

CVRD Election for Area Director

Each of the four candidates for Area B-Shawnigan Lake were asked to respond to reader’s questions. Below in reverse alphabetical order are their answers...

Alan Sutherland



How do you plan to reduce the tax burden on homeowners and find alternate revenue sources?

CVRD taxes are only one component of our annual tax bill and are necessary to finance services that we need such as roads.

I will work with my fellow directors to improve efficiencies and reduce costs wherever possible especially with duplicate services.

I support grant applications that will help fund services while recognizing that we are the taxpayers.

How will you address population growth in Shawnigan, and the additional infrastructure needed, but also support citizens who wish to maintain the rural culture of Area B?

We have an annual rainfall of over 1000 mm and our streams, lakes and aquifers support development.

We need to support development where this resource is not negatively impacted and is feasible.

What specific actions do you plan to undertake to protect and improve water quality in Shawnigan Lake and its associated creeks and, in addition, gain more control of enforcement of boating regulations on the lake?

Water quality is very important to us all and is regulated by all levels of government. If there are situations where the CVRD can take action to improve water quality, I will support them and I will act as your advocate with all agencies and today, we have salmon spawning in our local streams.

How will you support arts and culture in the Cowichan Valley? What relationships or affiliations (e.g., with developers or groups like Citizens oversight and accountability project) should voters know about that could affect your role as CVRD director?

Art and culture are important to communities and grants are available to support them.

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Kyle Cheveldayoff



How do you plan to reduce the tax burden on homeowners and find alternate revenue sources?

Area B taxes have roughly doubled in a decade, while wages and inflation have not kept pace. Residents are not getting double the services for double the cost. The CVRD runs 179 services, and some carry surplus balances that sit idle. Function 325, community planning, holds about \$1.6 million. Before any new tax, I will advocate for a full audit of every service: what each holds, what it spends, and what it delivers. Where surplus sits unused, I will bring forward amendments to reallocate it to urgent needs like affordable housing, or close services that no longer earn their tax line. Shawnigan also deserves a stronger voice: it contributes about 22 percent of the tax base among the nine electoral areas, and Areas A, B, and C together over 50 percent. That share has grown out of balance with what Shawnigan receives back. I will have those discussions with the other directors and push to correct it.

How will you address population growth in Shawnigan, and the additional infrastructure needed, but also support citizens who wish to maintain the rural culture of Area B?

Shawnigan is 97.8 percent rural. The growth containment boundary covers just 2.2 percent of the plan area. I reverse-engineer this problem: young adults are leaving because land is too expensive, and parents at my recent meetings tell me they are scared their kids will move away. The answer is not more urban density. It is responsible rural development in harmony with the land. That means easing bylaws so growing families can subdivide, a teenager can put a tiny home on the back acre, and a young adult can buy a piece of land and build a homestead. Ponds and cisterns can carry homes through water-shortage months, taking stress off the system. That keeps the Shawnigan spirit alive. I already demonstrated this at the podium and behind the scenes during the months residents pushed back against Bylaws 4710 and 4632, and I will keep doing it as one voice among sixteen.

What specific actions do you plan to undertake to protect and improve water quality in Shawnigan Lake and its associated creeks and, in addition, gain more control of enforcement of boating regulations on the lake?

Lake water quality is non-negotiable. The summer water problem is delivery, not supply. Shawnigan Lake holds 65 million cubic metres, but the pump station, treatment, and distribution cannot meet peak demand, so restrictions hit every summer.

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Amber Champ



How do you plan to reduce the tax burden on homeowners and find alternate revenue sources?

Rising property taxes are frustrating, especially when Shawnigan families are already feeling the pressure of higher costs. Hard-earned tax dollars need to be treated with care, with the CVRD held accountable for how they are spent. That means asking tough questions, scrutinizing spending, prioritizing essential services and finding efficiencies before asking residents to pay more. It also means exploring sustainable revenue through responsible economic growth, supporting local businesses and broadening the tax base. The CVRD is finally moving forward with an asset management plan. Following through will help ensure the infrastructure we already have is properly managed, maintained and budgeted for, helping avoid larger costs down the road.

Nobody likes paying taxes. Shawnigan residents deserve to know their money is being spent wisely and providing value to the community. Good financial planning and clear accountability should guide the decisions that shape our future.

How will you address population growth in Shawnigan, and the additional infrastructure needed, but also support citizens who wish to maintain the rural culture of Area B?

Shawnigan can welcome change while maintaining the character, Shawnigan is growing, and that growth needs to be planned for rather than simply reacted to. New housing and businesses need to be matched with the roads, water, infrastructure and services our community requires. Smart, responsible growth should consider our existing infrastructure capacity and long-term needs while respecting the people who already call Shawnigan home. Our rural character, lake, forests, farms and strong sense of community matter deeply to residents. Welcoming new families and businesses can be part of Shawnigan’s future, but current residents should not be overlooked as the community changes. Good planning and responsible investment in infrastructure can help ensure new growth contributes appropriately to the services it requires and supports a community that works for people at every stage of life.

Shawnigan can welcome change while maintaining the character, community and quality of life that make this such a special place to call home.

What specific actions do you plan to undertake to protect and improve water quality in Shawnigan Lake and its associated creeks and, in addition, gain more control of enforcement of boating regulations on the lake?

(continued on page 3)

Kim Barnard



How do you plan to reduce the tax burden on homeowners and find alternate revenue sources?

The current tax burden from spending at the CVRD includes Garbage & Recycling, Recreation, Regional Recreation, and General Government. We must make decisions that decrease operational spending, while maintaining vital (and aging) infrastructure. Savings can be found in doing more with less, and doing more in-house thanks to qualified staff rather than incurring fees from outside consultants.

According to the CVRD’s publicly available information, in 2026 they published that 41% of service funding comes from taxation, versus 57% in 2024. More funds now come from grants and other sources like program fees and rental income. It may be possible to continue to grow these alternative funding sources even as our population is predicted to increase. Advocating for more federal and provincial support in the form of grants is necessary and ongoing. I believe that building relationships at every level of government is key in accomplishing effective results throughout our lakeside community.

How will you address population growth in Shawnigan, and the additional infrastructure needed, but also support citizens who wish to maintain the rural culture of Area B?

Population growth in Shawnigan village (our Growth Containment Boundary area) is constrained by a lack of sewer infrastructure and available units for water usage. I often look over at the CRD who have planned for the next several decades with water from the Sooke Lake Reservoir. However, we need solutions here and now. Flexible housing including accessory suites and backyard tiny homes would support residents of all ages and stages to live affordably and interdependently. I believe that incentives for energy-efficient renovations, adopting the use of off-grid technology such as solar panels, rainwater harvesting, and eco toilet alternatives would reduce the pressure on our existing utilities and capacity. Shawnigan residents need resilient alternatives to urban solutions, as we must weather seasonal hazards and be more rurally self-sufficient. Neighbours helping neighbours, sharing tools and skills, is another way to reduce the cost of living. Together we can support our rural culture!

What specific actions do you plan to undertake to protect and improve water quality in Shawnigan Lake and its associated creeks and, in addition, gain more control of enforcement of boating regulations on the lake?

I’ve spent the last several years closely following the watershed data and

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South Cowichan Library

Monica Finn
South Cowichan Library
250-743-5436
southcowichan@virl.bc.ca
<https://www.facebook.com/VIRLSouthCowichan>

AI Workshop series with Literacy Now Cowichan, every Wednesday in October, 10:30am to 12:00. Learn about artificial intelligence in social media, videos and photos and more. Limited space, so please register. Free.

Parent-Child Mother Goose sessions happen every Thursday, 10:30-11:30am, through October. Focussing on ages 0-2 and their adults. Drop-in welcome.

Poetry Gathering and Workshop: Sat, Oct 17, 2-3:30, meet and discuss forming a poetry group. On Mon, Oct 19 from 10:30-12:30, learn how to get started writing poems with tips and ideas to practice.

Inspired by Reading Book Club, hosted by the Cowichan South Arts Guild, meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, 5:15-6:45pm. Oct 8 will be on How to Survive a Bear Attack: A Memoir by Claire Cameron and Nov 12 will be on Mother Mary Comes to Me by Arundhati Roy.

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 to learn and practice Scottish Gaelic. Join in at 4:30pm on Tuesdays.

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

Unable to come into the library due to illness or injury? The South Cowichan Library has a volunteer Home Delivery service. Get books, audiobooks, and DVDs delivered to your door each month.

The South Cowichan Library in the Mill Bay Centre is open:

- 10am - 6pm, Monday and Tuesday
- 10am - 7pm, Wednesday to Saturday
- 10am - 6pm Friday & Saturday,

Find out more at virl.bc.ca and at <https://www.facebook.com/>

Shawnigan Focus Weather — September 2026

Stats courtesy of [UVic Weather Network](#) and [Weather Underground](#)
Reported by Grant Treloar

	Sept Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay		Butler Road		Discovery School		Museum		Shawnigan Average	
		2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2025	2024
Average High	20.5	20.7	23.0	21.0	23.0	21.0	23.0	21.2	22.9	21.0	23.0
Average Low	9.3	9.8	12.2	6.9	9.5	9.6	11.5	10.1	12.6	9.1	11.5
Extreme High	34.0	27.0	30.1	27.2	29.5	26.3	30.5	26.4	29.5	26.7	29.9
Extreme Low	-3.9	5.2	6.9	2.1	3.6	4.3	5.5	4.3	7.9	4.0	6.0
Precipitation	33.3	48.2	41.7	38.5	24.8	34.3	32.7	36.3	30.7	39.3	32.5
Days w precip	8	7	6	7	6	8	6	7	5	7	6
Year Precip	716.1	765.1	724.5	601.0	582.1	576.9	540.5	507.4	496.7	612.6	586.0

Rank since 1914: 40th warmest, 52nd wettest

	Sept 6	Sept 13	Sept 20	Sept 27
Lake Temperature	20°	19°	19°	16°
Lake Temperature 2025	23°	22°	21°	18°
Lake Level	115.93	115.91	115.86	115.86
Lake Level 2025	115.90	115.86	115.83	115.80

Comments

Last Month was a fairly typical September, with close to normal temperatures and precipitation.

Warmest days were in the 6th, 16th and 17th with temperatures close to 27°. On 11 days (the whole final week of the month) the daytime reading not reach 20°.

Coollest night was on the 26th with temperatures hovering near 5°.

The 7 days of rain produced close to the normal rainfall.. So far the yearly total for rainfall is running about 90% of normal.

The lake levels were still being controlled by the weir just north of the end of the lake.

The lake level is running slightly below long term averages at the beginning of October, averaging about a 2cm drop each week. The level of the lake usually bottoms out when the heavier fall rains return.

Daylight hours are now shortening by greater than 3 minutes per day. Sunset on the October 1st was 6:53pm; it loses an hour by the end of the month to 5:55 pm.

Noon time sunshine height above the horizon dips from 38° on the first to 27° at the end of the month.

2026 Poppy Campaign: Honouring Veterans, Supporting Their Families

Brenda Burch
Malahat Legion

The Malahat Legion is keen to follow up on the excellent success of our 2025 campaign.

On October 15th we begin the campaign with our Poppy Stuffing program. We begin at 12 :00 p.m. with a complimentary lunch, start stuffing at 1:00 p.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. Each year a group of dedicated volunteers' stuff 2 poppies into at least 6,000 envelopes which are mailed to Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, Cobble Hill and Cowichan Bay residents. All envelopes are mailed the next day and every year the donations for

the poppy mail campaign are wonderful and much appreciated.

Every year, community minded businesses in Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, Cobble Hill and Cowichan Bay display our poppy donation boxes on their counters. This assistance is extremely valuable to our campaign and to the veterans who benefit. If you are a business in our area, please reach out and we will be pleased to provide you with a poppy donation box.

Funds raised through the Poppy Campaign are held in a dedicated Poppy Trust Fund. You can be assured that the money collected directly benefits

Veterans and their families, helping ensure they receive the care and support they deserve.

We thank everyone who supports our Poppy Fund. The Poppy Fund was one of the first fundraising activities undertaken by the Royal Canadian Legions across Canada. If you would like to volunteer for our Poppy Stuffing Day on October 15th or display a Poppy Donation Box in your business, please connect with us at rcl134@shaw.ca.

October 2026 at the Malahat Legion

Regular Hours
Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays

- Bar 1:00-7:00 PM



- Kitchen 12:00-4:30 PM

Drop-in Events
Fridays

- Euchre – 1:00-3:00 PM
- Mahjong – 1:00-3:30 PM

Saturdays

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

Our Special Events:

- For our Centennial year, the Legion offers free membership
- Friday, October 16th – Fish & Chip dinner with Tom Morrissey

More Legion events are available at [Upcoming Legion Events](#)

Shawnigan Focus

Alan Sutherland (continued)

I do not have any affiliations with developers or the COAP but I always welcome a open discussion with everyone.

Why people should vote for me...

The residents of Shawnigan Lake should vote for me Alan Sutherland based on the commitment I've made to Shawnigan Lake serving with our Shawnigan Fire Department for 32 years.

In 1989, we had a need in our community due to the housing growth in the North end for a 2nd. Fire station and at 2560 West Shawnigan Rd. Our #2 Fire Station was built. I served our Community for 32 years receiving the 20 year and 30 year Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal and the Provincial Long Service Awards.

Commitment is my passion in life and as shown through my time coaching our Kelsey High School Rugby team, a dedicated husband and father and a neighbor that cares about neighbors.
I care.

Kyle Cheveldayoff (continued)

Until that is fixed, further development in those areas must respect the capacity limit. That is another reason rural growth matters: people who want their own land, with ponds and cisterns, take pressure off the system instead of adding to it. On boating, this is a complicated matter because of the different agencies involved. I will do everything in my power to see that residents' voices are brought forward and best represented with those agencies. My past experience as a Fire Safety Codes Officer, on the Public Safety Task Force, taught me how to work in a multi-agency approach to find solutions, and I hope to bring that experience to these complex issues.

How will you support arts and culture in the Cowichan Valley? What relationships or affiliations (e.g., with developers or groups like Citizens oversight and accountability project) should voters know about that could affect your role as CVRD director?

The Cowichan Valley is a unique place culturally, and people gravitate here for different reasons: concerts, cultural events, First Nations heritage, and a rural lifestyle hard to find anywhere else. These are areas I support and look forward to assisting with. On the second part of this question, I have never been a developer myself and this question lumps developers with COAP for some reason as if both are suspect. That is a leading question, as small local developers doing small local projects support the local economy, and we should not paint them with a Langford brush. What I have read of COAP's work is interesting and brings forward arguments many are not raising. If this question wants to call out COAP for hosting an all-candidates meeting, it should also question equally the Shawnigan Residents Association, which hosted hosted a meeting. The SRA event was organized by people who openly support one particular candidate and also support the current Director.

Why people should vote for me...

I am a part-time Psychologist, former Firefighter and Fire Safety Codes Officer, and single dad living the homestead lifestyle in Shawnigan Lake. People asked me to run after I started speaking at CVRD meetings this spring about bylaws that punished rural living. I was one of the main voices at the podium, and in conversations with residents, directors, and staff, during the months that stopped Bylaws 4710 and 4632 and forced the repeal of the Official Community Plan. I have spent my life solving problems for people and businesses, from fire inspections and the Public Safety Task Force to mind-body health. I will represent Shawnigan Lake and demand an audit of existing services before any new taxes, and stop bylaws that push young families and grandparents off the land and into Urban Containment Boundaries. My stance has been the same and you can learn more at kyleforchange.com.

Amber Chanp (continued)

Protecting Shawnigan Lake and our watershed must remain a community priority. Residents have raised serious concerns about industrial soil dumping and the impacts of community development on water quality. Strong oversight, monitoring and enforcement are needed to ensure activities within the watershed meet environmental requirements and do not put our lake, creeks or drinking water at risk. Residents, First Nations and provincial and federal agencies all have an important role in addressing these concerns and ensuring community voices are heard. Boating safety also deserves attention. Navigation regulations are a federal responsibility, but local concerns can be documented and brought forward to Transport Canada when appropriate. Education, communication and stronger enforcement partnerships can also help improve safety for swimmers, paddlers and boaters. A healthy watershed and safe lake are essential to Shawnigan's quality of life. Protecting them requires listening to residents, working collaboratively and taking practical action for the long-term health of our community.

How will you support arts and culture in the Cowichan Valley? What relationships or affiliations (e.g., with developers or groups like Citizens oversight and accountability project) should voters know about that could affect your role as CVRD director?

Arts and culture are an important part of a healthy, connected community. Shawnigan benefits from local artists, cultural organizations, events and opportunities that bring people together. Supporting these community connections and ensuring that CVRD programs and grants remain accessible and well managed can help strengthen the community we all share.

Accountability and transparency matter equally. I have no affiliations with developers, development companies, or citizen advocacy groups. No special interest group or individual should ever have undue influence over anyone's decisions. I will listen to Shawnigan, my decisions will be guided by what is best for Shawnigan.

After five years as Alternate Director, the importance of listening, asking questions, considering different perspectives and being transparent is clear. Residents deserve to know how decisions are made, to have their voices heard and to have a Director who is accountable to the community and makes decisions independently and openly.

Why people should vote for me...

Shawnigan is a community built on people, family and a strong sense of belonging. Having grown up here and raised my family here, I understand what makes this place special and how much people care about its future. For the past five years, I have served as Shawnigan's Alternate Director, gaining a strong understanding of the CVRD and the decisions that affect our community. I've built positive relationships around the table and learned that listening, working together and finding practical solutions can make a real difference.

Families are facing real challenges, from affordability to finding suitable housing for aging parents. Shawnigan needs a strong, accessible voice at the CVRD—someone who will listen to residents, communicate openly, ask the tough questions and make decisions with the community in mind.

With experience, courage and a genuine commitment to Shawnigan, I'm ready to serve as your Director and be your CHAMPion for Shawnigan.

Kim Barnard (continued)

volunteer work of the Shawnigan Basin Society, now a recognized partner in the CVRD's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program (which is funded annually since the 2018 referendum). They monitor sites and creeks on a monthly basis and are often the first to act when concerns come forward. Waterfront owners can practice shoreline restoration using native plants, replace aging septic systems, reduce fertilizer use and prevent runoff, for example. Recreational users can clean and dry their watercraft to prevent disease transmission, and avoid generating milfoil fragments near the shorelines. Funding models can be explored to make greater milfoil removal possible. Safety is an ongoing issue especially in peak season. Each of us enjoying having fun on the lake have a responsibility to look out for swimmers, wildlife, slower non-motorized craft and to practice neighbourly etiquette for everyone's benefit.

How will you support arts and culture in the Cowichan Valley? What relationships or affiliations (e.g. with developers or groups like COAP - Citizens Oversight & Accountability Project) should voters know about that could affect your role as a CVRD Director?

As Electoral Area B Director I can facilitate Grants-in-Aid. Shawnigan has the Cowichan South Arts Guild bringing together talent and promoting visual arts and music. Collaboratively, they offer opportunities to showcase, learn and grow this vibrant aspect of community life. Our Shawnigan Museum, Young Seniors Action Group, the Legion and the Shawnigan Lake Community Association are other shining examples. I support events, markets and innovative gathering spaces that bring us together! Aspects of our village design could further support creative “Planting for Pollinators”, art installations and murals. “Think Shawnigan”, think aesthetics - even attractive garbage cans to reduce litter. I’ve had 8 years of volunteering through Rotary to inform my worldview and “learn by doing” to bring new ideas to life, in collaboration with other groups and the Shawnigan Basin Society. In the last 2 years, I’ve also been trained and entrusted to serve our interconnected network of postal code neighbourhoods!

Why people should vote for me...

I'm a community builder and proven leader, through 33 years of raising my family here and 22 years connecting through bite-sized gingerbread. My ongoing volunteering and attendance at meetings and events celebrates the spirit of Shawnigan Lake in a "Here for You, Shawnigan!" "Together We Care" capacity. Count on my responsive leadership, scrutiny of spending and operational policies for affordability, advocacy for seniors and youth, emergency preparedness amongst neighbours, and encouraging the best of lakeside life in Shawnigan's vulnerable mixed use watershed. I've participated on CVRD Recreation, "Think Shawnigan" and Waste Management committees, with 5 years of attending CVRD meetings to closely follow the decision-making deliberations and provide input. A 100% self-funded and 99% sign-free Kim-for-Shawnigan.com campaign reflects my values. Paying attention to the issues we face and working collaboratively, I dedicate my energy toward stewardship of Shawnigan Lake's economic, social and environmental well-being for present and future generations.

Advance Voting Days

- *Wed, October 7*
- *Tues, October 13*
- *8 a.m. to 8 p.m.*

Area B & SD79

**Kerry Park
Recreation Centre
1035 Shawnigan
Mill Bay Road,
Mill Bay**

General Voting Day

***Saturday,
October 17
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.***

Area B & SD79

**Shawnigan Lake
Community
Centre
2804 Shawnigan
Lake Road,
Shawnigan Lake**

Provincial Election - October 24

The Focus reached out to the announced candidates (as of October 3) for response - two of the three answered...
Why should people vote for you and what is the most important goal for you if elected?

David Evans - BC Green Party

I'm an islander, born and raised, self employed for more than 3 decades and currently a business owner in Sooke, I understand the realities of family, business, competition, and I know how to build and support community. My name's David Evans and I am running for the BC Greens.



The BC Green Party is the only party in this province that is focused on the well-being of people, not corporations, not their lobbyists with their free lunches. In BC, most of us are doing our part, working long hours but still struggling to get by. From gas to groceries to housing to healthcare, issues of affordability and access affect each of us. The status quo parties are the ones who got us to this point and it doesn't have to be this way...We are constantly told that we live in one of the wealthiest provinces in one of the wealthiest nations the world has ever seen...Does it feel that way? Government hands subsidies and tax breaks to industry and corporations already making record profits while we can't afford a Canucks game in Vancouver.

It's time for corporations and the ultra wealthy to pay their fair share. If we are going to subsidize anything let's subsidize education or renewable energy, co-op housing...Something good! It's time for BC to adopt proportional representation - a majority of us voted for it in a referendum years ago - so that every voice is heard and nobody is voting for fear of someone worse instead of hope for something better.

Amid all this struggle, in the back of our minds is the climate crisis. That fire and smoke from the other side of Sooke Lake last month, floods, drought, landslides - we know the cause of all this but we feel stuck in this lousy system. The fossil fuel industry has known they're responsible for decades but they fooled government and they fooled us into believing that THIS is the only way. And we believed it because it was easy, life was easy for a few decades there, but now?

Government is supposed to work for us! Government is supposed to make our lives better! Government has all too willingly bowed to corporate interests, abdicating their responsibilities and the promises they made to us. Government needs to remember that it serves you, not corporations and if it forgets us - even for a little while - then we should replace it with something better.

We didn't want this election. We all expected 2 more years. What happened to the Set Election Date legislation? It was passed in BC in 2001? The government thought they could pull a fast one on us, improve their majority, get 4 more years for their backbenchers who raise their hands and vote how they're told?

No. I believe in better, I will raise the bar for you.

Mike Hicks - Conservative Party

I am asking for the support of the people of Juan de Fuca-Malahat because I bring a combination of life experience, business experience and 13 years of elected public service.



For 28 years, this region has been my home. My wife Kathy and I raised our family here and built businesses here. I've worked in forestry, tourism, hospitality and the recreational fishing industry, and I know what it is like to run a small business, meet a payroll and deal with government.

As the former CRD Director for Juan de Fuca, I represented rural and coastal communities with very different needs. I learned that good representation starts with showing up, listening and then working with people to get things done.

That is especially important in today's Juan de Fuca-Malahat riding. This is a large and diverse constituency. Shawnigan Lake, Mill Bay, Cobble Hill and the Malahat must have just as strong a voice as communities on the Juan de Fuca side of the riding. If elected, I will represent the whole riding. No community should feel forgotten because it is farther away from the MLA's constituency office.

My most important goal will be to help make British Columbia a place where families, seniors, workers and businesses can once again feel confident about the future.

That means improving access to health care, addressing affordability, supporting safer communities, investing in roads and infrastructure, and rebuilding the resource economy that provides good-paying jobs and revenues for the public services we depend on. It also means protecting what makes our communities special - from our rural character and watersheds to our forests, farms and fisheries.

I don't believe an MLA's job is simply to make speeches in Victoria. It is to be accessible, understand the communities they represent and advocate relentlessly for them.

I have done that before, and I am ready to do it again.

If elected, I will bring the same approach I brought to local government: listen, work hard, be accessible and give the people of Juan de Fuca-Malahat 100 per cent.

AUTOPRO

It's true, with us, mechanical problems melt away.

Maintenance Offer Book an appointment now

Drive-Thru TREATS
4-7PM
HALLOWEEN
October 31st

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4 SHAWNIGAN FOCUS

Democracy Needs More Than Your Vote

Michael Battler
Shawnigan Lake

Four years ago, just before our last local election, I wrote about something that still bothers me...how so few of us actually participate in choosing the people who represent our communities.

So, did things change? You guessed it, barely. Almost four out of every five eligible voters in Area B, Shawnigan Lake, still did not vote. Voter turnout went from 21.2% in 2018 to 21.65% in 2022, an increase of less than half a percentage point. Of the estimated 7,105 people eligible to vote in 2022, only 1,538 ballots were cast.

Voting has always mattered although you wouldn't know it from the numbers, especially compared with all the opinions and activity

we see on social media. But after spending the past several months looking more closely at how our regional government works, I have come to see voting as only part of the picture.

That doesn't make your vote any less important. It is where you can directly influence who represents you and, through that choice, the direction our local government takes.

But what part do we play along the way?

Do we stay informed, get involved and then, when election day comes, make our choice about who we want representing our community?

That question got me thinking about a book I recently read, Democracy's Second Act, Why Politics Needs the Public by Canadians Peter MacLeod

and Richard Johnson, where the authors argue that "the public isn't a risk to be managed but a resource to be tapped."

That idea stuck with me.

Our communities are full of people with experience, knowledge and ideas. We see it every day in those who volunteer with community groups, sports organizations, fire departments, charities and other causes. They give their time because they believe they can contribute something and want to make a positive difference.

Maybe democracy deserves some of that same thinking and commitment. It is easy to be an armchair quarterback or keyboard warrior from the sidelines. Getting involved, asking questions and contributing something takes

a little more effort.

That doesn't mean attending every meeting, agreeing with every decision or becoming an expert on regional government. It can mean understanding an issue before forming an opinion; asking a thoughtful question; attending an open house; writing to your Area Director; volunteering, or simply paying attention.

And yes, when election day comes, voting.

Most of us don't spend much time thinking about how local government works. That is, until we see the impact through our taxes, services or a decision that affects us personally.

But underneath all of that is something much simpler.

It is our community.

The people we elect have a responsibility to represent us. Staff have a responsibility to serve the public and carry out the direction of the Board.

Perhaps we have a responsibility too.

Not to agree.

Not to make the same choice.

Just to participate.

Because democracy needs more than our vote.

It needs us.



From Maps to Decisions: Building the Future of the Shawnigan Basin

Brian Wyka
Shawnigan Basin Society

More than a decade ago, the Shawnigan Basin Society (SBS) made an important investment in understanding the watershed as an interconnected ecological system. The Society commissioned forest ecologist Herb Hammond of Silva Ecosystem Consultants to develop an Ecosystem-Based Conservation Plan for the Shawnigan watershed. That work provided a detailed assessment of the watershed's ecological character and condition and established an important scientific foundation for future conservation efforts.

Visitors to the SBS office today can still see part of that legacy. Many of the large GIS maps produced through the original Hammond/Silva study remain on display illustrating the watershed's forests, waterways, ecological characteristics and other features. They are both a valuable historical record and a reminder of how much information was assembled to understand Shawnigan as a complete watershed rather than simply a collection of individual properties.

Importantly, the Hammond/Silva work went beyond the printed maps and written report. It also produced Geographic Information

System (GIS) data—the digital layers and files behind many of those maps. Those original GIS files created a valuable digital snapshot of the watershed at that point in time.

Today, SBS is working to recover, evaluate and build upon those original GIS files using modern GIS tools and current information.

GIS is sometimes thought of simply as computer mapping, but its real value is much greater. It allows different kinds of information—streams and wetlands, forests, roads, property boundaries, zoning, sensitive ecosystems, topography and development—to be brought together and examined as parts of the same landscape.

This is particularly important in a watershed.

Property lines and zoning boundaries may define how we administer land, but water does not recognize those boundaries. Rainfall, groundwater, streams, erosion, wildlife corridors and forest ecosystems connect properties throughout the basin. A decision made on one parcel can have consequences well beyond it.

Hammond's work approached Shawnigan from this broader perspective, looking at ecological integrity and the relationships between the watershed's many sub-basins.

By bringing the original Hammond/Silva GIS information forward, SBS can preserve that earlier work while combining it with more recent data.

This creates some exciting possibilities.

Changes in forest cover can be examined against earlier conditions. Current zoning and property information can be viewed alongside streams, wetlands and sensitive ecosystems. Proposed land-use changes can be considered within their broader ecological context. Areas important for connectivity, restoration or conservation can be identified and monitored over time.

GIS can also help us understand cumulative change. A road, subdivision, forest harvest or zoning amendment may appear relatively small when considered individually. Viewed together across an entire watershed—and across decades—the picture can be very different.

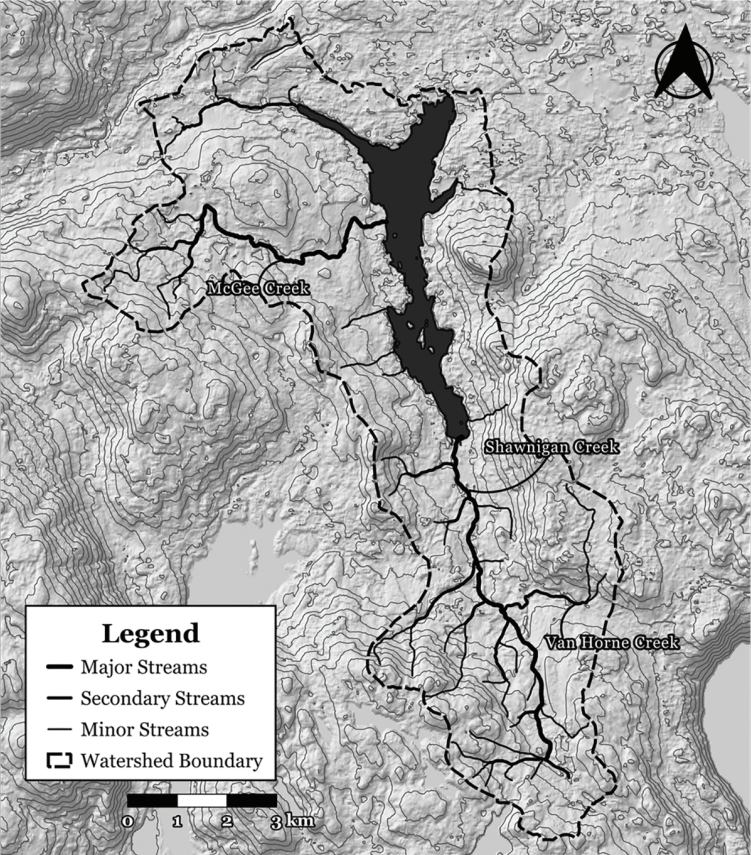
The next step is to create a sustainable GIS capability within SBS. That means investing not only in software and computer hardware, but also in good data management, training, volunteers and technical expertise. Just as importantly, it means ensuring that the knowledge behind the maps

is documented and preserved so that today's work remains available to future volunteers, researchers and community leaders.

Over time, GIS can also become an important public resource. Interactive maps can help residents better understand their watershed and provide landowners, First Nations, researchers and governments with a common geographic foundation for conversations about conservation, restoration and land use.

The Hammond/Silva work gave Shawnigan more than a report. It provided an ecological framework, the maps that still help tell the story of the watershed today, and an initial GIS foundation for understanding it.

SBS's investment today is about carrying that work forward - preserving what was created, adding what we have learned since, and developing a living geographic record that can help inform decisions about the Shawnigan watershed for decades to come.



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Shawnigan Focus

Lori Treloar
Executive Director

September was a quieter month at the museum as we all get back into routines. Despite that, we had over 500 visitors - many from the US, as well as Canadians visiting the island. We

also had group visits from The Discovery Centre and the Cowichan Intercultural Society, and hosted the 'one woman' play, "Useless", for two performances. We continue to fundraise for the project to bring

back the Shawnigan Lion. The pieces are being put back in place by Craig, the great grandson of the original carver George Gibson. When the lion is back to its original glory it will be installed next to the museum. This is a wonderful gift to the community, as it was an icon on the Shawnigan waterfront for over 100 years. The cost of concrete etc. is mounting up so, if you would like to help, please consider a donation toward this amazing project. Concrete for the pad that it will sit on and for the 'fixing' and shaping of the lion is expensive. We are also considering an option to create a shelter from the elements. For any donations \$25 or over you will receive a tax receipt and a small replica lion.

On October 22, at 1:30, Norman Kent will give an interactive talk about his collection of Peetz Reels. Peetz is an iconic

fishing store in Victoria that has survived for over 100 years. Anyone who grew up in Victoria will remember the name. The talk will be by donation – please let us know if you would like to attend: museum@shawniganlakemuseum.com



Shawnigan Lake Museum Presents

PEETZ FISHING REELS

100 Years of Vancouver Island History

Join us for a talk by collector Norman Kent to explore the story of Victoria's iconic Peetz reels and how Boris Peetz helped shape salmon fishing on Vancouver Island. See a selection of fishing gear spanning the early 1900s to today.

October 22nd | 1:30 pm - 2:30

• Entry by donation

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank Michael Battler for his excellent series regarding the ways and workings of the CVRD.

The information provided is an invaluable guide for all citizens seeking clarity and answers to the often complex and puzzling realm of local government.

Perhaps these articles could be combined into one entity, and acquired by local libraries and schools as a research guide for this purpose.

Sincerely,
Mary Desmond
Shawnigan Lake

www.Kim-for-Shawnigan.com

I'll Participate, Communicate & Advocate!

October 17th

ELECT

✓ **Kim B for Area B**

Authorized by Kim Barnard, Financial Agent 250-732-0531

Shawnigan Lake

Fall Festival & MARKET

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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.

September 2026 Report

Department Members Attended 47 Incidents in September

- Tuesday, Sep 1 – Vehicle Fire on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Thursday, Sep 3 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Thursday, Sep 3 – Burning Complaint on Oldham Rd
- Sunday, Sep 6 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Sep 6 - 1st Responder off Gregory Rd
- Sunday, Sep 6 – Burning Complaint on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Sep 6 – Alarms Activated on Pinder Pl
- Monday, Sep 7 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Tuesday, Sep 8 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 9 – MVI on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 9 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 9 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Thursday, Sep 10 - 1st Responder off Northgate Rd
- Friday, Sep 11 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Friday, Sep 11 - 1st Responder off S Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Sep 12 - 1st Responder off S Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Sep 12 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Saturday, Sep 12 – MVI on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Sunday, Sep 13 – Alarms Activated on Beatrice Way
- Tuesday, Sep 15 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Tuesday, Sep 15 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Tuesday, Sep 15 - 1st Responder off Gregory Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 16 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 16 - 1st Responder off S Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 16 - 1st Responder off Cameron-Taggart Rd
- Thursday, Sep 17 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Sep 19 - 1st Responder off S Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Sep 19 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Sep 19 – HazMat on Renfrew Rd
- Sunday, Sep 20 - 1st Responder off Colman Rd
- Monday, Sep 21 – Duty Investigation on SW End of Lake
- Monday, Sep 21 – MVI on Cliffside Rd @ Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Tuesday, Sep 22 – Alarms Activated on Ingot Dr
- Wednesday, Sep 23 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 23 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 23 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Thursday, Sep 24 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Thursday, Sep 24 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd
- Thursday, Sep 24 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Friday, Sep 25 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Saturday, Sep 26 – Alarms Activated on Wilmot Ave
- Monday, Sep 28 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Monday, Sep 28 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan-Mill Bay Rd
- Monday, Sep 28 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 30 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- Wednesday, Sep 30 - 1st Responder off Cameron-Taggart Rd

White Cross Placements at Cemeteries to Honour Veterans

Jim Wisnia

Placements of white crosses to honour veterans’ graves at South Cowichan cemeteries will take place on Saturday, October 31 at the following times and places:

- 11:00 St. Andrew’s Cowichan Station, Koksilah Rd.
- 1:00 Shawnigan Cemetery, East Shawnigan Lake Rd.
- 1:50 Mill Bay Methodist/United Cemetery, Church Way
- 2:10 St. Francis Xavier Cemetery, Kilmalu Road

For the past fifteen years, the Mill Bay/ Malahat Historical Society has coordinated these traditional events which are distinct from Remembrance Day ceremonies.

Members of Royal Canadian Legion Legion Branch 134 (Malahat) and local youth cadet squadrons salute each grave where a white cross decorated with a cloth poppy and cedar spring has been placed to recognize a veteran who served to keep their community safe and peaceful.

The crosses will be

gathered up at the end of November, so members of the public have a month to pay respects to these veterans even if unable to attend the placements on October 31.

If you know of a veteran recently interred or previously unrecognized, please contact the Society at info@millbaymalahathistory.com or 250-743-0144.

The Society is grateful to the Malahat Lions, YSAG wood carvers, and Cowichan Station Area Assn. for their collaboration on this program.



Opinion

Kevin Clancy
Shawnigan Lake

A letter on the South Cowichan Referendum

I have lived in Area B for 29 years and I don’t always agree with the decisions the CVRD makes, and I rarely feel I have a say in what goes on. What if interested South Cowichan residents could become more involved, have their voices heard and have greater input into how money is spent, and decisions are made in our communities?

I understand why people are concerned about higher taxes. Nobody wants to pay more taxes simply for the sake of paying more taxes. But I also think we need to ask what we would receive in return and whether it is worth it.

Before automatically voting No because this involves additional taxation, I encourage South Cowichan residents to learn what this referendum is actually about, what it would cost, and what it could provide our communities.

Read the CVRD information. Ask questions. Search “South Cowichan referendum” online or even put the question into your favourite AI tool and use it as a starting point for your research.

The additional cost may amount to only a few coffees a year for many households. Whether the additional local involvement and influence are worth that cost is ultimately up to each of us to decide.

I think it is worth taking a serious look before we vote.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

- **CVRD Director for Shawnigan Lake Area B**
Sierra.Acton@cprd.bc.ca
- **Area B Parks Advisory and Area B Advisory Planning Commission**
<https://www.cprd.ca/list.aspx#> (sign up for meeting notifications)
- **CVRD Public Input to the whole Board**
LegislativeServices@cprd.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: ysagsexec2024@gmail.com (web): blog.ysag.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) 743-4621
- **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: 778-936-0112
- **South Cowichan Healthcare Auxiliary**
Contact: info@southcha.ca

Shawnigan Cemetery



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



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Congratulations!

Shirely Astleford correctly identified last month's photo of the sign nailed to a tree by The Lakehouse Restaurant.



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