

Shawnigan Focus

Volume Six - Issue Three

March 2016

A Non-Profit Community Publication

TRIATHLON CELEBRATES 10 YEARS IN SHAWNIGAN



Mark May 29th on your calendar for the 2016 Subaru Shawnigan Lake Triathlon.

This is a big event for our community, with international exposure. Who makes it happen? A team of great volunteers! Many of the volunteers have been involved since the beginning. Why? Read the comments below...

Volunteers are needed for Friday, May 27, Saturday, May 28 and Sunday, May 29. You are invited to participate in this exciting event. Volunteer registration for the 2016 Subaru Shawnigan Lake Triathlon - Ironman website and sign up - there are a wide variety of positions available.

Why I love to be Race Director - Sarah Malerby

I bring together a team of community leaders who are awesome people and now I have a reason to hang out with them for five months of every year. It makes me very proud to represent our great

Shawnigan Community. I am rewarded with new friendships and shared bonds with many people - some of my life's best memories.

I love helping others succeed - either in a new volunteer job or as an athlete.

This exciting triathlon event aligns with my personal values of healthy people and supporting a healthy environment - swimming in the lake, riding your bike and using the trails. There is nothing better!

However, on race day, I feel like a mother duck helping my ducklings cross the road. Keeping everyone together, using a watchful eye, a bit of quacking for encouragement and finally, great relief when everyone is safely back in the pond.

Crossover Captain - Betsy Burr

Back 9 years ago, a friend from skating asked me to come and help in Transition. The next year I was asked again. That year, I was asked to look after the road crossover so the person in charge could have a break. I have been on the road ever

since! I come back because the group of people I work with are wonderful and the athletes are amazing. The athletes are always thanking us for volunteering so they can race. With a working crew who are great and athletes who really appreciate the volunteers, it makes it a pleasure to come back every year!

Parking and Transportation Captain - Jim Scott

Volunteers for Parking and Transportation Marshall positions have come from South Cowichan Speedwatch since 2008. Although speeds achieved in the parking lots at the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre and at the main race location don't quite get up to those on local roads, Speedwatchers' experience and comfort working around moving vehicles is an asset. In addition to this race, they are often invited to assist with other local events such as the Cobble Hill 10K. For some Speedwatch volunteers, this will be their ninth time working on the Triathlon.

Co-captain of the IronKids run - Marian Davies

Volunteering for the Shawnigan Lake Triathlon is positive, appreciated and inspiring! For nine years I have 'belonged' to a team of hard working volunteers from our community who have welcomed athletes and their families from around the world and showed them this destination is the most beautiful place on earth!! The atmosphere at the event is invigorating, healthy and fun! Every hour you give is appreciated and you will leave with a proud feeling of accomplishment!

Transition Captain - Blaine Castle

This will be my second year as the Transition Captain for the Shawnigan Triathlon after working a couple of different jobs over the past six years. I can sum up my experience of the job as follows (for those readers old enough, read this to the theme song from Rawhide, and for those of you young'uns, you can check out the tune on YouTube)

Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Transition!
Keep rollin', rollin', rollin'
Though the lungs are bursting
Keep them athletes racing
Transition!
Through rain and wind and weather
Hell-bent for leather
Wishin' ya race is lots of fun.
All the things you're missin'
Good vittles, rest, and medals
Are waiting at the end of the run.
Move 'em on, head 'em up
Head 'em up, move 'em on
Move 'em on, head 'em up
Transition
Swim 'em out, swim 'em in,
Ride 'em in, ride 'em out,
Run 'em out, run 'em in
Transition!

Hmmm...wonder if Blaine will be wearing his chaps!
If you have any questions regarding volunteering, please contact the Volunteer Director at Shawniganlake@ironmanvolunteers.com

SHAWNIGAN FOCUS
MARCH 2016

EDITORIAL TEAM:
Lori Treloar
Dave Hutchinson
editor@shawniganfocus.ca

LAYOUT:
Taryn Treloar

ADVERTISING:
Kim Hennecker
ads@shawniganfocus.ca

FOCUS TEAM:
Linda Nelson
Bernie Lewis
Monica Foster
Sally Davies
Peter Nash
Bev McCooey
Marcy Green
Grant Treloar
Janet Neilsen

ACCOUNTS:
Kim Hennecker

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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 involvement in the community; and interest a broad cross-section of the residents of Shawnigan Lake.

The Shawnigan Focus is delivered, free of charge, to postal addresses in Shawnigan Lake (Area B). Out-of-town subscriptions are available for \$30 per year. Contact: editor@shawniganfocus.ca

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

Additional copies are available in The Village.

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

South Cowichan
Library Programs

Crochet Club: Thursday
March 3 6:30-8pm

★ An informal evening of crochet to learn, to share and to enjoy a social evening of “hooking” All levels of experience are welcome. Drop-in attendance.

Art Healing with Francoise Moulin

★ Wednesdays 2-3pm. A group of artists from all levels of expertise explore ideas, create and socialize in the library, led

by Francoise from the Cowichan Intercultural Society. All welcome to drop-in.

Teen Tech Week

★ March 6-12. If you are a teen aged 13-18, come and try your luck at our photo contest. Snap a great photo and send it into us at southcowichan@virl.bc.ca for your chance at a great prize. The contest will run all week long until the library closes on March 12. Good luck!

March Break Puppet Show - The Three Easter Bunnies Gruff

★ March 16th 11-11:30am. Time for some fractured fairy tale fun! Which fairy tale is our show based on? Come to the show and see if you can guess. Suitable for children of all ages. Drop-in attendance.

All programs take place at the South Cowichan Library in Mill Bay. For more information, call the library staff at 250-743-5436

Shawnigan Weather February 2016

Stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network ~ compiled by Grant Treloar

	February Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay		Discovery School		Museum		Elford Road	
		2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015
Average High	7.4	9.0	10.5	9.8	10.8	10.3	11.5	9.7	10.7
Average Low	0.4	3.0	4.0	2.7	3.5	2.8	4.2	2.4	3.5
Extreme High	18.3	12.6	13.1	14.6	14.3	16.2	15.7	14.5	14.0
Extreme Low	-16.7	0.1	-1.3	-0.8	-2.0	-0.2	-1.2	-0.5	-1.5
Precipitation	155.3	169.4	153.4	160.2	169.7	131.7	149.5	158.2	158.8
Days w precip	16	22	16	22	18	22	18	22	15
Precip since Jan 1 (mm)	370.6	409.7	315.2	401.8	330.9	347.0	284.9	317.6	317.6
(up to Feb 27 th) Since 1914: 6 th warmest February 38 th wettest February									
Lake Temperature:		Feb 7 nd : 5°	Feb 14 th : 5°	Feb 21 st : 5°	Feb 28 th : 6°				
Lake Level Change:		Feb 7 nd : -25cm	Feb 14 th : -5cm	Feb 21 st : +22cm	Feb 28 th : -34cm				

Notice Board

South Cowichan Healthcare Auxiliary's

Annual Lemon
and Lavender Tea

March 20, 2016 2-4 p.m.

Mill Bay Community League Hall (next to Kerry Park, on Shawnigan Mill Bay Road)

Tea will be served with Dainty sandwiches and sweets: \$7.00 per ticket.

Tickets will be pre-sold (contact Sandy at 250-743-3158, or Nadine 250-709-8997), and available at the door.

There will be baking, crafts, raffles and lots of fun!!



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Something's coming...

The Steeples building has been sold and the new owner is fixing it up...what's next?

W5 visits
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Lucy Lewis

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEND US LETTERS... EDITOR@SHAWNIGANFOCUS.CA

The Focus will publish your thoughts on Shawnigan issues: bouquets you would like to offer to special people; things that strike you as 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 or groups.

I vote for killing this million dollar a year CVRD waste of tax money.

Dear Editor

Along with excessive pay rates for employees, one of the biggest wastes of taxpayers' money in the CVRD is the tens of millions of dollars squandered over the past decade by their Economic Development Department and nothing to show for it. The CVRD always tries to solve its problems and issues by new spending and more taxes and there's lots of evidence that it is not a solution that ever works.

More than a year ago, after another expensive consultant's report, the CVRD board was reminded again how wasteful the Economic Development Function (EDF) has been with its million dollar budget each

year. Yet the CVRD continues to throw our tax money at a function that has proven worthless in improving the local economy. Our CVRD taxes would be much lower if this and other wasteful spending stopped.

Now we have the befuddled CVRD Board members spending more time and resources trying to decide if EDF should have a \$150,000 a year manager or a cheaper coordinator. Yet the CVRD board has never stated exactly what the EDF should accomplish, or identify why it should exist at all.

Like most spending in the CVRD there are never any measures of success established other than shoveling our tax \$ out the door. That's why they now spend more than \$80 million a year and employ well over

200 employees to accomplish very little for Cowichan taxpayers.

I vote for killing this million dollar a year CVRD waste of tax money. The most important Economic Development functions in the Cowichan Valley are lower taxes and less bureaucracy.

~W.E.(Bill) Dumont

Why would your Minister sneak in and have a "private" meeting in my Regional District without the presence, consent or input of my duly elected MLA?

Am I being unrealistic in believing that when the majority of citizens in my area elect an MLA, that person is to be our representative regarding provincial matters?

Has this changed?

Recently the Minister of Environment, with an entourage of high level bureaucrats, held a "private" meeting in my area with the directors of my regional district. My MLA was not on the "guest list" despite having spoken in the legislature often and at length on the very topic to be discussed. Why would your Minister sneak in and have a "private" meeting in my Regional District without the presence, consent or input of my duly elected MLA?

Kindly ease my mind and advise me as to the conditions that must prevail in order for me to be properly and transparently represented.

Thank you for your prompt reply,

~Lavonne Huneck

SIA Update

The already extended Judicial Review of the Environmental Appeal Board ruling was supposed to finish on Friday, February 26. Originally scheduled for 10 days, February 29 will be day 21 - hopefully the last.

A few comments from various observers:

- ★ It was unexpected when SIRM's lawyers were granted at least a half a day of court time to explain why there shouldn't be a stay.
- ★ The morning ended with SIRM lawyers claiming their client is a complete innocent, know nothing about anything when they got into the deal.
- ★ The judge is slowly disappearing behind a wall of documents.
- ★ It would be sad if the winner of this fight is the one with the most money. A lake is at risk.

Drinking water is at risk. A community is at risk.

- ★ Consider donating to the Shawnigan Residents Association (www.thesra.ca) - they could really use your help right now.

On another note, Sat, Feb 27 saw a successful and inspiring "March for Sacred Land & Sacred Waters". It was good to see over 100 people from all walks of life join First Nation elders in a demonstration of respect for the natural environment. Ta'Kaiya Blaney, a remarkable young singer and environmental activist from Tla'Amin Nation, was in attendance. Her website states:

I feel that as humans, as participants and beings that walk upon this earth, it is our responsibility to help the earth. We all need to take steps towards a clean and healthy future regarding animals, humans, plants, and the various ecosystems.



March for Sacred Land & Sacred Waters
Photo by Laura Colpitts

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The joys of Alpaca hobby farm in Shawnigan Lake

Oriana Parker
Y.S.A.G.S.

Nestled cozily among rolling hills with silent streams meandering across the landscape lies the hobby farm of Wendy Palmer and her partner Lloyd Fujita. Peerless Alpacas is situated just a few miles off of the Shawnigan Lake Road, just a short drive from the quaint village. It was here that, twenty years ago, Wendy and Lloyd purchased a four acre piece of land complete with a dilapidated trailer which has since been replaced by a house.

Neither had any farming experience but it was apparent to them that the land should be put to good use. They noted how friends were successfully working with Alpacas and decided to do the same. "I would never have thought that I would undertake such a venture, especially since I've always worked in Victoria. Didn't know much about Alpacas or farming for that matter!" says Wendy. She credits the transition to the Vancouver Island Llama and Alpaca Club for their support and confidence to care for the animals. Their experience, knowledge and assistance was crucial in the operation of their farm. It also allowed them to connect with professional vets and form a network with other farmers. "Working with the Llamas and Alpacas is good exercise and it's a pleasure to be around these gentle and trusting animals!" say Wendy. Alpacas adapt well to our weather. They are indigenous to the High Andes of South America and are ex-

tremely hardy. In ancient times, their wool was reserved only for royalty. Its quality is similar to cashmere. Wendy explained, "For the most part they are very easy to raise. We started with six animals, two Fibreboys, three Alpacas and one stud." Today their number has grown to ten Alpacas and three Llamas.

The Alpacas all have names: Angel (oldest at 16 years), Komet, Saffron, Sage, Ivy, Ben, Casper, Chico, Angus and Holly. Colouring is varying shades of black, brown, cream and grey. They grow to weigh anywhere from 125 to 175 lbs. and live between 20 to 25 years. One acre of productive pasture can sustain five to eight animals so there is plenty of land to graze on. They eat approximately two pounds of hay each a day as well as supplements. The Alpacas are professionally sheared and the fibres, after being cleaned, are sent to a mill in Ontario and come back in cones of yarn. With her knitting machine Wendy produces beautiful mitts, socks and hats that she sells from her home. She also has a stand at the Saanich Fair held on Labour Day weekend. For the organic gardener she sells bags of manure.

Wendy is a member of YSAGS (Young Seniors Action Group) and enjoys the Monday ladies walk, Zumba Tuesday and Line Dancing Wednesday. For more information on the group, please contact Ed Wiebe at wiebeis@shaw.ca

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For The Wynn

Kathryn Harrison
Frances Kelsey Student

It's Scholarship season and Frances Kelsey's Wynn Rederburg is flying high. Becoming one of the lucky 31 students selected from across the country to receive the Loran Scholarship, this is the year of Wynn.

Completing Grade 12 a year early, Rederburg is no stranger to success. She was elected the 2015/2016 Student Council President at her High School as well as being an avid member of many local mock parliaments and the District Student Advisory Council. Her vibrant enthusiasm for politics is delightful and encouraging for future generations.

Here at Frances Kelsey everyone knows the name Wynn Rederburg. She plunges herself heart first into all that she can. [She is] "One of the most remarkable students in the school", says fellow student council member Sarah Kaufmann. Her spirit and dedication to everything she lays her hands on makes it clear that she can do anything

and all she sets her mind to.

The Loran Scholars are picked annually from across Canada and the award is worth up to \$100 000 to be used for full tuition as well as funds for living expenses. 80 finalists were hand picked to be assessed in the final interviews early this February. Six interviews faced each finalist over the course of two days.

Having received an offer into a top notch University at 3am, the morning after these intense interviews, she then received a call that same day congratulating her on being chosen as a Loran Scholar.

"It seemed as if my future was set after that weekend", Rederburg reflects as she jumps back into her jam packed last term of High School. Enjoying the comfort of financial stability and solid plans for her future education, she is able to relax as she looks onwards, filled with excitement. This Fall, Rederburg will attend McGill University and intends to go into Political Science. There is nothing stopping the luminous force that is Wynn Rederburg.



Book Review

Marcy Green
Shawnigan Focus

Inside the O'Briens
by Lisa Genova
Published by Gallery Books
Copyright 2015 by Lisa Genova

What would you do if you found out you carried the gene for a devastating disease like Huntingdon's and had a 50% chance of getting it? Would you go and take the simple blood test? Or would you choose to continue living your life not knowing, carefully watching for signs of degeneration? Would you live your life differently either way? Or would you be guided by the words of my late father who liked to remind us that, "We're all going to die someday" followed by, "You could be hit by a truck tomorrow."

In other words, live as if this is your last day.

The author, Lisa Genova, has a PhD in neuroscience and has written several books

dealing with brain-related conditions, notably, "Still Alice". She combines her knowledge of science with her understanding of the human heart and brings insight and compassion to every subject she writes about.

Inside the O'Briens has several main narrators and we follow the descent of Joe, the

father, with dread and anticipation of the worst as his secret is slowly revealed to the world and he worries about the loss of his beloved job and the possibility of his children sharing the diagnosis. His wife is no saint, but very human as

she tries to support him and then her four children, who deal very differently with the fear of a life cut short by mental degeneration and then death.

Some of the family members triumph, and one falls. The others struggle along and we are forced to wonder what our responses would be. The information about Huntingdon's is very helpful in increasing our understanding, but the broader message is one of hope and courage, and that families, when they pull together, can survive almost anything.

This is a good introduction to Genova and may encourage you to read her other fine books.

Rating: 5/5 stars

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS
A Free Drop-In at the
Shawnigan Lake Community Centre



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

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

INFORMATION : Rhoda - 250 709 3050
EMAIL : rhoda.taylor@viha.ca
FACEBOOK : Healthy Beginnings Cowichan

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Shawnigan Lake Business Association
2016 AGM

Date : Monday, March 14, 2016
Time : 7:00 PM
Location : To Be Determined

For additional information please contact :
info@slba.ca



Shawnigan Lake Business Association
www.shawniganlakeonline.com

Meet your fellow business owners and get your business noticed by becoming a member of the SLBA. Monthly meetings, speakers, mixers and opportunities to become part of a growing association.

Wounded Warrior Run BC 2016

On Saturday February 27th the Wounded Warrior Run BC team stopped at the Shawnigan Lake Legion where they were welcomed by local residents, legion members and the press.

The Wounded Warrior Run British Columbia's dedicated team of runners, who are all either current or former members of the Canadian Armed Forces, relay-run the length of Vancouver Island for seven consecutive days covering an excess of 600 km. The journey begins in Port Hardy and concludes in Victoria.

Wounded Warriors Canada is a non-profit charity organization that helps Canadian Forces members who have been wounded or injured in their service to Canada by raising awareness, fundraising and providing support to Canadian Veterans.

The Wounded Warrior Run British Columbia was created with its first Vancouver Island Run in February 2014. The Wounded Warrior Run British Columbia, by all accounts, has been a resounding success with over \$65,000 raised from both corporate and



individual donors alike as well as supporting and generating important awareness of veterans suffering from issues such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Many military servicemen and women bear the physical and mental scars of their experiences, often long after they have hung up their uniforms. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Occupational Stress Injuries exists in all segments of society, including Police, Fire and Ambulance personnel. Through aware-

ness and understanding they strive to change the stigma attached to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and mental health disorders in general. Together the runners are changing lives.

The Royal Canadian Legion Malahat Branch 134 made a presentation in the amount of \$885. The first picture includes the Local Fire Department as well as Wounded Warrior team. The last picture shows our donation. Photos by Jennifer Brum. Food for this event was provided by Thrifty Foods.



Beaver Scouts are returning

Elijah Fraser
Beaver Scouts Leader

Beaver Scouts are returning to the Shawnigan/Cobble Hill/Mill Bay area for fall 2016!

Beaver Scouts (Boys & Girls Ages 5-7)

Fun and friendship is the cornerstone of the Beaver Scouts program. Beaver Scouts opens the door for your child to discover the world. It is filled with a little bit of everything – outdoor activities, games, music and sports.

<http://www.scouts.ca/ca/programs/beaver-scouts>

If you are interested in joining us as a parent helper or 'Scouter' (Volunteer) in making this program a success, we welcome you to attend our first planning and training meeting: Monday the 7th March 7:30 PM at the Shawnigan Village Chipperry, RSVP.

We are now accepting registration for volunteers; registration for participants to open soon.

Yours in Scouts

(250) 743-3435
ElijahFraser@shaw.ca



SHAWNIGAN LAKE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

Department Members
Attended 21 calls in February



- ★ Tuesday, Feb 2 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- ★ Thursday, Feb 4 - 1st Responder off Gregory Rd
- ★ Thursday, Feb 4 - 1st Responder off Gregory Rd
- ★ Saturday, Feb 6 – Assistance on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Sunday, Feb 7 – Hydro Line Fire on Hawking Rd
- ★ Monday, Feb 8 - 1st Responder off Deloume Rd
- ★ Thursday, Feb 11 - 1st Responder off Northgate Rd
- ★ Friday, Feb 12 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- ★ Saturday, Feb 13 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Tuesday, Feb 16 – Gas Leak on Nora Pl
- ★ Wednesday, Feb 17 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Thursday, Feb 18 – Mutual Aid w/Mill Bay for a Structure Fire
- ★ Thursday, Feb 18 - 1st Responder off Inn Rd
- ★ Friday, Feb 19 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- ★ Saturday, Feb 20 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Saturday, Feb 20 - 1st Responder off Northgate Rd
- ★ Sunday, Feb 21 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Monday, Feb 22 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- ★ Tuesday, Feb 23 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Wednesday, Feb 24 - 1st Responder off Ingot Rd
- ★ Thursday, Feb 25 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd



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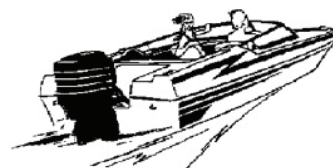
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At the 4-way stop in Shawnigan Lake Village



COMMUNITY GROUPS

- ★ **Area B Director's meetings with Sonia Furstenau**
Office hours by appointment. Email sfurstenau@cvrld.bc.ca Next Director's meeting March 7th at 7 pm. For updates: check www.soniafurstenau.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission (APC)**
No meeting in March. Watershed office: Unit 4-1760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd
- ★ **Shawnigan Parks and Recreation Commission**
3rd Thursday of the month - March 17th - 7pm at S.L. Community Centre
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Community Centre Commission**
Monday, March 21st at 7:00 at S.L. Community Centre
- ★ **Shawnigan Improvement District**
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- ★ **Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA)**
for info: check www.thesra.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Business Association (SLBA)**
Contact: info@slba.ca for information
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Community Association**
Contact: bburr@shaw.ca
- ★ **Shawnigan Basin Society**
AGM March 1. Watershed office: Unit 4-17760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road.
Contact: luvlife@shaw.ca
- ★ **Young Seniors Action Group (YSAGS)**
Contact: www.ysag.ca email: ysagssl@gmail.com
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Museum**
Open Fri-Sun 11-4. www.shawniganlakemuseum.com
Contact: shawniganlakemuseum@shaw.ca
- ★ **South Cowichan Community Policing** 250-929-7222

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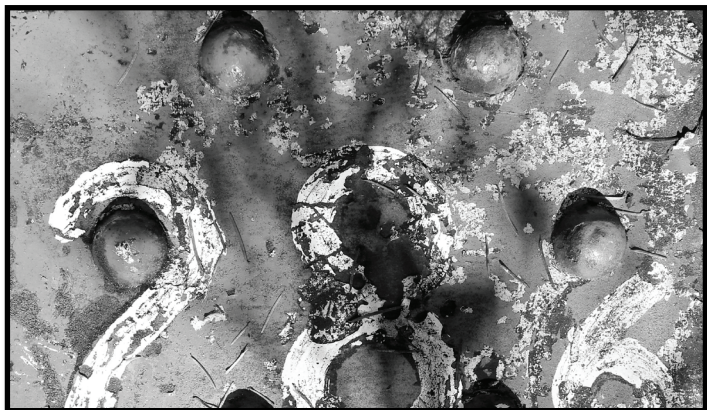
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What Is It? Where Is It?



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

CONGRATULATIONS

The winning answer for February was submitted by Kristie Eccleston who used her specialized knowledge to identify the mast-head on an Astar 350B helicopter flown by Doug Strachan on Jan 6 for the Save Shawnigan Water media day.

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TOM PLUMB AS PRESIDENT & CEO

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Take A Hike!

Robin Massey
Shawnigan Focus

Did you know that Westwood Lake is actually a man-made lake?

And once you are there, it's surreal that this fragment of our Island's natural wonderland is only a short four kilometres from Nanaimo's bustling city core. Just off Highway 19, at the Jinglepot Road turn off, you can wind your way to this marvelous lake that is snuggled under the protection of the Mount Benson foothills.

The option of doing the full 6 kilometre loop is yours to examine either on slow walking feet or quicker running feet. You can also bike, and/or explore the off-beaten paths and rocky outcrops, or step across the boardwalks constructed to save the eroding parts of the trail. Whatever the choice, there are lovely views all around and you will not be disappointed. Oh, and bring your swimmy stuff to enjoy the pleasant little beaches or snacks for the perfect picnic stops.

On my loop trip I came across many a fisher-person casting off - from cliffs, beaches or even hanging out on trailside benches or designated fishing piers. I've read that the lake is stocked with various trout and is also home to pumpkinseed fish, threespine stickleback and small mouth bass - I am no fisher type but I certainly have an interesting image of what these creatures would look like with names like that!

If birds are more your thing, Westwood has Canada Geese, eagles, herons and mergansers. The pockets of old growth around the lake

also host many other feathered friends.

There is a special area within the park called the Morell Sanctuary. At first I thought that it was a mushroom memorial and spelled funky... but, instead, it's a family name. The Morrell Sanctuary is an honoured area named after Mr. William Morrell, a local contractor, who donated the land for us to enjoy. It is approximately 27 acres of second growth forest with over 10 kilometres of trails.

So, at the beginning I mentioned that this is a man-made lake - what's the story there? Well, back in the 1860's or so, there was this fellow William J. Westwood who fancied the area, which was really just marsh back then, as his new home and settled in. Around 1908, Westwood Lake was created when the city built a dam to control the hold and release of water to help the Millstone power plant supply more power generation for the rapidly growing city. In 1957, with other power choices available, Westwood Lake became the dedicated recreational park we see today.

Most of the trail is evenly flat, but there is one hill around the backside that brings up the heart rate a few beats. It's pretty accessible by all levels of runner, walker or cyclist and if it is too much, of course you can always turn around! But don't take my word for it, go see for yourself!

Find photos of this trip and more on Facebook at The Om Tree or send us a note if you'd like to join us on our hikes, all ages and stages welcome - and of course the more the merrier!



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