



# Shawnigan Focus

Volume Six - Issue Four

April 2016

A Non-Profit Community Publication

## AREA B DIRECTOR'S REPORT



**Sonia Furstenau**  
*Area B Director*

Spring has suddenly arrived. It has been remarkable these last few days to see white blossoms on the plum trees, fat pink buds on the grape vines, and to bring in bright yellow daffodils from the garden. Life is bursting forth everywhere, which of course makes it the ideal time to reflect on the themes of renewal and rebirth.

Consider this: in the long, hard saga that our community has been through, three times pivotal moments have occurred right around Easter.

The week before Easter 2013: Ministry of Environment released SIA/CHH's draft permit.

Two weeks before Easter 2015: Environmental Appeal Board (EAB) released its decision to uphold SIA/CHH's permit.

The week before Easter 2016: BC Supreme Court ruled that CHH's landfill is not a permitted use on the Stebbings Rd property.

(Not to read too much into the Easter theme, isn't it interesting that on the third year, the Shawnigan community has experienced its own rebirth and renewal?)

For so many of us in Shawnigan, this last year has been one of the hardest years of our lives. Last spring, with the decision of the EAB to uphold SIA/CHH's permit to dump 100,000 tonnes of contaminated soil each year for 50 years in our watershed, felt like a kind of death for our community.

Hopes, visions, and dreams, which had been steadily building in Shawnigan, were set aside as the community galvanized itself around a single, unwavering goal: to have the permit overturned and to have

our watershed protected from the risk posed by 5 million tonnes of contaminated soil left in it for perpetuity.

Three avenues of effort were embarked on simultaneously. Firstly, the CVRD moved forward with its zoning bylaw case, which was filed in BC Supreme Court shortly after SIA/CHH announced that it was "open for business and accepting contaminated soil" - as this meant that the company was indeed in contravention of the CVRD's zoning bylaw.

Secondly, the legal team representing the Shawnigan Residents Association moved forward with filing an application for a Judicial Review of the EAB decision. The application filed in May presented evidence to support the SRA's argument that the EAB decision was "substantively unreasonable." Bolstering SRA's argument was the document that emerged in July 2015 that appears to show a 50-50 profit sharing agreement between SIA/CHH and their qualified professionals, Active Earth Engineering.

Thirdly, and in my opinion, most importantly, the people of Shawnigan came together and galvanized into a highly determined, effective, committed, capable, and passionate community. Have no doubt - the tireless work of the Shawnigan community has been incredibly valuable on so many levels. The people of Shawnigan have demonstrated what needs to be done in the face of a failure of democracy, a failure of process, a failure of a government agency to look effectively at science, facts, and authentic concerns.

The people of Shawnigan have demonstrated the importance of active engagement in standing up for a future that we want to create, rather than accepting a future forced on our

community by one company.

And the people of Shawnigan have shown that some issues transcend all political boundaries. Shawnigan has invited and worked with an incredible number of allies. In a province that has its share of political divides, consider this: people of all political stripes have joined and supported Shawnigan's efforts.

These political allies all agreed on one thing - that the protection of a community's water source is essential, and far more important than politics. The Shawnigan effort to protect our water has not only transcended political lines and political boundaries, it has also been an example for how we can move beyond political divisions and recognize that we can indeed all work together for the greater good.

I am deeply grateful to all who have stood with us, and I hope that we will soon be coming back together for a momentous celebration.

There are so many who deserve to be acknowledged and appreciated for the efforts they have contributed. Those who raised the alarm at the very beginning - who saw the danger coming and wanted to stop it in its tracks. The SRA Board members - who stepped up early as leaders and have led the community ever since. The previous CVRD Board, which initiated the Supreme Court challenge and the EAB appeal. All the people who wrote letters and showed up to protests even before the permit was issued. The people who organized events, rallies, endless meetings, and fundraisers - and all the people who attended the events, rallies, endless meetings, and fundraisers. The administration, staff, and students of Shawnigan Lake School and Dwight School - both have been steadfast in their solidarity with the community. The people who monitored the increasing truck traffic through the summer and fall. The people who got up early through the dark, cold, wet weeks in November and December to stand on Stebbings Rd. The hundreds who attended protests, the thousands who signed petitions, and the many dozens who raised their hands to be

on a "team". The dozens who worked together night and day to bring together "helicopter day" on January 6th. The hundreds who have tirelessly raised the profile of our efforts on social media. The researchers, the photographers, the hikers, the video-makers, the song writers, and the people who knew just when to offer a warm drink, a nourishing snack, a kind word, or a loving embrace. There are countless heroes and heroines, and what has been remarkable is that each and every person has been willing to give themselves to something greater, and in doing so, has contributed to creating something miraculous.

It has been a long hard journey - and one that is not over yet. An important victory has been won, but the permit has not yet been revoked and the soil that has been deposited has not been ordered removed. We will be on this journey together until these outcomes have been achieved.

The company has also filed for an appeal of this decision, and for a stay of the injunction that prevents them from bringing contaminated soil onto the site. We hope and pray that the courts will not see fit to allow continued dumping, and we also await Justice Sewell's decision on a second injunction, based on the evidence heard during the Judicial Review.

I expect that many feel - as I do - weary from having to fight so hard to try to protect our water, but nonetheless determined to stay the course, no matter what.

I also feel that it's valuable to take some time to reflect, and to consider all that we have learned and accomplished on this four-year journey.

We have learned vigilance, determination, steadfastness, and cooperation - particularly when it comes to protecting the water that we need for our community to thrive.

We have learned how catastrophically a "process" can fail. One person - a "statutory decision maker" with no ties to our community, who never visited the site applying for the permit, who did not adhere to the guidelines of his posi-

tion, and who may not have even had the authority to make the decision he did - was able nonetheless to make a decision that has impacted the lives of thousands of people. And the Minister of Environment has chosen to hide behind this person for three long years - often dismissing the serious uncertainties, concerns, and evidence of irregularities that have been steadily accumulating the entire time.

We have learned of the pitfalls embedded in the "Professional Reliance" model, introduced by the BC Liberal government as a result of now Minister of Energy and Mines Bill Bennett's "core review". It was this model that allowed for SIA hiring Active Earth Engineering to act as the "qualified professionals" throughout the permitting process.

We have learned how to come together, how to become highly organized, how to work together over and over again, how to never give up, no matter how tired, how exasperated, or how bullied we feel. We have supported each other, cared for each other, helped each other through difficult times, and continuously expressed the love we feel for our lake, our home, our community, and each other.

Recently, I read an interview with a long-time environmental activist Rebecca Stolnit, and her words resonated deeply:

"There's this idea that political engagement is some sort of horrible, dutiful thing you do, like cleaning the toilet or taking out the garbage. But it can be the most fantastic thing you do. It can bring you into contact with hope, with joy, with a sense of deep connection, with what Martin Luther King called the "beloved community." "

We have created a "beloved community" in Shawnigan. It has made us strong, and as we continue to move through this journey, we must continue to nourish it, and to defend it from those who may want to damage it. We must make it the one true legacy of this terrible situation that we have been forced to endure.

Let us remember, above all, to cherish and protect our beloved community.



SHAWNIGAN FOCUS  
APRIL 2016

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

**LAYOUT:**  
Taryn Treloar

**ADVERTISING:**  
Kim Hennecker  
ads@shawniganfocus.ca

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

**ACCOUNTS:**  
Kim Hennecker

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The Shawnigan Focus is an independent, local, non-profit publication, produced by the volunteer Focus team. Shawnigan Focus endeavours to inform; promote involvement in the community; and interest a broad cross-section of the residents of Shawnigan Lake.

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

Additional copies are available in The Village.

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

SIA graffiti & garbage cleaned up

Dave Hutchinson  
Shawnigan Focus

**Kudos to Jeanne Pepper and Russell Robertson:**

On the morning of Sunday, February 21st, a pile of rubbish was discovered dumped outside the main gate of SIA's site on Stebbings Road. This had the potential for another unfortunate propaganda event (remember the yellow dye incident) had it not been for the actions of several people. Jeanne Pepper collected the waste in her truck and took it to a proper disposal site. The immorality of dumping waste in the wrong location is what this whole SIA fight is about!

Recently, popular sentiment suggested that the anti-SIA graffiti on the cement blocks near Mason's Beach had served its purpose. With no intention of offending the original "artist", Russell Robertson decided to grab a bucket and brush and scrub the lettering off. It turned out to require considerable effort.



Jeanne Pepper joined in and the two of them worked hard to put things right.

Russell and Jeanne exemplify the selflessness, determination and commitment which make Shawnigan such a remarkable community. Thank you both.



Notice Board

Shawnigan Weather March 2016

Stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network ~ complied by Grant Treloar

	March Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay		Discovery School		Museum		Elford Road	
		2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015
Average High	10.0	11.3	12.8	11.5	12.6	11.8	13.2	11.5	12.6
Average Low	1.4	3.4	4.1	3.1	3.4	3.4	4.2	2.9	3.4
Extreme High	22.2	23.8	19.1	22.1	18.7	23.2	19.4	21.5	17.5
Extreme Low	-11.7	-0.2	-2.2	-1.0	-3.2	-0.4	-2.3	-1.0	-2.5
Precipitation	120.2	213.9	150.5	266.7	129.5	210.5	127.7	227.6	129.0
Days w precip	18	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
Precip since Jan 1 (mm)	490.8	680.9	467.0	727.1	460.4	623.1	412.6	669.2	446.6
Precip since Oct 1 (mm)	1018.9	1127.7	987.3	1292.8	1000.4	1096.8	883.8	1223.2	966.0
Since 1914: 9 <sup>th</sup> warmest 4 <sup>th</sup> wettest									
Lake Temperature: Mar 6 <sup>th</sup> : 7° Mar 13 <sup>th</sup> : 6° Mar 20 <sup>th</sup> : 7° Mar 27 <sup>th</sup> : 7°									
Lake Level Change: Mar 6 <sup>th</sup> : +8cm Mar 13 <sup>th</sup> : +44.5cm Mar 20 <sup>th</sup> : -36cm Mar 27 <sup>th</sup> : -31cm									

Have you ever wondered about the names on the South Cowichan Cenotaph?

Join us on Saturday, April 16th from 3:00-5:00 at the Cobble Hill Hall. John Orr will speak about his research of the locals who are memorialized on the WWI Cenotaph in Cobble Hill. John is a former research fellow from Dalhousie University whose wife has roots in Shawnigan Lake. He became interested in this project while on a visit to the area. John will be taking your questions after the presentation.

Cobble Hill Historical Society

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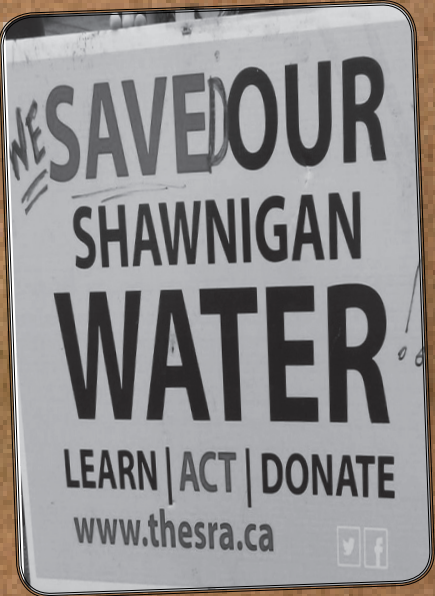
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# Shawnigan Focus - Editorial

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEND US LETTERS... [EDITOR@SHAWNIGANFOCUS.CA](mailto:EDITOR@SHAWNIGANFOCUS.CA)

The Focus will publish your thoughts on Shawnigan issues: bouquets you would like to offer to special people; things that strike you as funny; challenges you want our civic leaders to consider; and/or ideas that would better our community. Letters to the Editor must be accompanied by the author's full name, address and phone number, but the contact information, other than the name, will not be published. Letters should be limited to 300 words and we reserve the right to edit for brevity or to refuse inappropriate or abusive language. Letters should attack issues - not individuals or groups.

## Let's reduce the speed limit in Shawnigan!

To: Whom it may concern,

I would like to put in a formal request to reduce the speed limit in the Shawnigan Village area. Our entire village is Between four blocks. This consists of restaurants; a busy coffee shop and bakery; the only post office; stores that provide groceries; personal services such as barbershops, salons and spas; accounting services; our only pharmacy; dog grooming; a gas station; community centre; playground; RCMP office; children's dance and music studios; Realtors office; our museum; family doctors office; access to our popular government wharf; a day care centre and kindergarten; and our only auto service centre.

With so much happening in such a small space it would be natural to anticipate much pedestrian and cyclist traffic all year round. Unfortunately Shawnigan village also has a few unique and dangerous disadvantages added to this mix.

There is little to no sidewalk in the village. We are walking along the busy Shawnigan-Mill Bay & Shawnigan Lake Road with our children, dogs, bikes and strollers, a mere three feet away from cars that are zooming by. We all know that most people are not driving below the 50 kilometre an hour speed limit.

There is very little lighting on the road as well. This is not only for night time, as we all know it gets dark very early in the winter months; not taking into account weather conditions that play a factor in visibility as well.

There is inappropriate parking at the coffee shop. This is one of the busiest businesses in town and cars are pulling into park perpendicular to the road. There is no egress when having to leave the parking spot. One must back into the road, just metres away from an intersection on one side and a blind curve in the road on the other side. There are also pedestrians that you need to look out for, walking alongside the road. (Right in front of your back bumper)

Our gas station and service center are right on a busy corner. If anyone were to enter this area from the South or East side they have to cross the double yellow line right at a stop sign. Also if you have to turn out of the gas station you need to cross the

line again directly in front of an intersection as well.

I am a local mother and paramedic. I love this village a great deal and sadly I am truly frightened to walk around it with my family. My job is to help people when they become injured - I feel that it is the job of the Ministry of Transportation to act when preventable catastrophes can be avoided in such a situation.

I propose that we reduce the speed to 30 km per hour in the village area. (Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road from Wallbank Road to just West of Shawnigan Lake Road. Shawnigan Lake Road from Thrush Road to Just north of the RCMP station) I would like to see a speed sign that displays drivers speed placed at Thrush Road and Wallbank Road just so that the community knows just how fast they are going.

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure urgently needs to provide a solution in this matter. Our children are catching school busses on busy roads and summer is upon us. We pride ourselves on being one of the best places in the province to be in the summer time. It is a very cost effective way to prevent people from being injured or killed.

Shawnigan Village is a thriving pedestrian area and we need to act progressively.

*Sincerely, Heather Embury*

## In regard to the Provincial Government's permit to allow SIA/CHH and SIRM to dump contaminated soil into our Shawnigan Lake Watershed.

On March 22, 2016, due to a suit brought to the BC Supreme Court by our Cowichan Valley Regional District, the Court ruled that the Provincial Government could not countermand the District's land use bylaws. These specific bylaws do not allow this kind of operation within our boundaries. The companies involved were ordered to cease and desist accepting contaminated soil immediately. So many people involved in the protest experienced various levels of joy, tears, shivers, laughter and happiness! It was the best World Water Day, on March 22nd, any of us could have imagined! It was a win for our whole Province, because you know this is happening elsewhere under our Provincial Government.

Well, SIA/CHH and SIRM have now launched an appeal,

and are demanding relief for the financial losses they will incur. Right, and who will be on the hook for that compensation, if the Supreme Court's ruling is overturned? BC taxpayers, that's who. Just another travesty brought about by our elected officials; we're left holding the dirty bag of failure.

Can you imagine what would have happened if the Provincial Government had accepted the large amount of scientific evidence disputing this dump, way back in 2013, and not granted the permit?

Can you imagine what would have happened if the Provincial Government had not accepted the one scientific opinion offered by Active Earth? Remember that Active Earth apparently has a 50/50 profit sharing agreement with SIA/CHH, so why would anyone in their right minds have accepted them at face value?

Can you imagine what would have happened, at the most basic level, if the Provincial Government had taken into account the wishes of the people who will be impacted by this dump, those of us who live here and depend on our Lake for water, beauty and recreation?

Can you imagine what would have happened if the Ministry of the Environment's staff, and its Minister herself, had any semblance of logic or common sense, or understanding of their mandate to protect our environment?

This dump wouldn't have happened, that's what. The proffered alternative sites would have been considered, instead of being summarily dismissed. The effort, the stress, the tears and fears we've been feeling for 4 years would not have impacted us. The money we raised to fund our legal defense against our own elected officials would still be in our own pockets. The donations from our wonderful business communities would still be in their accounts. Our property values would not have gone down.

But I'll tell you what, the sense of community we have created in and around Shawnigan Lake and our Province is the only shining beacon on the horizon of this stupid mess. That is something I wouldn't have missed.

Anyway, you can depend on our continued efforts. We are not going away, and we will continue our job until every

bit of that contaminated soil is removed from our watershed. Depend on us.

*Sincerely, Elaine Dale Fitch, Shawnigan Lake, B C*

## These events have certainly opened my eyes

Although it feels so incredibly good to have a BC Supreme Court judge bring the dumping of contaminated soil here to a halt, I can't help but also reflect on this community's nearly four-year struggle to protect our watershed. And it has most certainly opened my eyes.

It's opened them to the extreme vulnerability of our drinking water. I now know that, on any given day in this country, more than 1000 boil-water advisories are in place. In recent months, that included Shawnigan Lake and could, without vigilance, be the norm here at some point in the future.

It's opened them to the sad fact that those who got elected to govern British Columbia and to protect our precious water, and our environment, are not there for us when they are needed the most. I now know that we are on our own and that, every day, this scenario is multiplied many times over around our province.

It's opened them to an ugly side of doing business in Shawnigan, where making money trumps all. I now

know that an ever-present alertness to this is critical.

It's opened them to political and bureaucratic processes where common good, common sense, and common decency do not prevail. I now know that even when 15,000 signatures are gathered, thousands of letters of concern are written, countless hours are spent in opposition, and hundreds of thousands of dollars are raised, justice may not result.

And it's opened them to the stunning strength of character of so many people in this community. I now know that the courage, determination, and hard work displayed here have been relentless and beyond impressive.

My hat is off especially to those who have been leading this long, drawn out charge. Thank you to the volunteer board members of the Shawnigan Residents' Association, who, right from the beginning, recognized imminent danger at a time when many people thought the provincial government would protect us from the threat of this venture. And thank you to past and present Cowichan Valley Regional District directors, and many, many other 'regular' citizens for having strongly and steadfastly stood for the safe future of our water and our community.

*Anne Brunet*



Dr. Mackenzie Brooks

250-888-0517

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Passing the “Buck”

Mary Desmond  
Shawnigan Resident

One sunny day last month as I strolled south along East Shawnigan Lake Road, I glanced down to the water and received an unpleasant surprise. There, resting part in, part out of the lake was a dead deer. It appeared to be a doe who had possibly been struck by a vehicle and knocked down the bank to land by a dock. How long it had lain there, I couldn't determine, but doubtless it would not be adorning a dinner table as prime roast venison. More to the point, I realised it should be removed from a source of drinking water before it really began to rot.

But whom to contact about getting rid of the poor creature? MOT [Ministry of Transportation] was sympathetic, but only acted if the animal was actually on or by the side of public roads. DFO [Department of Fisheries and Oceans] would be unlikely to take action given that their primary focus was on fish habitat rather than the safety of community drinking water. Perhaps an appeal to the Conservation Service would meet with more success. Alas, my request was denied. I was duly informed they “were not in the dead deer removal business”. It was suggested lake dwellers equipped with boats should retrieve it. However, most boats were tucked away during wintertime. Also, there was the problem of proper disposal of the remains. By this stage, no predator, no matter how hungry, would want to snack on such a waterlogged carcass.

But, the CO [Conservation Officer] had recommended that the actual purveyors of Shawnigan's drinking water should be approached, so the next seemingly logical step was to call the CVRD Engineering Service, which administers the Beach Estates water system. Yet again my hopes were dashed. Their intake pipes, as well as those of Lidstech, who operate the Village system, are located toward the north end of the lake, thus well out of harms way. [It is worth noting that Mill Bay Waterworks has never drawn water from the lake, and in fact, has not even taken water from Shawnigan Creek for a long time].

With options dwindling, time



passing, and the deer decaying, I decided next to contact the MOH [Ministry of Health]. Thankfully, the officer there agreed that the corpse did present a health risk, at least to those in the immediate vicinity who drew their water unfiltered and undisinfected from this location. But once more a question of jurisdiction arose. If the animal was on public land, MOH was responsible for its removal, if found on private land, then the task fell to the property owner[s]. In this instance, it was clearly the latter as the deer was down by a private dock. I was assured the owner would be contacted, and hopefully the animal would then be carted away.

Buoyed by this development, I was optimistic that this matter would be swiftly resolved. Unfortunately, delays regarding first, the identification of the property owner, an absentee landlord, and secondly, obtaining his co-operation, brought the business to a standstill. Although the owner has not refused to remove the deer, his attitude might be described as “vague”.

It is now Easter weekend, nearly six weeks since my initial discovery of the deceased doe. What I had mistakenly thought could be cleared up in the time it takes to sing a couple of rousing choruses of “Oh, deer, what can the matter be?” has been long enough to complete Schubert's “Unfinished Symphony” - and to start composing a new one.

The Health officer is presently seeking advice from the Medical Health doctor as to how to proceed next. It was surprising, and a little disconcerting, to learn that the Health officer is under no obligation to warn those whose drinking water might be affected. Nor is he endowed with the mandate to compel the removal of the deer by the owner. Even though its decomposing presence may be a health concern to those whose intake pipes may be situated close to the carcass, this situation would not be defined as a «health hazard» under the current system. One reason being is that no official water testing is conducted in this stretch of the lake. Should the owner remain unresponsive, the only legal recourse would be a civil lawsuit. But take heart, the doe appears to be slipping deeper into the water, and if it becomes fully submerged, then there's a chance one of the federal agencies, Transport Canada, might be willing to whisk it away.

Apart from that faint glimmer of hope, the Plain People of Area B might consider lobbying for a “Removal of Decomposing Wildlife Act” along the lines of the anticipated “Derelict Boat” legislation. The frightening circularity of the process is all too reminiscent of the great Flann O'Brian's novel, “At Swim Two Birds”, in which the hero embarks upon a bewildering series of experiences, only to end exactly at the place where he began.

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Book Review

Marcy Green  
Shawnigan Focus

Cutting for Stone

by Abraham Verghese  
Published by Vintage Canada  
Copyright 2009 Abraham Verghese

Before reading this book, the only Ethiopian person I knew was a woman in one of my English classes who had lived in the court of Haile Selassie\* as a Lady in Waiting. Hers was a story of serving the Emperor and his wife and then escaping the country once he was driven out of power by a coup. She came with other refugees to find a new beginning in Canada.

To be honest, I had no background knowledge of the revolution, and certainly no sense of the country itself, so found this novel fascinating. Using the chaotic background of an African country in flux and struggling to find its independence, the author tells a story of twin boys, born of an Indian nun and a Scottish physician father, both working together in a mission hospital. The mother dies in childbirth and the father flees when faced with the reality of his actions.

The boys, Marion and Shiva, are fostered by an amazing pair, the Matron and a hospital assistant, both of whom prove to be loving and wise parents. The story moves quickly along as the twins grow, develop their particular skills and become involved in relationships outside of the family. Their lives are closely tied up in threats of war and the dangers of being caught on the wrong side. Over time, the boys grow apart as much from jealousy as personal differences.

Eventually the narrator, Marion, a hard-working, bright student, flees the war zone and emigrates to America. He finds himself as a lowly medical resident in a Jersey hospital, tending to gunshot wound victims and becoming part of the closely-knit expatriate group. His work ethic, not to mention his cricket skills, gain him quick acceptance.

How he discovers his father and learns from him and how his brilliant brother, Shiva, follows him, only to eventually save his life, is part of the enthralling plot.

This novel is made so much

more vivid by the fact that the author is a physician and Professor of Medicine at Stanford University. His descriptions of medical procedures will leave you holding your breath. His understanding of the need for compassion in healing, or “words of comfort”, will touch the heart. Born in Addis Ababa of Indian parents, he began his medical career in Ethiopia and so knows the people and country well. One wonders how much of the story is autobiographical.

The characters in this story, including the country of Ethiopia, which figures large, stayed with me long after I finished the 600 plus pages. If you want a book to get lost in and maybe learn a few things in the process, I recommend this masterpiece.

\* Interesting fact: Haile Selassie’s original name was Ras Tafari. The Rastafarians in Jamaica revered him as the Second Coming of Christ as his family claimed to be directly descended from the Biblical King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Oh, how we are all connected...in some very interesting ways!

Rating: 5/5 stars

Mondays April 11–June 6  
*Mother Goose for ages 0-4. A playful time of rhymes, songs and storytelling for babies and toddlers with a caregiver.*

Fridays April 22 – May 13,  
10:30-11 Family Storytime. For children ages 2-8.

Stuffy Sleepover–Thursday  
April 21, 6:30-7:30.  
*Bring your stuffy to the library for a storytime and craft and your stuffy will stay the whole night in the library for some overnight adventures.*

South Cowichan Library Events  
(Mill Bay Centre)

Tuesday May 3, 6:30-7:30  
*Going Gluten Free with Shirley Bel-lows – learn great advice and tips on making the leap to a gluten-free life. Please pre-register by calling the library.*



*“The IB Diploma Programme is what I’ve always wanted to take. The program is very difficult, and to think that I might not achieve the desired results made me hesitant and nervous. I succeeded, thanks to the help and encouragement of my teachers and friends at the school, I know I made the right choice that I will never regret!”*

Sunny, Class of 2015

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

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

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

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Shawnigan Lake Road

We’re completing a system improvement project in your area. Crews will be completing line construction on Shawnigan Lake Road from Lakewood Road to Sooke Lake Road.

Start date: Wednesday, March 30, 2016  
Anticipated completion: Friday, May 20, 2016  
Time: Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Traffic travelling along Shawnigan Lake Road could experience delays. Please plan ahead and allow extra time for your commute. When possible, plan an alternate route to avoid delays. For your safety and the safety of our crew, please reduce your speed and follow the direction of traffic control in the construction zone.

Thanks for your patience while we complete this important work.

BC Hydro  
Power smart



## Take A Hike!

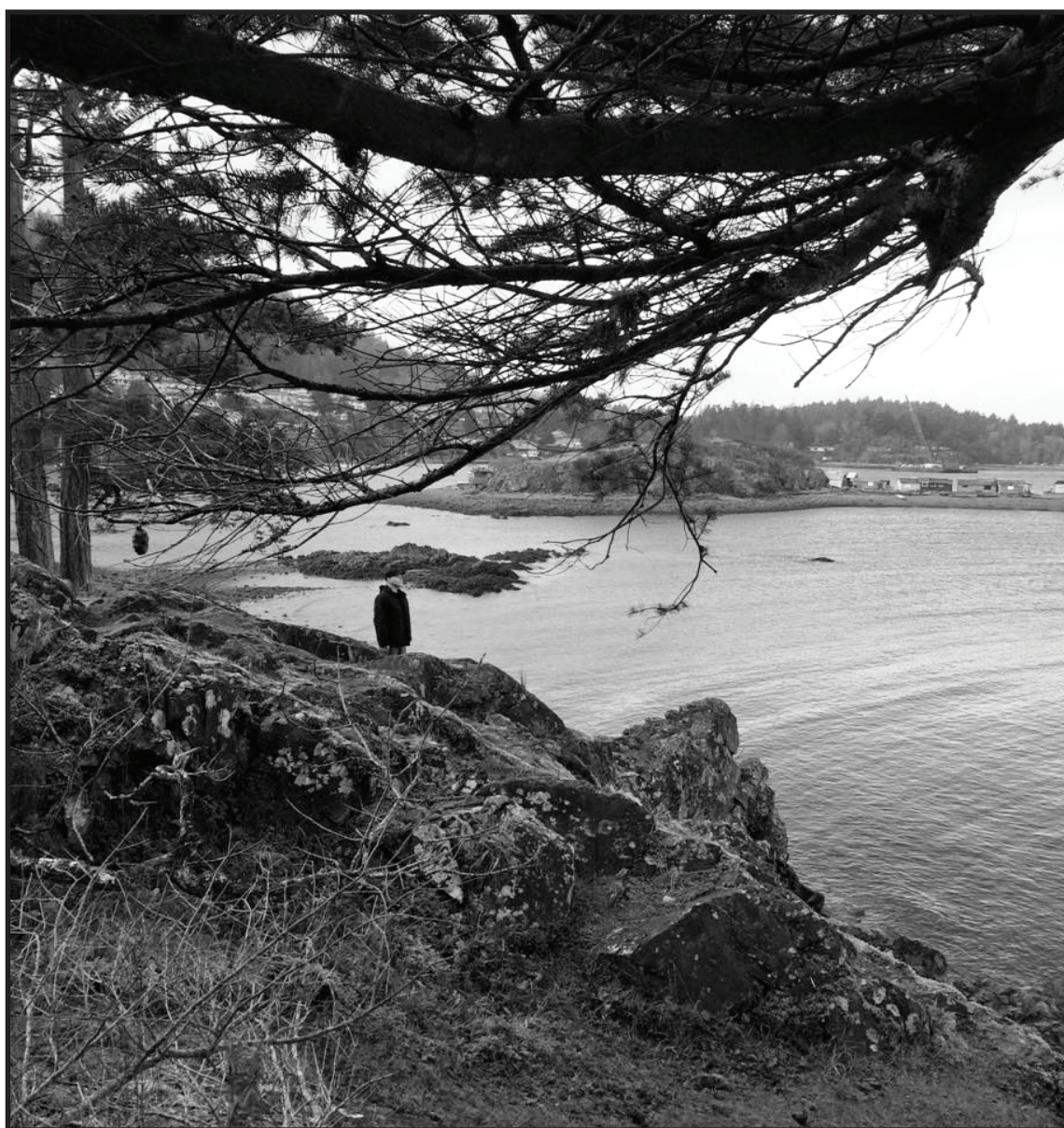
**Robin Massey**  
*Shawnigan Focus*

### **Piper's Lagoon Park – Have you heard of it?**

I have not really spent a lot of time in Nanaimo, but when I do I make it a goal to check out local scenic areas and this particular park popped up as one of the most popular. Just off of Hammond Bay Rd, Northeast of Nanaimo, is Piper's Lagoon Park. And as the name alludes, the park is located in the vicinity of a lagoon - the pretty natural kind...as opposed to the stinky variety where our wastes go.

This oceanside park features approximately 9½ acres of terrain to explore, from flat pebbled trails to pleasant little paths up through the bluffs and forest. The views and scenery are really quite extraordinary, comprising of plenty of tide pools to poke, spaces to beachcomb, break out a sweat, or even simply to take a seat and enjoy the ocean fresh breezes.

When you venture onto the forested path, you'll embark on a twisty 2 km loop along the water which takes you around a point, leads you to a cool rocky sandbar (which had a huge driftwood tipi during our visit) and then returns you back to the start. An especially noteworthy spot to see along this loop is Shack Island which is an adorable little island that can be accessed by foot during low tide. At first peek the little shacks appear to be abandoned, when in fact they are family cabins that have been passed down through many generations since the 1930's and often



you will see the lucky current owners milling about enjoying what their family members have for years.

As we commonly see on our West Coast trails, we have the signature Arbutus trees, the gnarly twisted Garry Oaks, and of course a plethora of ferns and lichens. Our feathered friends, such as loons, seagulls, herons, sandpipers, kingfishers, oyster catchers and eagles also find this area a great place to hang out as well,. We had the pleasure of watching an

Eagle guiding its fledgling through the joys of flight.

After the visit at Piper's I learned what an isthmus is; a narrow strip of land through a body of sea/ocean water, creating a connection between two areas of land. Isthmus' are another commonality that we find in our island's lagoons and at Piper's it is the launch of the path to a fun little journey. As you first begin, the lagoon itself is on your left and the ocean on your right. The maintained path

is a fairly flattish allowing for any level to enjoy what the park has to offer. Oh, and if you are one of those brave hardy swimmer types, at the start of the isthmus (my new word) there is a fun double headed serpent shower to clean yourself before the long journey home!

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

### **SHAWNIGAN LAKE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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



*Department Members Attended 16 Incidents in March*

- ★ Tuesday, March 1 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Friday, March 4 - 1st Responder off MacFarlane Rd
- ★ Sunday, March 6 - 1st Responder off Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Monday, March 7 – Trailer Fire on Carlton Rd
- ★ Tuesday, March 8 – Mutual Aid Malahat for a Structure Fire on Stebbings Rd
- ★ Wednesday, March 9 – MVI on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Wednesday, March 9 – Hydro Line Fire on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Wednesday, March 9 – Assistance on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Saturday, March 12 - 1st Responder off W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Monday, March 14 – Burning Complaint on Ida Rd
- ★ Wednesday, March 16 - 1st Responder off S Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Saturday, March 19 – Burning Complaint on Meadowview Rd
- ★ Thursday, March 24 – Mutual Aid Mill Bay for a Structure Fire on Chapman Rd
- ★ Saturday, March 26 – MVI on Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Wednesday, March 30 – Assistance on W Shawnigan Lake Rd
- ★ Thursday, March 31 - 1st Responder off Renfrew Rd



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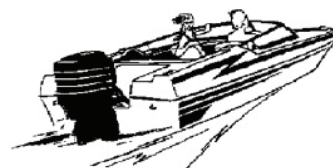
**250-743-2122**  
At the 4-way stop in Shawnigan Lake Village



## COMMUNITY GROUPS

- ★ **Area B Director's meetings with Sonia Furstenau**  
Office hours by appointment. Email [sfurstenau@cvrld.bc.ca](mailto:sfurstenau@cvrld.bc.ca) For updates: check [www.soniafurstenau.ca](http://www.soniafurstenau.ca)
- ★ **Shawnigan Advisory Planning Commission (APC)**  
April 7th at 7 pm. Watershed office: Unit 4-1760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd
- ★ **Shawnigan Parks and Recreation Commission**  
No meeting in April
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Community Centre Commission** Next meeting TBA
- ★ **Shawnigan Improvement District**  
2nd Monday of each month 7 pm at #1 Fire Hall
- ★ **Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA)**  
for info: check [www.thesra.ca](http://www.thesra.ca)
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Business Association (SLBA)**  
Contact: [info@slba.ca](mailto:info@slba.ca) for information
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Community Association**  
Contact: [bburr@shaw.ca](mailto:bburr@shaw.ca)
- ★ **Shawnigan Basin Society**  
May 3rd at 7 pm. Meetings held in Watershed office: Unit 4-17760 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road. Contact: [luvlife@shaw.ca](mailto:luvlife@shaw.ca)
- ★ **Young Seniors Action Group (YSAGS)**  
Contact: [www.ysag.ca](http://www.ysag.ca) email: [ysagssl@gmail.com](mailto:ysagssl@gmail.com)
- ★ **Shawnigan Lake Museum**  
Open Fri-Sun 11-4. [www.shawniganlakemuseum.com](http://www.shawniganlakemuseum.com)  
Contact: [shawniganlakemuseum@shaw.ca](mailto:shawniganlakemuseum@shaw.ca) **Note:** closed Sun., April 10th
- ★ **Village Development Committee** April 23 - 10:30 a.m. at Watershed office
- ★ **South Cowichan Community Policing** 250-929-7222

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[hennecker@shaw.ca](mailto:hennecker@shaw.ca)

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### HOME SERVICES

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## What Is It? Where Is It? Why Is IT?



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Reply to: [editor@shawniganfocus.ca](mailto:editor@shawniganfocus.ca)

### NO WINNER FOR MARCH

The photo for March showed the number 28.6 painted on the third iron bridge as you go from Mason's towards Cobble Hill on the E&N railway line. It is the number of miles from "Mile 0" in Victoria where the train started..

## Shawnigan Cemetery

EST 1965

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## The sky is the limit

**Oriana Parker**  
YSAGS

My story begins in the small hamlet of Tomahawk, Alberta. Europeans homesteaded this area in the early 1900's. Lucille (Haley) Baster was born here and as a youngster growing up on the farm she was fascinated by farm machinery, engines but, most particularly, her father's old vehicle. Today it is interesting to imagine how a person of somewhat diminutive stature with a free and easy disposition could have managed the colossal career that would define her life.

If, at an early age machinery intrigued her, as a starry-eyed teenager it was planes that captivated her imagination. Her innermost desire was to become a pilot and fly up into the sunshine. She was exhilarated by the thought of it. The major drawback was the prohibitive cost of the flying lessons. However, with this goal planted firmly in her mind there was absolutely no stopping her! She worked three jobs as cosmetician for Simpson Sears, a door-to-door vendor for Studio Girl and as a Checker cab driver.

Her first lesson was at the

Edmonton Flying Club. The cost was the grand sum of \$5.00. Lucille recalls that once she placed her hands on the controls, she was absolutely hooked for life. After obtaining her license she became an instructor and trained pilots for a commercial airline. Despite this, she was refused employment with a major airliner in 1966 because: "To date this company has never considered hiring females as pilots nor do we anticipate doing so in the near future". A picture shows Lucille with 39 instructors, many of whom she trained, all of whom were men.

In 1968, Lucille set a new record for high altitude flying – climbing to 18,116 feet in an old Fleet-Canuck 90 horsepower aircraft. It took her 2 1/2 hours in 15 below weather with oxygen tanks strapped to her back. Her dream had come true and things were about to get even better. In 1974, a handsome Air Traffic Controller by the name of Malcolm Baster spotted the mini skirted, blonde attractive instructor sending his heartbeat off the radar detector! Theirs was a brief and romantic courtship culminating in a wedding befit-

ting the couple as noted by the local paper under the title Mile High Marriage "Lucille Haley and Malcolm Baster were married 6,000 feet above the city of Edmonton, with the drone of the small plane's twin engines for music – and the occasional wisecracks from the airport control tower".

In addition to flying, Lucille also designed and created her own pottery, which she shipped around the world. Some of her pottery was on display in a Canadian exhibition in London, England. She also had a very busy modelling career. Lucille and Malcolm are retired. They lived in Shawnigan Lake for a number of years and now live in Arbutus Ridge. Again, in keeping with the theme and appreciation of engines, Lucille and Malcolm are the proud owners of a 1972 Corvette, a Porsche, a Mustang and a Jaguar. They are very busy with the various car clubs. Malcolm is the editor of The Island Growler an award winning newsletter of The Jaguar Car Club of Victoria and also writes for Jaguar Journal the official magazine of the Jaguar Clubs of North America.



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