMP do ask the public to continue to report suspicious activity.

Presently the RCMP is working with the South Cowichan Community Policing Advisory Society (SCCPAS) to identify and determine if a Community Policing Station would be supported. A possible site would be in Mill Bay. Volunteers would be, of course, needed. Anyone wanting further information is asked to contact SCCPAS Volunteer and Block Watch Coordinator Shirley WALKER at 250-743-6727 or swalker60@shaw.ca

Shawnigan RCMP continue to work with various agencies regarding possible solutions to road safety in the South Cowichan area including the Malahat, School zones and roads. We continue to provide school talks and participation in SADD, the PARTY Program focusing on healthy choices with High School Youth and recently completed DARE Graduation at Discovery School. Youth talks with George Bonner School are upcoming in February as well. Police remind parents and students that school is back in and a visible presence by RCMP is attempted daily to ensure our school zones remain safe.

The Detachment is presently in the planning process for 2012/2013. Priorities planned include Road Safety, Youth, Seasonal Policing, Drug Investigations/Awareness and Aboriginal Policing.

Thank you, Rob rob.webb@rcmp-grc.gc.ca



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Shawnigan’s
38th Annual Ski
Week

By Kelly Koeppe

A yearly highlight at Shawnigan Lake School is the annual Ski Week that transports nearly the entire student body and staff to the hills of Manning Park Resort for a week of frolicking in the snow. This amazing experience, and no small logistical feat, began in 1974 and has continued to be an important community-building mainstay of the School’s educational program. It is hard for the written word to do justice to the positive energy and feeling of connectedness that we experience at Ski Week. It is an opportunity for teachers and students to interact in a different environment, learn



together outside of the classroom, move beyond our comfort zone both physically and mentally and bring

Fire Department
Report

The Shawnigan Lake Volunteer Fire Department attended 19 emergency incidents in January 2012 as follows:

- January 3 - First Responder in the Beach Estates
- January 10 - First Responder in Hillcroft Acres
- January 12 - Chimney Fire in Hillcroft Acres
- January 14 - MVI on Cameron-Taggart Road
- January 15 - Auto Alarms Activated on Renfrew Road
- January 16 - MVI on Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road
- January 16 - MVI on Bob-O-Link Road
- January 16 - MVI on South Shawnigan Lake Road
- January 17 - MVI on Deloume Road
- January 18 - First Responder off Shawnigan Lake Road
- January 20 - First Responder off Shawnigan Lake Road
- January 20 - Hydro Line Fire on Renfrew Road
- January 22 - MVI on West Shawnigan Lake Road
- January 22 - First Responder off Shawnigan Lake Road
- January 24 - Hydro Line Fire on Sylvester Road
- January 25 - First Responder in the Beach Estates
- January 26 - Chimney Fire on West Shawnigan Lake Road
- January 26 - Possible Structure Fire in the Village Area
- January 28 - MVI on Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road at Forsyth Road

cooperation and teamwork to a whole new level.

The best way to sum it up is to compare the whole week to a well-loved, reliable and sturdy family campervan that faithfully delivers an unforgettable holiday each season and symbolizes years of cherished family memories packed into each trip. The Ski Week campervan is prepped well before the departure date, which is the first Sunday of every February. And the vehicle isn’t just well maintained; it is inspected, greased, tweaked, realigned, packed, repacked to insure it delivers a phenomenal road trip for everyone.

The main drivers are Deputy-Head Jo-Anne Kingstone along with Shawnigan teachers Wendy Woollven and Nigel Mayes, who pour hours of energy and passion into pre-trip planning for a seamless Ski Week

program. Their tireless dedication insures that no pothole, big or small, deviates the Ski Week campervan from running anything less than perfectly.

Another instrumental group at Ski Week is the grade 11 class. They are a large volunteer leadership group that takes charge of organizing games and groups to help with all kinds of Ski Week activities. Their multitude of responsibilities include being Snow Angels, experienced skiers and snowboarders who offer assistance on the hill to those in need, the bedtime helpers who gently nudge the juniors toward their rooms and make sure they are ready for “lights out”, babysitters to watch over staff children daily, recycling supervisors and carnival planners. The energy and atmosphere of Ski Week is highly dependent on the enthusiasm that the grade 11 team brings to the slopes.

Over the years, the Ski Week program has remained largely unchanged but has expanded into a mini Shawnigan Olympics. The week is filled with Interhouse competitions including downhill and x-country races, a snow sculpture event, tug-of-war and the academic Reach-for-the-Top challenge. Other highlights include the much-anticipated Staff Revue for the students, the fierce but fun staff versus grade 12 broomball game, the carnival festivities on the final evening and the new addition of musical après ski fun during the lunch break.

After six days in the snow, the Shawnigan family piles back into the campervan and prepares to be lulled into comfortable rest on the homeward journey along the Princeton-Hope highway. The feeling we take with us is one of contentment, pleasure and accomplishment for all the games and hard work it took to make Ski Week happen and moreover, a general gratitude that another family experience has been enjoyed by all.



Shawnigan Lake
Business Association

by Roy Davies



The new, full colour Shawnigan Map has been completed. This version will include new subdivisions and roads, important area phone numbers and a list of streets and their coordinates. The street index did not appear on the last version. Many merchants in the SLBA will have copies available for residents and their visitors starting in March. There will be no charge for the map.

Work is near complete on the new “Welcome to Shawnigan” sign at Cairn Park across from the Fire Hall. The sign is a cooperative venture involving the South Cowichan Rotary Club who donated the material and erected the sign, and the merchants of the SLBA who will pay for the creation and printing of the map on the sign. Finding one’s way around Shawnigan should be much easier once these two projects are complete.

Other SLBA projects in the works include:
-Community Office / Tourist information center in the Village
-Family Festival in Shawnigan Village in connection with the Subaru Triathlon.
-Groupon style addition to Shawnigan Lake Online for Shawnigan Businesses.

If you are looking to broaden your community knowledge, drop by our

Networking Tuesdays, every week from 8-9am at Moziro Coffee. Bring your mug, (coffee is only \$1 if you bring your own mug) questions or anything you would like to share about what you may be doing in the community. You never know who you might meet. Networking Tuesdays is an informal time with no agenda. Grab a coffee, sit down and start asking or talking. There is no limit to the topics.

If you have a small business in the area and are not a member of the business association we invite you to join us. The mission of the Shawnigan Lake Business Association is to increase the profile of Shawnigan Lake businesses and to support the community. Within this mandate, the SLBA works to achieve the following Strategic Goals:

1. Provide networking opportunities for Shawnigan Lake businesses
2. Increase public awareness of businesses in Shawnigan Lake
3. Increase Shawnigan Lake Business Association membership
4. Support initiatives that enhance the Shawnigan Lake community

Visit www.shawniganlakeonline.com for more information on the SLBA and Shawnigan Lake.

Film Review: “The Grey”

**** 1/2 out of 5 stars | Adventure Thriller/Drama

By Russell Treloar

The wilderness survival thriller ranks as one of my favorite film genres and so, naturally, I was hopeful that The Grey would deliver the thrills like classics in the same vain, such as Shoot to Kill (1988) and The Edge (1997).

For a supposed genre film, The Grey has a lot going for it. Foremost is its star Liam Neeson, whose Oscar-nominated performance in Schindler’s List almost twenty years ago proved his talents. More recently, in films such as Taken and Unknown, the 60-year old Irish-born actor has re-shaped himself into one of the toughest, stone-faced action stars of any age. He re-teams here with writer/director Joe Carnahan (The A-Team), who decided to film entirely on location here in British Columbia rather than on a Hollywood soundstage. The viewer feels this realism as Carnahan immerses us in the brutality of nature, enhanced by a particularly excellent sound design that blasts us with howling icy winds of the snow-swept wilderness.

The plot of the film finds a group of hardened oil drillers stranded in the Alaskan wilderness and pursued by a pack of man-eating wolves. From this basic premise, one would expect the film to verge quickly into horror-film territory, celebrating gore and violence. While there are moments of violence and a few jump scares, the film relies more heavily on suspense and a surprising amount of drama to create a harrowing, veritable poem on the choices one makes when facing death. The film is surprisingly contemplative, and many viewers expecting wall-to-wall action will be disappointed with the film’s rather deliberate pacing.

So, what about the wolves? Again, this could have easily gone wrong, but the blended use of real wolves and computer-generated stand-ins combine for some of the best visual creature effects I’ve seen in a while. That said, the wolves depicted in the film are how we imagine them to be in our nightmares, and are ultimately metaphors of death; so, for viewers looking for zoological authenticity, it would be best to stick to the Discovery Channel.

The performances are what elevate this film, and while the characters are somewhat clichéd by design and the film loses half a star for some melodramatic dialogue, the acting is still first-rate all-around. Particularly Neeson, whose emotional performance is one of best of his career. Carnahan has created a film that is more than worthy to stand among the best of the genre, and The Grey is one of the best surprises thus far in 2012. Although the ending of this film is near perfect, viewers should be sure to stay to the end of the credits for a brief, but rewarding extra moment.

Murder in Parksville!

Author **Jennifer Lafortune** lives in Shawnigan Lake. Many residents may know Jenn through her esthetics business in Shawnigan Lake but, if not, might soon know her as an author through her debut murder mystery, Murder in Parksville: Confusion in Tofino. This classic mystery has already sold out once at Volume 1 Bookstore in Duncan. Jennifer already has another mystery in the works. Jenn will conduct a book signing at Starbucks on Beverly Street in Duncan on Sunday, February 26, 2011, from 2pm to 4pm



Area Director's Report

Dr. Bruce Fraser

Kelly and I would like to offer many thanks to all who provided updates on civic activities at our February 6th Directors meeting: Margaret Symon from the Parks Commission; Roger Painter from the Advisory Planning Commission; Glen Sanders from the Shawnigan Improvement District; Rick Restell from the Triathlon Team; Mike Hansen from the South Cowichan Chamber of Commerce; Lori Treloar from the Village Development Council launch group; Lynn Weaver from Inspire; Dave Hutchinson from the Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable launch group; Graham Ross-Smith from the Shawnigan Residents Association and Roy Davies from the Shawnigan Lake Business Association. It was greatly inspiring to see the amount of community building activity these groups represent and how many useful cross connections can be built among them as 2012 unfolds.



Shawnigan residents contribute tax funds to thirty-four different CVRD functions, ranging from Kerry Park Recreation and the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre to regional transit and the management of solid waste.

The 2012 CVRD Budget and what our Tax Dollars buy for us

The Regional District budget process is in full swing. Shawnigan residents contribute tax funds to thirty-four different CVRD functions, ranging from Kerry Park Recreation and the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre to regional transit and the management of solid waste. At the Monday March 5th Director's meeting we will have an opportunity to look at all 34 budget items to see where our tax money goes and what each provides.

Village Development Council

On Saturday, February 25th from 2-4pm the first meeting of the Village Development Council will be held at the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre. All who are interested in this initiative are invited to attend. The purpose of the meeting will be to share ideas about desirable village enhancements and to create the working group that will assemble a master plan, research and set priorities for development projects and seek the funds necessary to accomplish them.

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Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable

On Saturday, March 3rd, from 2-4 pm at the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre, the first meeting of the Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable will meet to establish its working group. All who are interested are invited to attend. The purpose of the group will be to identify watershed issues that need to be addressed, set priorities for action and to invite all the residents and responsible agencies with jurisdiction over watershed matters to join the process. The meeting will include contributions from the Cowichan Watershed Board.

A Village Office

A village office has been established in Suite 4, on the second floor of the Purple Building at 2740 Dundas Street. It will be the home of the artistic community under the direction of Inspire, will provide a meeting space for community groups and will serve as the local public contact office for the Area Director and CVRD staff working on Shawnigan matters. Office hours for the Director will be established for regular drop in times beginning March 1st, and will be published at that time.

March 5th Director's Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction of Participants
2. Jennie Stevens and Malaika Marimba: Featured Artist
3. Questions and Comments from the Public
4. The 2012 Regional District Budget
5. Report of proposals coming before the Advisory Planning Commission
6. Reports from Civic Organizations
7. Reports from the Village Development Council and the Watershed Roundtable meetings
8. Director's report
9. Other matters arising

Makes one Wonder!

Walking down the railroad track on a rainy day, one would expect a bunch of slippery rail ties.

What would not be expected is a visible display of how much "stuff" oozes out of new ties.

In the spring of 2011, before the E&N railway shut down, the replacement of some railroad ties was started. Those ties are quite noticeable now because they are a solid black in colour, contrasted by the generally rotten ties alongside them. Naturally, when it rains, the water beads on the newly-treated, oily-surfaced ties. The surprise comes when one looks at rocks and leaves on either side of the new ties. The appearance is that of freshly spilled oil, 6-8 inches in either direction, carried by the splashing rain.



According to Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, most railroad ties are soaked in Coal Tar Creosote.

"Coal Tar Creosote

Railroad ties are typically treated with a mixture of chemicals known as coal tar creosote. The components of the creosote may leak or seep from treated timber over time, contaminating the groundwater for years to come.

Toxicity

Coal tar creosote is toxic to humans in large amounts or if exposure continues for lengthy periods. It's listed as being probably carcinogenic (cancer causing) by the Environmental Protection Agency, has been linked to skin and respiratory problems, and banned by the European Union.

Solubility

Coal tar creosote is relatively soluble in water, but doesn't often migrate far from the site of contamination and is broken down, in part, by microorganisms in soil and groundwater. Nevertheless, it may be absorbed by plants, invertebrates and small mammals in the vicinity."

Since most of the ties along the lakefront show signs of deterioration, it would be safe to assume that at least half of the guesstimated 1200 ties per kilometre would need to be replaced. That would amount to approximately 4000 new ties. It is not known at this time what chemicals the seepage is comprised of or, what effect it would have on the pollution levels of the lake, but it is certainly a legitimate question. Expert commentary on the effects of seepage from installing that many new ties would be welcome.

See Also:

http://www.ehow.com/list_5808985_dangers-treated-railroad-ties_.html

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Shawnigan Lake Triathlon Update

by Sarah Malerby

The excitement is brewing for the 6th Annual Shawnigan Lake Triathlon on May 27 – and with good reason!

The Subaru Triathlon Series is one of the largest and most prestigious annual sporting events that lands in the Cowichan Valley. The Shawnigan Triathlon brings a great deal of international attention and potential tourism and business opportunities to our small town.

A little known fact is that the Shawnigan Triathlon can also be an amazing spectator attraction because it often brings an elite field of famous or aspiring and accomplished triathletes. In 2009, Olympic Champion Simon Whitfield was a Shawnigan Triathlon race participant on two differ-

competing at his 4th Olympic Games this summer in London, England.

In 2010, Paula Findlay won the Shawnigan Lake Triathlon Sprint distance in 1:04:58. This 22 year old from Edmonton is also heading to the London Games and is hailed to be “one of Canada’s potential stars at the 2012 Summer Olympics.”

It will be exciting to discover who will be competing this year in Shawnigan and hoping to qualify for the World Long Distance Championships – stay tuned for updates.

You might not know that the Shawnigan Lake Triathlon has an enthusiastic organizing Race Committee that is comprised of a diverse group of talented and dedicated local residents. The Race Committee is working



Sarah Malerby

will get to enjoy the celebrations which will include the Danone Kids Run, children’s fun activities, local art celebration and a business showcase. The Shawnigan Lake Business Association is working to ensure that there will be lots of



Transition Area volunteer Anne Brunet “guards” the hundreds of bikes at the 2011 Subaru Triathlon at West Shawnigan Park

ent Relay Teams (Swam Half Iron distance, Swam & Cycled Olympic distance). Whitfield’s triathlon career accomplishments include Olympic Gold & Silver medals, Commonwealth Games Gold Medal, 14 World Cup Championships, 9 National Championships, plus many more. Whitfield will be

hard to bring a much stronger local community component to the event and, as a result, the community is going to benefit by enjoying the “Shawnigan Village Triathlon Festival” which will take place on Saturday of Race Weekend. Athletes will be visiting the Shawnigan Village Core to pick up their race packets and

fun activities and some great “triathlon” specials offered by businesses on that weekend.

There is lots of opportunity for everyone to get involved in the Village Festival. For more information, contact our “Community Spirit Captain” Rick Restell via email at rick@awinins.ca or visit him at the A-Win Insurance office in Shawnigan Village.

Other events happening on the weekend include the Saturday night Camp Pringle Fundraiser Dinner – everyone is welcome and dinner information and tickets are available on the Triseries Registration site at http://www.eventsonline.ca/events/subaru_shawnigan/. On Sunday Race Day, West Shawnigan Lake Park is the place to be – there will be a great Race Expo, entertainment, food, and of course the thrill of watching the race and getting inspired by all those athletes.

We need volunteers! Lots of volunteers are needed before and on Race Weekend to help with many different tasks, such as set-up, site support, registration, food preparation, medical, course marking, course marshaling, boat support, aide stations, hosting athletes and many more. Volunteers can register by visiting the Subaru Western Tri Series volunteer form at <http://triseries.ca/volunteering.php>.

This event is a big opportunity to work together to celebrate our wonderful community and to show our local and visiting athletes support.

Mark your calendars and get involved on the May 25 to 27, 2012 weekend. This is going to be a lot of fun!

Sarah Malerby, Race Director
s.malerby@triseries.ca

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Community Calendar

Area B Director's meetings - 1st Mon. of each month - 7pm at SL Community Centre (SLCC)

Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission - 1st Thurs. of each month. 7pm at SLCC

Shawnigan Parks and Recreation Commission - 3rd Thurs of each month 6:30pm at SLCC

Shawnigan Improvement District - 2nd Mon of each month 7pm at #1 Fire Hall

Shawnigan Lake Residents Association - 3rd Tues. of each month 7 pm at Dinter Garden House at Shawnigan School. Members welcome to attend.

Shawnigan Lake Business Association – 1st Tuesday of each month 7 pm (SLBA), currently at the Village Chipperry. Members welcome to attend.

Shawnigan Lake Community Association – 4th Monday of each month. Note: AGM Feb 20th at the Village Chipperry, 7pm. Contact bburr@shaw.ca to get on the mailing list. Anyone interested in joining is welcome.

Shawnigan Village Development Council - As announced. Next meeting Feb 25 at SLCC 2-4pm

Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable - As announced. Next meeting March 3rd at SLCC 2-4pm

Inspire! Arts, Culture and Heritage – As announced. Next meeting Feb 26 at the Art House

Dwight Interact Club

Dwight Interact Club is planning to hold 1001 nights Middle Eastern Dinner on 2012 Feb. 25th in our school.

Date: March 2, 2012

Place: Dwight International School

Price: \$20 for adults, \$15 youth (Proceeds go to Janeece Place and Micro Loan)

1001 Nights Middle Eastern Dinner provides a variety of traditional foods from all over the world.

For more information : Dwight International School

Ishayas' Ascension

The Ishayas' Ascension provides a series of simple and effective procedures to move our awareness from habitual Victim Consciousness to Enlightenment. Based in Praise, Gratitude, Love and Compassion, the practice is extremely easy, all but effortless and completely natural. Ascension can be practiced with the eyes open throughout the day and with eyes closed as a meditation.

A free introductory lecture on Ascension will be held at:

O.U.R. Ecovillage, Mar.21 at 7-8pm., 1565 Baldy Mountain Rd, Shawnigan Lake. For more info call 250-733-0610 or visit www.theishayafoundation.org.

The Game of Kings

Did you know that we have a chess club in Shawnigan Lake ?

At present, we have 6–10 players and have room for more. We play in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere and our main aim is to have fun. We accept chess players of all levels and invite you to join us every Wednesday afternoon from 1 – 4 .

If you have never played chess, we would consider starting a class for beginners.

We play at the Legion in Shawnigan Lake and we are part of the Young Seniors Action Group (YSAG) which offers a variety of activities. The membership fee is \$20.00 per year.

For more info call Dieter at 250 743 8740.

Stolen Sign



OLD FILM CAMERAS

Shawnigan Lake School photo club has a need for old SLR film cameras (non-digital).

If you have older cameras, extra lenses, filters, tripods, studio lights etc. the students will put your donation to good use.

Contact: nmayes@shawnigan.ca or call 250-686-2904 for pick up.

Badminton

at Francis Kelsey School
The Cobble Hill Badminton Club meets Tuesday nights from 8pm to 10pm.

\$5.00 fee for drop-ins.
For more info call:

Home Based Business Directory.

Free to register your business in Shawnigan, Cobble Hill, Mill Bay, or Cowichan Bay. Courtesy of: DFH Real Estate Ltd. Call 250-743-7151

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SPORTS REPORTER

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SLBA Member Profile



Shawnigan Jen's Sushi & Teriyaki is located at 2750 Shawnigan Lake Rd, near the beautiful Shawnigan Lake. We specialize in Japanese food maintaining the authentic Asian culinary style, while providing some of the local favorite burgers to satisfy your everyday taste needs. We take pride in using fresh ingredients and providing friendly services.

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