



Shawnigan FOCUS

"Our Voice - Our Thoughts - Our Community"

Winter On The Lake

by Dave Hutchinson

January on Shawnigan Lake - icy dark water, cold grey sky, rain and sleet prevail, but when the wind dies and the low south sun appears, it is a wonderful place to be. For those of us not away in some tropical haven it is peaceful and quiet, a time for contemplation and preparation for the year ahead.

Winter wildlife is abundant. Otter and beaver are active; kingfishers flit along the shore. A variety of ducks make their annual visit, cormorants perch on piles, and increasing numbers of resident geese honk their disregard.

Days are short and the weather can be a challenge, yet there are rewards for the intrepid few who venture out. For the most part, you have the lake virtually to yourself. An exception is New Year's Day when a handful of skiers and wake-boarders perform their annual ritual. When it is calm, the soft winter colours and mirror-like water provoke a sense of timelessness and tranquility. Storms can be worthwhile too if you are looking for adventure, are properly equipped, and are not too busy digging out the generator.

The lake level rises with the winter rain. Each year there is remembrance of previous records and debate



Silent and still in the fog

about the weir or whether the creek-bed near Mason's needs to be cleared. Things near shore drift free and the odd treasure is included with all the flotsam but there are not nearly as many good cedar logs as there used to be.

It has been three winters since the lake froze enough for skating on the West Arm and decades since the entire lake was covered with ice. It might have been another place altogether when you hear the legends of Charlie Armstrong crossing the lake on a horse drawn sled in the early 1900's. So far the predictions for an unusually cold la-Niña winter for 2012 have not been fulfilled but don't put your skates away yet.

photos by Dave Hutchinson and Janet Neilsen



Old Baldy dusted with snow



Worthington property awaits its fate



Rowers in the rain



A winter cruise on "Rusty"

Want to Speak to Shawnigan? . . . Advertise in the Focus!
CIRCULATION 3500!

A year in the life...

The motivation to produce a community newspaper percolated in the minds of many community groups, and individuals, for a few years before it came to fruition. With the loss of the Community Crier in 2006, there was a serious lack of communication within the Shawnigan Lake community. On January 17, 2011, five interested residents from Shawnigan Lake, hereafter called the launch team, met with the Editor and volunteers of the Metchosin Muse to discuss the nuts and bolts of producing a community newspaper.

A Community newspaper by definition serves a specific geographic area and ad space is restricted to 40%. Community newspapers are generally volunteer based papers that aim to build a community by informing the residents about other people in the area and about issues facing the area.

After the decision was made to start a community newspaper for Shawnigan, the launch team planned a four-page issue with a potential start date in September 2011. Those thoughts lasted all of five minutes. Our first

issue was published in April 2011 and with the plentiful copy provided by the community, the paper had grown from the original premise of four pages to twelve pages packed with copy. Twice in the past eight issues, we have expanded to sixteen pages.

While we prepared the first issue, we developed job descriptions, determined the vision for the paper and debated the best name. When it seemed impossible for the launch team to agree on a name, we asked the group at a meeting of potential volunteers to make the decision. Shawnigan Focus was the overwhelming favorite. The volunteer group has grown from



a few founding members to a group of many people who produce the paper, and even more who contribute to the success of the paper, either by providing copy or by placing ads.

The Shawnigan Focus team members are the first to admit that we are amateurs and that it has been a steep learning curve. We also recognize that because it is published once a month, it cannot be considered a “newspaper” in the true sense of the word. Our intent, right from the start, was to inform the community, celebrate the community and engage the community.

Every part of producing the first eight issues has been accomplished through volunteer help and with no startup money! Over the past year, our financial picture has improved with the support of our advertisers; our

stories are more concise; our subject matter is more varied and the look of the paper has improved dramatically with practice and experimentation. We also take pride that the paper is mailed to EVERY postal address in Shawnigan Lake . . . free of charge.

As our anniversary edition approaches, we plan to hold another volunteer meeting to encourage new volunteers, writers, reporters and advertising sales people to join the team. We will also provide the opportunity for constructive feedback so you can let us know how we are doing and how we can improve the Shawnigan Focus. The meeting will be open to everyone. Stay tuned for a date.

With your help, submissions and encouragement the Shawnigan Focus will continue to improve and inform. Please let us know how you think we are doing...

“the launch team planned a four-page issue with a potential start date in September 2011. Those thoughts lasted all of five minutes”

Coal for Christmas?

By Elijah Fraser

Some may be wondering if the E&N got coal for Christmas. There was great hope earlier in 2011 that the E&N was back on track. The Province’s commitment to contribute \$7.5 million of the \$15 million requested in infrastructure funding was considered by some as a 125th birthday present for the historic rail

from the Federal Government,” said Jim Sturgill a spokesman for the E&N Action Group and a previous committee member of the ICF. “It’s not so much that it won’t be approved, but there seems to be a hold up.”

Quick to dismiss the challenge,

“This will give us the state of repair and weight loading of each of these structures, which is very important in determining if you can take freight trains over the structures...the passenger train is half the weight of a freight train so we are pretty confident that they are all good for passenger service.”

A four page ICF Rail Infrastructure Plan, recently posted to the ICF website briefly outlines the immediate and long range plans of the ICF in regard to rail. Immediate plans include a commitment by Via Rail to the re-commencement of passenger service once the track work is approved. A newly renovated three car train will originate out of Nanaimo on a new proposed schedule, and a second “Intercity Commuter Train” is also being researched. The plan speaks to weekend Excursion Trains, Tourist Feature Trains to compliment the already successful Port Alberni Railway, and new stations in Victoria and Nanaimo. In addition to passenger service, the plan details the possibilities for the expansion of rail freight business, particularly for aggregate and coal.

All however seems to hinge on funding from the Federal Government and all sides seem to recognize the urgency. Graham Bruce continues to encourage people to write let-



The Shawnigan Station in busier days.

line. The Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) went ahead with a survey of the bridges and there was talk of a pilot commuter project taking to the rails in spring 2012. Unfortunately, towards the end of 2011 the process appeared to stagnate. The delayed response by the Federal Government in matching the Province’s contribution and the emergence of the E&N Action Group suggests that the Island Corridor is still in danger.

“Because of the way that a lot of things have been handled by the (ICF) Board and the Executive Director (Graham Bruce), it does not look very promising for a speedy commitment

an optimistic Graham Bruce made it clear the ICF is still committed to expanding and enhancing rail service. In regards to the \$7.5 million requested from the Federal Government, he said, “We’re quite confident that should be coming through shortly. We’ll be more confident when it is announced but all the indications are such that we’re pretty sure it is coming along.” An announcement is anticipated early in 2012.

With the field work completed on the Bridge and Trestle Engineering Audit in November and December, a report is expected mid February 2012. In regard to the survey of the 48 structures on the line Bruce said,



E&N Dayliner travelling through Shawnigan
Photo: Al Brunet

ters to the Minister of Transportation and the Prime Minister. “(All levels of government) right up to the Prime Minister’s Office are aware of the E&N, but we need to keep it on the forefront.” As far as the E&N Action group, Jim Sturgill said they would look at initiating another petition and doing town hall meetings to keep people involved. More information, addresses, and email can be found on the ICF website islandrail.ca or on the E&N Railway Coalition website, saveislandrailway.org.

GOING IN THE EXIT

by Al Brunet

At this point, what exactly would Shawnigan lose by scrapping the E&N? The blight that is emerging on our landscape with rotten ties, rusted rails, a rail corridor overgrown with weeds, completely ugly and useless with no hope in the foreseeable future for any change, might as well be scrapped and resurrected in a form that residents can enjoy. Keeping in mind that, if and when the federal government ever comes across with \$7.5 million to match the BC Government commitment, that is only enough to replace the rotten ties. Estimates are

that it will take at least another \$150 million or more to actually make it into a semi-useful or reliable railroad. Once that is taken out of our pockets we are still left with the same actors and politicians who let the whole thing run backwards and deteriorate to manage this enterprise. Of the plans to revamp the rail line, I have not seen or heard of any that would re-locate the section that runs through Shawnigan. The powers behind the project want to increase freight on the line, which is not a good prospect considering that the

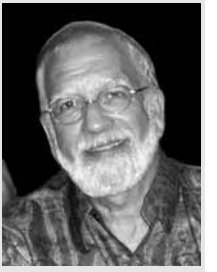
line runs as close to 10 feet of the lake in many places during the high water season. A derailment could, depending on the cargo, poison all of the drinking water for everybody in Shawnigan. Add to that the danger posed to the hundreds of children that play near the line because of the location of beaches and parks, or, the people who use the line as a walking path because walking on our ill-maintained roads is too risky, there does not seem to be many benefits to Shawnigan residents. While the responsible authorities agonized last spring over the railroad's future, our

world moved on. An increasingly efficient bus system, more versatile than the train would ever be, has been put in place. Commercial courier and trucking services have filled the void for most other things. We don't actually need an expense of this magnitude to give us something we already have, or to lose even more taxpayer money. Building on the success of the trail and the Kinsol Trestle, the rail line along the lake should be ripped up and turned into a walking/cycling path that many more people could enjoy. It would

be a simple matter to link it to the Trans Canada Trail giving us a stunning amenity at a fraction of the cost.

I love history and historical pieces such as the E&N, but not at prices that break the bank and do nothing for the area. A re-routed line may be good for other parts of the province. I see nothing of benefit for Shawnigan.

(this is the opinion of a budding curmudgeon)



Al Brunet

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

I Have a Friend

My friend and I have a history that spans decades. My friend has seen me at my best and worst, and offers help when needed. He is good and kind and loves his family. He has worked hard and contributes to society, but now he is sick.

He doesn't dwell on this. Instead, he has asked his friends and family to make him laugh. We email jokes and funny stories to help my friend. His wife takes pictures of him, and turns them into funny faces and distorted bodies through computer wizardry. I laugh.

Blow number one. The Dr. tells my friend that the treatment has been successful and he can leave the hospital and become an out-patient. Wrong. There has been a mistake, and my friend must endure more intensive treatment. This does work, but to continue recovery my friend requires a bone marrow transplant. Blow number two. He asks his brother. His brother declines, because he says my friend's chances of survival are not that good.

My friend continues sending the jokes and funny pictures, and I laugh. As the search continues for an alternate donor, I wonder which brother has given up on life.

Farrell Magnusson

A special place.

Thank you for your article reminding us of "our" magnificent quarry.

I feel that the quarry is a special place to be preserved and protected as a park for use by the community. Also, like the Kinsol Trestle, it will attract tourists on a hot summer day as part of their reason to visit our community. At the very least, the lake access and the path around the lake should be made into a park if any residential development occurs.

I personally would be happy to pay a daily fee or annual pass to use the quarry and thus help ensure its care and safe access. Certainly I feel it should be at the top of the Parkland Acquisition list and any related park budgets for conversion to a Regional Park. As a park, I feel that motorized vehicles should not be allowed to use the high-use paved access road or the path around the quarry lake, as I've witnessed too many near misses of children and dogs particularly in the warmer months. Perhaps the upper or back trails could be available for motorized use, assuming the whole property became a park.

At a bare minimum even if we don't make the quarry into a park in the short term, I believe our CVRD budget/taxes should fund an outhouse and a garbage pail on the property to prevent further contamination, assuming that the Dakuses agree with this idea.

There is no try!

First of all, Darren Cole went to a lot of work to put his workshop together. About 100 people attended the event in the Hugh Wilkinson Theatre at Shawnigan Lake School. In this state of the art building, I was impressed when, with a click of a

remote, the lights dimmed and the big screen came on.

I knew Hugh Wilkinson when he was a headmaster of SLS in the 1970s. When I started working there, when the school was still all boys, I wondered if Hugh had to deal with the issue of bullying?

The work-shop started with Michael Jackson singing "Man in the Mirror" on the big screen. I happen to like Michael Jackson but I could tell the person beside me didn't by his body language. Darren came by snapping his fingers to the music, then more people joined in - he was trying to get his shy audience to come out of their shells.

Tyler Noble's name was mentioned, but it was more about the way Tyler died that brought us all there on Sunday to learn what we could from his death and to address the issue of needless violence and bullying! I was surprised how many people stood up when we were asked if we have ever been bullied - almost all of us. What does this say about our society?

Some key words were spoken about changing yourself and how the foundation of your life comes from your childhood (I have

always thought this).

Ask yourself what kind of person do you want to be? You either DO or YOU DON'T, YOU CAN or YOU CAN'T...There is NO TRY.

I wish more people had gone to see this workshop but the people that did will hopefully pass it forward.

Thank you Darren.

J.N.

I Just Don't Get It?

I welcome comment on my articles in the Focus, but the comment by Roger Painter in the December Focus issue calls for a short reply.

Rather than answer any of my direct criticisms of the OCP, his comment was vague and condescending.

Rather than correct errors in my columns, Mr. Painter attacked me - saying I just don't get it. While Mr. Painter is rather vague about what exactly "it" is, I can be quite a bit more specific.

The IT that I don't get is the 2011 OCP. An OCP is an expression of the aspirations of the residents of the area. An OCP provides a goal



and a route to that goal. We know where we are, we know where we want to be, and the OCP is our guide along the way. While most people will make no significant changes, others will try to make drastic changes. The drastic changes that are and that are not made will determine whether or not we reach our goal for Shawnigan Lake. I don't think IT will word for Shawnigan Lake.

Mr. Painter says that IT contains enough to guide the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) deliberations and is an improvement over the 1985 OCP. Let's take an example. Construction of phase two of the manufactured home subdivision on South Shawnigan Lake Road included filling a wetland. Wetlands are crucial to water quality. The 1986 OCP allowed that. IT also allows filling in wetlands. CVRD staff explained that an added approval step would prevent a repeat, then refused to include that step in the OCP.

Mr. Painter says IT offers more protections. In spite of being three times as long, IT includes no additional the water quality protection.

The second way IT guides

A Village Development Council

Area B Director: Bruce Fraser

While incorporation of the Shawnigan area as a municipality may be several years off, there is much that can be done in the meantime to enhance the central village of the region. Shawnigan Village has both a stock of valuable assets and a range of development obstacles.

Shawnigan Village lies at a central crossroads of a region that now includes a population approaching nine thousand people. Village assets include a group of cooperating small businesses and their local organization, the Shawnigan Lake Business Association. There is room for expanded commercial development on the property across from the Community Centre and for a central gathering place employing the Elsie Miles school property next to the Museum. There is great potential for attractive development of public facilities on the lightly used lakeshore when it is effectively connected to the village core. When the railway resumes operation, there will be an opportunity to develop a rail station that serves both commuters and tourist excursions that can be hosted once more in the village like the early days of local tourism. We have a growing profusion of visual and performing arts that will enliven the experiences of both residents and visitors. We have an annual slate of civic celebrations. We are capable of hosting major sports events on land and water and we have a world-class historic rail trestle and trail system to draw visitors.

Many of these assets will offer limited opportunity until some of the development obstacles are eliminated. Commercial expansion of the village is limited by lack of sewage facilities and by lack of an anchor business capable of drawing regional shoppers to the village complex. Pedestrian traffic among village businesses is limited by the lack of safe pathways and sidewalks. Access to the lakeshore is limited by the railway, the lack of a foreshore path and low-value usage of some strategically placed lakefront land. The four-way stop intersection is hazardous to vehicles and pedestrians alike and parking facilities are fragmented. The limitations of

the village are part of the reason for empty buildings and the recurring failures of small businesses and complementary services that find insufficient volume to keep them alive.

I believe that the limits can be overcome and the assets developed to our advantage, but it will take thoughtful planning, astute targeting of enhancement projects and systematic fund raising to make significant progress. A master plan needs to be prepared that outlines the initiatives required, costs them out and identifies parties with the capacity to launch and sustain the civic efforts. For this we can convene an informal "Village Development Council", tasked with preparing a master plan and devising the strategies for achieving the identified development targets. Such a council will have to be widely inclusive of residents, businesses and organized civic groups to achieve the momentum needed to attract funding from both public and private sector sources.

The Council will have to maintain a "funding watch" to capture useful funding sources as they arise and to be prepared to put forward timely applications that support well developed proposals backed by the community. It can work with the Advisory Planning Commission as new developments are proposed so that, where feasible, the amenity contributions required can be used to serve village development needs. It can attract volunteers to help deliver on projects at various scales.

I propose to set up a launch group to put the Village Development Council together, widen the membership to provide broad inclusion and begin the process of master planning. The Council members will operate transparently and provide frequent opportunities for public engagement in the planning process, discussion of development ideas, participation in projects and reporting of progress.



The Element of Surprise: Learning in an Ignited Environment

Shawnigan Lake School hosts Dr. Judy Willis conference January 4, 2012

By Val Donahue

Shawnigan Lake School teachers, together with teachers from other independent schools on the island, began 2012 on a high note as they participated in a full day of brain-based learning and friendly strategies to ignite learning in the classroom.

Dr. Judy Willis, a former neurologist, classroom teacher, author and international presenter from Santa Barbara, California, engaged the teachers in an inspirational presentation. The first session focused on how an understanding of neuroscience can help, "Narrow the distance between young people and their dreams." Judy's message demonstrated how incorporating an understanding of neuroscience with teaching methods helps students develop their highest cognitive potential for 21st century success.

The classroom is changing and students need to learn critical thinking skills that will allow them to think in critical and creative ways in order to communicate and collaborate successfully. Teachers were encouraged to teach students the skills a successful corporate executive would need to know to achieve goals: planning, decision-making, reasoning, analysis, risk assessment, and delay of immediate gratification. Students need multiple opportunities to practice interpreting the accuracy of information, to make predictions and to solve real world problems.

The next session focused on getting and maintaining students' attention in the classroom. Judy demonstrated how to restore students' natural curiosity and to promote prediction, thus enabling students to remain attentive and genuinely interested in wanting to learn. Educators need to provoke curiosity about outcomes and encourage predictions from students. When students make a prediction, and discover that their prediction is correct, an increased rush of dopamine in the brain occurs. Brain patterns connected to this correct prediction are strengthened as the confirmation of understanding occurs.

Making mistakes increases learning! It was interesting to learn how the brain wiring changes when feedback is provided to correct a mistake. Neuroplasticity of the brain is a fascinating topic. As teachers, we are reminded, "the goal is to keep all students participating and engaged because only the person who THINKS (predicts), learns."

The Advisory Planning Commission and Shawnigan Watershed

By Area B Director: Bruce Fraser

Area B is unique in containing Shawnigan Lake and most of its watershed except for the lower reach of Shawnigan Creek that runs through Area A, Mill Bay. All of the issues that normally apply to a watershed are of concern to residents and domestic, irrigation or recreation water users. These include upland forest management, integrity of input streams, non-point and direct pollution sources, residential commercial agricultural and industrial development, lake-based recreation, mining, wild-land recreation, as well as transport corridors and utilities. In our area we experience watershed impacts from all these sources but there is no single jurisdiction that can address them completely. Because of fragmented jurisdictions we will require active collaboration among many authorities working with the public to gain sufficient control over the watershed to achieve necessary improvements in management.

A device that can help us to achieve integration of effort at the watershed scale is a "round-table" of interested and authoritative parties that work together to develop a "watershed master plan". Such a plan would identify threats to the integrity of the watershed and develop initiatives that would address those threats systematically. It would identify responsible parties that could contribute to the overall objectives of the plan, set priorities and help to sponsor necessary watershed projects to achieve specific improvement targets. In creating a round table and plan for Shawnigan, we can draw on the decade of experience of the Cowichan Round Table and the Cowichan Water Board and on similarly well-developed experiences in the Okanagan Basin, The Columbia Basin and the Fraser Basin.

The Advisory Planning Commission for Area B considers the appropriateness of development proposals using the Official Community Plan and Zoning by-laws as a guide. It examines proposals and makes recommendations to the Area Director and the Board of the Regional District. As one of the key administrative functions of the area, the Commission has the opportunity to take a "whole basin" approach to its deliberations, placing all incoming proposals in the larger watershed context.

I propose to create a Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable and to link its membership with the APC through cross appointments. Results of deliberations of the round table and the APC would be shared with each other systematically. All decisions and recommendations of the APC will then be informed by the whole basin approach. The roundtable's public membership will be formed at an advertised Director's meeting early in 2012 after which relevant agency and industrial representatives will be invited to join. Progress of the roundtable will be regularly reported and frequent opportunities for broad public discussion will be provided.

Shawnigan All-Basin Symposium 2012

Area B Director: Bruce Fraser

Shawnigan is a very diverse community with distinct sub-regions with greatly differing interests. One thing that binds them all is that they are all contained within a single watershed that must be managed for our long-term water supply. Another common interest is the state of development of our landscape, where the pressures of the day may be taking us and what kind of overall governance we may wish to create to help shape our future. Another is the long-term development of our core and satellite villages. Alongside such larger issues lie the many community building and public service initiatives sponsored by civic minded groups concerned about the welfare of our citizens, support of arts and culture, management of our parkland, sharing of our lake, sponsorship of celebratory and sports events and development of our business community. There is a great deal

of civic energy going into all of these matters but not everyone is aware of the work being done by others. Holding an "All-Basin Symposium" is a way to gather our diverse interests and enterprises into our common understanding of what Shawnigan is and what it should become. The symposium plan would be to invite representatives from all quarters of the community to

(see: Symposium page 5)

Gift certificates available



If your house is a mess
And its driving you crazy,
Give us a call
So you can be lazy

250-510-9999

info@
desperatehousewivescleaning
.com

Electrolysis
by Cindy Rose, C.E.
phone 250.882.9954

GILL-POWER HOBBY FARM

2124 Millicent Avenue
Shawnigan Lake

www.gillpowerhobbyfarm.vpweb.ca

We sell local organic products

- Omega-3 Eggs at our Farmgate-
- herbs, garlic and in season veggies-

Shawnigan Beach Estates (SBE)

By Gaileen Flaman



Gaileen Flaman

I have just returned from another walk around my beautiful neighbourhood in the SBE and instead of coming home with a sense of good health for getting some fresh air and exercise, I am feeling disappointed and upset. As soon as I stepped out my door, the smell of burning plastic assaulted my nostrils. I know my sense of smell is becoming more acute as I age, however, during my walk I noticed plumes of smoke coming from residential chimneys. This is an indication of improper burning techniques and burning wet wood and other matter not meant for burning. Often, backyard burning also generates this low-hanging, acrid smoke that, on some days, keeps my family from enjoying the outdoors.

A report compiled by the CVRD on Monitoring Residential Burning Emissions states that, "From a human health perspective, fine particulate matter (PM2.5) has been identified as the air pollutant of most concern in British Columbia. One of the largest cumulative sources of outdoor fine particulate matter is widely considered to be residential wood burning. PM2.5 is highly detrimental to human health as it is respirable and able to penetrate deep into the lungs. Pre-school aged children are especially susceptible to smoke because their lungs and airways are still developing. Wood smoke also increases cardiovascular problems like angina, particularly in older people."

I'm going to take a wild guess that a number of families who reside in the SBE either have or had pre-school aged children and/or are "older people" themselves, so I would think this would be of great concern. We live in a medium-density neighbourhood within a rural community, yet have the same by-laws regarding burning. That means residents themselves need to consider the "greater good" and burn properly so as to not impose these ill effects upon their neighbours. Please be a considerate neighbour and burn properly with everyone's comfort and health in mind. Search "Air Quality" on the www.cvr.ca website for fact sheets and resources or consider taking part in the Woodstove Exchange Program to replace your old wood-burning appliance. Your neighbours will thank you for it.

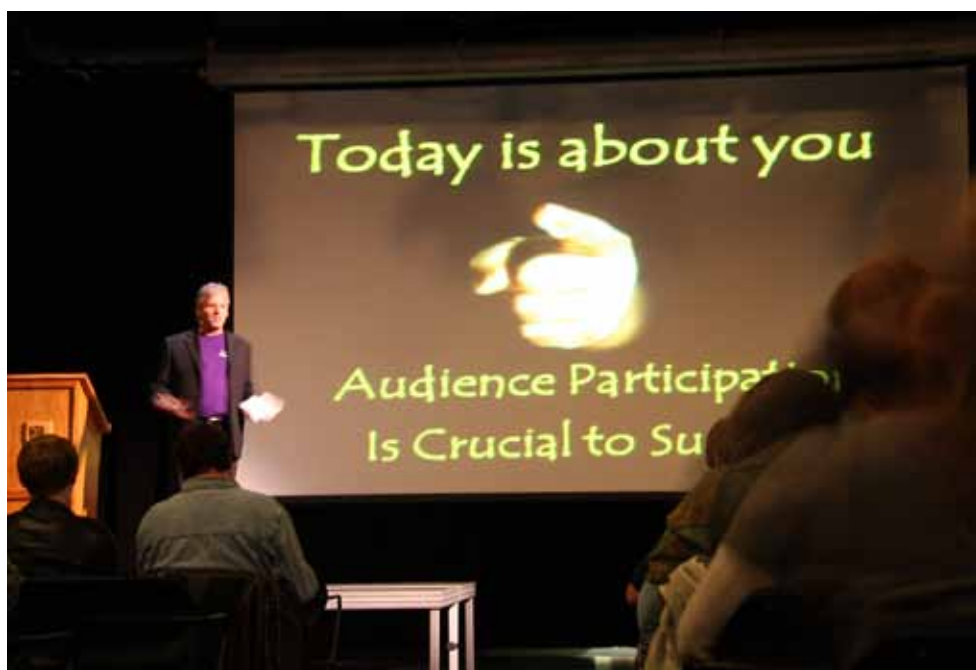


Photo: Al Brunet

Slightly more than 100 people attended a Seminar/Workshop organized and sponsored by Darren Cole of Steeples restaurant on Sunday, January 8th. The workshop dealt with stemming the violence and changing the attitudes that degrade, maim, injures or kills young people every day across the country. The event, held at Shawnigan Lake School in the Hugh Wilkinson Theatre and was organized as a tribute to Tyler Noble, an employee of Steeples Restaurant, who was killed in a senseless incident before Christmas.

Symposium cont.

present their concerns, aspirations and initiatives for all to see and hear. The purpose would not only be to celebrate what we are collectively doing now, but also to think out loud about where we are going. The gathering would talk about what things are going well, what common purposes are being sought among the many civic groups, what issues face us where improvements need to be made and how to organize to address the community building work that we can agree needs to be tackled.

Such a large-scale community conversation will take some time to organize, but late Spring of 2012 seems a likely target date. I will be establishing a launch group to begin the process and seeking seed funds to support the event. The agenda and the means of gathering Shawnigan people for both the planning process and the event will be the responsibility of the launch group and will be widely communicated as the work proceeds.

Shawnigan Lake Triathlon Gets a Local Race Director

On May 27, 2012, our community will be host to the Subaru Western Triathlon Series 6th Annual Shawnigan Lake Triathlon.

Participants in the triathlon will swim, bike and run one of three courses – either the Half Ironman, Olympic or Sprint Distances. Last year there were 500 participants either in the individual or relay events and athletes ranged in level from beginner to "elite". For the first time this year, the Shawnigan Lake Triathlon is a World Championship Long Distance Qualifier, which increases world profile of the event and brings an exciting new field of top level athletes to our community.

Shawnigan Lake is fortunate to be host to this great event which celebrates the unique and wonderful features that Shawnigan has to offer. This year's event will include a crossing of the Kinsol Trestle, which will attract more participants and spectators on a world-wide scale.

Also new this year is that the Shawnigan Lake Triathlon has acquired a local Race Director, Sarah Malerby.

Sarah Malerby is a Shawnigan Lake resident, business owner and seasoned community volunteer who brings her extensive experience and skills in managing events. Sarah has big plans to increase the community connection and involvement with the Triathlon.

"This new role fulfills two passions of mine – serving my community and promoting health and fitness for all",



Sarah Malerby

says Malerby. "Triathlon is a great sport because it can include athletes of all levels, ages, shapes and sizes. The Shawnigan Lake Triathlon is a wonderful opportunity for locals to try their hand at participating in a triathlon or to volunteer to be part of this exciting and world class event."

Malerby is currently looking for some great individuals with leadership skills to join the organizing Race Committee. The first meeting of the Race Committee will take place on Thursday, January 26 evening. Interested individuals can contact Sarah Malerby by email at s.malerby@triserries.ca.

Volunteers are also needed on race weekend to help with the many tasks that are required at a triathlon event. Volunteers can register by visiting the Subaru Western Tri Series volunteer form at <http://triserries.ca/volunteering.php> or by contacting Sarah Malerby.

GOT A STORY?

The "Focus"

is interested in your Shawnigan news and stories.

Contact:

editor@shawniganfocus.ca

SCREENPRINTING & EMBROIDERY



Professional screenprinting & embroidery for your business, school, club or association.

Need ideas? Visit our showroom or consult with our knowledgeable, friendly staff.

Monday - Friday 10 - 4 PM

Saturday 10 - 4 PM

We are located at :

**#2 - 1340 Fisher Road
Cobble Hill, B.C.**

(right next to Creative Woodcraft)

250-929-1181

info@harlequinnaturegraphics.com
www.harlequinnaturegraphics.com

(locally owned and operated)

Island Pharmacy

Our Island. Your Pharmacy.

**Compounding for the
Whole Family**

SHAWNIGAN LAKE

250 743 6977

1 - 1769 Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road
Shawnigan Lake, BC

www.islandpharmacy.ca



Shawnigan Goes Prime Time!

By Sally Davies



The \$10,000.00 frown . . .and Smile!

On January 8th, when 38 million viewers around the world tuned in to watch “America’s Funniest Home Videos”, they were probably wondering where Shawnigan Lake is.

The winner, and star, of the season opener of the longest running prime-time show on A.B.C. was none other than Alice Tillie Fowler and her family, all from Shawnigan Lake.

Alice’s grandmother, Sally Davies submitted a video that she took of Alice when she was turning five. The only problem was - Nana thought she was turning four. Therein lies the makings of a \$10,000 prize winning video.

Alice, her Mum Sara, little sister Chloë, and Nana Sally flew to Los Angeles in November 2011 to record the program and will be returning February 3rd for the taping of the \$100,000 episode.

The only complication for this exciting event is the fact that it coincides with the opening weekend of South Island Musical production of “The Sound of Music” in which Alice was to star as the youngest Von Trapp. Fortunately, her very capable understudy will step into the roll for the opening shows and Alice will again be in the limelight for the matinee on February 11 in Duncan and again in March at The Port Theatre in Nanaimo.



Large willow toppled near the end of the West Arm.
Photo by Dave Hutchinson

Beavers Busy Down The West Arm

by Dave Hutchinson

Since our first story about beavers on the lake in the October issue we have heard several more accounts of beaver sightings and activity. This one is worth noting due to the size of the tree. One or more ambitious individuals have been busy down the West Arm. A large willow (more than a foot in diameter) was recently toppled near the water’s edge a few properties up from the far end, opposite the West Arm Grill.

Firearms License PAL

Need a Possession Acquisitions
License (PAL) for Firearms?
Non-Restricted & Restricted Courses
& Challenges available.



Mark: 250-888-7801
- Shawnigan Lake -



RBC Royal Bank®



Emily Black
Mobile Mortgage Specialist
250-715-7692
emily.black@rbc.com

Need mortgage financing?
Look no further.
Let me make it happen.

Advice you can bank on™

All personal lending products and residential mortgages are offered by Royal Bank of Canada and are subject to its standard lending criteria. ® Registered trademarks of Royal Bank of Canada. RBC and Royal Bank are registered trademarks of Royal Bank of Canada. ™ Trademark of Royal Bank of Canada. 45808 (08/2010)



Shawnigan Lake



FARRELL MAGNUSSON



I am your link to
**VICTORIA
BUYERS**

Feature
Listing

New Listing Shawnigan Lake Front Acreage

Why wait for Spring, buy it now. Priced below assessed value, this 1.47 acre lot has approximately 200 feet of lake front with southern exposure. Treed and cleared areas makes this a special place to build your recreation or full time residence. This is a land only sale. Call for details.

\$ 749,000



1750 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd.

Pager 250-477-7291 www.farrellmagnusson.com

Call Farrell for your
FREE, No Obligation,
Home Evaluation
250-743-7151.

Open 6 Days Per Week Mon-Fri- 9:30-5:00 Sat - 10:00-2:00

Shawnigan Lake Parks Commission

by Margaret Symon

A Walk in the Park - with Wildlife Trees

In the last issue of the Shawnigan Focus, we had a discussion about wildlife trees, what they are, and why they are so important to wildlife. As you'll recall, a wildlife tree is any standing dead or live tree with special characteristics that provide valuable habitat for the conservation or enhancement of wildlife. Habitat features provided by wildlife trees include cavities (various uses, including nesting), chimneys (for bat roosts), branching (nesting perches), spiked tops (eagle perches), loose bark (frequented by foraging birds, such as the brown creeper and nuthatches), feeding holes (woodpeckers), and snags (nesting and perching). Our focus today is on tree cavities – a vital wildlife habitat.

Today we're taking a walk in Shawnigan's Old Mill Park to reflect on local history and to look at wildlife tree cavities. Old Mill Park is accessed off East Shawnigan Lake Road, just south of the train overpass, and a short distance west on Recreation Road. Named for a number of saw mills that churned logs into lumber for the Shawnigan Lake Lumber Company, the quiet lakeside locale that is now Old Mill Park once supported a bustling timber business. A 10-man logging show that started in 1881 grew to an operation using 150 men in the mill and almost as many men in the woods. The first mill, which was destroyed by fire a week before Christmas in December of 1918, was replaced by a larger mill, which was also destroyed by fire, in

August 1934. This fire is said to have burned for a year and a day in a large sawdust pile, and then, in August 1935, strong winds fanned the fire into a conflagration that razed the mill store, old mill cookhouse, and five dwellings. In 1936 a third mill was built on the site. It met its demise when a fire tore through the site in 1944. The mill was never rebuilt.

Now a pleasant recreation destination for locals, Old Mill Park has several easy walking trails frequented by nature enthusiasts and dog walkers, and a sandy beach and an enclosed swimming area popular with families in the summer time. It's January, so we're going to don our gum boots, and, with binoculars in hand, we'll take a leisurely stroll through the winter woods of Old Mill Park to look at wildlife trees.

Many species of birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles at Old Mill Park depend on tree cavities for critical life functions, including nesting and shelter. The largest group of wildlife tree users is cavity nesting birds. Looking up into the tree canopy at Old Mill Park, we see a number of different tree species – cottonwoods, alders, wild cherry, Douglas firs, and cedars – with various sizes and shapes of tree cavities. Wildlife species that specialize in chiseling out holes in decaying wood of trees are known as primary cavity excavators. Like woodland carpenters, primary cavity excavators leave a legacy of old cavities for other wildlife. Woodpeckers and sapsuckers are primary cavity excavators, as are chickadees and nuthatches. Look closer through the binoculars at some of the tree cavities – do you see any of our year-round resident chickadees and nuthatches that depend on cavities for winter roosts?

Birds and mammals that cannot

excavate their own tree cavities are known as secondary cavity users. They raise their young in holes created by primary excavators, and may also use wildlife trees for food storage and temporary shelter. On the forest floor we spot some castings. Peering up, we spy a small cavity high in a black cottonwood. Could it house an owl? Or perhaps some other secondary cavity user, like a duck, raccoon, or bat?

On this late afternoon stroll through Old Mill Park, winter daylight is fading fast, and it's becoming more and

more difficult to scrutinize the trees for tree cavities. We make haste to the local coffee shop. There we'll plan for our next venture in the park, an evening owl sortie. See you then - in the next issue of the Focus!



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

COPPERSTONE ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

"Simple clean professional electrical work at prices that fit your budget"



- ▷ Bonded and Insured
- ▷ Residential
- ▷ Commercial
- ▷ Electrical Renovations / New construction
- ▷ Upgrade Services / Custom builds

E-mail - mackfly@shaw.ca

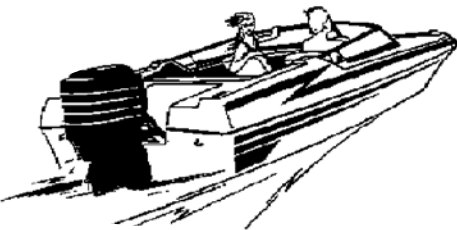
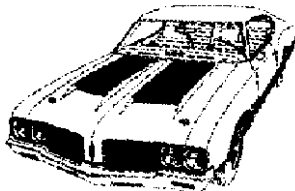
250-715-7170

Shawnigan Weather for December 2011 (stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network) compiled by Grant Treloar

	Shawnigan Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay	Discovery School	Museum	Kelsey School
Avg High	5.6	5.4	6.0	6.6	7.0
Avg Low	0.4	0.5	-0.7	0.3	0.2
Extr High	16.0	10.9	11.2	11.4	12.7
Extr Low	-15.0	-3.7	-5.2	-4.1	-3.6
Precip	208.7	122.5	84.2	90.1	60.8
Days with Rain	20	14	15	13	14

Lake Temperature: Dec 4th: 5° Dec 11th: 4° Dec 18th: 4° Dec 25th: 4°

SHAWNIGAN MILL BAY AUTO PARTS (1992) LTD. 743-3355



Mill Bay's Auto/Marine Parts Store Pioneer Square

January/February TIDE TABLE - FULFORD HARBOUR

Mon 16 JanT	02:43	6.7L	09:39	11.5H	17:12	3.7L			
Tue 17 Jan	00:33	8.4H	03:32	8.0L	10:10	11.4H	18:10	2.8L	
Wed 18 Jan	02:34	9.2H	04:47	9.0L	10:47	11.3H	19:05	2.0L	
Thu 19 Jan	03:42	10.0H	06:35	9.7L	11:31	11.2H	19:57	1.4L	
Fri 20 Jan	04:25	10.6H	08:07	9.8L	12:24	10.9H	20:45	1.1L	
Sat 21 Jan	05:01	11.0H	09:17	9.5L	13:24	10.6H	21:30	1.1L	
Sun 22 Jan0	05:34	11.3H	10:15	9.1L	14:26	10.3H	22:12	1.2L	
Mon 23 Jan	06:06	11.4H	11:07	8.6L	15:28	10.0H	22:53	1.7L	
Tue 24 Jan	06:36	11.4H	11:58	8.1L	16:27	9.6H	23:32	2.3L	
Wed 25 Jan	07:06	11.4H	12:46	7.5L	17:26	9.2H			
Thu 26 Jan	00:11	3.2L	07:35	11.3H	13:34	6.9L	18:27	8.9H	
Fri 27 Jan	00:48	4.2L	08:03	11.1H	14:22	6.3L	19:33	8.6H	
Sat 28 Jan	01:25	5.3L	08:30	10.9H	15:10	5.7L	20:50	8.3H	
Sun 29 Jan	02:01	6.4L	08:56	10.7H	16:00	5.2L	22:27	8.2H	
Mon 30 JanG	02:36	7.5L	09:20	10.5H	16:52	4.7L			
Tue 31 Jan	00:48	8.5H	03:12	8.4L	09:44	10.2H	17:46	4.2L	
Wed 01 Feb	03:16	9.1H	04:36	9.1L	10:07	10.1H	18:38	3.7L	
Thu 02 Feb	03:57	9.7H	06:58	9.5L	10:36	9.9H	19:27	3.2L	
Fri 03 Feb	04:23	10.1H	08:18	9.5L	11:21	9.8H	20:09	2.8L	
Sat 04 Feb	04:44	10.3H	09:06	9.3L	12:19	9.7H	20:48	2.4L	
Sun 05 Feb	05:04	10.4H	09:41	9.0L	13:23	9.7H	21:24	2.1L	
Mon 06 Feb	05:23	10.5H	10:13	8.6L	14:24	9.6H	21:58	2.0L	
Tue 07 Feb@	05:43	10.6H	10:47	8.0L	15:25	9.6H	22:34	2.2L	
Wed 08 Feb	06:05	10.7H	11:25	7.3L	16:25	9.5H	23:10	2.7L	
Thu 09 Feb	06:28	10.9H	12:07	6.5L	17:27	9.4H	23:48	3.4L	
Fri 10 Feb	06:52	11.0H	12:52	5.7L	18:33	9.2H			
Sat 11 Feb	00:26	4.4L	07:18	11.1H	13:41	4.8L	19:45	9.0H	
Sun 12 Feb	01:06	5.6L	07:44	11.2H	14:33	4.0L	21:07	8.8H	
Mon 13 Feb	01:47	6.8L	08:12	11.2H	15:29	3.4L	22:44	8.9H	
Tue 14 FebT	02:31	7.9L	08:43	11.2H	16:31	3.0L			
Wed 15 Feb	00:39	9.2H	03:29	8.9L	09:20	11.0H	17:35	2.7L	

Shawnigan Residents Association

by Gaileen Flaman

Ah yes! New Years Resolutions. Did you make just one or an entire list? Does it include something about improving your health? Here's an idea that doesn't involve sweating, scheduling or spending a lot of time or money: become a member of the Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA). "How will that improve my health?" you may ask. Experiencing the sense of belonging that comes with being part of an organization is positively associated with better physical and mental health. Really. (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada).

According to the article "Indicators of Well-Being in Canada", joining with other members of your community actually contributes to your well-being. And rather than feeling guilt for not living up to your resolution, your commitment only needs to be the 15 minute act of completing a Shawnigan Residents Association on-line membership form with an annual fee of \$10. That action alone will increase the SRA's membership numbers which then gives the association a stronger voice to be heard when dealing with the people who make decisions regarding our community. Once you have joined, you will be able to regularly read up on SRA activities and progress on its website (www.shawniganresidentsassociation.com).

The SRA has made a commitment to keep its website relevant and

current as a way of communicating with our community. The act of joining might even inspire you to go one step further by becoming an active participant on one of the associations committees. The SRA is working on some big projects that impact the entire Shawnigan community and include topics such as the watershed, local governance, water quality and development. A larger membership and greater participation by members will help the association deal more effectively with these and other issues in the years ahead.

Beyond the potential of improving your individual health, a strong sense of community is also good for societal well-being, so doing something good for yourself is doing something good for the community.

The Board of Directors thanks all past and current members for their contribution and commitment and encourages those members whose memberships have recently expired to make the resolution to renew. To renew, or become new members of the SRA, visit us at www.shawniganresidentsassociation.com

LOCAL ADVERTISERS MAKE THIS NEWSPAPER POSSIBLE

PLEASE SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

"Shop where your real friends are!"

Dwight International Walks For Peace

Danielle Donovan/Stephen Johnson

On Thursday, December 15, Dwight International students marched up Shawnigan Lake Road in an effort to raise awareness for world peace and non-violence. In addition to the Dwight students' March for Peace, the students wrote letters for Amnesty International's "Write for Rights" campaign, organized in the school by the grade 6, 7, and 8 students. The March ended at



the Shawnigan Lake post office where students mailed their letter individually.

After mailing their letters, they were escorted by the RCMP back to the school building. With one final cheer for their mission and their escorts they wearily, but happily, dispersed to start their well-deserved Christmas vacations. "It began as my dream, but I couldn't have done it without the encouragement and support

of the Dwight staff and the RCMP. And the students were so enthusiastic! It was just such an awesome display of positive energy," said staff member, Mrs. Donovan, who was instrumental in organizing the event.

West Coast Sapsucker

By Elijah Fraser

"So... are you, like a tree vampire?" asked an inquisitive eighth grade Dwight International School student. I was explaining how to tap our local Bigleaf Maples during a presentation to the grade seven/eight class. It may not be the most common question I have been asked about maple sugaring; however, it seems that upon hearing that I am a local "sapsucker," most people have a few questions.

Maple Sugaring has gained a lot of ground on our coast in recent years. While there are few commercial operations, amateur and small scale operations are becoming more common. That being said, misconceptions still exist about the viability of our local maples to produce syrup. Most stem from the fact that our local species known as the Big-leaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) is as different from the Eastern Sugar Maple as is our climate and geography.

The Eastern Canadian climate keeps the trees and sap frozen for most of the dormant season, leaving only a two to four week window for tapping in the spring. Here on the West Coast, depending on the weather and micro climate we are able to tap from November to February.

The general practice in tapping Eastern Maples is to tap larger diameter trees. This does not work well for our species. The common consensus is that when tapping Big-leaf Maples, younger fast growing trees consistently produce better. Ask anyone who has tried; it is pretty hard to kill a Bigleaf Maple. Trees as small as 25 cm (10 in) in diameter, and copices (shoots from a tree that has been cut down) as small as 10 cm (4 in) in diameter yield good results without risk of damaging the tree.

Unfortunately, the sugar content of our sap is approximately 1% lower

than that of Eastern Sugar Maples, and peaks at about 2%. When it takes 43 litres of sap to produce one litre of syrup, that 1% can make a big difference in the amount of work and energy required. Bigleaf Syrup has a stronger flavour and often wins in blind taste tests over Sugar Maple Syrup. Its flavour makes it apt to many culinary applications.

So if you are now eyeing up that grove of trees in your backyard that



Dwight students take part in tapping demonstration

you previously viewed as noxious weeds, you don't have to go far to become a sapsucker too. It requires only a little knowledge and few tools. The Forest Discover Centre in Duncan hosts an annually Maple Syrup Festival. This year's is on the 4th of February, and is one the best ways to experience maple sugaring. Big-leaf Sugaring by Gary and Katherine Buckland is a great local resource; both it and tapping supplies are available at local farm stores.

Donation Offers Shawnigan Lake School 'Gift of the Galaxies'

by Steve Housser (reprinted with the kind permission of the Times Colonist)



SLS will be the new home of this observatory and 14" Celestron telescope
Photo by W. John McDonald

Advancement or development work is often code for fundraising. Depending on perspective, this can be admirable or slightly suspect. Fundraisers aren't always viewed in the best light. "Professional beggars" might be one unflattering observation.

This article is not about the merits of fundraising. Personally, I find it incredibly rewarding to raise money for scholarships and financial aid so good kids can get a great education.

This is about sharing a fascinating twist of advancement work.

My job is to seek philanthropic support for Shawnigan Lake School. This can mean contributions of cash, stocks, bonds, life insurance policies and "gifts in kind."

We've had people give us exotic lilies, a grand piano, an old boat, rare stamps. But the most interesting offer so far: a fully equipped, research-grade observatory sitting on tiny King Island, just off of Saturna Island.

Recently, King Island changed hands. The new owners had no use for an observatory so were looking for someone who might appreciate it. For our Science department, it was a dream come true.

Well - maybe. Bright as our science guys are, they're not astronomers, nor astrophysicists. Would this equipment be too sophisticated for our needs?

We set about establishing conditions for acceptance. For me, that meant learning about ideal locations for an observatory, trying to find a mentor from the local stargazing community and planning an expedition to King Island to see exactly what was on offer.

It took one click on Google to find the Cowichan Valley Starfinders Astronomy Club. The vice-president lives 10 kilometres from the school. That connection led to another - a retired professor of astrophysics. Both experts agreed to go to King Island to scope out the observatory and its 14-inch Celestron telescope.

As we docked at the island, the two stargazers were eager to inspect the compact, white-domed observatory about the size of a tall igloo. First they had to figure out how to roll back the

clamshell roof panels and get power to the telescope.

Then, miraculously, "beam me up, Scotty," the telescope whirled into action and started tracking heavenward. High fives all round! The scope appeared in excellent working order with very expensive Nagler eyepieces, a \$12,000 digital camera for astral photography and all the bells and

whistles of a mini Palo Alto observatory.

With the experts giving an enthusiastic thumbs-up for the high quality of the equipment, the next step was selecting a perfect south-view, low-horizon site at Shawnigan. With a campus of 300 acres, the right spot was not hard to pick, and the

headmaster gave his blessing to a vibration-proof platform to place it on.

The next step was to fetch the observatory from King Island. This took two intrepid stargazers, the King Island caretaker and me a whole day to engineer.

Because of a difficult tide and current, we had to snub the aluminum landing barge against the rocky slope leading to the observatory and leave it in gear while we scampered up to dismantle and then lower by rope, piece by piece, the observatory and all its optical and electronic paraphernalia.

"Ad astra per aspera" - to the stars through difficulties, sweat and hard labour. Mercifully there were no mishaps. The observatory is now safely at Shawnigan awaiting re-assembly. Stay tuned for the next update - maybe some exquisite photography of exploding quasars.

Meantime, I have to do some professional holding my hand out for money to build a "warm room" beside the observatory for cold night probes of outer space.

Steve Housser is the Executive Director of the Shawnigan Lake School Foundation.

Editor's Note: The Shawnigan Focus intends to do a follow-up article after the observatory is operational.

"beam me up, Scotty," the telescope whirled into action and started tracking heavenward!

The Wild Side

by Lori Treloar

At this time of year, the bird feeders at our house are an endless flurry of feathers. We enjoy feeding these wild “pets” all year round but in the winter, they need a considerable amount of food. Coarse or medium sunflower chips attract an amazing variety of birds and create very little waste so that is our food of choice. We also provide our feathered guests with a home-made peanut butter and lard mixture. Although there are many birds to choose from, this time I will highlight the woodpecker family.



Downy

The Downy and the Hairy Woodpeckers are frequent guests at our feeders and this winter we have had the unusual pleasure of several visits from the Pileated Woodpecker. It is quite a sight to see this spectacular bird scarfing



Hairy

down seeds while swinging on the feeder.

Downy Woodpecker – *Picoides pubescens*: This small woodpecker (6-7” or 15-18 cm) is very much like the Hairy Woodpecker only proportionately smaller. Unlike their relatives the Hairy

and the Pileated, these birds have adapted well to mixed deciduous forests and urban woodlots.

Hairy Woodpecker - *Picoides villosus*: This medium sized woodpecker (8 ½ -10 ½” or 22-27 cm) has a white head with a black crown, eye mask and whiskers. The male has a red patch at the base of his crown, light underparts and black wings with white spots. The tail is black with white outer feathers.

Pileated Woodpecker – *Dryocopus pileatus*: This crow-sized (16-19 1/2” or 41-50 cm) bird is predominately black with a magnificent red crest. Pileated means “capped”, referring to the red crest. The cheeks and underwings are white. This bird arrives at the feeder with a flourish and takes over. Pileated Woodpeckers need access to a large territory in a conifer-



Flicker

ous forest and mixed woods where dead stumps abound.

Another woodpecker that we see regularly is the Northern Flicker. In the summer, we often wake up to the sound of the Flicker drumming on our hardi-plank siding. At this time of year, he visits the feeder regularly. It is amazing to see this large bird wrapped around the feeder for a lengthy meal.

Northern Flicker – *Colaptes auratus*: The Flicker in this area is red-shafted referring to the salmon colour of the feather quills that we can see

below when the bird is in flight. He is similar in size to the Jay (12” or 30 cm). Their basic body colour is brown with fine black lines across his back and a black spots on the breast. They have a wide black necklace above their breast and the male sports a



Pileated

red moustache. As they fly away, you can see a flash of white on their rump. Unlike other woodpeckers, they often feed on the ground. Flickers are generally found in deciduous or mixed woods and in semi-open country.

If you would like to attract these woodpeckers and their feathered friends, try our winter “suet” recipe:

- 2 cups oats
- 1 cup lard
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 1 cup peanut butter (all natural)
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup coarse sunflower chips
- ½ cup sugar

Using the microwave, soften the lard and peanut butter in a big glass bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well. Press into square molds (we use old plastic suet containers) to fit a wire suet feeder (inexpensive to buy). You can use any plastic storage container to shape the “suet” as long as it will fit in the feeder. Freeze all of the squares until needed. We put them in the feeder frozen - it does not deter the birds at all.

Enjoy your new “pets”!

Take a Hike!

By Robin Massey

Hey Cobble Hill Mountain! Heard of it?! Our hiking group frequents this perfect spot almost each and every Sunday regardless of the weather. The only exception being the last Sunday of each month as we trek out into the wilds to explore other fabulous Cowichan Valley locations.

If you haven’t been to this remarkable ‘little’ mountain then you’ve more than likely driven past it a million and one times as you passed the cute village of Cobble Hill. Right at the main parking lot, the community boasts a wonderful little park for our furry four legged pals where they meet new friends and get a bit of play time. Although the puppy park is wonderful, those that need a bit more umph in their day will find the real big fun is up the trails.

There are so many trails to explore and so many viewpoints to discover that it’s almost endless. My personal favourite



is taking the trail up from the yellow gate past the bike park, first right into the woods, straight across the next branch and up, up, up! This particular trail if you stay on the main branch will eventually bring you to the beautiful Kingburn area lookout, complete with a little picnic table to stretch your muscles and an opportunity to catch your breath.

Whatever your chosen trail(s) or starting and ending points there is much to experience on Cobble Hill Mountain and a ton of choices that allow you to customize your hike from day to day depending on how you feel. Doing as little or as much as you like or even a combination thereof.

Honestly though, it’s close and convenient, a lot of people utilize it, and it really is awesome! If you haven’t already done so, you simply MUST take advantage of this gem. And perhaps if you happen to find yourself up and at it, early one Sunday morning, come on out or send me an email to join us – you never know the friends you’ll meet along the way to health!

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

Third Fire Hall For Shawnigan?

The information below is from a recent posting on www.shawniganfire.com

As Shawnigan Lake grows in size and numbers the need for additional resources is recognized. In our current position, it has been recognized that

the Shawnigan Lake Volunteer Fire Department should have a third hall in the area south of the lake.

The Shawnigan Fire Department Master Plan from 2008 indicated the need for a third fire hall in the South Shawnigan area to serve the new homes being proposed for the Estates at Shawnigan Station and other proposed residential developments.

As part of the Master Plan the Shawnigan Improvement District boundary was extended to include the Estates at Shawnigan Station who had petitioned to have fire protection from the Shawnigan Lake Volunteer fire department.

The Estates at Shawnigan Station have their own municipal water system and have fire hydrants throughout this subdivision. The developer has also installed a fire hydrant at the corner of Sooke Lake Road and Shawnigan Lake Road for the benefit of the whole community.

The Fire Underwriter’s Survey recommended a standard travel distance from a fire hall to a dwelling as 8 kilometers. The travel distance to the Estates at Shawnigan Station is 13 kilometers from Shawnigan Lake fire hall #1 and 11 kilometers from Shawnigan Lake fire hall #2. To maintain the district fire insurance rating a fire station is recommended by Fire Underwriter’s Survey.

Other development is proposed for the South Shawnigan area and the Cougar Ridge development is just outside the district boundary.

In being proactive the Shawnigan

Lake Fire Department recognized the need for fire protection for the existing and new developments that will result as infilling takes place. The fire department announced in their five year plans that a third station was needed.

An adequate parcel of land has been identified and negotiations with the landowner have taken place. The proposed fire hall would be similar to the Shawnigan Lake #2 fire hall.

Location:
Sooke Lake Road ½ kilometer off Shawnigan Lake Road

Estimated cost:
Fire hall \$ 780,000
Apparatus & equipment \$ 850,000
Land \$ 300,000.00
Completed Project total: \$1,880,000

see: 3rd Fire Hall page 12



SHAWNIGAN LAKE CHIROPRACTIC
“Enjoy the Freedom to Move”
250-743-6616
shawniganlakechiropractic@shaw.ca
 # 3 1855 Renfrew Road, Shawnigan Lake,

SOMETHING NEW – A SOUTH COWICHAN ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

By Graham Ross-Smith

Several years ago the Cowichan Valley Regional District's board of directors decided not to undertake review of the official community plans (OCPs) for each of the three individual electoral areas in the southern part of the CVRD (i.e. Cobble Hill, Shawnigan Lake and Mill Bay/Malahat) but, instead, to meld them together under a single "South Cowichan" OCP. One of the interesting results has been the need to create a new and unique type of advisory planning commission – a South Cowichan Advisory Planning Commission. Being a new approach to the processing of applications to change zonings and land designations, many people with an interest in such matters have experienced some confusion and uncertainty about how the process is expected to work.

To understand the newly modified process, it is important to first know about one of the most important aspects of the new OCP; the creation of "village containment boundaries" for each electoral area's most densely developed lands. Prior to the adoption of the new OCP, each of the three electoral areas had its own CVRD-appointed Advisory Planning Commission (APC) with responsibility for providing the CVRD, when asked, with advice as to whether a land-use-change application should be approved or denied. For example, the Area B (Shawnigan) APC would provide advice to the CVRD on any application regarding a piece of land within the borders of Area B. Now, under the structural changes created by the new OCP, the Shawnigan APC now can only deal with land change issues on properties that lie within the Shawnigan Lake village containment boundary – an area that is a small fraction of the total size of Area B. All land-use-change applications for Area B lands that are outside the Shawnigan Village con-

tainment boundary are now to be dealt with by a new entity called the South Cowichan Advisory Planning Commission; sometimes also referred to as the "joint APC." The two other electoral areas (A and C) are affected in exactly the same way as is Area B.

So, for properties falling within village containment boundaries, it is business as usual. For properties in any of the three electoral areas, (A, B and C) that are located outside of the village containment boundary areas, it means that CVRD referrals for APC advice will now go to the "joint" APC instead. The South Cowichan joint APC draws its members from each of the other three APCs using the following formula as set out in a CVRD bylaw: It will consist of at least nine people: five from the electoral area in which the property is located and two from each of the other two electoral areas - normally the chair and vice-chair persons of those APCs.

For a person who is applying for approval of a change in land-use, this altered process will probably not have a significant impact. It will simply mean that for properties outside of village containment boundaries, the application will be scrutinized and its merits assessed by an APC within the context of the entire south Cowichan area instead of from the more local perspective of one of those smaller geographic entities known as an electoral area.

More information about Areas A, B and C village containment boundaries and advisory planning commissions can be had from staff at the CVRD's Planning and Development Department (phone 250-746-2620) and by going to the CVRD's web site (www.cvrdbc.ca)

Happy Birthday Moondance!

As we reach the first anniversary of the Art House here in Shawnigan Lake Village, we would like to share some of our story!

MoonDance Dynamic Arts School was created, and is owned and operated, by Lynn Weaver (nee Taylor). The adventure began in 1999 in Sooke BC. It evolved from Lynn's love for dance, and desire to share what she

anywhere in the World. As founder of Ballet Saamato, the West African dance company MoonDance works with in Guinea, Gigla has helped many street-youth learn discipline and mastery through the traditional arts of Guinea (music, dance, and singing). His choreography carries important social messages, as well as excellence and entertainment.

On this trip, Byron brought many drums (djembes and doundouns) to Canada from Guinea, to make his drumming classes more accessible. Students could then participate without having to have a drum of their own. MoonDance continues to have strong connections to Guinea. Regular email, occasional calls, and an up-

coming trip in the works, ensures the friendships and cultural experience continues to deepen. As Lynn likes to say, "Traditional dance is not about preserving ashes. In this dynamic art form, it is about spreading the fire!" Preceding a group trip (Lynn was bringing nine other Canadians with her) to Guinea in 2008, Lynn asked Gigla what they could do to "give back" for all the generosity MoonDance has experienced in Guinea. Gigla suggested a primary school in Kumbian, his birth village, where there was no school. This marked the beginning of Matoto Multicultural Arts Society, MoonDance's sister non-profit. The school has now opened (October 2011), and we are looking forward to seeing it in completion on our next trip!

MoonDance now has 15 teachers(!) and brings in guest instructors regu-

larly. The calibre of artists coming to the Valley thanks to MoonDance is phenomenal. Internationally renowned artists are sharing their talent right here in Shawnigan Lake!

For example, periodically MoonDance hosts Denbaya, a West African drum & dance workshop weekend with the likes of Naby Camara, Seattle, (Juno Award winning musician), N' nato Camara, Vancouver and Manimou Camara, Seattle.

MoonDance is also a regular presenter with Every Woman, Power of Hope, Canada World Youth, Cowichan Intercultural Society, Dwight International School, Shawnigan Lake School, and Eagle Arts Academy. Lynn also re-discovered "western" dance (ballet, modern, hip hop, etc) through the lens of inclusiveness and fitness and fun. MoonDance also offered these types of classes, in addition to West African and other Cultural Dance.

In 2008, the long journey to the realization of a life-long dream began - - the construction of a Studio space for MoonDance. In January of 2011, the Art House opened in Shawnigan Lake Village, as not only a dance studio, but a community space. "The place to move. The place to be moved." We are celebrating the first anniversary of the opening of the Art House this January (Jan 21st, 2:00 – 4:00pm).

Lynn is now advocating for greater



had learned: that dance could be about connection, fun, and wellness. So much of what Lynn had encountered in the dance industry was competitive and destructive.

Lynn discovered in Cultural Dance, specifically the dances of West Africa, a different way of being, that allows our full human potential to flourish through dance.

Through Lynn's extensive dance background (dancer/choreographer; University of Calgary, Sienna College, Melbourne) MoonDance began to thrive. In 2002 we began to offer classes at Euro Studios, a collective studio space on Cook Street in Victoria.

Through high-quality teaching, sharing of knowledge, and the exuberance of live percussion, the classes continued to grow and expand into the Valley.

In 2005, Byron (Lynn's spouse) and Lynn went with musician and dance artist, Aboubacar Camara to Guinea. This began a life-long friendship with Abou's brother-in-law, Alya Gigla Sylla. Gigla is one of the most up-standing individuals they had ever met



arts, culture, and heritage inclusiveness, access, and appreciation here in the Valley through Inspire! Shawnigan Lake Arts, Culture, and Heritage Collective that she co-founded (with Terry



Dheensaw).

MoonDance will remain connected to our roots here on the Island, specifically Shawnigan Lake and the Cowichan Valley, while exploring cultural dance around the World. We hope you will journey with us!



Lunch - 11:30am
Brunch - 10:30 Sundays
Dinner - 5:00pm Daily

250.743.1887
www.steeplestaurant.ca

2744 E. Shawnigan Lake Rd.

The Shawnigan Lake Fire Department

The Shawnigan Lake Fire Department attended 18 emergency calls during the month of December:

Dec 4 First Responder call in the Village
 Dec 4 Chimney Fire on Shawnigan Lake Road
 Dec 9 MVI call on South Shawnigan Lake Road
 Dec 10 First Responder call in the Beach Estates
 Dec 12 Possible Bush Fire on Memory Island
 Dec 13 First Responder call in the Village
 Dec 14 First Responder call north of the Village
 Dec 16 First Responder call in Silver Mine Estates
 Dec 16 ATV accident off West Shawnigan Lake Road
 Dec 17 Vehicle Fire off Shawnigan Lake Road
 Dec 17 First Responder call north of Village
 Dec 17 Auto Alarm in the Beach Estates
 Dec 20 MVI on Shawnigan Lake Road
 Dec 21 First Responder north of the Village
 Dec 24 MVI on South Shawnigan Lake Road
 Dec 28 Hydro Line Fire on Sylvester Road
 Dec 29 Hydro Line Fire on Shawnigan Lake Road
 Dec 29 First Responder off Renfrew Road

The annual Santa Run on December 22nd was a great success. Thank you to community residents who gave food and cash donations to the local Food Bank.

We hope for everyone a Happy and Healthy 2012.

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 – December Issue



Congratulations to What is it? Contest Winner

Jill Parent had the first correct answer for our December Where is it? What is it? Contest. The picture is a group of pilings at "Old Mill" Park. Jill wins two specialty coffees from Moziro's.

The wonderful photos of Santa and children, on the front page of our December issue, were taken by local photographer **Paul Tedrick**.

Check out his website at:
www.paultedrick.com

SHAWNIGAN FOCUS
 January 2012

EDITORIAL TEAM
 Lori Treloar
 Dave Hutchinson
editor@shawniganfocus.ca

ADVERTISING TEAM
 Farrell Magnusson
 Al Brunet
 Robyn Greentree
ads@shawniganfocus.ca

LAYOUT
 Al Brunet

FOCUS TEAM
 Linda Nelson
 Farrell Magnusson
 Monica Foster
 Sally Davies
 Peter Nash
 Bev McCooley

ACCOUNTS
 Dewar McCarthy

EDITORIAL CARTOON
 Kurt Hafso

PHOTOS
 Credit given under photo

DISTRIBUTION CO-ORDINATOR
 (We need you)
EVENTS & CLASSIFIEDS
 (We need you)

CURRENT CIRCULATION:
 3500

SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND HOW TO SEND COPY
 February 2012 Issue:
 February 6th

Please send copy as an email attachment using Microsoft Word, text, RTF or Appleworks to:

editor@shawniganfocus.ca
 Typewritten or handwritten copy is acceptable if you have no access to a computer. Please do not send PDF as it does not convert properly. Leave hard copies of articles not sent via email in the Focus box at The Chipperry – 1- 2740 Dundas, Shawnigan Lake

AD DEADLINE
 The 10th of every month for mid-month publication.

CLASSIFIEDS
editor@shawniganfocus.ca

ABOUT THE FOCUS

The Shawnigan Focus is an independent, local, non-profit publication, produced by the volunteer Focus team. The opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors, not the paper. Shawnigan Focus endeavours to inform; promote harmony and involvement in the community; and interest a broad cross-section of the residents of Shawnigan Lake

Shawnigan Focus is delivered, free of charge, to postal addresses in Shawnigan Lake (Area B). Out-of-town subscriptions are available. Please contact editor@shawniganfocus.ca for details.

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

MAILING ADDRESS
 Shawnigan Focus
 Box 331
 Shawnigan Lake, V0R 2W0

You can now FOLLOW US on
 TWITTER and FACEBOOK
www.shawniganfocus.ca

CUTHBERT CONSTRUCTION

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Shawnigan Lake 743-9000

Art House
1st Birthday
Celebration

+ MoonDancer Appreciation Day

'wonder where the music is coming from?

FIND OUT ... celebrate the thriving & growing art space in Shawnigan Lake.

Saturday, January 21, 2012 2-4 PM

1756 Wilmot Avenue
 Shawnigan Lake Village
 250-743-5846

www.MoonDanceArts.ca
 Creativity. Community. Celebration.

PAINTING BY HART

Certified • Custom Residential • Commercial

Family owned & operated since 1948

Call us today for your free estimate

Painting

Colour Consultation

Wall Coverings

Specialty Finishes

Handyman Services

Call: 250-733-2220

www.PaintingByHart.com

PROFESSIONAL • EXPERIENCED • RELIABLE

Renovations

by... KURT HAFSO
 DESIGN • IN/OUTDOOR MURALS • HOME RENO

- Rubbish Removal
- Storage Shelving
- General Repair

- Tree Trimming
- Painting
- Fencing

Call... 250-889-8059

E-mail kurthafso@shaw.ca



You've got a terrific idea for a story or news article, but you don't have the time or energy to write it.
You can be a **"Ghost Thinker!"**

Or, you would like to write, but have a modicum of skills and your circumstances don't allow you to go out and find the stories. You can become a **"Ghost Writer"!**

This is where two things should happen.
First, if you have a statement to make or a story to tell, let us know. We can help make it happen.
Second, if you would like to write from home and would like the opportunity to collaborate on a project . . . again, send us an email.
We can make that happen also.

The Focus is all about our community.
We are all volunteers attempting to keep Shawnigan informed. The more participation we get, the more reporters we have, the greater the range of opinions and types of stories we can cover.

Ah . . . I see that you have questions . . .

Contact: editor@shawniganfocus.ca

NOTICE

Annual General Meeting for Shawnigan Cemetery

**Tuesday
January 24, 2012**

at Sylvan United Church
985 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road
(Beside Frances Kelsey High School),
Mill Bay.

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

Like new
Hytec acrylic soaker tub
(no jets) with faucets.
Will deliver in area.
Asking \$300.
250-710-0931

FOR SALE:
4 Duron snow tires.
215/60 R16 99+x1.
Used three months.

3rd Fire Hall from page 9

Process:

- Voter assent at Shawnigan Improvement District Annual General Meeting for the Trustees to formally start the process.
- Enter into a formal agreement with landowner to purchase the 2.5 – 3 acres of land for fair market value

- Apply for P1 rezoning of the land
- Apply for a subdivision of land
- Voter assent – Alternate Approval Process?
- Fire hall building plans and start of construction
- Order apparatus
- Target finish and occupancy date summer - 2013

Beach . . . from page 3

change is by encouraging desired change. In Shawnigan Lake we would benefit from focused growth in or near the current village centre. Unfortunately, IT diffuses growth with a growth boundary, called the Village Containment Boundary, that includes over a third of all the residential properties in the watershed. Even within the village core, the area designated for commercial development is too large for focused growth. Can lot-by-lot rezoning from residential to commercial produce the village core we want?

Then there are IT's growth assumptions. Do the residents of Shawnigan Lake really want the population to grow by 50% in the next 15 years? The watershed can handle the current population. Can it handle 50% more people without surrendering water quality?

One big change – in 1986 we had the Shawnigan Lake OCP. In 2011 we have the

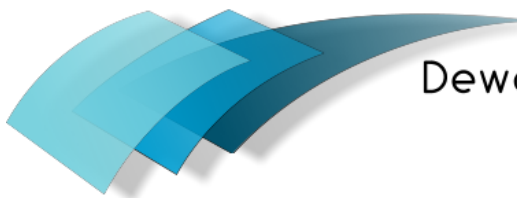
South Cowichan OCP. Now, control over development in the watershed is shared with the residents of Cobble Hill and Mill Bay. Can this be an improvement?

Other problems with IT - the down-zoning of islands added in the last revision, the rule preventing groups of residences from joining to build a small sewage system, the fact that IT is unreadable, and many others, are too numerous for one article.

But, the South Cowichan OCP is the past. I would rather look forward. I would rather join with a large group of my fellow Shawnigan Lake residents and explore another future. A future in which Shawnigan Lake is a municipality on its own. A future in which the Shawnigan Lake OCP is written by the residents themselves; a community project.

Brent Beach [A longer version of this article, along with past articles, can be found at brentatthefocus.blogspot.com.]

SLBA Member Profile



Dewar McCarthy & Company
Professional Accountants



Shawnigan Village in April 2011.

We are full service Professional Accountants offering the following services:

- Bookkeeping,
- Personal taxation,
- Corporate taxation,
- Notice to reader accounting engagements,
- Review accounting engagements,
- Incorporations,
- HST/GST remittances
- Payroll setup and remittance,
- Business plans and consulting services.

We use the latest bookkeeping, tax and working paper preparation software and are Certified Quick books Pro-Advisor's and Simply Accounting Premier Advisor's. We also specialize in receipt scanning guaranteeing accurate and fast recording of expenses.

Dewar McCarthy and Company offers an initial free 30 minute consultation and there are no obligations. It's an opportunity for you to meet us and ask questions. Each client is unique and we want you to be comfortable that we are able to provide you with:

- The type of accounting and tax services that are appropriate for you and your business,
- The knowledge and experience that you and your business requires to take it to the next level,
- The right personality fit between you, your business, your staff and us.

We are committed to establishing quality relationships that are based on a no-nonsense, practical and informed approach.

Call us on (250) 483-4739 or drop in to the "Old Bakery" red building opposite the RCMP in the village.

Brought to you by members of the Shawnigan Lake Business Assoc.



SHAWNIGAN JEN'S

**Sushi & Teriyaki
*Take Out***

Best Sushi in Shawnigan Village!

250-743-1669



Style Centre

Barber Shop

Experienced Barbers

1769 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd., Ph: 250-743-7033
Shawnigan Lake, BC



**FOCUS ON THIS
10 coffees for \$10**

Bring your own mug between 6-8am

Moziro Coffee Roasters and Chocolatiers
In Shawnigan Village



Health - Fitness - Strength - Peace of Mind

**Daily Yoga, AcroYoga
Open All Summer**
All Levels - Drop-in welcome!

KALI YOGA
Nicola Cusi Yoga Centre

nicolacusi@yahoo.ca
250 466 0006
www.kaliyoga.ca

Wise Financial Services Inc.



Gay Wise

Phone: 743-5999 • Fax: 743-5788
PO Box 157, 1757 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd.,
Shawnigan Lake, BC V0R 2W0
gaywise@shawbiz.ca

Monthly accounting, payroll, personal & corporate taxes and more



Duncan
(250) 701-7305
Victoria
(250) 888-4834

- Mini Bin Rental - 12 and 15 yard
- Dump Box Service
- Top soil, sand, gravel, bark mulch delivery
- Flat Deck Service
- Small Equipment Hauling
- Fifth Wheel Hauling
- Snow Plowing



*Shawnigan Lake
Acupuncture*

Sara Tillie, R. Ac
250-743-7767



- BREAKFAST ANYONE -

SATURDAY AND SUNDAYS 9-11AM
SERVING LOCAL FARM FRESH EGGS COOKED TO PERFECTION!
2740 Dundas Rd. 250-929-8886

Explore...

Shawniganlakeonline.com

... and find business embracing community!