



# Shawnigan-Showe'luqun Focus

Volume Fourteen - Issue Twelve

December 2023 Shts'ulwe'sum

A Non-Profit Community Publication

## Another Record Year for the Salmon Fishtrap

**Ken Gray**  
*Secretary & Director,  
Mill Bay & District  
Conservation Society*

With the trap shut down last week, another year is finished, and another record is on our books. That makes 4 years in a row, that we have set new records for returns to the Shawnigan system. The final total number of fish moved this year was 985, of which 706 were adults and 279 were jacks. 93 adults were transported to Goldstream and Shawnigan Lake School Hatcheries, for brood stock. With the low returns in Goldstream and other South Vancouver Island streams, it is a blessing that we were able to share our bounty with them.



Gary Caton moving salmon for transport

The exciting thing about this year's return, is that these fish were our heat dome fish. It truly is amazing that they were able to find a hospitable place to rear in our system and come back in the numbers that they did. We are, once again, near the top of the Coho projects in BC, percentage-wise. Three years ago, we had 404 spawners return, of which 80 fish

went to Goldstream for brood stock. 324 fish were transported above the falls and released back into the creek. This year's 706 returning spawners, are coming from those 324, giving us over a 100% increase. Looking back, only 4 returns ago, this run was only 5 fish. There were a good number of jacks that came back this year, which is an encouraging sign

for next year, as they are part of the return that had to endure the "Atmospheric River", that pounded us in November, 3 years ago.

Thank You, to all the volunteers, who contributed their time and effort this year. Whether that involvement was: doing clerical things; helping out at the bottle drives; putting in some real effort doing stream enhancement; trap maintenance and, of course, the capture and transporting of our Coho. A special Thank You to the volunteers that put in their time netting fish this year. Without their dedication and hard work, we wouldn't be at the numbers that we were able to achieve. Our Societies' logo

is now proudly displayed on apparel we had made and was purchased by a number of volunteers. This will add another dimension to the awareness and importance of this project. Another, big Thank You to all our sponsors, for your support, allowing us to continue to make this one of the most successful projects in the Salmon world. Our AGM will be held early next year. The date is not set yet, but as soon as I know, you will too. Please think about what we do and if there is an opportunity to makes things even better. Come and voice your opinions at the meeting. As the Christmas season approaches quickly, please stay safe, and enjoy time with your families.

## Just Under Our Feet

**Jared Quwustenuxun Williams**  
*Author and Educator*

I live in this strange place between bounty and poverty. I walk in forests filled with plum trees, apple trees, and pear trees that my not-so-distant ancestors planted in their fields. I walk on beaches covered in sea asparagus and shells from sea gardens that my more distant ancestors ingeniously created. I walk on mountains covered in nettles, Chocolate Lily, and mushrooms. I've even searched forgotten caves with deep shell middens far from any ocean. I spend my days watching water, spearing fish from our

river, and smoking it for my family. In one world, I see the very real remains of the Indigenous food systems that were here precontact. I even see evidence of how our ancestors took on the colonial fruit trees and planted them for added food security.

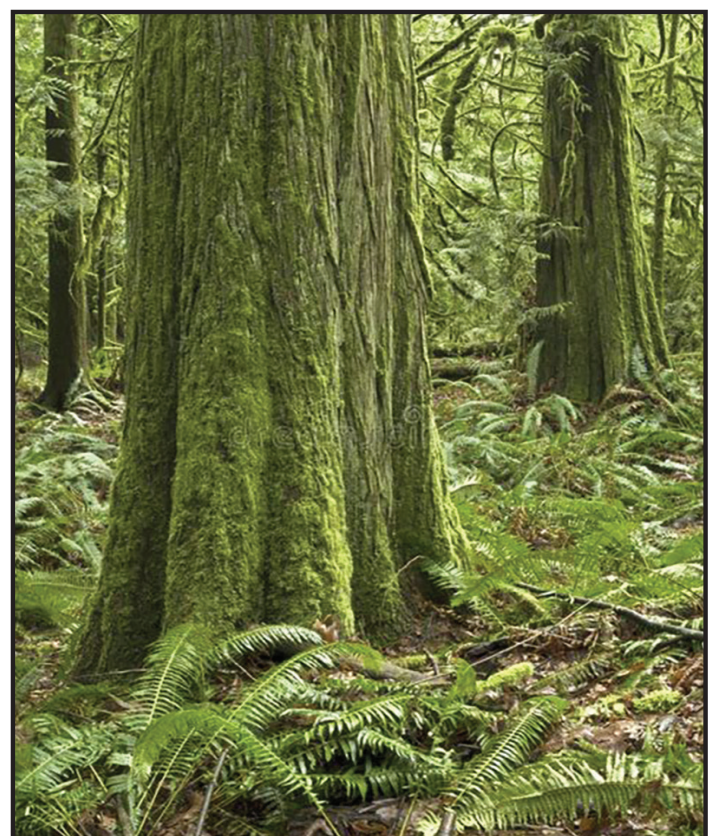
But then, in another world, literally metres away, I see unimaginable suffering. I see kids living on the streets, and I see elders strung out on drugs begging for money. I see moms in grocery stores putting back food that costs too much. I see Hwulmuhw people who can trace their ancestry to Quw'utsun lands for over a dozen

generations living under bridges and in tents because they cannot afford to own a home on their own land. It's like a surreal fantasy world, but it's true, it's real, and it's heartbreaking.

I share things like this in the hopes that some will read my thoughts and perhaps look up from the game of life we are stuck in — wake, work, cook, eat, clean, sleep, repeat. Some of us can re-find and tend to the old apple trees and the salmon in the river. Maybe someone who is hungry will read this and rethink where food can be found. Or maybe someone will read this and realize, as

I've said many times, re-indigenizing our food systems is a key step in halting climate change and feeding our hungry. The earth can only sustain this global

food system for so long and, now more than ever, it's time to reinvest in Indigenous Foods. Lucky for us we can find many of them just under our feet.



Hughes and the Cowichan River

Robert Amos  
Artist and Author

The artist E. J. Hughes moved from Shawnigan Lake in 1972 and found a new home in Duncan. From there he ventured out to make drawings all around the Cowichan Valley. A favourite destination was Skutz Falls on the Cowichan River which he drew in 1967, 1974 and in 1986.

On June 16 1976, he delivered an oil painting titled *Late Summer at Skutz Falls* to his exclusive dealer, the Dominion Gallery in Montreal. For this he was paid \$1900, and, at the time, he wrote “In late summer and early fall the water in the Cowichan River on Vancouver Island is quite low, especially noticeable at Skutz Falls where the river is narrow. The Government has installed some concrete fish ladders here to help the salmon up the river.

Otherwise, the fish would batter themselves against the rocks, trying to leap up the rapids. The fish ladders can be seen crossing the picture in the centre. The white triangle in the middle distance is a “no fishing” marker.”

Hughes took up the subject again a few years later and on July 8, 1980 he sent a new painting, *The Cowichan River at Skutz Falls*, to the Dominion Gallery. On a descriptive label on the back of the painting he wrote: “This view is in the early Fall, when the maples are becoming yellow, as are some smaller leaf bushes in the foreground. About a month later, salmon can be seen trying to leap upstream through the rushing water... The original pencil sketch for this painting was produced in my car, which can park quite close to the river at this point.”

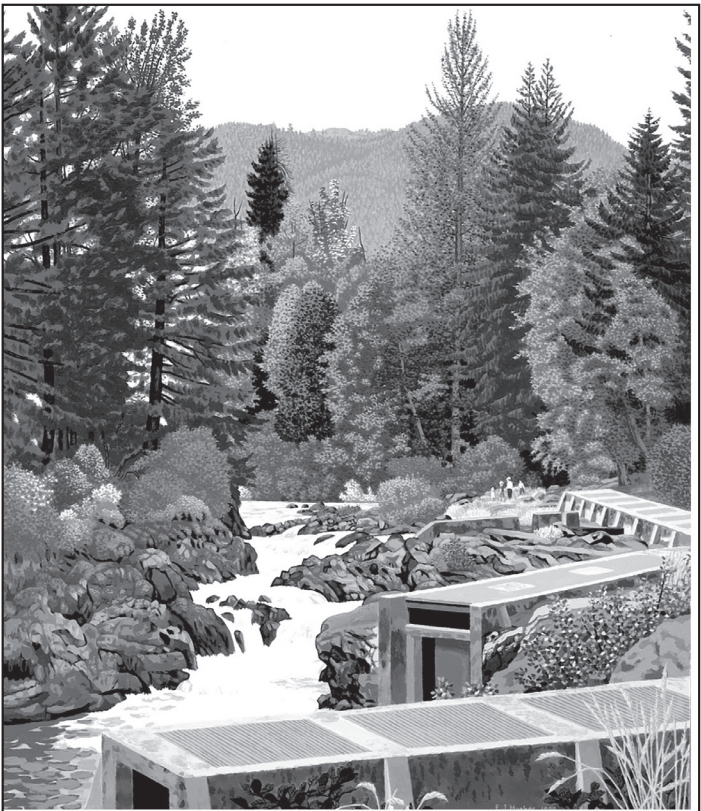
He made a final trip to draw Skutz Falls in 1986

and on August 31 1988 he sent a new painting of the site which he titled *The Cowichan River*. For this the Dominion Gallery paid him \$20,000. In his letter which accompanied the painting Hughes wrote: “The cement structures (fish ladders), rocks and distant hills stay the same but everything else, trees, bushes, water level, summer lighting, are constantly changing, so it is never monotonous doing this same subject over again. I sketch from nature in pencil, and later, in the studio, enlarge the subject into a painting, using the pencil sketch as source material, so it is a help being able to sketch this scene from my parked car, as my paper is safe from rain.”

Michel Moreault, then director of the Dominion Gallery, on August 31 1988 replied diplomatically: “The Cowichan painting is very beautiful... I have to confess that I find fish

ladders, despite their usefulness, to be odd, even ugly structures, stuck into a wild landscape like discarded industrial refuse. Of course the joining of industrial shapes – whether

they’re fish ladders, saw mills, or ships – with natural landscape is one of the important contributions of your art. you are, after all, telling the truth. Those who want a pretty painting will not buy this work, but someone with a strong sense of history will.”



The Cowichan River, 1988. Acrylic 32" x 40"

Opinion  
Our Parks Have Dog Rules

Janet Neilsen

I’ve seen people that take their pet dog off lead or have no lead at all. I walk my neighbour’s dog and I have been charged at by other people’s dogs that are off lead. How is this being a responsible dog owner?

Our parks have signs that

show ‘a dog on a lead’. That is meant for EVERY dog. I know a German Shepherd that bit someone who was riding their bike. This dog was off lead! I wouldn’t want this to happen to any child in our neighbourhood, or have it happen to anyone out going for a walk or when I’m out riding my own bike.

Dog owners... “Please be more Mindful” and Please Put Your Dog on a Lead.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Royal Canadian Legion Malahat District #134 wishes to express its sincere appreciation and thanks to the businesses, organizations, schools and individuals in the Cobble Hill, Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake and Cowichan Bay areas for their tremendous support during the 2023 Poppy Fund Donations Campaign. Thanks also to many others who donated through our drop off boxes and to our onsite taggers.

The Poppy Fund Donations are held “In Trust” and are used to support veterans and their families, educational materials, as well as local organizations that support the needs of veterans such as the Cowichan District Hospital.

Royal Canadian Legion  
Branch 134 - Malahat



South Cowichan Library

Monica Finn  
South Cowichan Library  
250-743-5436  
southcowichan@virl.bc.ca

HOLIDAY CLOSURES:

Monday, Dec 25

Tuesday, Dec 26

Wednesday, Dec 27

Monday, Jan 1

**School Holiday Break:** drop in for a scavenger hunt, Straws and Connectors, LEGO, and other activities from Dec 28 to Jan 6. Enter a draw to win a book!

**Drop-in Button Making** workshop on Saturday, Dec 9, 2-3:30pm. Children bring their own artwork or magazine clipping or create an image here to make a one-of-a-kind button to wear (or gift!).

**LEGO® Club** happens

every Tuesday, 2-5pm. We provide the LEGO (and Duplo) and you supply the imagination. Come ready to build! This is a free, drop-in event.

**Tech Help** is available most Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Drop-in or make an appointment for one-on-one help with your mobile device or laptop.

**The Inspired by Reading Book Club** meets on Tuesday, Dec 12, 6:30-8pm to talk about We Measure the Earth with Our Bodies by Tsering Yangzom Lama. This is for anyone interested in reading and sharing inspiring conversation. The book club is run by the Cowichan South Arts Guild. Meetings are welcoming and an accepting environment for all!

**Conversational Spanish** meets from 6:30 to 7:30pm

every Tuesday now. Drop in to practice Spanish in a casual setting and chat en español en la biblioteca! Beginners welcome.

**Conversational Scottish Gaelic** is a fun way for people interested in learning Scottish Gaelic to practice together. Check it out on Tuesdays, 6:30-8pm.

**Art for Newcomers** is a drop-in group for new Canadians hosted by the Cowichan Intercultural Society. Come by 2-4pm on the first and third Tuesdays or email francoise@cis-iwc.org .

The South Cowichan Library in the Mill Bay Centre is open: 10am - 8pm, Monday and Tuesday 10am - 5pm, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, & Saturday Find out more at virl.bc.ca and at [www.facebook.com/VIRLSouthCowichan](http://www.facebook.com/VIRLSouthCowichan)

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or Articles About  
Shawnigan!

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[shawniganfocuseditor@gmail.com](mailto:shawniganfocuseditor@gmail.com)

Send your article in Word, not pdf  
Maximum word count 500 words

If you include a photo, send as  
separate jpg or png file

Photos should be 300dpi or  
larger resolution

A Visit to O.U.R. Ecovillage

Don McVie & Kat Runnalls

On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Kat and I joined a small group, from the Newcomers, given the opportunity to visit and experience a remarkable enclave in our Cowichan community. It was enlightening and very impressive.

O.U.R. (meaning One



United Resource) Ecovillage was founded 25 years ago as an “intentional” community focused on being self-reliant and respectful of the resources our land provides. It has evolved into a model of sustainability and creativity that is enviable. We visited what the insiders refer to as an “educational

demonstration site” and it was an eye-opener.

We were first given an excellent introduction session conducted by Executive Director, Brandy Gallagher, which was held inside the large communal dining hall. Cozy and warm, it was hard to believe this was constructed using ancient building techniques and mostly reclaimed materials. Afterwards we toured a host of structures built using straw and clay “cob” construction augmented by donated or cast-off materials. The members of the Ecovillage team have created something that feels almost magical; blending vision and artistic creativity into a remarkable community that provides a teaching

and skills resource for thousands of visitors from across Canada and around the World every year.

We saw all manner of food production and small livestock management as well as a recycling process for water with potential applications on a larger scale. The volunteers and community members produced a fabulous looking buffet which showcased many of their homegrown farm to table offerings.

A valuable message that was shared was the importance of finding ways to innovate an aspirational project within the larger (external) environment with its myriad regulations that are often designed without consideration for exceptions like this innovative community. What began as a vision for

25 carefully selected, acres evolved into a non-profit administrative structure. Recently, the group has been successful in creating an organizational model to allow for future construction of 9 private homes on the shared site.

O.U.R. Ecovillage was an inspiration. It gave us a real sense of what dedicated people can accomplish together when respect for our environment, and for one another, are fundamental values.

I encourage you to take the opportunity to visit this wonderful “intentional” community. I think that you will come away as thrilled as we did! Thanks to Oriana Parker for organizing this visit and to Brandy and the gang at O.U.R. Ecovillage for making us feel welcome.

What is Your Safety Letter to Santa Saying...? Dear Santa...

**Sarah Davidge**  
Cardinal Manager Programs & Volunteers South Cowichan Community Policing (SCCPAS)

**RCMP** - Remind people to lock their houses, garage doors, sheds and vehicle doors. Santa says good idea “Lock Out Crime.”

**RCMP/Paramedic/Fire/Emergency** - Please put a Visible Reflective House # Sign on everyone’s Christmas Friend and Family List – Buy a gift of safety – Get a free medium Pizza for yourself or to share from Panago Pizza, Mill Bay. Thank you, Panago, for supporting the Gift of Safety.

**Community Policing – FREE Friendly Phones Program** - Please spread the Christmas care by reminding our seniors that we offer this FREE service. A daily phone call between 9:00-10:00 a.m. from volunteers/staff who genuinely care about your

wellbeing. Just give us a call and we will add your name to the list.

**Fire Fighters** - Remind everyone to give water to their thirsty indoor live Christmas Tree and keep all plugs away from water sources. Enjoy beautiful candles, and the light they give, but remember to extinguish them before retiring for your long winter’s nap.

**Community Policing Speed Watch** - Remind those speeding to the next red light, or traffic jam, that life is too short to take that kind of risk. Leave Time...less stress, and safer for everyone including the driver of the vehicle. It is good to give, so if you want to, join us and Volunteer in 2023.

**ICBC – Drunk Driving Awareness/Cell Watch** - Please remind all those who are celebrating over the Holiday Season to leave your car at home, arrange a safe ride home or plan to be a designated driver. If you are driving, be alert and remember distracted driving has a high cost. In short: Leave Your Car at Home and Your Phone Alone... Let’s all have a Safe Holiday Season.

**Block Watch** - Please give everyone a special gift of “Thank you” for actively participating in keeping their neighbourhood, and our community, safer where we live,

work and play.

**RCMP Scams and Fraud Awareness Division** - Reminder to be aware that during the Holiday Season all those offers that “seem to be too good to be true”, definitely are. Be sure not to give your personal, banking or credit card information out over the phone to a total stranger, or even a “so called” family member in trouble. Safeguard your credit cards, and personal information, that could allow those “Grinches” the opportunity to steal your Christmas cheer, identity and money.

**Shopping Centre and Store Owners** - remind everyone to drive safely. Everyone is hustling and bustling, highly motivated to get that last parking spot, that perfect Christmas present and baking supplies. Kindness gets you on Santa’s Nice List. Naughty gets you a lump of coal (of course you could find a diamond or a precious jewel...lol).

*... I heard him exclaim as he drove the speed limit out of sight A Safe Christmas to All and to All A Safe Night. Safety Doesn’t Happen by Accident. Let’s All Do Our Part. Merry Christmas and have a Safe Holiday Season from all of us at South Cowichan Community Policing - All The Best for 2024!*



Handel’s Messiah: Part 1

Eve Daniell soprano Ciara Gallagher alto  
Tim Carter tenor Kyron Basu baritone

Victoria Baroque Youth Orchestra  
Director: Elyssa Lefurgey-Smith

2.30pm Sing-Along Messiah

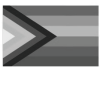
Adults \$50, Youth \$20, Kids \$10.  
[sylvansingalongmessiah.eventbrite.ca](http://sylvansingalongmessiah.eventbrite.ca)

5pm Candlelit Messiah

All tickets \$30  
[sylvancandlelit.eventbrite.ca](http://sylvancandlelit.eventbrite.ca)

Sunday, December 17th

Sylvan United Church, 985 Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road  
[sylvanunited.ca](http://sylvanunited.ca) or call (250) 743-4659



Mason’s Store

... wish our  
Shawnigan Lake friends  
and customers a ...

Happy  
Holiday Season!

OPEN EVERYDAY

Monday - Friday 6:30 AM - 11:00 PM  
Saturday & Sunday 8:00 AM - 11:00 PM

HOLIDAY HOURS

Christmas Eve 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM  
Christmas Day CLOSED  
Boxing Day 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM  
New Year’s Eve 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM  
New Year’s Day 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM



Shawnigan Lake Museum

Lori Treloar  
Executive Director

2023 has been quite a year for the museum. After planning, writing grants and raising funds for the last six years, we finally pushed the ‘go’ button and the project went out to tender. The highest bid was \$3.5 million, and the most affordable bid was \$2.4m. Fortunately, the contractor we chose, Cascadia West (the lower bid) was willing to work with us to make it happen. It meant that we had to cut some of the features to get started. We knew that if we didn’t start then, it would likely never happen.

The contractor mobilized to the site on May 29th, and we had a well-attended ground breaking ceremony on June 3rd.

If you have been in the

village lately, you have probably noticed that the expansion of the museum is now well underway. The project is expected to be at lock up before the Christmas holidays and completed by the end of May. Then we will likely need a few weeks to move in and set up exhibits. This is a very exciting time for us, and we are hearing from community members that it is for them as well. It is amazing to see it happening.

In addition to grant money, so many people have stepped up, pro bono, to help make this dream a reality – large donations from individuals/families who understand the value of the museum for the community, professional exhibit designers, a heritage consultant, artists, a consultant who will

help with our amazing new Kinsol Trestle exhibit, community members with amazing stories to share and so much more. This is truly a community project. We deliberately chose to add on to the current building as it was the original Shawnigan Fire Hall. There have been a few unexpected hiccups along the way, associated with a 70+ year old building, but we have managed to overcome them.

We have also been awarded a grant to develop a new volunteer program. A very experienced facilitator has been hired to help. Sometime in the new year, we will be reaching out to the community for volunteers who want to be a part of the future of the museum. This is an opportunity to celebrate our community, and its history, and to be a part



Donation to the Legion Poppy Fund, from ceramic poppy sales in the Museum Gift Shop (l-r) Virginia Bauder, Jacquie Marsh (Co-Chair Poppy Fund), Lori Treloar

of something great. No special skills are required, other than a love for our community and its history. We train volunteers as needed.

It is a very busy time with the building going up, developing exciting new exhibits, but we still have opening times (limited) for the museum and gift shop.

We are grateful to everyone who has helped to make this expansion a reality. Thank you!

If you have any questions, or would like to be involved with, or donate to, the museum, please contact:

***[museum@shawniganlakemuseum.com](mailto:museum@shawniganlakemuseum.com)***

Letter to the Community

Shelagh Bell-Irving

I was reading the November Shawnigan Focus and there were letters, from 1950, talking about the raising of

the weir being a horrible idea and I agreed...imagine my surprise to see one letter written by Michael Bell-Irving, my grandfather, who bought our property in 1941.

His fears have come true. We no longer have a beach and many riparian water bushes drowned because they raised the weir by 2 ft in 1998. Now they want to raise the weir on lake Cowichan and drown their shoreline.

Can we not learn from our mistakes? His wife, my Granny, told me that if we learn from our mistakes, they become lessons. Can we learn that drowning a shoreline harms the water quality and erodes the shoreline.

My Grandfather died the following year and never met any of us grandchildren, but we inherited his love for this lake. I will continue fighting to protect Shawnigan lake as it’s apparently a family tradition and in my blood.



St. John’s Academy Spotlight  
Shawnigan Lake



Visit our website for additional information:  
**[www.stjohnsacademy.ca](http://www.stjohnsacademy.ca)**

Fall Recap & What’s Coming

It has been an exciting year for SJA here in Shawnigan Lake. The academic year was kicked started with the launch of our soccer program and authorization as an IBDP (International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme) school

Mark Your Calendars

- Term 1 September 5 to November 24
- Term 2 November 27 to March 8
- Term 3 March 25 to June 21
- Spring Break March 9 to March 24
- Music Theatre Performance TBD April
- Fun Fair May 25

SJA Football Academy Update

With the successful launch of our Football Academy, our Fall 2024 lineup will be expanding to include girls. If you’re interested in learning more about our Football Academy and joining us for a “meet-and-greet” including a tour contact Jenny Boomer, [jenny.boomer@stjohnsacademy.ca](mailto:jenny.boomer@stjohnsacademy.ca) to reserve your spot.

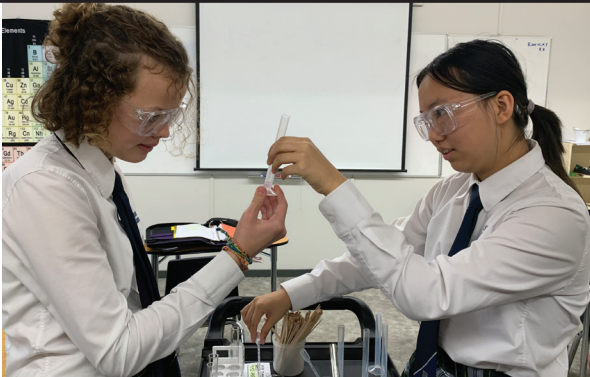
On behalf of St. John’s Academy Shawnigan Lake, we wish you all a peaceful holiday season, and safe travels.



Take Me Outside Day enhanced learning by heading outdoors. Some classes went on hikes, some created poetry in nature, some took Science outside and some created art with pieces of nature.



The MUN students have already attended two conferences: in Shawnigan Lake and in Seattle.



Our Science Department revitalization is already improving our quality of Science classes!



Our Senior Boy’s Soccer team were Island Champions making it to provincials on the mainland!

Halloween festivities were a big hit this year! There were was a costume contest, Family Feud game, and pumpkin bowling to round it off. These competitions were for House Points.



Shine On With Shawnigan Rotary!

Kim Barnard  
Founder-President-StoryGatherer

During June 2021’s heat dome, Shawnigan gained a new group of volunteers dedicated to caring for our shared outdoor spaces. The “Rotary Club of Shawnigan Lake EcoClub” registered with Rotary International as a tiny-but-mighty spark of service-minded residents... who all happened to make time for litter picking! It was natural that we align ourselves with Shawnigan’s “No Dumping” stance, and work to unite and equip the more than 9000 people in Area B to be gratefully caring for our home. For us, it’s Earth Day every day. But is that all we can be with Rotary? By no means! Before you ask, “What is

an EcoClub?” (a video is posted under Learn More at our website), let’s review what Rotary does. Since 1905, Rotary International encourages community volunteers to be giving back through projects and activities within “7 Areas of Focus” - Community Economic Development | Basic Education and Literacy | Maternal and Child Health | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene | Disease Prevention and Treatment | Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention are the first 6. The 7th is in many ways the foundation for all of these - our Environment. In Shawnigan Lake and surrounding geographical area, we share parks, trails and a watershed with natural resources that deserve our respect.

Our club actively looks to Indigenous and environmental stewardship groups throughout the Cowichan Valley for guidance and collaboration. We have so many ideas, and we welcome members to bring their talents to the table to grow our project possibilities! Most of all, we want to have fun in a flexible club format that especially works for busy people. Hint: we love exploring! If you’re looking to set intentions for 2024, Shawnigan Rotary is your ticket to endless learning, vibrant action, and encouraging leadership in strengthening our outlook and resilience. Illumine your world with us... Together We GLOW!   
www.ShawniganRotaryEcoClub.ca



“Block 228 Hike Feb 2022 - we always welcomed Ed Wiebe’s caring presence!”

Editor’s Note:  
With the passing of Ed Wiebe, the community has lost an ardent supporter and committed volunteer. Ed was also one of the finest people you could ever meet. He always had a smile and took the time to chat. Ed was there, in the dark and cold, when the community fought the illegal dumping on Stebbings Road; he monitored the Shawnigan Lake watershed, for years, with his friend Cliff Evans and he led many hikes in the area freely sharing his vast knowledge and so much more. The Shawnigan Basin Society summed it up with their Facebook post about Ed. We mourn the loss of a lifelong learner, ecosystem advocate, friend and SBS Director Edward Wiebe — Ed, you will be deeply missed by all who knew you!



Shawnigan Weather - November 2023 Report

Stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network and Weather Underground  
Reported by Grant Treloar



	Nov Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay		Discovery School		Butler Road		Museum		Shawnigan Area Average	
		2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Average High	8.5	8.6	6.5	10.0	7.9	9.5	7.8	9.9	7.9	9.5	7.5
Average Low	2.6	2.6	0.3	-1.9	-0.1	0.9	-1.4	2.8	0.4	2.1	-0.2
Extreme High	20.0	14.3	13.1	15.4	12.9	15.1	12.5	14.6	12.7	14.9	12.8
Extreme Low	-15.6	-1.6	-3.0	-2.2	-4.4	-3.4	-5.7	-1.0	-4.7	-2.1	-4.5
Precipitation	225.4	180.3	131.4	153.5	99.1	173.7	127.8	156.2	92.6	165.9	112.7
Days w precip	22	17	12	18	11	17	14	17	12	17	12.3
Year Precip	1056.2	1087.3	1107.7	820.0	869.4	1000.8	1082.4	733.9	772.5	910.5	958.0
Precip since Oct 1	340.1	405.3	235.5	303.9	167.1	389.5	237.2	297.4	156.7	349.0	199.1

Rank since 1914: 48<sup>th</sup> warmest, 51<sup>st</sup> driest

Nov 5	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26
11°	10°	8°	7°
+28cm	+18cm	0cm	-11cm
116.28m	116.46m	116.46m	116.35m

Lake Temperature  
Lake level change  
Surface Elevation

November 2023 was very close to normal, temperature wise. Warmest day was on the 2nd. At the end of the month there was 7 consecutive days with freezing temperatures, the coldest night coming on the 24th . Precipitation trends followed much of the rest of the year with 75% of normal. There was no snow this past month. Wettest days were on the 2nd and 4th with both those days totalling over 25mm. We now head into the earliest sunsets of the year with that time not changing more than a minute or so until the end of the month. Noonday sun peaks slightly below 20° above the horizon for most of December (compared to 65° in June).

QUALIFY FOR UP TO  
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WHEN YOU INSTALL  
A NEW HEAT PUMP  
\*Subject to terms & availability



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The Shawnigan Lake Volunteer  
Fire Department presents its annual



SANTA RUN

Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> - 6 pm to 9 pm

Santa visits the Beach Estates starting at Ceylon Road,  
making his way to Linden Lane.

On the East side, Santa starts in the Village, down to Wallbank  
Road, south to Galland Road, then north to the Burnum Park area.

At the South end, Santa will start at Shawnigan Station then over to  
the salt shack in Cougar Ridge.

FOOD & CASH DONATIONS GRATEFULLY  
ACCEPTED FOR THE LOCAL FOOD BANK



Help Us . . . Find You!  
. . . when You need Us!

Is it your choice...do we spend 30 minutes  
looking for you?...or do we spend 30  
minutes caring for you?

Our friends at panago pizza know the  
right choice and are prepared to prove it!  
With every purchase of a  
High Visibility Reflective House # Sign  
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Shawnigan Lake First Responders

Wish Our Community

A Safe & Happy

Holiday Season

Shawnigan Lake Fire Department

Phone: (250)743-2096 Non-emergency: (250) 812-8030 shawniganfire@shaw.ca

November 2023 Report

Department Members Attended 28 Incidents in November

- Wednesday, Nov 1 – Burning Complaint on Sunnybrook Ln
- Thursday, Nov 2 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Thursday, Nov 2 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Sunday, Nov 5 -1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Nov 5 - 1st Responder off Heald Rd
- Thursday, Nov 9 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- Thursday, Nov 9 – Chimney Fire on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Nov 11 – Hydro Lines on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Nov 11 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Nov 12 – Mutual Aid Structure Fire w/Mill Bay Fire on Lashburn Rd
- Tuesday, Nov 14 - 1st Responder off Meadowview Rd
- Tuesday, Nov 14 – MVI on Cameron-Taggart Rd
- Wednesday, Nov 15 - 1st Responder off Inn Rd
- Saturday, Nov 18 – Chimney Fire on Raymond Cres
- Saturday, Nov 18 - 1st Responder off Sooke Lake Rd
- Sunday, Nov 19 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Nov 19 – Hydro Lines on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Nov 19 - 1st Responder off Ravenhill Rd
- Sunday, Nov 19 – Assistance on Burnham Rd
- Sunday, Nov 19 - 1st Responder off Wilmot Ave
- Tuesday, Nov 21 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Nov 22 – Structure Fire on Carlton Dr
- Thursday, Nov 23 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Thursday, Nov 23 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Friday, Nov 24 – Chimney Fire on Raymond Cres
- Monday, Nov 27 – Alarms Activated on Renfrew Rd
- Monday, Nov 27 - 1st Responder off Ravenhill Rd
- Monday, Nov 27 – Burning Complaint on Wooden Rd



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COMMUNITY GROUPS

- **Area B Director's meetings with Sierra Acton**  
Email: [sierra.acton@cvrd.bc.ca](mailto:sierra.acton@cvrd.bc.ca)
- **Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission (APC)** Meetings TBA
- **Shawnigan Parks and Recreation Commission**  
Meetings are held bi-monthly on the third Thursday of the month.
- **Shawnigan Lake Community Centre Commission**  
Meetings TBA. Held at the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre
- **Shawnigan Improvement District**  
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- **Shawnigan Lake Museum**  
Contact us for information about hours and/or group visits.  
Contact: [museum@shawniganlakemuseum.com](mailto:museum@shawniganlakemuseum.com) (web): [shawniganlakemuseum.com](http://shawniganlakemuseum.com)
- **Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA)**  
For info: (web): [www.thesra.ca](http://www.thesra.ca)
- **Shawnigan Lake Community Association (SLCA)**  
Contact: [bburr@shaw.ca](mailto:bburr@shaw.ca)
- **Shawnigan Basin Society**  
#102-1760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road. Contact: [info@shawniganbasinsociety.org](mailto:info@shawniganbasinsociety.org)
- **Young Seniors Action Group (YSAGS)**  
Contact: [ysagssl@gmail.com](mailto:ysagssl@gmail.com) (web): [blog.ysag.ca](http://blog.ysag.ca)
- **South Cowichan Community Policing (SCCP)**  
Contact: 250-929-7222(web): [southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca](http://southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca)
- **Royal Canadian Legion Malahat District Branch 134**  
Saturday Meat Draw 3:00-5:00pm. Contact: Gloria [gsolley@shaw.ca](mailto:gsolley@shaw.ca)
- **Cowichan South Arts Guild (CSAG)**  
Contact: [hello@cowichansouthartsguild.com](mailto:hello@cowichansouthartsguild.com) (web): [cowichansouthartsguild.com](http://cowichansouthartsguild.com)
- **Shawnigan Quilters** - Wed. 9-2 at Lion's Hall (former Sylvania School)
- **Rotary Club of Shawnigan Lake Eco Club**  
Meeting Info & Contact: [ShawniganRotaryEcoClub.ca](http://ShawniganRotaryEcoClub.ca)
- **Malahat Lions Club**  
For information Contact: 250-743-0569

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Richard Neil was one of a number  
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silhouette in the Legion Sign.

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# Happy Holidays Shawnigan Lake!

**Sierra Acton**  
*Area B Director*

We are witnessing a lot of turmoil globally and feeling many pressures locally - everything from rising prices to an uncertain housing market. Sometimes, all it takes is a walk on one of our beautiful trails or a drive along the ocean to be reminded of how lucky we are to live here. As your Area Director, I have so much to be grateful for: the many volunteers and groups that support the community, the members of the various South Cowichan Commissions, and everyone else that

works hard to make this a wonderful place to live.

This year, to celebrate the holidays, the advisory volunteers from Areas A, B and C (Mill Bay, Cobble Hill and Shawnigan Lake) gathered to share a meal at the Cobble Hill Community Hall. Special thanks to the Farmers Institute for an amazing three course meal. As an area director, the CVRD Advisory Groups are very valuable confidants, advisors and engaged citizens who always have the community's best interest at heart. There were a few missing, and we missed you!!

I am grateful to have Amber Champ as my Alternate Director. She attends Board Meetings in my absence and has always stepped up when I needed her. Currently, Amber works in the school district helping kids in our community. She is born and raised in Shawnigan and, in addition to her history here, she brings a military family's perspective to the role.

I continue to reach out to get the community's input on our local area plans. If we haven't spoken yet feel free to connect. Stay Safe, take care of each other and enjoy your time with

friends and family this holiday season.  
As always, I'm available, your Area Director, Sierra.

Sierra Acton  
CVRD Director for Shawnigan Lake  
[Sierra.Acton@cvrd.bc.ca](mailto:Sierra.Acton@cvrd.bc.ca)



(l-r) Amber Champ, myself, Bruce Stevens, Matthuw Ronald-Jones, Pieter DeVries, John Robertson, Dan Nugent, Mark Champ, Calvin Cook, Jeffery Patterson, Edwin Rebner and Michael Battler at our Holiday Dinner

## Quw'utsun Nature Rambles

**Genevieve Singleton**  
*Genevieve is a wife, Mum, Nana, nature educator and biologist living in the Cowichan Valley*

Santa is busy these days checking out our very own local reindeer, Kwewe'uts (Hul'q'umi'num' word for Roosevelt elk), to be sure they are ready for Xmas Eve!! On these cold crispy mornings keep an eye open in the woods to see if Santa left some of his white beard on pieces of

rotting wood! Check out the photo!!

Jared Quwustenuxun Williams tells me that the Elders call this Sheyutun tu Sthima. In English it is known as Hair Ice and is only found between the latitudes of 45-55 degrees in areas where there is rotting, deciduous wood. A fungus, called Exidiopsis effusa, which lives in moist rotting deciduous wood, causes these crystals that look like cotton candy to

form when temperatures are slightly below 0 C and the air is humid.

Analysis of the ice shows that tannin and lignin molecules end up in the ice. Researchers hypothesize that one or more of those organic molecules keep the ice crystals from growing larger. If the temperature stays cool Ice Hair can last several days.

Every day I see miracles in nature.



## EXHIBIT GENEROSITY

And keep your money in our community!

Our little museum is growing!

### PROJECT IMPACT UPDATE:

You may have noticed we're under construction! Our project team and Board of Directors are working hard to have this community project complete before next summer.

The new space will feature a community space with a kitchen that can be booked for events starting September 2024.

We'll have 3 beautiful exhibits featuring local art and stories. We'll even have public washrooms!

We're really looking forward to sharing this much needed new space with you in 2024!

### WHY DONATE TO THE MUSEUM?

#### We support local tourism

The provincial government heavily cut back funding for visitor information centres and we act as the unofficial hub for local tourism.

#### We're the link to local history

In a world that seems in a rush to get to the future, we are the keepers of history. Stories from the past are an important part of the future and we are honoured to pass them along.

#### We are a group of mostly volunteers

The museum is a non-profit and our operations are funded from grants and donations from our community.



### HOW TO DONATE

There are many ways you can help support us. Visit [shawniganlakemuseum.com](http://shawniganlakemuseum.com) to learn more! We also have a Community Partners program for local businesses that wish to donate. Ask us about it!

Thank you ❤️

[www.shawniganlakemuseum.com/donate](http://www.shawniganlakemuseum.com/donate)