



WEEK OF NOVEMBER 30, 2009

# Shawnigan Parent News



Photos: More International Week! For more photos and stories, go to <http://www.shawnigan.ca/now>

## International Week – David Robertson

If there's any truth to the saying that, "pride comes before a fall," then I'm going to be tumbling freefall in the weeks to come because I am so proud of our school community and, beyond that, of being a part of a country that actually lives the notions of multiculturalism that we promote. Unless a few narrow-minded despots derail the future world, then we are bound on an irreversible course towards globalisation where respect and co-operation will be the norm and people will be expected to move seamlessly between countries and cultures. That's the essence of what's going on here this week and, of course, it fits perfectly with our general approach to life and education. Is it only in Scotland that they have a saying along the lines of having to know where you're from to know where you're going—probably not? That's the essence of this fabulous week and what a series of opportunities it has again provided for awareness, interaction, amazement and just sheer fun and laughter. Happy to fall if that's the price I have to pay for this privilege!

The writing above was taken from the Headmaster's blog on our website. Please check the Headmaster's blog regularly to read his comments. <http://www.shawnigan.ca/now/headmasters-blog>

## Realizing a Dream – Caryl Worden

After years of intensive training, Grade 12 student Lauren G. realized a dream last month when she rode into first place at the prestigious Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto. "There was a lot of pressure because BC hasn't won since 2001," says Lauren who competed as part of the Canadian Equestrian Team.

Her mother is also an avid rider, so Lauren has spent her whole life on and around horses. She began competing at age nine and got her own pony at 10. For years Lauren has trained with Olympian Laura Balisky, making the daily drive from Vancouver to the Fraser Valley. Frequent travel to competitions also took a lot of the teenager's time so she opted to be home-schooled until this year.

"Then I realized that I really needed to focus on my education and to graduate," says the Strathcona House boarder. She looked into schools in Ontario, which is the Canadian equestrian heartland, but the family decided it was just too far away. "A riding friend had come to Shawnigan so we checked it out, and here I am."

Competing in Toronto this fall was truly remarkable for Lauren. She rubbed shoulders with Canada's entire Olympic Equestrian Team who were on hand for World Cup qualifiers, getting to see them compete and sitting in on classes during the evenings. Still, she is realistic about where riding will fit in her future. "It's not really that easy to make money with a riding career. It's expensive and you spend a lot of time away, so I think I'll just do it as a hobby now," she says, adding that she does sometimes miss her horses. "It was a big change coming here and honestly I thought I'd miss them more. But we're so busy around here at the School, there's barely time to miss them," she laughs.

## From the Admissions Office – Chad Holtum

Not unlike a new student starting Shawnigan in September, I arrived at my new school this past October to be welcomed by a few familiar faces, a buzz of activity coming from the students and an overwhelming welcome from the community at large. What struck me the most in my first few days was the quality of the students, staff and programming. Students make eye contact with you, hold doors open for you and show a respect for one another. Staff strategize how to encourage each student to be the best they can be and are clearly committed to the programs of the School. As I wrote a former

## Upcoming Events:

- Dec. 5-6** Leave Weekend - 5pm ferries to the mainland and 7pm ferries back to Shawnigan.
- Dec. 17** Christmas Dinner and Carol Service
- Dec. 18** Christmas Break begins at 9:00am
- Jan. 3** Christmas Break ends. Students must return to School by 8:00pm at 9:00pm. Buses will meet the 5:00 sailings from the mainland.

colleague of mine just last week, what continues to amaze me at Shawnigan is that everything is done right! There is clear direction from the Headmaster that "giving it all you have" is part of being Shawnigan, for both the students and staff. Whether it is the stage show as part of International week, the faculty assessment meetings, or weekly chapel services at Shawnigan, it is always done right and with enthusiasm.

So, this is my challenge, to take this amazing school and to communicate who we are and what we offer to families here, at home, and around the world. This coming Wednesday, Andrea Carballo, one of our incredible Spanish teachers, and I will embark on a recruitment trip to Costa Rica to share the Shawnigan story in San Jose and Tamarindo. It is with this in mind that I consider it a pleasure and a privilege to represent everything Shawnigan!

## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has historically been part of a Shawnigan education, but for some years it disappeared from our curriculum. Last September, The Jr. Duke of Edinburgh's Award program was instituted for Grade 8s and Jeff Williams has just begun the medal award program with those students, now in the Grade 9 class.

*The BC and Yukon Division of the Award describes it as follows:*

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Young Canadians Challenge is the most prestigious achievement award for young Canadians. It is a challenge to all young people between the ages of 14 and 25. It offers an opportunity to broaden interests and experience under adult guidance and assessment. This is achieved through participation in a balanced program of practical, cultural, and adventurous activities chosen to suit individual aptitudes and related to local needs and conditions.

Participation in the program represents a personal commitment to constructive endeavor, promoting qualities of self-discipline, self-help and self-reliance.

There are three "Awards" – Bronze, minimum starting age 14; Silver, minimum starting age 15; Gold, minimum starting age 16.

Because of the depth of the Shawnigan program involving academics, fine arts, and athletics, our students are very close to achieving the requirements of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Young Canadians Challenge already. With Mr. Williams' leadership, assessment and monitoring, our Grade 9 class should all earn the Bronze award and then work toward the Silver and Gold in subsequent years at the School. Mr. Williams is enthusiastic about his opportunity to lead this group of students and excited about the value the award will add to their personal achievements and to their résumés.