



Shawnigan FOCUS

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A Non-Profit Community Publication

Happy Mother's Day, Mom

This is the first Mothers Day without my Mum – I miss her.

Brave twenty-six-year old Nan Kennedy (nee Robertson) came to rural Shawnigan Lake in June 1947 from post-war Bishopbriggs, Scotland to marry her beloved Andy. In 1950 they moved into our family home where Mum lived for the next 54 years. Dad's job in the logging industry took him away from home for days at a time so the raising of a young family and running the home became Mum's responsibility. She was a dedicated stay-at-home mom who nurtured with encouragement, discipline, love and laughter. She doted on us when we were sick – soft boiled eggs with toast soldiers followed with a bowl of her canned peaches. The cookie jar was always full, Sunday dinners were important family times, as were the daily doses of Wampoles cod liver oil and malt was during cold and flu season. Her knitting needles and wool were never far from her side, the rhythmic clicking of needles turning out flawless creations of baby sets, sweaters and blankets.

Mum attended all our school functions, belonged to the PTA and cheerfully hosted the annual Brownie windup picnic on our beach. A faithful member of the United Church, her involvement in worship and fellowship began with her arrival to Shawnigan and continued well into her 80s – everything from Sunday School teacher to the active women's group who held bazaars filled with home-baking, knitting and sewing; this group of ladies served up the popular Pancake Breakfast on Kiddie Karnival mornings for many years. And then there were many years of involvement at the annual Flower Show. It was never work to her – she embraced her community of family and friends and she was welcomed with open arms.

Visitors were welcome in our home. Mum was always up for a hot cup of tea, a platter of cookies and a good blether. She was Nana to her grandsons and great-granddaughters, Auntie Nan to neighbouring children and Nan to her many life-long

friends. Her later years were filled with YSAGS activities, a ladies' luncheon group and Monday afternoon card games with the ladies in the back room in the Legion. Sharing stories of these happy days, Mum would end with "We had a such laugh!"

Mum passed last July at the grand age of 94, a woman of strong character who led a full life surrounded by family and friends. She was loyal, wise, dedicated, joyful, and dutiful spiced with wit, with a great sense of humour, an incredibly unique laugh and a

soul. So many people, all in one tiny package; 4 foot 11 AND 3/4 inches. Never were we allowed to forget that all important 3/4 inches. My grandmother told me how, during the war, my mother at 14 refused to go in the air raid shelter; she defiantly said she would rather die in the street than be buried like a frightened rabbit. That attitude stayed with my mother her whole life.

As a war bride she emigrated from a huge city in England, to follow my father to a log cabin in the Turtle Mountains. With

that got her through the war. She grew gardens and canned and did everything to help my father raise a family. Even with such long and busy days her need for artistic expression was always there. She became a wonderful costumer, creating amazing clothes for local theatre groups and eventually opening her own Costume shop in Chemainus, where year after year, familiar customers would return to see what new creations had come forth.

Keeping us safe and fed was not enough for my mother; she instilled a great love of reading

MOM STORY

Where do I begin?

To tell the story of how great a Mom can be
The story of the Matriarch of our family that she means the world to me

Where do I start?

In her early days
She met the man of her dreams who quickly became her lover
She raised six kids with him although, she herself, never had a mother
A superb cook, sewer, knitter, puzzler & talented like no other
She amazes me

Life was good to Mom

She had a family to whom she was devoted
Lots of kids & a good man on whom she doted
Grandchildren arrived & her life became sugar coated
Her dream come true

Year 1992

She & Dad moved in across the road from me
'Wee Cottage' she named it, affectionately
We were good friends so we neighboured easily
She helped us and we her, reciprocally
She was content

Mom's garden became her passion

She transformed her yard; it was so pretty & admired
She leaves a large family behind but very inspired
She taught us well until the end, Mom never tired
So dignified & brave

Although Mom is gone

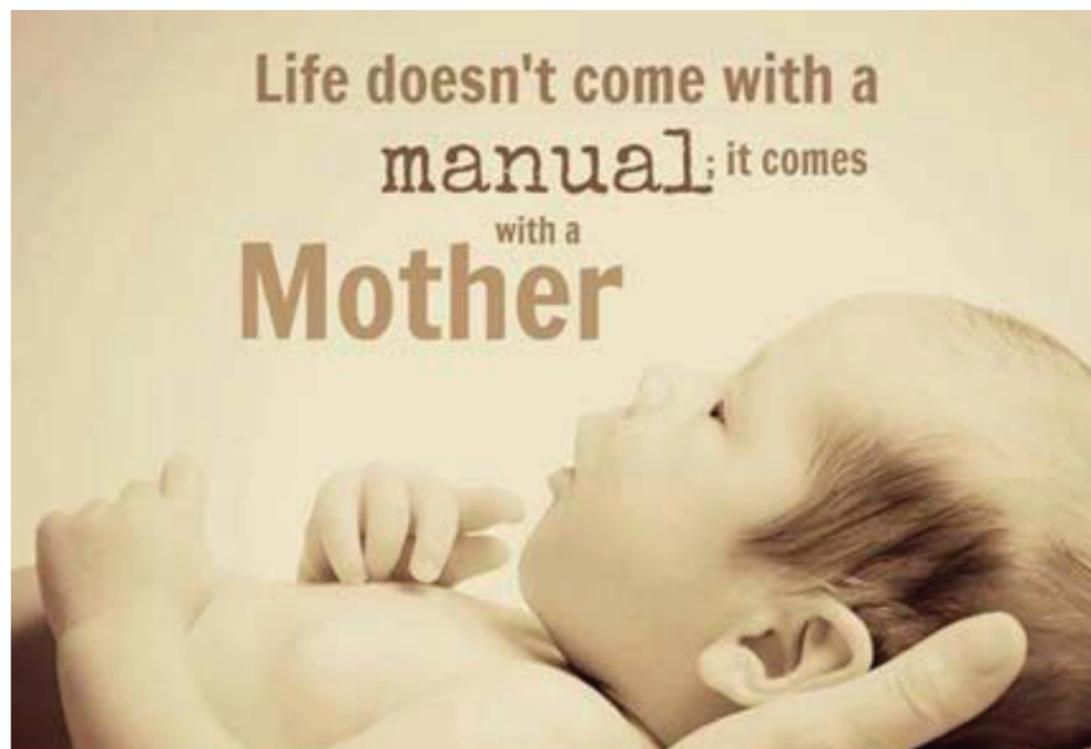
And has left a void that we will all have to weather
She was the crazy glue that held our family together
We will go on but, of course, we will miss her forever
She leaves a Legacy

This Mother's Day

The beauty she created lingers on for all to see
Blooming in her garden that she tended to, fondly
A true angel from heaven shining down on me
I miss her so

Forever & always in my heart & in my thoughts,
xoxoxoxoxox

~Your "Steel Magnolia"



Scottish accent that refused to fade. The following quote is reflective of her life: "So how does one remain graceful and strong? I believe that one must genuinely embrace what is truly important and what grounds us. It is our families, our ties to our communities and bonds of friendship that make us who we are." This is what made Mum our lovable and gracious Nan. I will hold her close in my heart forever.

~Happy Mothers Day, Mum!

"Good things come in small packages"

I had a long think when asked about writing a story of my mother. Who do I write about? Think of all the people a mother is, a girl, a daughter, a sister, a wife, a protector, a creative

no electricity, no running water and a young baby, she always said she saw it as a great adventure; they stayed through a very tough winter before moving to the coast.

When they arrived in Powell River they fell in love with the ocean and shingle beaches, even with three young children my mother always had to have a creative outlet, she would comb the beaches for giant oyster shells and the woods for tree fungus, on each she would paint scenes that were good enough for her to sell.

We moved to the Island when the new mill was being built in Crofton, where a fourth child made our family complete. Although my mother was always a big city girl at heart, she adapted to our life in the country with the same grit

and knowledge in all of us. A voracious reader herself, she introduced us to books that opened the world to us.

Her tiny stature belied her inner warrior, she would always stand up for those in need, her compassion and kindness touched the hearts of many.

Few who met my little mother would suspect all she had done in her life, from meeting the challenges of a new land, to her artistic expressions; she even buried a pony when there was no one else to do the job ... with a garden spade!

My mother was elegant and gracious to the end, an example of courage and fortitude, a lifetime of love that did not stop with her passing; I will carry her memory all the days of my life.

~Roswynne Cuthbert

SHAWNIGAN FOCUS MAY 2016

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UPCOMING EVENTS

South Cowichan Library Branch:

Judy Baxter - Library Manager

- ★ *What is Chiropractic medicine?* – Doctors from Chiani Chiropractic will present an overview on what chiropractic is and how chiropractic care can not only help you recover from injury but help people reach their highest level of health.
- ★ Drop-in attendance.
- ★ Tuesday May 17, 6:30-7:30 pm

Family Storytime:

- ★ Stories songs and activities for preschoolers of all ages and a caregiver. Drop-in attendance.
- ★ Fridays April 29-May 20, 10:30-11am.
- ★ Drop-in attendance.
- ★ All programs happen at South Cowichan Library (Mill Bay Centre)
- ★ 250-743-5436

Mill Bay Flower and Garden Show:

- ★ The South Cowichan Healthcare Auxiliary will be on site, May 28th from 9:00-2:00 at the Mill Bay Flower and Garden Show offering bunwiches, strawberry treats, brownies and refreshments, all priced individually.
- ★ The proceeds of our food sales go to our charitable causes, namely: care and comfort of patients of Cowichan District Hospital and residents of Cairnsmore Place in Duncan.
- ★ Everyone is welcome. Cobble Hill Hall, 3550 Watson Ave.
- ★ The entry fee is \$2,. Children free.
- ★ Call Sandy at 743-3158 for more info.

Cowichan Valley Ride for Suicide Awareness:

- ★ This fundraising event starts with a motorcycle ride through the North Cowichan area and finishes at the royal Canadian Legion in Shawnigan Lake, where there will be a BBQ and door prizes.
- ★ All proceeds from registration and ticket sales will go to the Vancouver Island Crisis Society, an accredited crisis centre that provides an accessible 24 hour crisis line 1-888-494-3888 along with other support.
- ★ For more information, or if you would like to help support this event, contact Stacy 250-589-1922 or Dave 250-686-6960

Notice Board

10th Annual Subaru Triathlon

- at Shawnigan Lake takes place on the weekend of May 27th-29th at the West Shawnigan Lake Provincial Park- Triathletes and Volunteers wanted.
- Don't miss the IronKids Fun Run on Saturday, May 28th at 12pm.
- Stick around for the 10th anniversary celebration and cake at 1pm.
- Bring the family to the fundraiser dinner party at Camp Pringle from 5-7pm on Saturday the 28th. tickets at www.camppringle.com
- Join the hundreds of volunteers on Sunday, May 29th to cheer athletes from all over North America who will swim, bike and run in and around Shawnigan Lake.



Tick

The Subaru Triathlon is coming!

There's still time to sign up to volunteer at the 10th annual Subaru Triathlon on May 29th

Info/Register/Volunteer:
www.ironman.ca

SRA Bottle Drive Fundraiser

Drop off your
bottles at:

'Island Return-It'

with locations at
1350 Fisher Rd and
6476 Norcross Rd.
Donate proceeds to:

SRA Legal
Action Fund

It's Tick season!

Check pets and
humans after
outings.

Mother's Day

May 9th
Call Mom!



Shawnigan Focus

Article continued from page one

Thank you to a special Mother

I was hired by Mary when I was 14 years old as her babysitter in the summer of 1970. She taught me to “take care” of her four daughters and run a household.

Mary helped her husband Gerry run a general store in the Village and she picked up supplies for this store on their trips over to Vancouver. Aitken and Fraser had everything you would ever need: groceries, household items, clothing and even toys. Provisioning the store was one of Mary’s jobs and I think she had great taste. Mary also worked behind the counter of the store and did office work and banking.

I learned to use Mary’s washer and dryer, a daunting task for me, as my own mother always did that chore at home. Gerry would buy Mary a new appliance for working in the store each summer.

I would help Mary in any way I could, with their home and their girls. I could see how busy Mary’s life was as storeowner and a mother of four girls.

Mary drove a van in which she delivered groceries to summer people around the lake and dropped off orders of food at their homes.

Mary also used her van as a volunteer to help move students at Elsie Miles School on Sports trips for her daughter’s games.

Mary always had time at the end of her day to listen to

her twins talk about the tea party that the older girls and I would have put on; or how they learned to swim under water at the beach that day. Having her girls taken to the lake each day was important to Mary, who didn’t know how to swim herself (she did learn at the age of 40). All Mary’s daughters loved the lake.

Mary would allow her girls to call her at the store if they thought it was “important to them” to talk to her. I would drill them that it HAD to be important as their mother was working. Mary never got angry when she received these phone calls.

Mary and Gerry were a great team. Both loved Shawnigan Lake and contributed a lot to the community. Mary helped organize the annual Kiddie’s Carnival where they had an Aitken and Fraser Store float which carried family and staff. Mary was also a Guide leader for many years and she also helped with the Shawnigan Flower Show.

I stayed on as their babysitter well into my twenties and even went on a holiday with the Odegaard family to Disneyland. I would also look after their girls when they found time to go to Las Vegas on a much needed holiday.

Mary Odegaard you are my “mentor” and I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. You were a great mother figure to me. I can’t believe how much you gave

of yourself to your family.

~Janet Neilsen

A Shawnigan Mom

Mom, Margaret Fedun, passed away last fall having lived in Shawnigan Lake for 74 years.

She was born in Scotland and came to Vancouver Island as a child. The family lived on James Island near Victoria and, after attending college in Victoria, she married Steve in 1942, and came to Shawnigan Lake.

She told us many stories of those early days. Mom driving (without her licence) an old Ford whose gears jammed at stop signs and she had to get out under the hood to unjam them. If going to a dance, she and her sister would paint the straight line on the backs of their legs for the silk stocking seam look of the day. Stockings were expensive. It was war time, no one had much money and ration tickets were necessary to buy many things.

At that time, Shawnigan was a very small and close community. Most of the women in the community belonged to either or all of: the Women’s Auxiliary, the Parent Teachers Association, and the “Church Group.” It seemed that this small village was cared for by these women. Mom told of how they got together and started a kindergarten for their children, and how most village events had great food and organization because of this caring, capable group of women.

Mom was a very good cook and baker, and a smart woman. With these traits she started the Shawnigan Lake Coffee Shop in the 40’s. Pies, scones and coffee were a favourite of many, as were the excellent meals. At times she also took in boarders who were delighted to get the meals she served. She was the go-to person for wedding cakes (and other special occasions); all made according to her high standards and beautifully decorated. I remember getting my hand slapped when I wanted to eat those perfect little icing roses meant for a cake! My siblings and I used to watch her making them and hoped for mistakes to be made so we could eat the rejects.

She was a natural to be asked to run the kitchens at Strathcona School for girls, and later, Cliffside Preparatory School for boys. She told the story of a fire in the dining room at Cliffside and then the question of how to feed all those kids and teachers? No problem; she and the other women in the two kitchens figured out how to handle all the food preparation, co-ordination, sharing and a schedule for meals. The Cliffside School attendees marched up the road three times a day for their meals until they could go back to their repaired dining room.

Mom took quite a few younger women from the community under her wing especially those that assisted her in the school kitchens teaching what she knew. Community get-

together such as the Kiddies Carnival saw Mom’s pancakes on the BBQ grills. Shawnigan Lake and the people who lived there during Mom’s time were important to her and most community activities included pretty much everyone who lived at Shawnigan, often with Mom and friends preparing large scale meals with aplomb. This made for very joyful events with huge participation.

Mom’s creativity was also obvious in her ability to sew clothes for her 4 children. She could get two children’s coats, matching hats and mufflers from one of her gently used winter coats! She had us kids in dance lessons for which she made every costume for recitals and performances. During Centennial year (1967) she made costumes for all of us, herself included, and my Brownie Queen dress. I was so proud of that dress as I rode in the parade that year! Oh, and all this sewing was done on a treadle sewing machine no less!

At dinner time, the mothers of Shawnigan would start calling their kids to come home ... Mom, even though not a big person, sure had a loud voice that carried down to the Government Wharf with no problem! It sounded like the loudest voice of all the moms in Shawnigan. We knew it was time to come home when we heard her.

Mom was the person who put my siblings and me on this earth and I am grateful!

~Barb Fedun

Alice & the Bag Dance

Bruce Fraser
Shawnigan Focus

A view from the river

There was a terrible commotion in the barn. I rushed out to see what could be the matter and there was Alice the Nubian, head completely stuck in a bag of alfalfa pellets. The bag, with no more than a smattering of pellets left, had been lying on the barn floor in the midst of cleaning and was just too tempting to resist.

The frantic bleating went on for some time so I removed the bag, and mustering my best Nubian sign language, I asked her “Is something going on here other than you just going for an afternoon snack and getting caught

in a bag?” “Well”, Alice replied, “I was actually doing an impersonation of the Minister of Environment, couldn’t you tell?”

“Just what do you mean by that” I asked her. She snorted “I have been watching the goings on in Shawnigan these past couple of years and I thought I should comment, but with no language to tell you what I have been thinking, I had to do it in pantomime.”

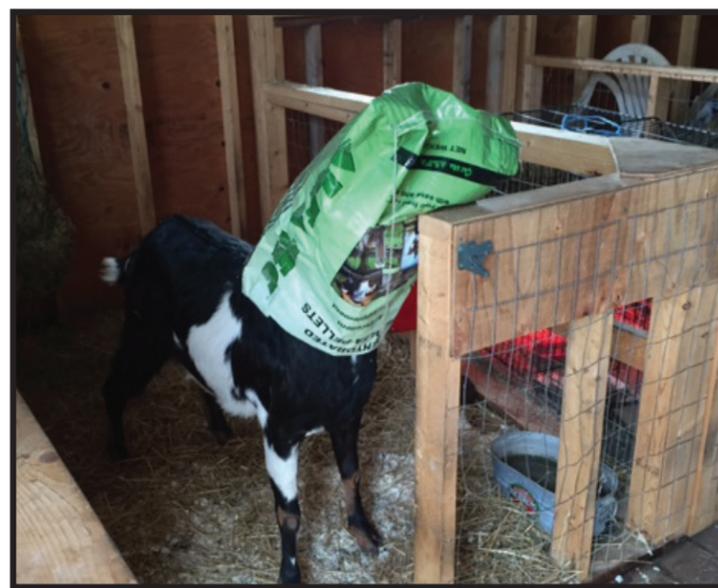
“Alice, you’re going to have to explain the bag dance in more detail for me to understand the full story”, I said.

“Okay”, she nickered, “As Minister, I first put my head in a bag because that dump permit was approved by a statutory decision maker and I couldn’t

possibly interfere. Then I stayed in the bag because the permit was before the environmental appeal board and again I couldn’t possibly interfere. Then I remained in the bag because there was a judicial appeal and a court case in process and I couldn’t possibly comment. Then the CVRD won it’s case about the permit being invalid because the operation violated the local zoning by-law. I was furious but, by then, the bag was so comfortable that all I could do was dance around in silence. Now do you get the picture?”

“But Alice, now that the regional district zoning was upheld, how come the bag dance wasn’t just ended there on the spot?”

With her biggest snort of all



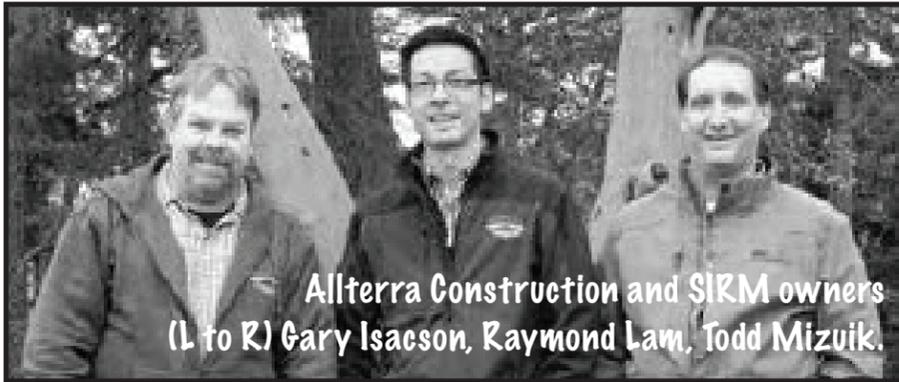
Alice went on, “Though it was getting hard to breathe and speak to the press at the same time I still stayed in the bag because there is an appeal in process and I couldn’t possibly comment. Besides there is an election coming and the whole cabinet is bag dancing. I couldn’t just break ranks and do the right thing for the Shawni-

gan Community, could I?”

“Alice, I get the picture. Here I thought that you were just after a few alfalfa pellets. As usual, you nailed the human follies so well. Next time I clean the barn I’m going to leave a bag with a little goat-text meal and see what you have to say about the American election.”

ONE OF THE GREATEST TRAGEDIES IN LIFE IS TO LOSE YOUR OWN SENSE OF SELF AND ACCEPT THE VERSION OF YOU THAT IS EXPECTED BY EVERYONE ELSE. -ANONYMOUS

Corporate Connections – Moguls of Muck: SIA/CHH/AE/OPCO/Allterra/SIRM



Allterra Construction and SIRM owners (L to R) Gary Isacson, Raymond Lam, Todd Mizuik.

Submitted by Save Shawnigan Water Community Action Group

The fight to protect the Shawnigan watershed and prevent risk to our drinking water seems like a marathon with no finish line. Contaminated soil represents big money and there is a lot at stake. Price per tonne varies and currently seems to be in the \$50 to \$100+ range depending on how nasty it is. The Ministry of Environment (MOE) permit for 460 Stebbings Road allows 100,000 tonnes per year so \$75/tonne would mean annual revenues of \$7.5M. Even if expenses were one third of the revenue (which is quite a stretch), profit would be \$5M per year; a quarter billion

dollars over 50 years!

As this sordid saga continues here is a reminder of the companies involved and the individuals who own them:

Mike Kelly and Marty Block are the main principals of South Island Aggregates (SIA) and Cobble Hill Holdings (CHH). SIA and CHH are inextricably linked to the two properties on Stebbings Road, Lots 21 & 23. Both Lots have Mine permits while only Lot 23 has a MOE permit to accept contaminated waste.

David Kneale, Matt Pye, Jeff Taylor, David Mitchell, and Michael Achtem

are the principals of Active Earth Engineering (AE) and provided engineering services to SIA/CHH.

They acted as the “Qualified Professionals” required (and relied on) by the Province during the MOE permit application. In February, 2013, the principals of AE entered into a secret profit sharing deal with Mike Kelly and Marty Block of SIA/CHH. A new company called OPCO was formed with the intent to evenly split the expected profits from operating the permit. This was prior to permit being issued and while AE was busy helping SIA/CHH convince MOE that the site was “ideal” and there was virtually no risk to our water. Allegations of fraud and perjury along with details of the OPCO agreement were heard by Justice Sewell during the Shawnigan Residents Association’s challenge of the MOE Permit. We are still waiting for his decision.

In the meantime, SIA/CHH appear to have given AE the cold shoulder and have found new friends to partner with. Kelly and Block have entered into a long-term operating agreement with South Island Re-

source Management (SIRM).

SIRM was incorporated in April 2015 as a subsidiary of Allterra Construction. Allterra and SIRM are owned by Gary Isacson, Raymond Lam, and Todd Mizuik. Isacson founded Allterra in 2011 after severing a partnership with Russ Crawford and their company Aggressive Excavating. Lam and Mizuik also worked for Aggressive Excavating but left to join Isacson as Allterra principals. Crawford still operates Aggressive Excavating which has a huge soil dump at 4600 Goldstream Heights Road. There is a particularly informative document which contains a section about the origins of Allterra at: www.cases.legal/cn/act-ca1-768569.html



SIA and CHH owners (L to R) Mike Kelly and Marty Block.

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The Devil's Goatvocate

Bruce Fraser
 Shawnigan Focus

Alice's evil Nubian twin, Alix, has muscled her way into the story of Eternal Lake. The two kids were separated at birth and their life trajectories have significantly diverged. Alice went on to become the champion of environmental responsibility and signator to the Leap Manifesto along with Amber, her lifelong Dwarf Nigerian friend and barn mate. Alix is the CEO of a poop composting firm with contracts in the Paradise Valley Watershed. In recent emails with Alice, Alix has tried to set Alice on to the politically correct path of corporate advantage. “Alix”, she wrote, “you really must get things straight if you are going to prosper in this world. You have go for forgiveness rather than permission. Rack up the financial cost of being thwarted and both the government and the courts will back you up without hesitation.”

Alix went on in some detail. “Let’s take the recent court cases that we faced in getting our poop facility permitted and then upheld in the face of massive protest from those little Dwarf Nigerians of Paradise Valley. They made such a fuss, but we outflanked them and it was laughingly easy”. “What do you mean” says Alice with a grimace, “how did you

manage to upset the interests of an entire Nigerian Dwarf community in favour of your poop firm?”

“Well” says Alix, “here is how it was done. First we made sure that the government passed legislation that made it mandatory to consider poop facilities, no matter where they were to be located. Next we assembled all the technical arguments why our facility would consolidate poop from the whole of Paradise into one perfectly safe facility. Those simpletons in the ministry bought that package without a hiccup and issued us a permit. Of course they hedged it with conditions to make it look like those little goats had nothing to fear. We agreed with all of those conditions because we knew that they had no hope of enforcing them. Those uppity Nigerians bleated to the Environmental Appeal Board, but the Board held true to form and decided on the balance of probabilities that our poop would be contained and the Nigerian Dwarf public would have nothing to worry about.”

“But Alix”, says Alice, “The Nigerians had independent experts testifying that the plan for poop containment was flawed”. “No problem”, says Alix, “Our engineers had anticipated that approach and had them outflanked with their own

experts. Of course those little hicks appealed immediately to the Supreme Court, but our lawyers were ready for that one too. The strategy was to get as much poop dumped as possible right away so it would be difficult to shut us down without causing economic hardship to our corporation and employees. This one never fails to work.”

“But Alix”, the first judge ruled that the poop facility violated the Paradise Valley zoning by-laws and issued an injunction to shut down the poop dumping.” “Oh yeah Alice, but we had an ace up our sleeves. We appealed the injunction claiming incipient poop corporation bankruptcy with the loss of jobs and the new judge said that on the balance of convenience that we should be allowed to continue dumping. You see, Alice, the strategy worked like a dream. The potential loss of corporate money trumped the concerns of those silly little Nigerians who expected the integrity of their by-laws to be upheld. Boy, were they naïve! Balance of probabilities and balance of convenience, works every time.”

Alix settled in her stall, nibbled a bit of alfalfa hay, gazed over at Amber and thought to herself, “I had no idea that the dark side was so well organized. I wonder what went wrong in Alix’s life that turned her into the Devils Goatvocate.”

Area Director's Report:

Sonia Furstenau
Area Director

April 25: Where we are at:

There has been a lot of discussion of the ruling that came down on April 15th from Justice Kirkpatrick, and it seems to have created confusion. Did we win? Did we lose?

The ruling allows SIRM to complete the contracts that were in place as of March 21, 2016. According to the documents submitted to the court, the volume of soil in those contracts is 106,000 tonnes. The company intends to resume hauling soil, and they have been actively working at the site and returning equipment.

How, exactly, could that be construed as a win?

Yes – it is only a partial stay of the injunction – but a stay that allows them to essentially double the volume of contaminated soil at the site.

Yes, the injunctions from Justice MacKenzie remain in place after the contracts from the stay have been fulfilled – but the company has permission from Justice Kirkpatrick to import soil until the contracts are complete or until the appeal is heard in August. That means four more months of truckloads of contaminated soil being dumped in our watershed.

For all of us in Shawnigan, every truckload of soil brought to that site is the opposite of a victory.

As I said many times after the MacKenzie decision, we have many more victories that we will need before this fight is over.

We await the Sewell decision on the Judicial Review. We await action from the provincial government, which has ignored our community for four years.

We await the appeal hearing of the zoning decision in August.

The truth is that we are plunged back into uncertainty as a community, and that we face the grim reality of trucks continuing to haul – for now – contaminated soil to Stebbings Rd.

And we continue to work hard, as a community. The teams we formed in December have continued to work together. We continue to support each other and take care of each other. We continue to act with kindness, generosity, and compassion towards each other.

And these are the most important things that we can do. We have won respect and admiration as a community for the ways in which we have chosen to pull together and care for each other throughout this horrible ordeal, and we've created a strong, loving community; a trusting community - let us not allow that trust or compassion to be eroded.

We are all weary from this

fight, but our greatest strength is each other – let's remember to value what we've created in Shawnigan, and fiercely protect it.

We have known from the beginning that this will be a long fight, and it will be a hard fight. We are going down all avenues available to us, because we value our water so much that we do not intend to let the outcome hinge on a single court decision.

I intend to never give up with my efforts to protect our watershed, and throughout this entire ordeal, I have drawn my strength, my courage, and my determination from this community.

April 27 update: CVRD files application to BC Court of Appeal

On March 21st, 2016, BC Supreme Court Justice MacKenzie ruled that the contaminated landfill located at 460

Stebbing Road in Shawnigan Lake is not a permitted land use, and he imposed a number of injunctions that prevent the importing of contaminated soil to the site.

The landfill site, which is also an active quarry, is owned by Cobble Hill Holdings (CHH) and operated by South Island Resource Management (SIRM), a subsidiary of Allterra Construction.

Justice Kirkpatrick of the BC Court of Appeal heard the stay application on April 6th, and issued a ruling on April 15th that granted a partial stay that would allow SIRM to complete six contracts – a total of 106,000 tonnes.

On April 27th the CVRD filed a court application to discharge or vary Justice Kirkpatrick's April 15th order. It will be heard at the BC Court of Appeal in Vancouver on May 9th.

Cowichan Valley Regional District v. Cobble Hill Holdings

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Schedule: SIRM's Active Projects and Open Tenders, as of March 15, 2016

Category	Estimate/Job #	Status	Tonnes Committed	Tonnes Received	Tonnes to be Received	Balance to be Received
Subject to the stay	--	Active Project	40,000.00	5,289.62	34,710.38	\$1,561,950
	--	Active Project	19,000.00	7,853.68	11,146.32	\$1,081,162
	20150914	Active Project	16,150.00	--	16,150.00	\$939,550
	20160216	Active Project	10,000.00	2,794.16	7,205.84	\$35,292
	20160229	Active Project	5,000.00	47.04	4,952.96	\$421,001
	20160315	Active Project	32,000.00	--	32,000.00	\$1,600,000
Sub-Total:			122,150.00	15,984.50	106,165.50	\$5,638,955



WEEKEND SPECIALS

Saturday, May 7
Freezer Packs
30% OFF
while supplies last

Sunday, May 8
MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL
New York Striploins @ \$12.99/lb
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Steers Meat Market, more than just your village meat market. Stop by and take a look at our great selections! Located on Dundas Road in the heart of Shawnigan Village.

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Photo Credit: Laura Colpitts



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An inspired community

Michelle Polley
Shawnigan Basin Society

I have had the pleasure of being a guest at the Shawnigan Basin Society for two weeks as part of my Ecosystem Management program at Fleming College in Ontario. The experience was eye-opening and also heartwarming due to the incredible community you have here at the lake. I spent my time learning about the Ecosystem Based Conservation Plan of the Basin Society, as well as the concerns and solutions of local residents to challenges faced by the lake.

The Ecosystem Based Conservation Plan developed through the Shawnigan Basin Society is an amazing watershed-wide plan that will create a healthy community and lake for many generations to come. Because the SIA conflict has brought the community together and highlighted the importance of a healthy watershed for every person,

the time is ripe to plan out the watershed's future. The EBCP contains detailed, considerate planning, with the needs of all residents in mind, and is especially critical in this small watershed that faces so many human pressures.

Every homeowner will benefit from the plan as it protects property values, drinking water supply, reduces flooding and drought, and maintains a healthy ecosystem for all. This type of ecosystem-based planning is effective and very relevant. It makes Shawnigan a leader among communities, as you work to take your health, prosperity, and future into your own hands by taking care of your watershed.

I also focused on learning about lake stewardship from the perspective of local residents. Shawnigan residents taught me about reducing the impact of septic fields, naturalizing shorelines to prevent erosion and reduce lawn run-



off, removing contaminants originating from soil dumping, and conserving road-ends for ecological health and public right of way. It was inspiring to see so many people passionate about being stewards of the lake, and who are finding solutions that empower them to create a healthier environment for everyone. I created

a small presentation about these innovative solutions that is available through the Basin Society.

Thank you, sincerely, to everyone who welcomed me and took the time to share and teach me about their lake. Other communities across the country will no

doubt look to Shawnigan as a leader and be inspired by the passion and commitment you are showing to creating a healthy, prosperous future here. There are so many amazing projects and ideas underway here, and my heart is with this community! I will certainly be rooting for you and hope to be back soon.

Shawnigan Lake Museum

Lori Treloar
Museum Curator

What does it take...?

A museum needs the support of its community and its local government. The Shawnigan Lake Museum recently asked for a Regional grant from the CVRD (the CVRD is our local government, due to the fact that we are not incorporated) for our expansion project. The Board denied our application on the grounds that the museum is not a regional asset. The question is...what museum is not a regional asset? In our case, the Shawnigan Lake Historical Society (incorporated in 1976) has operated a museum since 1983; we pay all of the expenses related to the building and grounds; our tracking shows that 29% are from Shawnigan, 40% of

our visitors are from Vancouver Island (including the Cowichan Valley); 17% come from the rest of Canada and 13% from the US and the rest of the world. We have a 5 star rating through Trip Advisor reviews and yet the CVRD directors do not consider that the museum is an asset to the Cowichan Valley as a whole.

There is some irony here as their own policy contradicts their decision:

Community Heritage Conservation Policies set by the CVRD itself within the Official Community Plan:

Policy 9.6: Cultural heritage facilities such as museums create connections between people and places, and the past and present, to improve the quality of life, celebrate diversity and foster community identity. Where feasible, the CVRD will

assist the efforts of the historic societies and other community groups in their efforts to record the history of the South Cowichan. This may be through funding, inclusion of heritage resources on the CHR, and consideration of museums and heritage conservation as community amenity contributions in Section 8 –Social Sustainability

As the second largest taxpaying population in the Cowichan Valley, Shawnigan has paid into the regional grant fund since 1999, yet we have seldom reaped the benefit of a grant back to the community. In fact, there have been only two grants directly related to Shawnigan – both to the EcoVillage (one in 2007 and one in 2009) since 1999. We, as taxpayers, pay roughly

17.5% of the share and have therefore supported \$120,000 to the Forest Discovery Centre (museum) over the last three years; almost \$800,000 to the Sportsplex in Duncan over several years; a significant amount to the new Info centre in North Cowichan and now, this year, we will even support a grant to provide honour regalia for the Duncan Firefighters, among many others.

In any community, it is important to recognize and support the past as we move towards our future. The Shawnigan Lake Museum has been a mainstay of the village since 1983 and now we are planning an expansion so that we can improve our service to the community through more

school programming, public outreach and as a tourist destination. If you haven't visited, please do. If you have visited and you have had a positive experience, please consider a review on TripAdvisor.

As we move through the process of our expansion plans in the next year, we will be asking for community support...through reviews and letters of support; through fundraisers and visits to the museum. You might be surprised. We live in a unique community with a great story...please show your support, in your own way, for the Shawnigan Lake Museum.

It takes a community to support a museum!



Dr. Mackenzie Brooks

Dr. Mackenzie Brooks

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The Magical Land of Finn



Oriana Parker
YSAGS

Tucked away on a secluded corner off the Shawnigan Lake Road, a few kilometres from the village, is an enchanted place called FINN-land. It is home to Finnian, the Tree Spirit carved by Kevin Lewis, a master chain-saw carver from Courtenay. There's a mystic charm that surrounds this picturesque property, which is enhanced by the artistic talent of Dianne Casavant. Over the years Dianne has managed to leave her creative signature in every corner. Nothing escapes her artistic eye. As a folk art decorator working with acrylic paints, her imagination is limitless! Seemingly ordinary objects are redecorated into pieces of art. Among these are watering cans, potato bins, steps, chests, birdhouses, old sewing machines, rocks and road signs. In a corner of the room two old wooden canoe paddles caught my eye. They were decorated with Loons and had large numbers vertically from top to bottom to be used as address signs.

Born on the island, her father Ken Spencer was a logger and her family lived in Camp Six for a number of years. In his memory she decorated a one handled or one-man logger's crosscut saw and hung it over the barn. A licensed practical nurse, Dianne worked at St. Mary's Hospital in New Westminster and Prince George Regional Hospital in Prince George and as an OR Booking Clerk at

Cowichan District Hospital in Duncan. She and her partner Huck Finn built their lovely home in Shawnigan Lake where they have lived for fifteen years. Of Huck, Dianne says, "I always wanted a home with character and now I have a character in my home! He keeps me laughing!" She oversaw the landscaping adding some of her mother's favourite flowers and shrubs.

In 2010 she joined YSAGS. She has marched in the Shawnigan Lake Canada Day Parades as a clown, dressed as a clown and elf to cheer on the crowds at the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Annual Shawnigan Shiver. Just this year, she dressed as a bunny for the 2016 Easter event. Laughing, she says, "Whether a clown or a bunny it allows me to be as silly as I like".

Dianne is a mother of three sons, Spencer who is a tugboat operator; Mitch who is third generation logger and Mark who is in the Navy. Dianne is passionate about her community and very active with YSAGS participating in the Monday morning women hiking group and Tuesday mornings Zumba Gold. She teaches Folk Art on Thursday mornings and belongs to the quilt group that same afternoon; wood carving on Friday mornings and theatre the same afternoon. She is currently the Vice President of YSAGS (Young Seniors Action Group Society) whose activities all take place at the Malahat Legion on the Shawnigan Lake Mill Bay Road.

SLBA

After a great Annual General Meeting of the **Shawnigan Lake Business Association**, we have a new Board of Directors as of March 14, 2016. These include Kathy Paton: Chair (KP Photography), Marsha MacMurchy: Vice Chair (Changing Seasons Apparel), Bonnie Cuthbertson: Secretary (LT Dance), Dewar McCarthy: Treasurer, Directors at large: Brandy Gallagher (O.U.R. Ecovillage), and Andy Cook (Shawnigan Gardens). Welcome all!

It is time to hear the new news, so check out the "Shawnigan Lake Business Association - SLBA" Facebook page for info on discounts, new member info, and the upcoming Business Mixer at The Black Swan, May 7th. (Saturday night). Be with everyone for networking and new opportunities.

O.U.R. Ecovillage

Brandy Gallagher EcoVillage

After 17 years of design, development, and an incredible effort towards the legal structuring of all sustainable living systems (land use/zoning, healthy and affordable housing, waste water management, collaborative ownership modelling, integrated governance and decision making, comprehensive economic community design with Vancity) O.U.R. Ecovillage now has achieved it's long awaited Grand Opening!

On Earth Day, April 22nd, 2016 the founder of Earth Day came to Shawnigan Lake (out of all the Earth Day celebrations in the world!) to support the Grand Opening of O.U.R. with a wide variety of government, business/corporate stakeholders, academic partners, and neighbours/community at large - to celebrate the precedent-setting Canadian example for inte-

grated community design... right here in little Shawnigan Lake.

Really, you don't need an annual celebration day or even any reason at all to come on up and have a self-guided tour or have tea in OUR Zero Mile Eatery while you learn about the many opportunities for living a more sustainable life. www.ourecoovillage.org

O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE EXPANSION....

Have the concerns of safe water, and water use, become a concern? Does the future of Food and Farming interest you? How about creating a sense of 'Placemaking' and community building/development? Does healthy and affordable housing sound like a social justice possibility? If yes, then this is your year to come and learn from amazing local and international expert teachers who are coming to your community at O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE. If you are

local - we wish to provide more skills development and capacity building and invite you to come on a 'no cost' basis. O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE has invested a large economic partnering into the local economy - and this is meant to include everyone who wishes to bring these skills to the area.

FOR MAY:

Introduction to Permaculture: Principles and Practices to Design your Sustainable Life

Village Design and Placemaking: Mark Lakeman returns to support local design teams

CSA Goodie Box: The ethics of local food and farming - monthly food/and local business box program.

Awaken the Healer: With Yarrow Willard (Harmonic Arts Medicinals) local Cert. Integrated Health Professional www.ourecoovillage.org



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Onsite solutions for home and business

BC Hydro work in your area Shawnigan Lake Road

We're completing a system improvement project in your area. Crews will be completing line construction on Shawnigan Lake Road from Lakewood Road to Sooke Lake Road.

Start date: Wednesday, March 30, 2016

Anticipated completion: Friday, May 20, 2016

Time: Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Traffic travelling along Shawnigan Lake Road could experience delays. Please plan ahead and allow extra time for your commute. When possible, plan an alternate route to avoid delays. For your safety and the safety of our crew, please reduce your speed and follow the direction of traffic control in the construction zone.

Thanks for your patience while we complete this important work.

BC Hydro
Power smart

Take A Hike!

Robyn Massey
Shawnigan Focus

Last month found us at Piper's Lagoon in Nanaimo. This month, we go around the corner to Neck Point. Once again I am left impressed with Nanaimo's marvelous parks – and yet there are so many more to explore!

Upon arrival at the park you are immediately welcomed with an open view of the bay. Once you head up the trail the view expands past Piper's Lagoon and the Strait of Georgia. There is plenty of parking provided, complete with porta-potty. However, if you've enjoyed copious amounts of morning bebies, hit the loo right then, as you will find no private relief in the 36 acres that you are about to explore.

And there really is an expanse to explore. You might decide to walk along the interpretive and managed trails. Or, if a more adventurous spirit, a walk along the beach rubble is fun – or, like us, you can do a little

bit of both. The main trail leads you nicely alongside the bluffs, over boardwalks and through pockets of forest featuring plenty of wonderful viewpoints. The park is a protected environment and naturally visitors are encouraged to stay on marked trails, but it appears that the bluffs are fair game to deviate. If you choose to clamber upon the rugged rocky cliffs, you might witness a raft of sea lions having fishy snacks, exercising their lungs, and performing morning water aerobics as we did.

The name 'Neck Point' comes from an isthmus that connects to a ginormous rock resembling a kind of head at a major point of interest in the park. Neck Point Park is also a well known and sought out destination for the diving clan. They often speak of the incredible sea life that lives in the vicinity of the park and also about a rock wall in the deep that is safe by the guardianship of a happy go



lucky octopus.

Rather than list out all of the activities available, and in fear of using up my allotted valuable word count which could otherwise be put to better use in effectual adjectives describing the park itself, here is a snapshot



borrowed from the City of Nanaimo's website.

To get to Neck Point, first find yourself on the Nanaimo Parkway heading north. Take the right onto Aulds Road, and cross the Old Island Highway which then becomes Hammond Bay Road. Follow the curvy turns until you see Morningside Drive on your right. Follow Morningside past the school and

there you will be.

Neck Point was once home to Deane Finlayson and his family. Deane was a well-known businessman and developer in Nanaimo and, as it states on one interpretive sign, was their 'heaven on earth' - I can certainly believe it!

JOIN US! Find photos and Island hiking information on Facebook at The Om Tree.



Photo Credit: Dave Hutchinson

Shawnigan Lake School celebrated its 100th year anniversary on April 30th with the actual 1932 Packard that belonged to the founder of the school, C.W. Lonsdale. A special day for a remarkable institution!

Discover Discovery Elementary School

Allison Vliet
Discovery student

Discovery School Grows A Garden With The Help Of Community

Discovery, with the help of the community, grows a garden. We have been growing fruit, vegetables, and glorious tulips and flowers. We are very grateful to have all the help we got and support from local businesses. As a student of the school, it is always thrilling to know that our community is very generous towards others. Our school just wanted to say how much we appreciated the help.

Thank-you to Dinters and Emily for coming to our school to help plant and thank-you for the apple tree and other plants and seeds you provided. We also want to thank Central Landscape for soil, and Island Tractor the auger to dig the holes for the fence posts and Jarod Evans for the gate and The Farmer's Institute for the grant money. Last but not least, for the parents providing donations of tools and other items needed. We, the students, have been busy planting and weeding our garden. Thanks, again for the support.

-The Discovery Team



Shawnigan Weather April 2016

Stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network ~ compiled by Grant Treloar

April Stats	Cigarmaker's Bay		Discovery School		Museum		Elford Road	
	2016	2015	2016	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015
Normal High	13.2	18.1	17.6	13.9	18.3	14.6	17.5	14.2
Normal Low	3.5	6.8	6.6	2.8	7.1	4.1	6.7	3.5
Highest Temp	30.0	27.8	28.4	21.5	29.2	23.2	27.5	21.0
Lowest Temp	-5.6	2.4	2.6	-0.7	3.2	1.2	3.0	1.0
Precipitation	65.2	19.8	17.3	36.1	14.4	24.8	16.8	34.8
Days w precip	15	9	9	14	8	13	8	15
Precip since Jan 1 (mm)	556.0	654.1	699.0	496.5	451.8	437.4	498.2	481.4
Precip since Oct 1 (mm)	1084.1	1147.5	1310.1	1036.5	1111.2	908.6	1240.0	1000.8
Since 1914: 2nd warmest 6th driest								
Lake Temperature:	Apr 3 rd : 11°	Apr 10 th : 12°	Apr 17 th : 13°	Apr 24 th : 14°				
Lake Level Change:	Apr 3 rd : -9cm	Apr 10 th : -2.5cm	Apr 17 th : -2.5cm	Apr 24 th : -2.5cm				

Celebrate with Dwight School Canada!

For the past seven years, Dwight School Canada has enjoyed the hospitality of the wonderful residents and businesses in Shawnigan Lake. This year we find ourselves in a position to show our appreciation for the support the community has generously given. We invite you to celebrate with us!

We recognize that there are some amazing local teens who will flourish in the right educational environment. One of our goals for the coming year is accessibility; we want to help local families afford a private school education at a more manageable price. To this end, we are pleased to offer a new lower tuition rate.

For BC resident day students, our tuition for grades 7 through 10 will be \$462 per month.

We are enjoying an exciting time of growth! With growth comes change, and one of the changes coming for the new school year is that we will expand our International Baccalaureate (IB) options to include the Middle Years Programme (MYP) for grades 7-10. The new BC Ministry middle school curriculum being introduced in September follows a similar

framework, and we feel that the MYP Programme will be a natural complement to this updated way of learning. For grade 10 students, this will also mean an easier transition into the IB Diploma Programme we offer in grades 11 & 12.

This is an exciting step forward, because the MYP helps guide students during these important developmental years, giving them a strong foundation for lifelong learning. The IB Programmes teach in a way that encourages critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the practical applications of each lesson, and help to build strong organizational skills, self-confidence, and better study habits. This is something we feel strongly about at Dwight School and are offering this lower tuition rate as a celebration of the new middle school curriculum.

We are having an open house on June 3, we invite you to join us and learn more about the vibrant international learning community at Dwight School Canada. Come and celebrate with us!



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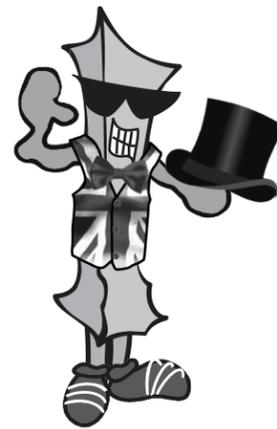
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Passing the “Buck”: Update

Mary Desmond
Shawnigan Resident

At long last, the deceased deer which has languished by the lakeside for the past two months, has finally been removed.

It came to light that the corpse was not on private property as first thought, but actually at the bottom of one of the little known public road ends. With this new status, the situation became more viable, even though the precise administration of these roadways belongs in a bureaucratic «grey zone» of the CVRD and/or the MOT (Ministry of Transportation). The latter staunchly refused to assist, still protesting that the creature was down an embankment - although a climb of fifteen feet or so would hardly call for mountaineering skills. But thanks to the intervention of our area director, Sonia Furstenau, Mainroad (MOT)s contractors) were ready and willing.

Thus it came to pass that on Thursday morning, April 14th, Kevin Searle of Mainroad, aided by community volunteers

(including Calvin Cook), clambered down the slope and, after wrapping the remains in a blanket, hoisted it away. After this length of time, it was probably not the most pleasant of operations, so someone should buy these lads a drink!

Yet despite the successful disposal of the unfortunate ungulate, doubts continue to surface. Arguments over the jurisdiction of land and water aside, the MOHs (Ministry of Health) dearth of a clearly defined protocol to deal with public water concerns when possibly jeopardised by private land issues is distinctly troubling. [Perhaps spurred on by this very episode, this point will be discussed at a ministry meeting in late April]. Let us hope that a clear and decisive line of action will be determined. When any community drinking water is affected, surely a government body charged with safeguarding public health must exert the expected authority to hold those responsible accountable.

In the meantime, beware of those peddling “fresh” venison sausages...

A brighter future through crime prevention

Oriana Parker
SCCP

In 1999 the world was on the cusp of a new millennium. The feeling of promise and change was in the air! It was an exhilarating time, a time to look over our shoulders and see how far we've come. More importantly, it was a time to set our sights on the future. Despite her seemingly happy life, Sarah Davidge chose to embark on a journey of faith and self discovery. Leaving friends and family behind she set her compass west travelling across the country. Her path brought her to the awe-inspiring beauty of Shawnigan Lake: a place where she could immerse herself in nature, absorb its healing benefits and discover spiritual fulfillment. She settled into the community, running programs for children

and adolescents at the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre. In 2006, through the China/Canada World Youth Program, she was invited to China where she taught English and psychology for four months. Currently, Sarah is the Program Co-Ordinator for the South Cowichan Community Policing Society in the Mill Bay Shopping Centre. Here, she is working with Block Watch captains to promote community safety. As well, she is busy setting up an outreach program that will allow her to meet with youth, parents and law enforcement personnel.

Some of the popular and successful programs running are Friendly Phones, Positive Tickets, Speed Watch to name just a few. Of her work Sarah says, “I love it! I feel like I'm supposed to be here.” Due to our aging society, with

seniors living longer the subject of elder abuse has to be addressed. “It's Not Right” is a video on the subject. Sarah plans to give presentations on the subject, as well as presentations on crime prevention and safety. The SCCP has received approval for a Thrifty's Smile Card up to \$1,500 a year. If you are interested in a card, please drop by the office. Facts speak volumes; we now know that a SCCP office in our community deters crime. If you are interested in volunteering you may call the office at 250-929-7222; email: sccp@shaw.ca As well, check us out on Facebook or go directly to our website: www.southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca

The office address is 120 – 2720 Mill Bay Road – Mill Bay Shopping Centre. Drop by the office and discover the many resources available. Volunteers of all ages are welcome.



SHAWNIGAN LAKE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

PO Box 201, Shawnigan Lake, BC V0R 2W0
Phone: (250)743-2096
Fax: (250)743-2096
Non-emergency Phone: (250)812-8030
Email: shawniganfire@shaw.ca



Department Members Attended 13 Incidents in April

- ★ Friday, April 1 – Mutual Aid with Mill Bay for a Structure Fire on Telegraph Rd
- ★ Saturday, April 2 – MVI on Thain Rd
- ★ Monday, April 4 - 1st Responder off Briarwood Drive
- ★ Wednesday, April 6 – Mutual Aid with Malahat for a Possible Bush Fire on South Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Thursday, April 7 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Sunday, April 10 - 1st Responder off Heald Rd
- ★ Sunday, April 10 – Burning Complaint on Thain Rd
- ★ Tuesday, April 12 – MVI on Forsyth Lane
- ★ Saturday, April 16 – MVI on Renfrew Rd
- ★ Saturday, April 16 – Structure Fire on Briarwood Cresc
- ★ Saturday, April 16 – Alarms Activated on Fitzgerald Rd
- ★ Monday, April 18 – Assistance on West Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Wednesday, April 20 - 1st Responder off Northgate Rd



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- ★ **Area B Director's meetings with Sonia Furstenuau**
Office hours by appointment. Email sfurstenuau@cvrld.bc.ca Director's meetings 1st Monday of month at SL Community Centre For updates: check www.soniafurstenuau.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission (APC)**
May 5th at 7 pm. Watershed office: Unit 4-1760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd
- ★ **Shawnigan Parks and Recreation Commission**
No meeting in May
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Community Centre Commission** Next meeting TBA
- ★ **Shawnigan Improvement District**
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- ★ **Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA)**
for info: check www.thesra.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Business Association (SLBA)**
Contact: info@slba.ca for information
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Community Association**
Contact: bburr@shaw.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Basin Society**
May 10th at 7 pm. Meetings held in Watershed office: Unit 4-17760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road. Contact: luvlife@shaw.ca
- ★ **Young Seniors Action Group (YSAGS)**
Contact: www.ysag.ca email: ysagssl@gmail.com
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Museum**
Open Fri-Sun 11-4. www.shawniganlakemuseum.com
Contact: shawniganlakemuseum@shaw.ca
- ★ **Village Development Committee** May 19th - 6:30pm. at Watershed office

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What Is It? Where Is It?
Why Is IT?



One lucky respondent with the correct answer will be randomly selected to win two Specialty Coffees at Shawnigan House.
Reply to: editor@shawniganfocus.ca

CONGRATULATIONS

The winning answer for April was submitted by Ron Cuthbert who recognized the supporting timbers of the new viewing platform at the Kinsol Trestle..

Shawnigan Cemetery

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HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

A Free Drop-In at the
Shawnigan Lake Community Centre



Healthy Beginnings is a friendly, relaxed group for moms and dads with babies and toddlers from birth to 3 years of age. There is no registration required, just drop-in to visit and share a cup of coffee or a snack. We will be discussing a wide range of topics. Gathering every Thursday morning except the weeks with a statutory holiday.

Toddler Group starts at 9:30 AM | Infant Group starts at 11:00 AM

INFORMATION : Rhoda - 250 709 3050

EMAIL : rhoda.taylor@viha.ca

FACEBOOK : Healthy Beginnings Cowichan

Book Review

Marcy Green
Shawnigan Focus

On The Move

by Oliver Sacks
Published by Vintage Canada
copyright 2015 by Oliver Sacks

Although this is a memoir, it reads like an adventure novel. A young British neuroscientist, Oliver Sacks, rejected as a researcher because he is too clumsy, travels to live and work in America. He is an avid motorcyclist and Muscle Beach weight lifter and is also a prolific drug user. While living his life to the absolute physical limits, he still finds time to have a brilliant, although unorthodox, medical career.

In the hospitals of New York he becomes fascinated by patients whose neuropathies display bizarre symptoms and he is patient and compassionate as he listens, diagnoses and keeps detailed case studies. He becomes a superb clinician. From this work come several books including "Migraine", "The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat" and "Awakenings". The latter is made into a movie of the same name and is about a group of encephalitic patients who are released from their locked-in bodies with the administration of the drug L-Dopa. Based on true case

studies, the part of Dr. Sacks is memorably played by Robin Williams.

As his fame grows, the author becomes connected with many famous researchers and writers in the field of neuroscience and he continues to be the "Poet Laureate of Medicine", as described by the New York Times. In this memoir he documents the origins of his twelve books and his struggle to keep the rewrites and footnotes in hand. While I enjoyed these details, others might wish for an edit.

His curiosity carries him deeper and deeper into believing in the uniqueness and plasticity of the brain and, in the second part of the book, he explains its vast interweavings and beautiful complexities, incorporating many of the new discoveries with the area of medical imaging. Each brain is unique because of all of the individual choices it has made, he explains.

I must admit I had to reread some of the more detailed sections several times in order to understand his explanations, but I did, at least, get the gist. Sacks writes so that even a layperson can grasp the medical concepts.

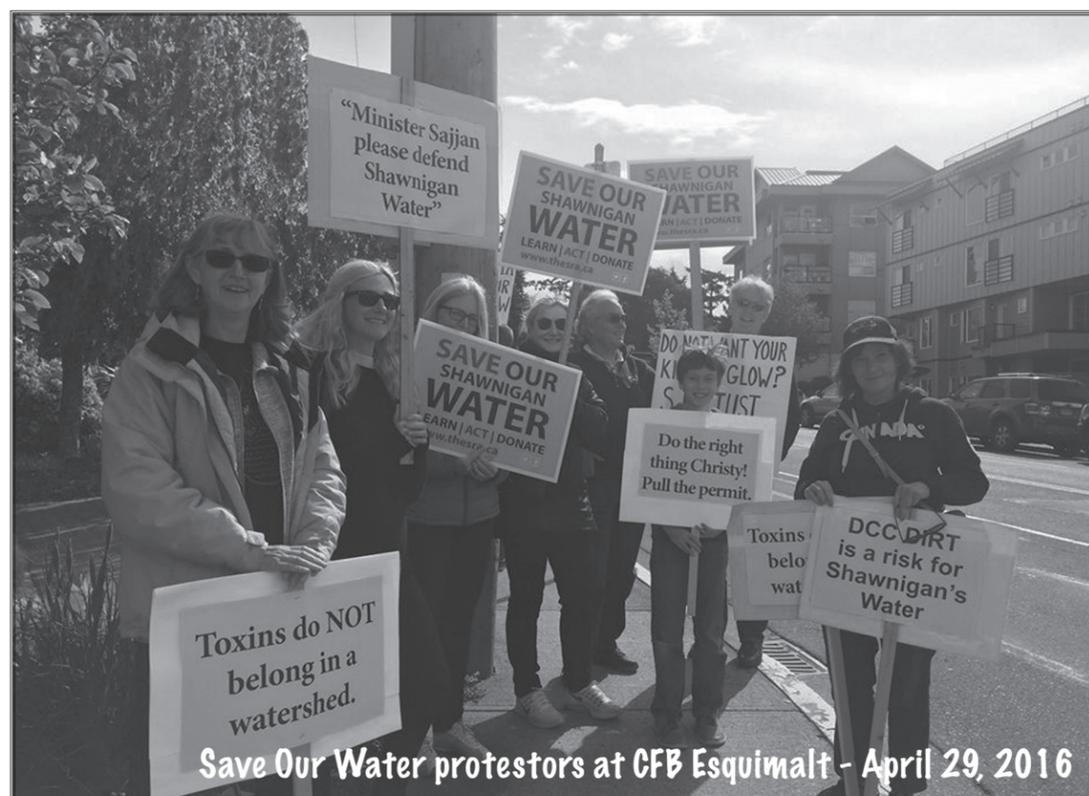
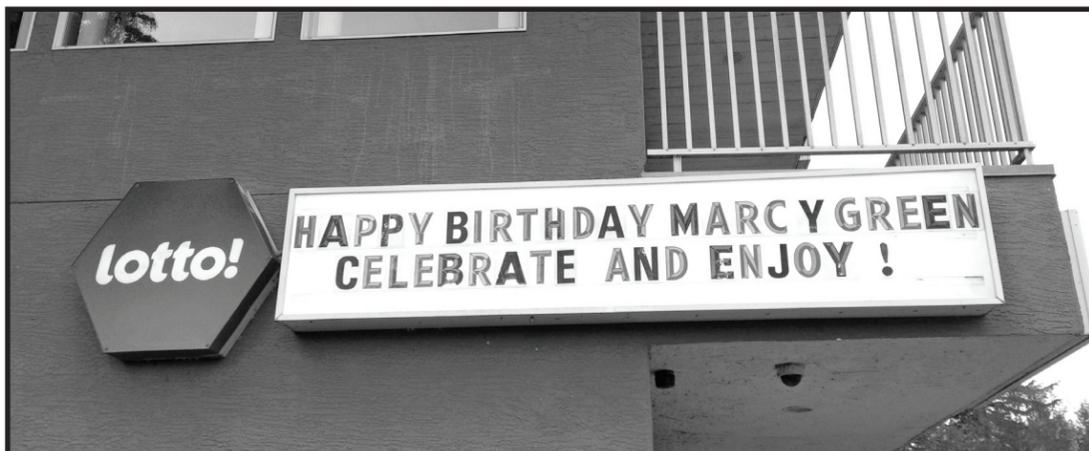
What is most endearing

is his ability to share some of the more difficult personal challenges of his life. He speaks of his brother who had schizophrenia, his mother's denunciation of his homosexuality and his terrible "face blindness", a condition that made life very difficult as he could not readily recognize people. For many years he was unable to accept that he was worthy of affection and it was not until his 70's that he met and lived with the love of his life, a fellow writer.

By the end of the book it becomes apparent that he has a number of physical issues and, indeed, he dies soon after finishing this book. His final essay on dying of cancer, which received wide exposure online, showed that he was at peace with himself and his life. It's a courageous piece, and speaks of his great character.

At the end of the book he writes: "I am a storyteller, for better or for worse...over a lifetime, I have written millions of words, but the act of writing seems as fresh, and as much fun, as when I started it nearly seventy years ago." And so he leaves us this gift.

Rating: 4.5/5



Save Our Water protestors at CFB Esquimalt - April 29, 2016



SUNDAY MAY 29, 2016
10TH ANNUAL SUBARU SHAWNIGAN LAKE TRIATHLON
7:00AM - 11:30AM

Triathletes and Volunteers Wanted!

Join us at West Shawnigan Lake Provincial Park or VOLUNTEER for a weekend of fun and festivities. On Saturday, come on down to the park to watch the IRONKIDS Fun Run at 12 pm and join us for 10th Anniversary Celebration and Cake at 1 pm. Don't miss the Fundraiser Dinner Party at Camp Pringle from 5 to 7 pm - get your tickets at www.camppringle.com. On Sunday, watch as hundreds of athletes from all over North America swim, bike and run in and around Shawnigan Lake.

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