



Volume Seventeen- Issue Two

Shawnigan-Showe'luquun Focus

February 2025 Mím'ne'
"The time of the baby moon, the short month"

A Non-Profit Community Publication

Next Civic Election for Area Director: October 17, 2026

“Here!” for You

Kim Barnard
250-732-0531

When the teacher takes attendance, do you slowly put your hand up, or give an enthusiastic thumbs-up? I feel this motivation to be increasingly present at the CVRD boardroom. No longer nervous but keeping it real - by listening and observing, paying attention to past policy and taking notes on what's happening now. I really appreciate the friendly staff, and the genuine effort they make to help distribute the information and put us at ease.

It takes courage to step up for Area B, so I definitely bring my experiences to bear. I was a shy teen once, growing with Timmies and M&BcD's, before leaving home in Alberta to study in Langley, meet my Campbell River soulmate, and settle in BC for good. I've worked with plants, cleared boats and planes, and been lucky enough to land in the printing industry to learn graphic design on the job. We moved to the Island in 1993, discovering Shawnigan Lake as the perfect place to raise our family. 33 years later, with postings to Edinburgh, Yokohama and Rotterdam, helps me see Shawnigan afresh and keep learning!



I've taught Photoshop at SLS, expanded tech skills through Rotary service and assisting the Basin Society, hosted exchange students, and several years of public speaking with Toastmasters. My fellow posties agree, I'm not shy anymore!

With everything happening in the world, let's take heart. We are an incredible community in this valley, in a place infused with deep roots and diversity. Shawnigan's Rotary EcoClub will be led by Heather Plumb and team, so I can fully embrace a calendar of learning from all of the groups who meet and volunteer here.

I promise to stay in touch, be a conduit (and connector!) for the work being done, and remain approachable and answerable throughout some INTERESTING times ahead!

Remember When...

Amber Champ
Alternate Director

I recently had the pleasure of visiting the newly completed expansion of the Shawnigan Lake Museum, and it did not disappoint. From the moment you walk in, it's clear that a great deal of thought went into the design. The space feels open, welcoming, and well considered striking a thoughtful balance between honouring Shawnigan Lake's history and presenting it in a contemporary, engaging way.

As I walked through, it stirred up memories. Near the entrance, there is a podium welcoming visitors, and it is here I unexpectedly noticed my grandfather's name listed as the person who built it many years ago. That moment hit close to home. It was a reminder that this museum isn't just about objects behind glass; it's about the people, families, and stories that quite literally built our community.

Seeing the expansion also made me reflect on how Shawnigan Lake has managed to remain a small town at heart. We've grown and changed, yes but in a way that still feels thoughtful and true to who we are. Our charm and sense of familiarity have endured. Isn't that what we all hope for?

My thoughts drifted to places from years past Aiken and Fraser, which I continued to call Jerry's for many years after. Growing up, that's what it was to us, named after the wonderfully kind man who owned it and helped many in the community especially during the difficult years of the 1980s. Before Mason's became the store it is today, I remember the old building with its sit-down



counter—a place where people gathered, talked, and lingered. I even remember when the current building was moved from further down the street near where I lived.

These weren't just stores; they were part of everyday life. And even now, that same spirit carries on. I hear that Mason's donates their delicious, home-baked bread to the seniors' luncheon—a small gesture that says a great deal about community values that haven't been lost.

It all led me to a bigger question: remember when government felt like part of the community too? When it reflected its vision, its struggles, and its heart?

I believe that can be the case again.

As the Alternate Director (like a deputy) to Sierra Acton, the current Area Director, I've had the opportunity to learn a great deal as her backup by observing, listening, and stepping in where I can. With the next local election scheduled for October 17, I am looking forward to putting my name forward and continuing to serve in a way that keep our old values and sense of community.

*Remembering. Community.
Government with heart.*

Shawnigan Focus Team

Co-Editors:

Lori Treloar

Kim Hennecker

Advertising and Accounting:

Kim Hennecker

Layout:

Grant Treloar

1775 Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
Shawnigan Lake BC V8H 3B6

250-743-8675

shawniganfocuseditor@gmail.com

shawniganfocusads@gmail.com

Shawnigan Focus

South Cowichan Library

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

[www.facebook.com/
VIRLSouthCowichan](http://www.facebook.com/VIRLSouthCowichan)

The South Cowichan Library in the Mill Bay Centre is open:
Mon & Tue 10-6
Wed & Thu 10-7
Fri & Sat 10-6

Family Storytime is meeting every Friday at 10:30am this month!

Parent-Child Mother Goose happens every Thursday at 10:30-11:30am, mainly for children 0-2 and their adults.

The Inspired by Reading Book Club, hosted by the Cowichan South Arts Guild, meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, 5:15-6:45pm. The February 12 meeting will talk about The Woefield Poultry Collective by Susan Juby.

Common Scams in Canada is an online program from the Cowichan Intercultural Society and the Justice Education Society that you can watch at home or with others in the library on Friday, Feb 13, 1-2:30pm. For a Zoom link or more information, please email demy@cis-iwc.org or call 250-252-5684.

Tech Help: Drop in Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays or make an appointment for one-on-one help with a mobile device or laptop.

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.

Intermediate Conversational Spanish meets 5:30 to 6:30pm on Thursdays. Drop in to practice Spanish in a casual setting.

Conversational Scottish Gaelic is a fun way for people interested in learning Scottish Gaelic to practice together. Join in at 4:30pm on Tuesdays!

Intermediate Chess meets Wednesdays at 1pm. For experienced players looking for matches.

If you know someone local who is unable to come into the library due to illness or injury, please let them know about our volunteer Home Delivery service. They can get books, audiobooks, and DVDs delivered to their door monthly.

Book a Librarian: available various days and times for a 1-on-1 sessions.

Find out more at virl.bc.ca and on Facebook at VI Regional Library South Cowichan.

Find out more at virl.bc.ca and at [https://www.facebook.com/VIRLSouthCowichan](http://www.facebook.com/VIRLSouthCowichan)

Shawnigan Focus Weather — January 2026



Stats courtesy of [UVic Weather Network](#) and [Weather Underground](#)

Reported by Grant Treloar



	January Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay		Butler Road		Discovery School		Museum		Shawnigan Average	
		2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
Average High	6.3	7.1	5.4	7.5	6.5	8.0	7.1	8.0	6.2	7.7	6.3
Average Low	0.5	2.0	-0.2	0.6	-1.7	1.6	-0.8	2.1	-0.6	1.6	-0.8
Extreme High	15.0	11.9	8.2	11.8	11.2	12.3	11.0	12.8	10.1	12.2	10.1
Extreme Low	-21.1	-3.9	-3.3	-5.9	-5.6	-4.6	-4.2	-4.1	-4.0	-4.6	-4.3
Precipitation	215.3	252.3	75.6	200.4	58.7	197.6	58.7	177.1	57.5	206.9	62.6
Days w precip	20	17	11	15	12	16	13	15	12	16	12
Year Precip	215.3	252.3	75.6	200.4	58.7	197.6	58.7	177.1	57.5	206.9	62.6
Precip since Oct 1	534.7	1041.4	806.2	917.6	745.9	864.3	643.7	737.6	622.1	890.2	704.5

2026 Rank since 1914: 8th warmest, 49th wettest

Lake Readings	Jan 4	Jan 11	Jan 18	Jan 25
Temperature	5°	5°	5°	4°
Temperature 2025	5°	5°	4°	3°
Surface Elevation	116.775m	116.82	116.96	116.61
Elevation 2025	116.93m	116.69m	116.46m	116.28m

Comments

January ended up being warmer than normal (8th warmest) and close to normal for precipitation compared to the long time averages since 1914.

The warmest day was on the 12th, with temperatures hovering near 12°. The daytime temperature exceeded 10° on 4 days. The coldest night was on the 25th, under clear skies with temps bottoming out near -4°. There were 14 days with freezing temperatures, including 12 in a row during the dry spell.

With a 13 days dry spell after the middle of the month, the precipitation total was very close to average. There were 4 days when just over 25mm was recorded in some areas. There was no snow recorded. So far, the wet season (October - April) is running about 170% of normal due to a wet fall.

The lake levels are now fluctuating with the amount of heavy rain/dry days. It can very as much as 30cm over a couple of weeks, depending on the rainfall amount. about 28 cm below the long time average.

We are now ending the “dark time of the year”. Over February the daylight hours increase from about a minute a day at the beginning to almost 3 minutes a day by the 28th. Sunset moves from 4:29 PM on the 1st to 5:11 PM on the 28th.

Learning Gaelic Together: Language, Kinship, and the Courage to Begin

Teàrlach Eshu Kilgour

Scottish Gaelic (Gàidhlig) is often spoken about as something fragile — a language to be preserved, rescued, or archived. But anyone who has spent time in Gaelic-speaking spaces knows a different truth: Gaelic is a living social practice. It thrives not through perfection, but through use — spoken aloud, imperfectly, in the presence of others.

For many people in the Cowichan Valley and across Vancouver Island, interest in Gaelic is already there. Some have dabbled through apps or books. Others once took a class and drifted away. Many feel drawn

to the language because of ancestry, while others arrive through music, land-based culture, or a longing for community that feels slower and more relational.

What often gets in the way is not motivation, but structure.

Language learning, especially for adults, is notoriously difficult to sustain in isolation. Apps can be helpful, but they rarely teach people how to be with one another in a language. Gaelic, perhaps more than most, is shaped by social presence — by listening, responding, and learning to hold one's place in a shared rhythm of speech.

Traditionally, Gaelic was learned not in classrooms but in community settings: kitchens, fields, cèilidh houses. People learned by being around the language, hearing it used naturally, and being gently brought into participation. Confidence came later. Presence came first.

This approach is beginning to re-emerge in contemporary learning circles, where beginners and early learners commit to learning together over time rather than dropping in and out. These models ask more of participants — regular attendance, shared responsibility, practice between sessions — but they also offer something rare: the

chance to belong while learning.

In this spirit, a new term-based Foundations of Gaelic learning circle will begin in March, offering an entry point for beginners and near-beginners who are ready to show up consistently and learn in relationship with others. The programme blends structured weekly learning with guided conversation circles, and will culminate in an in-person cèilidh gathering here on the island.

It is not a fast track to fluency, nor is it designed for advanced speakers. It is, instead, a commitment



Teàrlach Eshu Kilgour

to beginning well — together.

For those curious about Gaelic, or wondering whether it's “too late” or “too hard” to begin, the answer is simple: you don't need confidence. You need presence. The rest grows from there.

Those interested in learning more about the March Foundations of Gaelic programme can inquire by email at redmountainwizard@gmail.com.

A Life in the Country - Part 6

Robert Amos
Artist & Author

For several generations, Bruce Hutchison was one of Canada's beloved newspapermen and "the dean of Canadian political commentators". When he found time to leave his Victoria home for some rest and relaxation, he made his way to Shawnigan Lake where he transformed

*a wilderness shack into a family cabin full of memories. In 1988 - at the age of 87 years - Hutchison published *A Life in the Country*, a bittersweet look at the joys and tribulations of "the country life that urban dwellers envy and fortunately escape." This is the sixth of a series of excerpts from this book.*

Robert Amos



Linocut by Marion Dahl

"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much"

Helen Keller

On the western seashore, as I grew older, spring offered a different spectacle. It ambled in from the sea at leisurely gait with the Japan Current and spread its salty flavour abroad with a fragrant whiff of earth and blossom.

Flabby coastal dwellers like Dot and me had watched our jasmine bush flaunt a constellation of yellow stars before the old year's end. Next came the white bells of snowdrops, apparently too weak for stormy weather yet strong enough to break through a black-topped garden path and breed colonies under the Gothic arches and intricate groaning of the oak trees. Swarms of azure crocus followed, their petals closing tight whenever a cloud hid the sun. A golden sibling bloomed a week or so later to provide a treasure trove of bullion for the honeybees.

Purple heather had been in flower since Christmas, and by mid-February rhubarb, bold pioneer of the vegetable family, thrust up its crimson buds and wrinkled leaves in a pattern of green lace. Already we had discovered the first dandelion, like a miniature chrysanthemum, its

beauty rejected only because its seeds blew too far and fast on tiny parachutes, and its presence was too common.

In those days the world was at peace. We were too, but heedless of our blessings when we knelt in the gardener's posture of reverence to plant an edible crop. For this purpose, we long had the help of a dairy farmer who, every year, gave us a Christmas present of rich barnyard stuff. As we scattered it thrifly on the vegetable patch, our seasoned nostrils relished the perfumes of Arabia. Nowadays, few gardeners and fewer vegetables enjoy that noisome luxury.

The worms seemed to enjoy it with special gusto, becoming fat and sleek as they continued their immemorial task. Since civilization began, or even before, in the age of food gatherers, the worm has been one of mankind's most valuable and least appreciated servants. If its myriads failed to break up the clotted earth and, by its simple digestive system, renew the planet's fertility, humans would starve. And so would other species.

In boyhood I had impaled worms on my fishhook with no

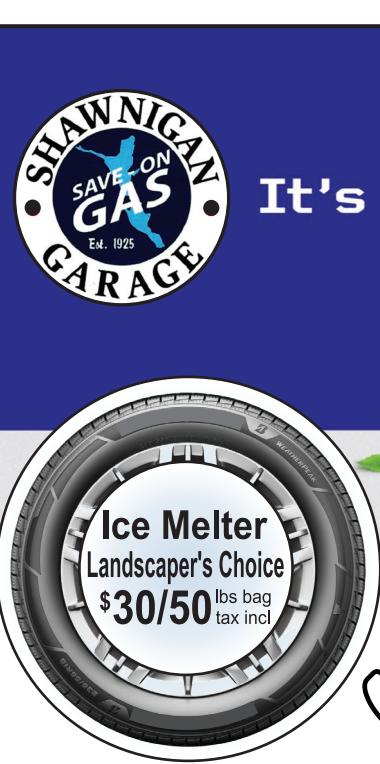
thought of their value. As a countryman I scrupulously preserved them and rescued any that got lost on the paths, returning them to their natural habitation.

It was good for Dot and me to feel the loam in our hands, to plant seeds and participate, however marginally and clumsily, in the rite of creation. We grew enough vegetables to feed at least three families and, though we resolved each spring to plant less, we usually expanded the garden. There was a strange fascination in vegetables, which, unlike shrubs and trees, completed their life cycle in half a year. We didn't need to wait long to see nature's whole performance and the results of our work.



"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much"

Helen Keller



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Museum Update

Lori Treloar
Executive Director

The museum will resume regular hours, 10-3:30 Tuesday to Saturday, starting February 3rd even though it is still a work in progress... If you have never been in the museum, we encourage you to take a chance. If you have visited, prior to the expansion, you will likely be surprised...there are a lot of changes! Shawnigan has a long, rich history and a strong community spirit...it is not just a summer destination. We look forward to your visit!

In addition to regular openings, we will be resuming our school programming in April/May/June; we offer a monthly soup event for

seniors (members get priority); special events through the year; new exhibits and surprises; talks; workshops and much more. And, we have a shop where you can find great gifts or Shawnigan related items.

In late March, we will co-host the 3rd Annual Storytelling event, with the Cowichan South Arts Guild, at the museum. Watch for details. Later in the year, there will be other staged events.

Did you know that the museum has a library with a wide variety of history books on people, places and things? Members can take out books and non-members can enjoy them in our library space. Also, there are several

traditional board games that visitors can play in the library. Watch for a games event in the future...

The museum also has a lovely retro theatre where you can choose to watch Shawnigan history. There are many choices that have been developed by staff and summer students over the years.

How can you get involved? Become a member and/or a volunteer. Membership is one way to support the museum. It is an important indicator of support when we write grants. Volunteering at the museum is a very rewarding way to get involved in the community and meet new people.

shawniganlakemuseum.com



Shawnigan Lake Fire Department

Phone: (250)743-2096 Non-emergency: (250) 812-8030

shawniganfire@shaw.ca

Mission Statement: To provide fire suppression, medical aid and rescue services to the community. To protect life, property and environment through prevention, public education and emergency response.

January 2026 Report

Department Members Attended
34 Incidents in January

- Thursday, Jan 1 - 1st Responder off Cameron-Taggart Rd
- Friday, Jan 2 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Jan 3 - 1st Responder off Jersey Rd
- Sunday, Jan 4 - MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Jan 4 - MVI on Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- Monday, Jan 5 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Tuesday, Jan 6 - 1st Responder off Sooke Lake Rd
- Saturday, Jan 10 - Mutual Aid Rope Rescue w/Malahat Fire
- Saturday, Jan 10 - MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Jan 11 - 1st Responder off Gregory Rd
- Sunday, Jan 11 - 1st Responder off Thain Rd
- Monday, Jan 12 - 1st Responder off Ravenhill Rd
- Monday, Jan 12 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Wednesday, Jan 14 - MVI on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Thursday, Jan 15 - 1st Responder off Treit Rd
- Thursday, Jan 15 - 1st Responder off Bob O Link Rd
- Thursday, Jan 15 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd

Thank you to all of
our advertisers and
contributors
for supporting
this local publication!

Opinion

Dear Mr. Kibble and Mr. Poilievre:

I attended the January 10, 2026 Townhall in Cowichan Valley as a local constituent and I cannot tell you how disappointed I am in what I saw and heard. Between people being denied entry for the t-shirts they wore, the jeers of the crowd and the condescending way a man in a wheelchair was treated and the outright mischaracterizations of several policy issues, I am aghast to think that this is how Canadian citizens are being served at the federal level of government by the Conservative Party.

Apparently, there is no room in your party for free speech, the inclusion of all Canadian citizens, immigration, foreign aid and the “wokeism” that is generally used to level the playing field for so many of our less privileged citizens. You displayed and projected a broad misunderstanding of how our Canadian government works. Your inability to delve into policy issues in any substantive way demonstrates a lack of reality and/or a play for political gain.

Canada is not broken and the Cowichan Valley is not a crime ridden region. Sure, we can do things better and they are being done better, no help from you. Polls continue to show massive approval for Mr. Carney and his work to put us on a solid global footing. (Note: I did not vote Liberal). Your attempts to tear us down in the face of the threats from the American administration are less than helpful, and Mr. Poilievre’s earlier praise for the kidnapping of Venezuelan President Maduro is simply unCanadian.

Let me outline just some of the issues that came out of your Townhall:

1. People were ejected prior to the beginning of the meeting for wearing t-shirts valuing equality, diversity and the Palestinian people. Mr. Kibble had a direct quarrel with that and directed the RCMP to toss them out of the hall.
2. You started 45 minutes late. There were chairs set out for less than half the crowd so many elderly people were forced to stand for a long period of time and there was no request to ensure those who needed to sit could do so. People were required to register for this event so you knew
3. how many people were going to show up.
4. A man in a wheelchair asked Mr. Poilievre how he, as an elite, could understand the situation of vulnerable people. The crowd immediately booed and jeered while Mr. Poilievre laughed and said he’d had worse questions than that before. He was condescending in his manner, replying that he was the adopted son of a couple and choose a political life at the age of 16. How that proves anything is beyond me. But thus speaks the man who refused to move out of Stornaway and its flotilla of servants supported by taxpayer dollars when he lost his seat in April.
5. Mr. Poilievre accused Prime Minister Carney of causing inflation by printing excessive amounts of money. In his 20 plus years of political life, he should know by now that it is the Bank of Canada that is responsible for printing money and holds that mandate precisely to fend off political interference.
6. Fee simple issues raised by the Cowichan Tribes decision was an easy topic to whip up the crowd. There was no mention made of the reconciliation process that will be used to solve this issue.
7. Lumber tariffs: Mr. Poilievre blamed Mr. Carney for the American increase in lumber tariffs and says he should have had a deal by July 21. As most Canadians know, Trump is entirely unpredictable and there’s no point in getting him to sign anything. Clearly, the solution is to develop partnerships elsewhere in the global market.
8. Forestry: Mr. Poilievre mentioned the Crofton mill, laying the blame on the federal government. Forestry is a provincial responsibility and, in this case, the fault lies with the provincial NDP government. The issue is the lack of accessible fibre as the entire province is running out of trees to clear cut. Mr. Poilievre who stated earlier that you have to know the problem in order to solve it, was clearly not familiar with this information.
9. Affordability: one of the main themes of the Townhall, Mr. Poilievre’s solution is to cut taxes,

those imposed on farmers, food, carbon, etc (which is not true or minuscule) and to get rid of consultants. No mention of the grocery corporations or Real Estate Investment Trusts making record-breaking profits.

10. Crime: the other major theme of the Townhall, Mr. Poilievre’s solution is to throw everyone in jail, from drug addicts to corporate drug makers of opioids. He should also be aware that it is the judiciary that sets sentencing protocols, not politicians.

11. Oil Pipelines: apparently this is the panacea to bring billions of dollars into Canada, notwithstanding that China, India and the European Union are weaning themselves off oil and gas and onto renewable energy sources. And how many private proponents are stepping up to build the required infrastructure in Canada? Zero. You might want to keep up. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/solar-wind-renewables-coal-electricity-1.7653234>

12. Mr. Poilievre still refuses to undertake his security clearance, yet he has much to say about the defence and security of our Arctic. He is unlikely to have any significant input into this program.

13. It is sad to think that so many people in the Cowichan Valley have no tolerance for people outside their bubble and sadder still to think of the fate that awaits us should the Conservatives be elected as the governing party of Canada.

14. Only by building strong communities, embracing our diversity and differences, and employing programs based on reality rather than political spin can we meet the crises and threats faced by our nation. Being relevant and kind is key to winning Canadian hearts and votes.

Sincerely yours,
Kathy Code
Cowichan Malahat
Langford Constituent

Ways to Help... Hearts Unite!

Community Safety Happens When We Work Together

Sarah Davidge-Cardinal
SCCP

We're Looking for Volunteers – Yes, YOU!

Are you fun, dedicated, and flexible? Do you love the community where you live, work, and play? If so, the South Cowichan Community Policing & Engagement Society (SCCPAS) wants to hear from you!

We are currently seeking volunteers for a variety of important and rewarding roles, including:

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- Friendly Phone Callers
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Call us today at 250-929-7222 or stop by our South Cowichan office to learn more.

Email: sccp@shaw.ca
<https://southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca/>

Live in North Cowichan/Duncan or Cowichan Bay?

No problem! Reach out at 250-597-7927 or visit one of our offices in North Cowichan, or Cowichan Bay. Email: sccp@shaw.ca

Because safety doesn't just happen — it takes all of us. Let's do our part, together.

More Opinion

Eric J. Ronse
Shawnigan Lake, BC

As a senior, I feel compelled to connect to others who feel the bed shortage for needy seniors is dire. A spokesperson stated today there is a 1000 bed shortage in BC and that purpose-built construction should be undertaken at once.

Here, in nearby Duncan, a new hospital is being built. It stands to reason that the existing hospital could be repurposed as a seniors centre, with very little transformation needed should seniors opt to take up residence there. The main take-away is that an existing structure will significantly reduce the residency cost for the prospective seniors.

We live in a disposable society. In Europe, a building as the referred to hospital, would stand for generations. As someone with a knowledge and background in the field of construction, and eminently aware of the life-status of the hospital, I state confidently that, for nothing if not the bottom line, that structure ought to be allocated to needy seniors. It would also allow for couples to share a room rather than to forcibly dislodge decades and life-long relationships.

We should look at all buildings at the three levels of government that are to be vacated or deconstructed and determine whether they would be suitable for remediation to address this pressing need.

SHAWNIGAN CEMETERY

Notice of Annual General Meeting 2026

To receive reports and review accounts for the year
January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025

Date : Sunday, February 22, 2026

Time : 11:45 AM

Place : Sylvan United Church

Lower Social Hall

985 Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road

Contact : Roy Davies - ADMINISTRATOR

250-929-6100

 **Shawnigan Cemetery**

Malahat Legion

Jeff Lydiatt
Malahat Legion

February 2026 at the
Malahat Legion

Regular Hours

Fridays and Saturdays

- Bar 1:00-7:00 PM
- Kitchen 12:00-4:30 PM

Drop-in Events

Wednesdays

- Crib 1:00 - 3:30 PM

Fridays

- Euchre - 2:00-4:00 PM
- Mahjong - 1:00-3:30 PM

Saturdays

- Meat Draws - 3:00-5:00 PM

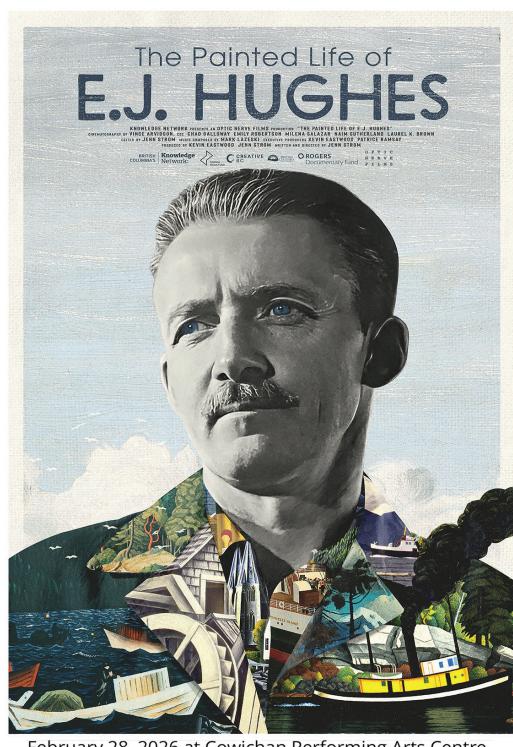
*Our Special Events:

- Sunday, February 8th – The Legion is OPEN for the Super Bowl 2 PM to 9 PM. Bar is open and Kitchen has hot appetisers. See the action on a big screen TV with

excellent sound.

- Monday, February 9th – The International Auction is at the Legion 9 PM to 5 PM buying gold, silver, watches, sports cards. See the ad on our website.
- Friday, February 13th – Valentine's Day BBQ Steak Dinner. Mits plays music bingo after. Reservations available on our website, malahatlegion.ca.
- Friday, February 27th – Bingo Fundraiser for the CMS Food Bank 5:30 – 8 PM. Reserve your pizza slices and bingo cards online at the malahatlegion.ca.
- Saturday, February 28th – Wounded Warrior BC Runners arrive after the meat draw. Lot of excitement. Please join us.

More Legion events are available at Upcoming Legion Events



February 28, 2026 at Cowichan Performing Arts Centre
also at the Shawnigan Lake Museum date TBA

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Ways to Help... Hearts Unite!

Kim Barnard, Heather Plumb and Marcy Fenske
Shawnigan Rotary EcoClub

Imagine the feeling of entering a room and being warmly greeted by name and encouraged to belong!

Everyone is welcome to join us at Shawnigan's "Ways to Help... Be a Volunteer" Appreciation Day on Saturday, February 14th from 10am-2pm at the SBS Community Table Space in Shawnigan Village, jointly hosted by the Shawnigan Rotary EcoClub and the Shawnigan Basin Society, in support of the Food Bank.

Attendees will get to enjoy refreshments, discover who's who, learn where the needs are, make heartfelt tokens of appreciation, and take inspiration from those who actively volunteer and those who are curious to know more!

We seek to connect with caring members of the community who want to give of their time and talents to make positive change happen - bookmark this year's Clean Up on April 25th!

Representatives from our volunteer-driven community groups are especially invited to attend and to share your experiences! We are offering information, inspiration and gratitude for your generosity and example. We believe that dedicated volunteers deserve to be celebrated - and multiplied!

It's the projects shared that creates that mutually-rewarding bond of connection and belonging. Together with our kind hosts, we invite you to explore the opportunities and benefits of offering your skills and expanding your friendship connections here!

Bring your family to the SBS Community Table on Saturday, February 14th from 10am-2pm to make the most of this opportunity. Together let's celebrate the ways of kindness for helping others! There'll be Door Prizes happening, and Food Bank Donations gratefully accepted! Hearts unite, we are stronger together!

Your hosts,
Kim Barnard, Heather Plumb and Marcy Fenske



Watershed Stewardship - 5 Year Plan and Ecosystem

John Robertson Director, SBS

The Shawnigan Basin Society, established in 2012, is a registered non-profit society. Our mission is to restore and preserve the ecological function of our community watersheds and the drinking water they supply in the South Cowichan region generally, and Shawnigan Creek Watershed specifically. We work with community members, community organizations, local First Nations and the CVRD to identify and implement holistic solutions that guide development and provide for the needs of the community while maintaining and enhancing the ecosystem services we need.

The recently adopted Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas identifies the importance of natural systems in providing services that are essential for the sustainment of our community. The CVRD lists four challenges that guide policy with respect to natural assets:

- increasing human footprint on natural areas,
- resultant habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation,
- invasive species impact on biodiversity,
- climate change impacts.

The SBS Five Year Plan targets strategies and actions that support the CVRD Official Community Plan objectives and policies, providing an opportunity to continue a partnership that works towards achieving common goals. Specifically, the SBS wishes to engage with the CVRD and First Nations partnerships, supporting the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program. We are updating our Ecosystem-based Conservation Plan for the Shawnigan Lake Watershed through GIS analysis to provide a current assessment of the distribution of ecosystems, disturbances, ownership, and land use across the landscape. Once updated, the

information can be used to identify opportunities for setting aside areas for conservation, mitigation of biodiversity loss, and restoration of critical ecosystems while allowing for community growth.

There are three strategies the SBS is pursuing to meet the target of 30% of the landscape protected from ecosystem loss and degradation by 2030. The first is modeled by the Elkington Forest property in the south end of the watershed. A minor percentage of the property is targeted for development, while the remainder is committed to conservation or ecosystem-based management practices that preserve and restore natural attributes. The SBS is in negotiation with the Living Forest Trust to assume management responsibilities of the forest lands with the goal of establishing a learning centre for forest ecology and promote access for First Nations cultural practices.

The second is the commitment of CVRD



Community Forests to a formal Community Forest Trust designation that entrenches a long term management plan devoted to the establishment of mature forest attributes in perpetuity. The Sooke Lake Road Community Forest and the Stebbings Road Community Forest are two properties that fit this approach.

The third is to identify crown forest parcels and work with First Nations groups to establish a Community Forest Trust tenure model committing the forest to ecosystem-

based management practices aimed at promoting old growth stands and providing important cultural and spiritual values for indigenous groups.

This is just one facet of the work at SBS. All our effort comes from volunteers of various backgrounds and expertise and much work lies ahead of us. If you have an interest in shaping the future of your community for generations to come, please consider joining the SBS.

New Leadership for Camp Shawnigan's Next Chapter



As I step into the role of Acting CEO of Easter Seals BC/Yukon, I do so with a deep sense of gratitude and optimism. In my first year with the organization, I've been inspired every day by the passion, determination, and generosity that surround us. Our supporters contribute not only their time and financial support, but also their voices, advocating alongside us to create meaningful opportunities for people with disabilities.

For more than 20 years, I've had the privilege of working with donors and community groups to build programs rooted in shared values, transparency, and long-term impact. At the heart of that work has always been a belief in relationships, fostering trust, collaboration, and a shared commitment to meaningful change.

This year has been one of transition for Easter Seals as we look toward an exciting future at Camp Shawnigan. This camp has played an important role for generations of campers and families, but much of its infrastructure has reached the end of its useful life. Now is the time to re-imagine what this space can be.

The new Camp Shawnigan will be a modern, inclusive, year-round facility that reflects current and future best practices in accessibility and support. It will extend our impact beyond the summer months and become a place where belonging thrives and barriers disappear, a true community asset.

As we move from vision to construction, I'm filled with excitement to share this journey with the community. I look forward to what lies ahead and to working together to ensure Easter Seals BC/Yukon continues to grow, evolve, and serve our community for generations to come.

Tristan Klassen

Tristan Klassen, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Easter Seals BC/Yukon



I am honoured to step into the role of Manager, Capital Campaign, leading the redevelopment of Easter Seals BC/Yukon's Camp Shawnigan, a place that has long represented possibility, independence, and belonging for people with disabilities.

After more than two years working with Easter Seals BC/Yukon, I officially stepped into this role in the fall to guide the transformation of Camp Shawnigan. This redevelopment is about more than buildings; it's about removing barriers, creating access, and ensuring children, youth, and adults with disabilities can participate fully, safely, and confidently in camp life.

This work is deeply personal to me. As a parent of a son on the autism spectrum, I understand how often systems fall short of true inclusion. Camp Shawnigan is a place where differences are celebrated, supports are built in, not bolted on, and campers can build friendships, try new things, and gain independence in an environment that truly understands them.

With accessibility at its core, the redevelopment will create modern, inclusive spaces where campers can move freely and focus on what matters most: fun, growth, and connection.

I'm grateful to work alongside an incredible community of supporters, donors, volunteers, and partners who believe, as I do, that inclusion isn't optional, it's essential. Together, we are building a future where Camp Shawnigan continues to change lives for generations to come.

Elena Lawson

Elena Lawson, Manager, Capital Campaign
Easter Seals BC/Yukon



COMMUNITY GROUPS

- CVRD Director for Shawnigan Lake Area B**
Sierra.Acton@cvrd.bc.ca
- Area B Parks Advisory and Area B Advisory Planning Commission**
[https://www.cvrd.ca/list.aspx# \(sign up for meeting notifications\)](https://www.cvrd.ca/list.aspx# (sign up for meeting notifications))
- CVRD Public Input to the whole Board**
LegislativeServices@cvrd.bc.ca
- Shawnigan Improvement District**
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- Shawnigan Lake Museum**
Contact us for information: 250-743-8675
museum@shawniganlakemuseum.com (web): shawniganlakemuseum.com
- Shawnigan Lake Community Association (SLCA)**
Contact: bburr@shaw.ca
- Shawnigan Basin Society**
#102-1760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road.
Contact: info@shawniganbasinsociety.org
- Young Seniors Action Group (YSAGS)**
Contact: ysagssl@gmail.com (web): blogysag.ca
- South Cowichan Community Policing (SCCP)**
Contact: 250-929-7222 (web): southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca
- Royal Canadian Legion Malahat District Branch 134**
Events: (web) malahatlegion.ca/upcoming-legion-events
Contact: (web) malahatlegion.ca/contact-us
250-643-4621
- Cowichan South Arts Guild (CSAG)**
Contact: hello@cowichansouthartsguild.com
(web): 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
- Malahat Lions Club**
Contact: 250-743-0569

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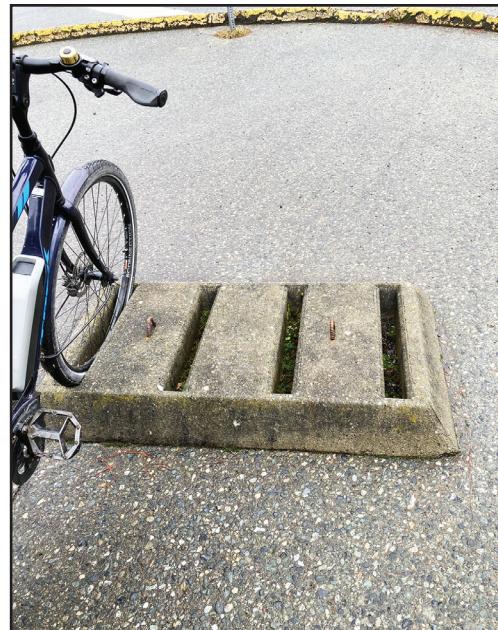
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shawniganfocusads@gmail.com

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



One lucky respondent with the correct answer will be randomly selected to win two Specialty Coffees. Thanks to Shawnigan House Coffee

Congratulations!
Shirley Sukkel identified the table and bench on the property of Shawnigan Alliance Church from last month's edition.

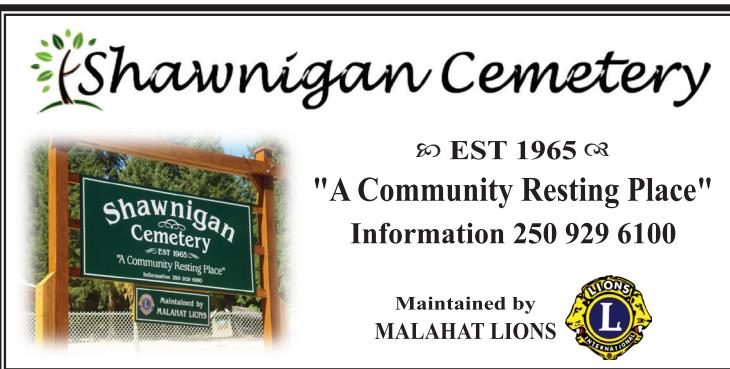
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