



# Shawnigan Focus

Volume Two - Issue Eleven

NOVEMBER 2012

*A Non-Profit Community Publication*

## A CANADIAN TANK BATTLE

**Elijah Fraser**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

The sappers of the Royal Canadian Engineers, onboard LCT 163, donned earphones as the tank crews of “Bob”, “Bert”, and “Bill” began warming up their massive engines. The three MK III Churchill tanks in the hold of the landing craft comprised 6 Troop, B Squadron. That morning, the 19th August 1942, Operation Jubilee on the beaches of Dieppe would be the Canadian Army’s first major European battle of WWII. The Calgary Tank Regiment would become the first Canadian Tank Regiment to engage in combat and it would mark the first time the Churchill Tank saw action.

As the beach came into view at 0530 hrs, the sun had already begun to rise and the smoke screen cleared. Towering cliffs flanked the beach along which ran a seawall to the partially demolished Casino that jutted out. The buildings that fronted the promenade above the seawall formed a fortress. The German artillery, anti-tank batteries, mortars, and machine gun nests directed their fury on the beach and incoming landing craft.

As LCT 163 made her approach, a shell found its mark and the engine room burst into flames. Overcome by the smoke, the helmsman collapsed and the ship veered to port. Two more helmsmen would be killed before, on its fourth attempt using another sunken LCT for cover, she landed her tanks. Once on the beach Bert’s gunner, Trooper Stewart, realized his turret was not traversing. The experimental waterproofing had not been adequately blown by the cordite charges. Co-driver Trooper Dunsmore ventured out into the hail of bullets to cut away the waterproofing with a machete.

Of the twenty nine tanks



*My Grandfather, Trooper Felix Noel’s, tank “Bert”, would earn the dubious distinction as one of the most photographed tanks of the Second World War. Pictures were used in both German and Allied propaganda and appeared in Life magazine.*

that attempted to land, only sixteen made it off the beach. Undeterred by the chert rocks that bellied down and broke the tracks of other tanks, 6 Troop proceeded down the beach to where the seawall was at its lowest point, near the Casino, and roared onto the promenade.

Using their Bessa machine guns and six pound guns the tanks destroyed gun emplacements in and around the Casino, on the promenade, and the buildings and cliffs above. Seven foot tall concrete road blocks prevented the tanks from advancing further into the town. Very few of the sappers who were to destroy the bar-

riers with their 60lb packs of explosives had survived the first few minutes, let alone made it across the beach, barbed wire, and promenade. With no high explosive ammunition, the tanks’ armour-piercing rounds ricocheted off the concrete.

Tank crews would later describe the concentrated fire of the anti-tank batteries and Stuka dive bombers that caused the walls of the tanks to glow red from the shells, stressing the armour, the stifling heat and smell of melting paint. As Bert manoeuvred to avoid an anti-tank ditch, a direct hit blew the left track off. From

their position, they continued to provide covering fire for twenty Royal Hamilton Light Infantry who crossed from the Casino into the town. Bill moved alongside Bert and after some difficulty removing the waterproofing from the tanks side hatch, three members of Bert’s crew crammed into Bill. Bob then moved alongside to receive the remaining two.

At 1100 hrs the tanks were recalled to the beach to lay smoke screens and provide covering fire for the soldiers attempting to board the few returning landing craft. As the Germans mercilessly

rained down fire on the soldiers, there was little the tank crews could do. Those that ventured out of the tanks to aid their comrades quickly became casualties themselves and there was little cover to be found.

Of the 6,000 who deployed, only 2,078 would return to England that day, 850 of whom never landed. In a just a few short hours, 3,367 Canadians were killed, wounded, or captured in what would be Canada’s worst defeat. Those that survived, including the majority of the tank crews, would spend the remaining years of the war as prisoners.

## WHERE DO YOU WANT TO SPEND YOUR MONEY?

CVRD is proposing major changes to garbage handling in the Cowichan Valley that will result in increased taxes. This proposal will be passed, through the Alternate Approval Process (AAP), unless 10% of the voting population completes a form and returns it to the CVRD prior to November 24th. It is your choice. However, the Focus wants to make sure that all Shawnigan residents are, at the very least, aware of this proposal. Every eligible voter, not just one voter per household, is entitled to fill in a form. Read more on this proposal on page 3 and page 4



# Tar sands, China and Shawnigan Lake

**Brent Beach**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

What do these three things have in common? The Canada China Investment Treaty (CCIT).

Island Timberlands, which owns much of the private forest lands in the Shawnigan watershed (and along the entire E&N rail corridor) is now owned by a group of institutional investors, including the BC pension plans.

One of the partners in the original deal sold its share to the China Investment Corporation (CIC). CIC invests surplus money for the government of China. Companies investing on behalf of a country are called a sovereign wealth funds.

CIC is not subject to Canadian law, or provincial law, or even regional law. Any decision made by any level of government that affects the profitability of CIC investments is covered

by the CCIT. CIC can challenge those government decisions. The challenge is ultimately resolved through an arbitration process.

From a CBC report on Oct 27, 2012: "this very powerful arbitration process operates outside of the Canadian legal system and Canadian courts. Arbitration would happen behind closed doors, ... and if the arbitrators found Canada at fault, Canadian taxpayers could be left footing the bill. Several countries have already faced stiff punishment under such treaties."

So, if you think the CCIT does not matter to you because it only affects foreign companies operating in the Alberta Tar Sands, think again. The same treaty now governs the operations in private forest land in our watershed.

### Shawnigan Moments



Photo by Barb Fedun

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**NOVEMBER 2012**

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Please send copy as an email attachment using Microsoft Word, text, RTF or Appleworks to: editor@shawniganfocus.ca  
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#### ABOUT THE FOCUS

The Shawnigan Focus is an independent, local, non-profit publication, produced by the volunteer Focus team. 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. editor@shawniganfocus.ca

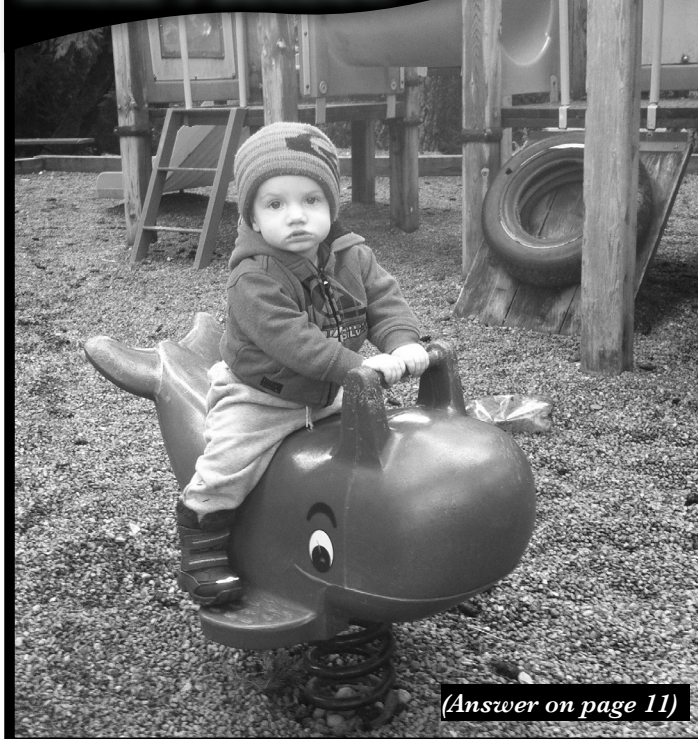
*Views expressed in articles are not the opinions of The Shawnigan Focus, but of the authors.*

Additional copies are available in The Village.

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### WHERE'S DECLAN?



(Answer on page 11)



## 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 should attack issues - not individuals. Send letters to [editor@shawniganfocus.ca](mailto:editor@shawniganfocus.ca)

### TIME SENSITIVE GARBAGE AAP

Dear Editor:

Currently the Cowichan Valley Regional District collects more than \$1.1 million in fees it demands from all households to pay for garbage collection and recycling services in most non-municipal parts of the Cowichan Valley (except in South Cowichan which only has CVRD controlled recycling). The CVRD tenders the work out to private businesses and has done so for at least 15 years in most areas. It then takes 1/3 of the fees collected for itself.

The CVRD board has decided to cancel these private contracts effective May 31, 2013 and will do the work with new employees and new CVRD trucks starting next year- unless action is taken to stop this.

The CVRD will spend more than \$20 million of fees over the next 15 years and borrow \$1.8 million to purchase 3 large garbage trucks and 17,500 large wheeled garbage and recycling cans that everyone must use. The new trucks have video cameras to film each tote as it is dumped into the truck so the CVRD can inspect your garbage and recycling.

To borrow money to buy the trucks and garbage cans normally requires a public vote. However, the CVRD feared their plans would fail to get a YES vote from taxpayers. They "chickened out" knowing the public would probably vote against it because nobody believes they will do it cheaper than private businesses. So they are using the obscure Alternative Approval Process (AAP).

This is the "negative billing option" scheme that is not legal in most other areas of Canadian business or society. In fact, cable companies and others are banned from using it. But the CVRD uses this sneaky tactic regularly to increase spending and hire more employees without taxpayer approval. They now spend more than \$70 million each year and have 220 people on their payroll with generous benefits and lifetime pensions.

This has nothing to do with garbage collection and recycling and everything to do with more bureaucracy, higher fees

and elimination of private sector jobs.

On October 17, the CVRD served notice to the 25,503 electors in the Valley that the CVRD's garbage plans will proceed unless at least 10% or 2,550 electors submit a form objecting to the AAP process by Nov. 25. The forms are on the CVRD website and must be downloaded and taken to their offices. Let's force a vote on this huge CVRD spending proposal.

*W.E. (Bill) Dumont*  
[www.stopcvrdbgabage.com](http://www.stopcvrdbgabage.com)

**"The Focus is not a bundle of advertising wrapped in a sheet or two of local news"**

Dear Editors:

Having become a loyal Focus reader, I want you to know that I'm increasingly happy with the paper's layout and content. Unlike some other local newspapers the Focus is well structured. It contains not only a healthy amount of timely local news but also a range of interesting, informative, and well-written articles. While the Focus contains advertising mainly from local advertisers, which I note and whenever possible support, the Focus is not a bundle of advertising wrapped in a sheet or two of local news. All up, the Focus is a Good Read! Thanks for your hard and inspired work. Please keep it up.

*Joseph Gollner*

**You are lucky...just so you know!**

Once upon a time, I lived at the lake every summer. Our adventures began with Mom and Dad packing up the car and making the drive over the Malahat - I always counted how many turns it took. I think this was my mothers' least favourite drive of the year as our cat, Tiger, threw up along the way, and often! Shawnigan Lake was a magical place though. Just the smells and sounds made it amazing. Time was filled with family and friends, paddling to the ski-jump to slide down, kneeboarding and screaming with joy, walking along the tracks picking and sampling blackberries, watching our dogs chase the train as it went by, spending endless hours in the water and sitting on the dock watching

the sun set. I have to admit I never did watch it rise in those years...except that one time we went fishing in the wee hours! This was our summer place! Full of adventure, memories and laughter! I am fortunate that my parents now call our 'summer place' home and have transformed it into their 'everyday place.' I hope they realize how beautiful it is. I know they remember when they come back from vacation how lovely being at the lake is, but I'm not sure if they do every day? I know I didn't realize it in a 'here and now' way while I was living there.

Alas, I am a 'grownup' now and, with that, reality strikes. I moved to Calgary to finish school and found a job that I enjoy and get well compensated for but Calgary doesn't even touch how wonderful Shawnigan Lake is. I have a picture of the view of the lake from my parents place on my bulletin board in my office. People comment on how beautiful it is ... and they are right. I have a screen saver of the sun setting behind the mountains and it reminds me of sitting on our deck with a glass of wine or tea with my family.

I can now appreciate the winter beauty of the lake as well. It is serene. I also appreciate the community of Shawnigan Lake now. Last year, I attended the Christmas light up, the opening of the EJ Hughes Gallery, at the museum, and walked over the Kinsol Trestle!

One day, I will move home - to live near the lake if I have my dream! In the meantime, whenever I visit I gain some beauty for my soul, some fresh air for my body and more memories in my heart. I hope you all realize how lucky you are to live in one of the most beautiful places in the world and take comfort in knowing you are spending your days in this sanctuary and appreciate it! I am sure you all have summer memories similar to mine. I now see the Shawnigan summer through my nieces and nephew who paddle in the lake and have their own summer adventures. I am not sure if our family will always own a home on the lake and that is okay. We will, however, always own a piece of it in our hearts.

*Emily Nash*

*Congratulations!!*

Shawnigan resident, Marian Davies, was recently given the Rural Woman of the Year award by the South Vancouver Island District Women's Institute.

Marian, who has volunteered for countless Shawnigan groups over the years was completely taken by surprise.



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**Music gives a soul to the Universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.**  
~Plato



# Incorporation: A complex question

**Bruce Fraser**  
*Area Director*

*The Shawnigan Times recently printed a series of articles by Rick Restell on the topic of incorporation. On his web-site, [www.fraserforshawnigan.ca](http://www.fraserforshawnigan.ca), our Area Director added to the discussion with the following essay which was also published in the Times. Because this is an important topic we are repeating it in this Focus issue. If you haven't already seen Rick's articles they can be found at <http://shawnigantimes.shawwebpace.ca>.*

In recent editions of the Shawnigan Times, Rick Restell has contributed to our community's conversation on the merits and pitfalls of incorporation. He is to be congratulated for taking on this most complex of subjects, because there is much to consider. This posting is intended as a contribution to the conversation.

Shawnigan, with a population of 8100 and growing, is the largest unincorporated social jurisdiction in British Columbia. It is an electoral area within the Cowichan

Valley Regional District, represented by a single elected official. Many decisions affecting the area are made collectively by the 15 Directors of the Regional District Board, fourteen of whom are non-resident. Provision of basic infrastructure and services is divided between the Regional District and the Province. Water is provided individually by wells or drawn from the lake, by the Regional District through a variety of area-specific water districts and by private water purveyors. Sewage treatment is provided primarily through individual septic systems governed by the Vancouver Island Health Authority, with community level systems limited to a few subdivisions, mainly run by the Regional District. Roads are built and maintained by the Province. Police and ambulance services are provided directly by the province while fire services are provided by separately governed Improvement Districts. Health Services are provided by the Province and the Regional District and by private clinics.

The Province governs subdivision developments while the Regional District administers official community plans, zoning regulations and building by-laws, parks and recreation services and economic development. Industrial activity in the watershed is governed directly by provincial ministries with limited influence from the Regional District. Regional Districts do not have a business licensing function and have limited ability to level development cost charges to support local infrastructure.

The Province, the Regional District and the Improvement District have separate taxing authority to support their responsibilities. As an electoral area, Shawnigan is governed by numerous political and agency authorities in a complex web of relationships that are challenging to integrate in practice. Informal community organization is spread among resident, business, education, and arts & cultural groups that form the civic base for future governance. Both the Malahat

First Nation and the Cowichan Tribes have interests in Shawnigan and will be partners in whatever form of governance emerges.

The main advantages of being incorporated as a municipality include more extensive political representation, greater local control over the scope, cost and integration of public infrastructure and services, and increased opportunity to shape the social, environmental and economic future of the community. Local control also comes at greater local cost. Two main drivers of increased cost are roads and policing, both of which become a municipal responsibility upon incorporation.

Other costs are more difficult to determine, such as governance, water and sewer, infrastructure maintenance, and bylaw enforcement. An incorporated Shawnigan would still be part of the CVRD, like Duncan, North Cowichan, Lake Cowichan and Ladysmith and would be expected to continue to share

in the cost of the hospital, along with regional transit, parks and recreation facilities.

The political cost and infrastructure control implications will vary substantially among incorporation options. Shawnigan, Mill Bay and Cobble Hill could seek to become a single municipality or in any combination. Standing alone or combining with other communities is a question of cost sharing, political representation in decision-making, boundary definition, service areas assumed from the Regional District and social cohesion. It will be very difficult to address these issues without the thorough assessment that is normally provided by the province, one that they are currently reluctant to provide. The three southern Area Directors have told the Province that they should provide the proper studies to enable our constituents to make an informed choice. Only one thing is for certain - the issue is extremely complex.

## Curbside recycling in Shawnigan Lake

**Brent Beach**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

The CVRD has big plans for recycling. Having been soundly rebuffed by voters over the previous big plan - the Eco Depot - the CVRD has decided that depots are bad. It has decided that curbside recycling is good. You have to wonder why they were so keen on a central depot then, but not now. Wonder what changed their mind?

However, for this to be a good idea for Shawnigan Lake we would first have to have curbs! You would think that no one in the CVRD ever leaves Duncan. If they drove around Area B for even a few minutes they would see that many of us don't have curbs.

Now, you might not think that would not be a serious problem. Take a look at the video the CVRD is using to sell this new recycling dream. You can get the link at my blog, or hunt around the CVRD site.

In the video the happy homeowners are shown in their driveway - their short, cement driveway. Now, think about your driveway. Short? Cement? A driveway you can push your rather large recy-

cling bin up and down?

No problem, you say - you will just use your current small bin or bags. Wrong. You have to use the large bin the CVRD provides.

### The Cost

I Googled around and found costs for recycling in the province. It turned out that the community in the video, Central Okanagan, had the highest cost of any of the listed municipalities.

That does not mean that the CVRD program will be more expensive than other options. It does mean though that the CVRD should present the business case for its option. The CVRD material contains only an explanation of the cost of the vehicles they will buy. It does not include any indication of operating costs.

It does however contain an indication of the user fees. Even though they have no business case, they do somehow know how much they will charge us for the service. Like magic, it happens to be \$1 less than we are currently being charged. Amazing! Notice, they do not predict the fees in the second year of service, or any year thereafter.

### The Process

The CVRD is using the Alternative Approval Process (AAP). This process was used for the Shawnigan Creek Cleanout as well. AAP assumes you agree with the proposal unless you take the time to send in a form expressing your disapproval. Sort of like your cable company adding charges unless you read the fine print and say you don't want the additional charges. Except that it is against the law for cable companies to do this in Canada. But the CVRD can. And does.


### Curbing the CVRD

If you want to slow this process down, or you cannot imagine pushing a large bin up and down your driveway, or are just feeling grumpy about the AAP this morning, then get a copy of the "Elector Response Form Bylaw No. 3607" and send it in to the CVRD today. Don't finish reading the Focus. Do it right now. The paper will still be here when you get back from sending in the form.

Oh, and for those few who don't save your copy of the Focus in a scrapbook, or use it to light your wood fire, make sure you recycle it.

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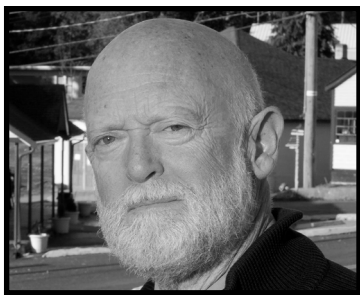
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## Director's Report: November 2012



**Bruce Fraser**  
*Area Director*

### The Shawnigan Watershed

On the December 3<sup>rd</sup> Director's meeting at 7pm at the

Shawnigan Lake Community Centre we will have an opportunity to discuss the latest initiatives in taking charge of our watershed. The Shawnigan Resident's Association will have held their AGM on November 29<sup>th</sup> focusing on the state of the SIA application, the CVRD will have intervened to prevent the Esquimalt Dredging material from entering the valley and our internal organization will have taken a few steps forward. The Shawnigan Watershed

Roundtable has established a formal registered society: **The Shawnigan Basin Society** to act as the formal fund-raising arm of the Roundtable. What we have discovered is that in order to attract outside supporting funds, that we needed a legally accountable society to solicit, receive and account for financial support. The sole purpose of the Society is to provide financial support to the Roundtable so that it can foster continuing research, mapping of the

basin features, water body monitoring, public education and restoration where that is needed.

Join us on December 3<sup>rd</sup> to meet the Directors of the Society and help us give it the community support that is needed to attract the attention of funding agencies.

### Remembering Veterans

As I write this I am just thawing out from a morning at the Centotaph in Cobble

Hill where a great number of us continued to honour the fallen and the survivors of intolerable human conflict. My grandfather is buried in a war grave in Heudicourt in France and my father is buried in war grave in Killead in Northern Ireland. There is no substitute for their presence in my mother's life or mine and at the going down of the sun, I remember them, but that is at every going down, not just on November the 11<sup>th</sup>.

## Shawnigan Lake Parks & Recreation Commission



**Margaret Symon**  
*Chair of Parks Commission*

Thanks to the "focus" on parks and trails in the Shawnigan Focus, the Shawnigan Lake Parks and Recreation Commission is pleased acknowledge that, more and more, our local parks and trails are connecting people and places. The Shawnigan Lake community has a variety of parks varying in type, size, and amenity. The Parks and Recreation Commission regularly receives questions about the different types of parks in our area. What is the community parks function? What's the difference between community parks and "Community Parks"?

The Community Parks and Trails Master Plan for Shawnigan Lake sets direction

and priorities for the immediate and long-term future for community parks and public trail corridors in and around Shawnigan Lake. The Master Plan identified eight park types for the community parks system in Shawnigan Lake: Community Park, Neighbourhood Park (i.e., Galland Road Park), Nature Park (i.e., Old Mill Park), Community Forest (i.e., Stebbings Road Community Forest), River Corridor Park (i.e., Kelvin Creek Park), Special Purpose Park (i.e., Shawnigan Hills Athletic Park), Linear Park (i.e., Bob O' Link Trail), and Lakefront Park (Shawnigan Wharf Park).

Within the Cowichan Valley Regional District, the community parks function is administered by the Regional District. However, community parks and trails are funded individually by each Electoral Area. In Area B, this means that community parks and trails at Shawnigan should directly benefit the people who live in the Shawnigan Lake community. The Shawnigan Lake Parks and Recreation Commission, which includes residents of Shawnigan Lake appointed to the Commission by the CVRD Board,

makes recommendations to the CVRD Board on park policy, various parks projects, and volunteer coordination in community parks.

While Provincial Parks (i.e., Koksilah River Provincial Park), Regional Parks (i.e., TransCanada Trail), and Regional Recreation Areas (i.e., Cobble Hill Mountain) make up a portion of Shawnigan Lake's larger recreation fabric, they are not part of the community parks function.

Community parks and trails provide many benefits, including community health and wellbeing. These parks and trails can be a focal point for a community; they are places for the community to come together in a friendly, interactive setting.

While a variety of parks in our area are considered community parks, there are actually no "Community Parks" in Area B. "Community Parks" are generally fairly large (over 10 ha), and are intended to provide passive and/or active recreation for the entire community. An example of a Community Park within the CVRD is Transfer Beach Park at Ladysmith.

### PARK VANDALISM

On October 31st, vandals damaged the driveway gate at Shawnigan Hills Park.

The gate is beyond repair and will be replaced at a significant cost to taxpayers.

Vandalism is a regular problem in our parks. Please contact the CVRD if you witness any vandalism.

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# Shawnigan Residents Association to sponsor public meeting

**Graham Ross-Smith**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

Please make a note on your calendars for the evening of THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29th. On that date the SHAWNIGAN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (SRA) is sponsoring an important public meeting starting at 7:00 PM in the Hugh Wilkinson Theatre at SHAWNIGAN LAKE SCHOOL. The topic to be presented and discussed is the application to the province by SOUTH ISLAND AGGREGATES for a permit to treat and store contaminated soil at its quarry in the Shawnigan Lake reservoir's water-

shed over a 50 year period.

All residents of the Shawnigan community are invited to attend. Admission is free.

In addition to the information provided to the community to date on this matter by South Island Aggregates, the findings of three more recent reports will be presented and discussed. They are:

1. A report to the SRA by Lowen Hydrogeology Consulting Ltd.
2. Bedrock Geology of the South Island Aggregates Stebbings Road Quarry by Kirk Hancock of the

provincial Ministry of Energy, Mines and Natural Resources

3. South Island Aggregates, Stebbings Rd. – Review of Application for an Authorization to Discharge Waste written by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations

A panel of persons with expertise and an interest in this application will be present to provide information and to answer questions. The overall goal of this public meeting is to provide to the community with as much relevant information about this matter as possible, prior

to the date at which the Province will decide to grant or deny the SIA application.

Starting at 7:00 pm a short annual general meeting of the SRA will take place prior to the meeting about the SIA application. All are welcome to both meetings. Information will be provided about the SRA's activities over the past year and plans for the future. For those wishing to support the work of the SRA, new memberships will be welcomed (\$10 per year) as will donations to help cover the cost of the Lowen report and related expenses.



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## Environmental Science class visits the Shawnigan Watershed

**Cohen Isberg**  
*Shawnigan School*

The Shawnigan Environmental Science 11 class often has the opportunity to visit and support local environmental initiatives in the Shawnigan area. This past month, they had the opportunity to tour the Shawnigan and Koksilah watershed, a tour organized by the Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable and hosted by three different forest management entities in the area: Island Timberlands, TimberWest and R&K Woodlot operators. Grade 11 student Cohen Isberg recounts the day's events in his own words:

First, the class visited a site that had been clear cut and harvested in 2009 and then replanted a couple years ago. We mainly looked at the bottom half of the of the site also known as the "Water receiving site." This was because the water receiving site vegetation had more access to water. With all the replanting, it is important to keep an eye out so that the scotch broom, an invasive species, does not take over or compete with the native vegetation. Next, we went to a site that was 18,000 hectares, one of the largest sectors, and looked


at a creek that fed Shawnigan Lake. The creek we looked at was not as full as it should have been and fish will have a hard time unless there is a significant influx of water.

On September 22, a fire started in the forest outside of Shawnigan Lake, and this area was our next stop. The fire had spread quickly and had not been easy to put out. Most of the land was scorched and a red anti-fire solution was sprayed on the surrounding areas. The end cost, not including the total incurred by the forestry company who owned the land, was approximately \$650,000.

Our last stop was at a private property that had been clear-cut in certain areas. All the areas that had been logged have since been replanted. It was last logged in 2007 and the owner worked with different Native groups in order to harvest respectfully, letting them strip the bark of trees in order to do weaving. Most of the wood, left on the ground, is starting to shed and turn brown which will put many nutrients back in the soil.



*Shawnigan Environmental Science students*




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# Shawnigan Lake Fire Department Marks Movember!

Scott McMillan  
SLFD

During the month of November you will see a tremendous increase in moustaches of all shapes and sizes. Some may be of the traditional style, others more elaborate, and some will be hard to recognize if not for the constant touching of one's upper lip. Over the past few years the month of November has morphed into Movember. During Movember, vital funds and awareness are raised for men's health, specifi-

cally prostate cancer and men's mental health. The funds raised go towards programs that are directly run by the organization called Movember and to their partner in health, Prostate Cancer Canada.

This campaign originated in Melbourne Australia but has since become a global movement inspiring both men and women to be active participants or supporters. In 2011, over 854,000 men and women came together and were able to raise an astounding \$125.7

million! The underlying message which is the foundation of the campaign, is to continually strive to change the attitude men have towards their health and to educate them on the risks they face. In doing so, they increase the chances of early detection, diagnosis, and effective treatment of health issues.

This year the Shawnigan Lake Fire Department has put together a Movember team to do our part within our community both locally and

globally. To learn more, go to <http://ca.movember.com>. To make a donation to SLFD just enter Shawnigan Lake Fire Department in the team search.

The vision of Movember is to have an everlasting impact on the face of men's health, and the moustache is a symbol to spark conversation and raise awareness. Whether you grow a moustache, donate to a moustache, or count down the days until the moustache is gone, take part in Movember.

## RCMP Report

Sergeant R.E. (Rob) Webb  
Detachment Commander

Shawnigan Lake RCMP continue to receive complaints from the community regarding the amount of vehicles speeding within our area. We have recently outfitted an unmarked unassuming Chevrolet Impala with a new radar set and emergency lights. The car will still have an administrative use at times. However, it gives us another avenue to address this ongoing concern. Areas that continue to be a problem include the Malahat with aggressive driving; Mill Bay Road, Cobble Hill Road, and both East and West Shawnigan Lake Roads are also noted for increased speeds and distracted driving.

By introducing this car through the media, we are hopeful this will bring awareness to this problem and drive home the importance of slow-

ing down. The majority of speeders we catch through enforcement and the tracking by our volunteer Speed Watch Program show that this is a local issue in that many of us in the community are the guilty party so to speak.

Shawnigan RCMP want to keep visibility high with our marked police units, and will utilize this car more for special events, targeted areas of enforcement, and traffic campaigns throughout the year. Please slow down and ensure your vehicles are maintained for the road and road conditions. Driving infractions within South Cowichan continue to be our number one complaint, including speeding, cell phone use while driving, and generally not paying enough attention to the road.

I am led to believe this is a first for this detachment.

## Community Opportunities

### WELL OWNERS WORKSHOP - FREE

The Environmental Policy Division of the Cowichan Valley Regional District will present a free Well Owners Workshop. Topics include: water supply, troubleshooting common well problems, proper well maintenance and protecting water quality; including information about well disinfection, septic maintenance and manure management.

Monday November 19th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at Kerry Park Recreation Centre.

For more info: contact Emily Doyle-Yamaguchi - Ph: 250.746.2641 Email: edy@cvrld.bc.ca

### LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Mill Bay Marine Rescue Society is looking for volunteers to train and crew on our 26' vessel to respond to emergencies on the water . No exp required.

Contact karen bigelow by email at: bigelow@marinerescue.Org

## SHAWNIGAN LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT



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

Department members attended 14 calls in October

Department Officers attended 6 burning complaints in October

- Mon., Oct. 1 - Bush Fire off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road
- Tue., Oct. 2 - Possible Structure Fire off Carlton Road
- Sun., Oct. 7 - MVI on Renfrew Road
- Mon., Oct 8 - 1st Responder off Briarwood Road
- Mon., Oct 8 - Alarms Activated off Shawnigan Lake Road
- Tue., Oct. 16 - - 1st Responder off Northgate Road
- Wed., Oct. 17 - 1st Responder in the Beach Estat
- Wed., Oct. 17 - Chimney Fire in the Beach Estates
- Fri., Oct. 18 - Structure Fire in Burnum Park
- Fri., Oct 18 - 1st Responder in the Beach Estates
- Mon., Oct 22 - MVI on Renfrew Road
- Mon., Oct 22 -1st Responder in the Village
- Tue., Oct 23 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Road
- Sun., Oct 28 - 1st Responder off Sylvester Road

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# Viva 'BellaVita' Artisan Studios!

### Jennie Stevens

Enthusiasm and passion warmly greet you the moment you meet husband and wife artisans, Aurelia and Lorenzo BellaVita, and it is no surprise to see that they are indeed living up to their name in creating a life of beauty! While much of the world is experiencing a distressing disconnection with nature, we are fortunate to have these toymakers reminding us that toys made with care from natural materials will foster a deeper appreciation in children for our natural surroundings. Tucked away in their studio/home in the woods, the Shawnigan duo create objects of beauty, using 100% non-toxic local materials to craft their unique pieces. Simple and appealing, these toys are designed to spark the child's imagination and foster the type of creative play that comes from pleasingly tactile, open-ended materials.

Using local kiln dried alder, Lorenzo shapes, sands, and polishes his wooden toys, using beeswax to finish the pieces, leaving much of the bark intact. Train sets with

mix and match cars, logging trucks, quaint mushroom houses, blocks to create castles, all these toys are sturdily built for busy little hands. New ideas are constantly being generated as the BellaVita couple inspires each other in their shared adventure. Coming from a diverse background of skills, including traditional boat-building, Lorenzo has found his passion in working with wood and creating something that carries the warmth and spirit of the material it was crafted from.

Aurelia's passion for exploring texture and colour through fibre arts came at an early age. Her mother sewed clothing, toys, and many other treasures, while her grandmother, a professional teacher of needlework and Japanese embroidery, taught Aurelia the art of stitchery. Inspired to find her own creative path, Aurelia went on to study Fine Arts, natural plant dyes, weaving and spinning, and felting. Her beautiful wall hangings & charming felted dolls and animals are truly works of art, made from the lovely organic colours of soft plant dyed



*Aurelia at work*

wool, yarn and silk. They have a simple elegance, yet at the same time are intricate, with such attention to every detail. Each one has the spirit of many hours of creation imbued in the final product.

Aurelia uses her talents to teach her craft at the Sunrise Waldorf School in addition to offering classes at her studio in Shawnigan, when time permits. The busy parents of two are dedicated to bringing alive

their vision of encouraging imaginative play, creativity, and an appreciation for the beauty in natural playthings for children.

<http://www.bellavitaartisan.com/>



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## Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society

**Garth Harvey**  
*President, C.F.C.S.S.*

### Question Period:

What does one do with an eight year old idea? Ask questions like - has it been successful? Yes. Could it be better? Well, we'll look at it. Why did we do it? We chose a walk around Shawnigan Lake as the only public, annual, fund-raising event for the Cowichan Family Caregivers Support Society. What happens to these funds?

Since the walk started, eight years ago, the Society's operating annual budget has been \$100,000 plus and its project budget often equals or surpasses the operating budget. Most of these monies come from outside the Valley and all of it is spent in the Valley; seven or eight percent on administration and the rest directly on supporting caregivers. The last walk grossed about \$23,000 of which our take was about \$16,000. Do we need more

money? New referrals are stretching our budget. Looks like as a business and a non-profit we are an asset to the Valley.

Is it successful? Each year there are questionnaires for participants. The return is about 70% and overwhelmingly favourable. One person, out for his daily run, saw our signs, ran the course, then went home, got his registration money and came back and paid. We could use more like him. At our first walk there were 91 walkers. At the eighth walk there were double that number.

Could it be improved? We think so. The Shawnigan Lake Walk has morphed into the Shawnigan Lake Adventure. Next June you can choose to walk, run, float, ride, or find your way with your GPS. But, that is another story.

[www.familycaregiverssupport.org/](http://www.familycaregiverssupport.org/)

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### Reader Review:

*"Thanks for the Shawnigan Focus - being a former Shawnigan Lake girl, I sure appreciate it once a month." ~Pauline*



## The Wild Side - Counting Crows



**Dave Hutchinson**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

The waning light of a grey November day can provide a remarkable experience as crows prepare to roost for the night. In years past, the towering old growth forest on Worthington Point was an intermediate destination as countless squadrons arrived from the east. Fans of Alfred Hitchcock could be unnerved as thousands of these ominous black creatures noisily regrouped prior to a final flight towards the hills behind Camp Pringle.

- The collective name for a group of crows is called a “murder”. Two crows perched together might be considered “attempted murder” ☺

- Our Northwestern Crow (*Corvus Caurinus*) is slightly smaller, but otherwise very similar, to the American Crow.
- Crows reach sexual maturity around the age of 3 years for females, and 5 years for males. Some crows may live to the age of 20, and the oldest known American crow in the wild was almost 30 years old.
- Crows are monogamous birds. Mated pairs form large families of up to 15 individuals from several breeding seasons that remain together for many years.
- Crows are omnivorous, and their diet is very diverse. They will eat almost anything, including other birds, fruits, nuts, molluscs, earthworms, seeds, frogs, eggs, nestlings, mice and carrion.
- The term “scarecrow” is thought to have come from the 1719 novel Robinson Crusoe, by Daniel Defoe. In attempting to keep crows away from his corn, Crusoe remarks, “...I could never see a bird near the place as long as my scarecrows hung there.”
- Despite attempts to drive away or eliminate these birds, they remain widespread and very common. The number of individual American Crows is estimated by Birdlife International to be around 31,000,000.
- Crows are remarkably intelligent and can reason how to combine tools to achieve a goal. Researchers placed a snack in a hole too deep for the crows to reach. To get it, they needed to fish it out with a long stick which was also placed out of reach. A shorter stick was placed within reach. The creative thing the crows did was to use the short stick to get the longer one which they then used to retrieve the meat. Three of seven crows that were tested figured it out on the first try and all eventually learned within 25 tries.
- Counting Crows? They are one of only a handful of species to possess a sense of number. An 18th century anecdote tells of a nobleman who wanted to shoot a crow that had built its nest on his tower. Whenever the man approached, the bird flew out of range, waited for him to depart, and then returned to its nest. The man asked a neighbour for help. The two hunters entered

the tower together and later only one of them came out. The crow did not fall into this trap and carefully waited for the second man to come out before returning. Neither did three, then four, then five men fool the clever bird. Each time, the crow would wait until all the hunters had departed. Finally, the hunters came as a party of six. When five of them had left the tower, the bird, not so numerate after all, confidently came back, and was shot down by the sixth hunter.

- More on Counting Crows: Augury is the practice of divination from auspices or omens. For centuries, diviners have made predictions by counting the number of crows hanging about. Various rhymes help with remembering.

*One for sorrow, Two for joy  
Three for a girl, Four for a boy  
Five for silver, Six for gold  
Seven for a secret never to be told.*

This is the version used in the song “A Murder of One” by the Counting Crows, and undoubtedly where they got their name.

## Shawnigan Lake Museum

**Lori Treloar**  
*Shawnigan Museum*

### What’s in a name? Shawnigan

There is no definitive answer to the question, “What is the meaning of the name Shawnigan?” There are, however, a lot of suppositions and suggestions. When Brownie Gibson wrote the community history Green Branches and Fallen Leaves in 1966, she worked closely with the Provincial Archivist to determine the source and meaning of the name Shawnigan. Their conclusion was that the answer, from their research, was inconclusive.

Fact: the name, Shawnigan District, was used on an 1858 War office map of the area. This information firmly discounts one of the stories that the name was based on two early settlers, Shaw and Finnegan. Settlers did not “settle” at Shawnigan before the 1880s.

Folklore and research has repeatedly suggested similar meanings such as “abode of evil spirits”; “the lake that does not give up its dead”; “lake of many shadows”; “a shady gulch” or “something is happening that I don’t understand” - all suggesting sinister overtones.

There have been stories of an ancient and bloody battle between warring First Nations, in war canoes on the lake. This

is not corroborated by First Nations folklore and it seems highly unlikely, as there has never been any permanent First Nations settlement on or near the lake. There is, however, an ancient First Nations story that tells of two Sky-men of Cowichan tradition that embarked on a spirit-quest of the Cowichan Valley. When they visited Shawnigan Lake, one of the Sky-men encountered a large, fierce creature of a blue-green colour. This story certainly gives credence to the suggested meaning that “something is happening that I don’t understand”.

More evidence from the 20th century supports the meaning of “something is happening that I don’t understand” but also gives weight to an alternate meaning – “the lake that does not give up its dead”.

Fact: On at least two separate occasions, bodies that were lost in the lake did not surface.

On August 9, 1932, the Victoria Times reported a boat accident at Shawnigan Lake. W.I. Francis and Marjorie Gilliland were thrown from a boat, driven by Betty Francis, and both disappeared from sight. In an attempt to recover the bodies, dragging ensued. Dynamite was also used without success. Finally, a chain sweep of the area recovered the body of 19 year old Gilliland. Later, a diver

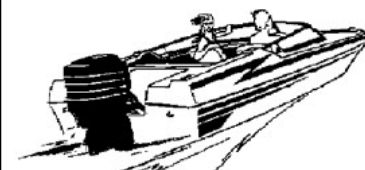
recovered the body of 21 year old Francis from about 110 feet.

On Christmas Eve, 1904, two mill workers were rowing across the lake in the dark. Their skiff upset and one went overboard. He disappeared. Pop Elford, owner/manager of the mill, and four others, searched for hours but to no avail. The body was never recovered – even with the use of dynamite.

Based on these recorded incidents, and others that I have heard, it is no wonder that there is an unusual connotation to the name Shawnigan. It is likely that other incidents of the same nature happened long ago leading people to believe that there is something about our lake that is inexplicable – whether it is some supernatural force or a physical property that explains why it does not release bodies. As for the name, it is most assuredly of First Nations origin, but the meaning will continue to be a mystery.

For more information about Shawnigan, the Kinsol Trestle and the area, visit the museum - open year-round (except January). Current hours are Friday, Saturday and Sunday 11:30 – 4. If you are looking for Shawnigan related Christmas presents or souvenirs, visit our gift shop or check out our website: [www.shawnigan-lakemuseum.com](http://www.shawnigan-lakemuseum.com)

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# 30 Years of Cuthbert Construction Ltd.



Ron Cuthbert and helper Mick

**Janet Neilson**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

Ron Cuthbert has been building things in Shawnigan for a long time. I met Ron shortly after he moved here when the first job for Cuthbert Construction was his own home, then on McKernan Rd. In the decades since, the list of projects has grown to include new custom homes, renovations of all sizes, boat shelters, docks, and general maintenance for many Shawnigan property owners.

Ron is well known for his attention to detail and high standards. The results are remarkable quality and happy customer relationships - some cementing into long lasting friendships. Some clients are seasonal residents who turn to Ron for winter improvements. His reputation is reassurance that a good job is being carried out in their absence.

Ron, along with his wife Roswynne have provided employment for many local people over the years. Steve Unischewski has been with Cuthbert Construction for 26 years. My husband remembers Steve framing our garage back in 1990 and putting in pilings for the dock just last year. Sub-contracted trade work has also kept many people busy.

All of this has been done without having to drive very far to work. I teased Ron when he finished his last custom home on the West Arm, just a stone's throw from where he and Roswynne now reside. "How long has it been since you have had to work on the other side of the lake?" It turns out that the west side has kept him busy for the last six years not counting the odd excursion on "Rusty" the work barge.

## ~Shawnigan Focus Advertiser Profile

# "What are you doing in my creek?"

**Brent Beach**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

"Er, taking a picture of that level gauge."

"What is that level gauge doing in my creek?"

"Er, measuring the water level."

"Who put that thing in my creek?"

"How long have you got...it is a long story."

So began my meeting with

Deborah, the property owner in the area of one of the water level gauges we had put along Shawnigan Creek between Halhed Bridge (the bridge at the outlet, near Mason's Beach) and the weir.

We - Grant Price, Graham Ross-Smith and I (Brent Beach) - have been discussing the creek for months. See back issues of the Focus for details of that discussion. We

agree that there is a problem, we just don't agree on the solution. So, we decided to find out who was right.

### What is the Problem?

I am glad you asked, Deborah. You know that they have logged off most of the forest in the watershed. Look at the [Shawnigan Residents Association website](#) for maps from 1999 and 2012. Less forest

cover and more rain - thank you climate change - mean rain getting to the lake faster.

As well, the creek is slowly getting shallower. Branches get waterlogged, sink to the bottom, and get silted in. Water is leaving the lake more slowly. (Great pictures on the SRA website or on [my blog](#).)

More rain coming into the lake faster but leaving more slowly means increased risk of flooding.

### What are the Solutions?

We can't do much about the rain. We can try to retain what little forest we still have. We can also improve flow down the creek.

This is where Grant, Graham and I disagreed. Grant and Graham thought the creek near the lake needed work - I thought the area near the weir. The CVRD cleaned out the area beside William Rivers Park! (See the [September Focus](#), or [my blog](#) that has many pictures of the creek.)

We decided that we could either continue to argue, or we could put in a few water level gauges and find out who was right.

### Water Level Measurements

Water level measurements

along the creek tell us where blockages exist. Water is higher behind (upstream of) a blockage and lower below (downstream of). Our level gauges will allow us to isolate blockages.

Grant made the gauges, which we installed at 5 places along the creek. Instead of just two gauges - one in the lake and one at the weir - we now have 7 gauges.

Wet Season Data Collection

We also have access to excellent rainfall information. In addition to the national weather service rainfall data (which has been collected since 1904) there are 4 on-line weather stations around the lake that report to the [UVic School-Based Weather Station Network](#). One of these stations is at the [Shawnigan Lake Museum](#)!

By combining the rainfall information with the water level information, we will be able to understand the dynamics of our watershed. This knowledge will allow Focused work (brainer work, as opposed to no-brainer work) on the creek during the next work cycle.

Deborah is fine with that. Hope you are too.

Pictures and links at [Brentat-theFocus.blogspot.com](#)

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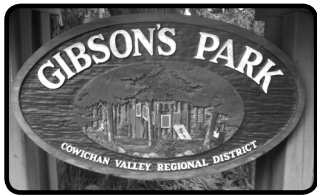


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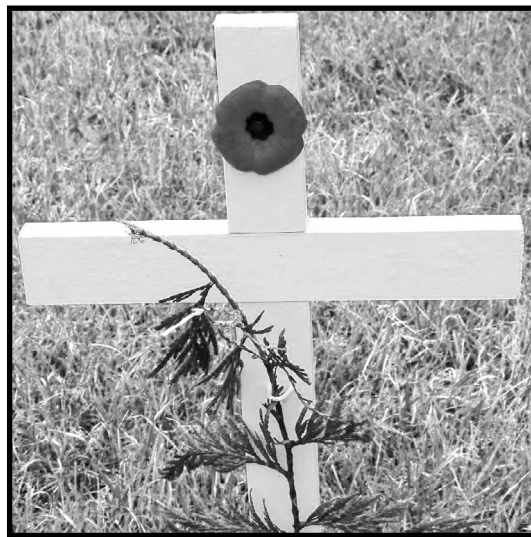
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## WHERE'S DECLAN?



Gibson Park is a 3.5 acre neighbourhood park in a wooded area between Cairn Park, on Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd., and Wilmot Rd. It offers swings, a playground and picnic tables. The park is named after the Gibson family. George Gibson settled in Shawnigan in 1910 and family still lives in the area.

## WHAT IS IT? WHERE IS IT? WHY IS IT?



*First correct answer sent to editor@shawniganfocus.ca wins*

## WHAT IS IT? CONTEST WINNER: OCTOBER

### CONGRATULATIONS

The winner for October was Christine Eriksen. The photo was of a "yarn-bomb" which encircles part of a small cedar tree near the bus stop on Renfrew Road opposite Linden Lane. The international yarn-bombing movement has gathered momentum over the last decade. It is a type of outdoor art that employs colourful displays of knitted or crocheted yarn or fibre.

*Winners receive two specialty coffees at Moziro's*

## Shawnigan Weather for October 2012

stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network ~ complied by Grant Treloar

	November Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay		Discovery School		Museum		Kelsey School	
		2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011
Average High	8.3	13.7	7.2	13.4	7.3	14.2	7.9	13.9	8.2
Average Low	2.4	6.6	1.0	5.8	-0.3	6.3	0.8	6.1	0.4
Extreme High	20.0	23.5	12.2	23.5	12.6	25.4	12.8	23.6	12.4
Extreme Low	-15.6	2.8	-3.4	2.3	-5.2	2.2	-4.3	1.7	-4.0
Precipitation	214.6	228.7	214.1	166.4	158.0	195.0	156.2	140.7	124.8
Days w precip	21	16	25	16	28	16	27	18	29
Lake Temperature: Nov 4 <sup>th</sup> : 11° Nov 11 <sup>th</sup> : 9° Nov 18 <sup>th</sup> : 13° Nov 25 <sup>th</sup> : 11°									

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- **Area B Director's meetings**  
1st Monday of each month – 7 pm at SL Community Centre (SLCC)
- **Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission**  
1st Thursday of each month. 7 pm at SLCC
- **Shawnigan Parks and Recreation Commission**  
3rd Thursday of each month 6:30pm at SLCC
- **Shawnigan Improvement District**  
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- **Shawnigan Residents Association**  
The SRA will hold their Annual General Meeting November 29th 7-9:30 at the Hugh Wilkinson Theatre - Shawnigan School. The South Island Aggregates (SIA) application will be a main item on the agenda. The public is encouraged to attend.
- **Shawnigan Lake Business Association**  
1st Tuesday of each month 7 pm, currently at the Village Chipperry
- **Shawnigan Lake Community Association**  
4th Monday of each month 7pm. Contact [bburr@shaw.ca](mailto:bburr@shaw.ca) to get on the mailing list. Anyone interested in joining is welcome.
- **Shawnigan Village Development Council**  
As announced. Everyone welcome!
- **Shawnigan Watershed Roundtable**  
Upcoming Dates TBA (see website for details: [www.shawniganwatershedroundtable.ca](http://www.shawniganwatershedroundtable.ca))
- **Inspire! Arts, Culture and Heritage**  
Friday November 16th - 6:00 Join us for the opening of our first YOUTH ART SHOW! Students from Frances Keley will be showing their work, in both the Cafe Creme space and the Inspire Gallery - in the Purple Building
- **Shawnigan Lake Facebook** group has the objective to be for daily postings of people's stories, news and events on a more personal scale. Please view <https://www.facebook.com/groups/129586433786330/>

Malahat Legion

1625 Shawnigan–Mill Bay Road - For more information: 250-743-4621

**League Darts:** Monday - 7:00pm - Nov 26, Dec 3, Dec 10 ~ **League Pool:** Tuesday - 7:00pm - Nov 27, Dec 11 ~ **Crib & Drop in Darts:** Wednesday - 7:00pm - Nov 21, Nov 28, Dec 5, Dec 12 ~ **Tuesday to Friday:** Lunch with homemade Soup ~ **Friday:** Wing night - 4:00pm

**Poppy fund:** Have you ever wondered where the money raised from the poppy fund is used. Here are just a couple of examples:

- Malahat legion branch 134 gave \$ 2000 to broadmead lodge from the poppy fund to repair beds.
- The legion also gave \$1500 to the cowichan district hospital to refurbish rooms.

*Your support to the poppy fund is much appreciated.*

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