

villagevibe

September 2008 : News and views from the heart of Fernwood



Photo: Mark Powell

From empty space to Park Place

>> BY ROBERTA MARTELL

Three years ago, on August 1st 2005 Fernwood NRG took a deep breath – as it took possession of the derelict Cornerstone building. Along with the neighbourhood, we learned the hard way about renovations, building codes, affordable housing, and about exactly how much work it took to create such a monumental transition in our neighbourhood. Three years later to the day, on August 1st 2008 all the lessons we learned came to fruition as our newest project, Park Place, was completed and ready for occupancy.

We built 'Park Place' to provide safe, affordable, supportive housing for homeless, or at-risk of becoming homeless, families. The project idea was brought to us by a community member who saw an empty lot and with it an opportunity to build affordable housing. We listened closely to residents to ensure that Park Place would be an asset to the incredible heritage streetscape of Yukon St.. We worked with funding partners to secure the capital required to build the quality of housing that this neighbourhood and these families deserve.

Mostly though, we dreamed big and took calculated risks. We signed an offer to purchase the two lots for \$325,000 mere hours after finishing up the funding reports for the Cornerstone. We'd just heaved a sigh of relief and said, 'Never Again!'. But we moved forward, at times with funding that was less than secured, simply because the need for housing in the region was too great, and the potential rewards too many.

On February 15th 2007 we made the offer to purchase the land. On June 4th 2008 the last funding was confirmed. During this time, work was mostly behind the scenes in completing the planning, research, due diligence and fundraising. From January 2nd, 2008 when we broke ground, until completion a mere 6 months later on July 18th, the building went up like clockwork. I would like to extend a note of thanks to the visionaries on the Board of Fernwood NRG who were able to see through the uncertainty to make this project happen. The flowchart of possibilities (on page 3) was the tool we used to make our decision. It gave us the confidence to move forward even in uncertainty.

– continued on page 3

Park Place opening

Fernwood NRG invites neighbourhood residents to the grand opening of its Park Place building at 1222 Yukon Street. Festivities will take place Tuesday, September 2nd at 11:00am. Representatives from all levels of government as well as the Vic High students who helped build Park Place will be in attendance to celebrate the addition of six market-based affordable housing units to Victoria's housing stock. Five families moved into the newly-constructed building on August 1st.

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editorial : Think globally vote locally

EVERY THREE YEARS VICTORIA RESIDENTS HAVE an opportunity go to the polls and make an important choice: who are the people we want in decision-making positions governing our municipality?

Although the municipal election in November may seem a long way off, these next few months are critical. Candidates will be launching campaigns, door-knocking for your votes, erecting lawn signs, giving away buttons, and bending your ear in any way they can. It's time to pay attention.

Voter turnout in municipal elections is notoriously low, many people only waking up when it comes to "important" elections, like those at the federal level. And while it is true, municipalities are limited in their revenue generating taxation powers and thus in some ways, in their ability to get things done, cities are where people live.

As fossil fuels dry up, food prices soar, water sources are compromised, and the global economy becomes even more tenuous, cities – and the smaller neighbourhood units of which they are comprised – will become the new building blocks. It is on the local and micro-local levels that citizens will need to come up with solutions to the pressing social, environmental, and economic challenges that face us. Cities can be sites of uncontrolled development and urban sprawl or sites of sustainability.

What kind of city do we want Victoria to be? What mandate do Victorians want to give to those we empower in November? What leadership qualities and skill sets are necessary to meet the issues before us? These are some questions we all might want to ask ourselves in the lead up to November's election.

Like the work of Fernwood NRG? Go to **CanadaHelps.org** and donate to Fernwood NRG.

declaration of principles and values

We are committed to creating a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable neighbourhood;

We are committed to ensuring neighbourhood control or ownership of neighbourhood institutions and assets;

We are committed to using our resources prudently and to becoming financially self-reliant;

We are committed to the creation and support of neighbourhood employment;

We are committed to engaging the dreams, resources, and talents of our neighbours and to fostering new links between them;

We are committed to taking action in response to neighbourhood issues, ideas, and initiatives;

We are committed to governing our organization and serving our neighbourhood democratically with a maximum of openness, inclusivity and kindness;

We are committed to developing the skills, capacity, self-worth, and excellence of our neighbours and ourselves;

We are committed to focusing on the future while preserving our neighbourhood's heritage and diversity;

We are committed to creating neighbourhood places that are vibrant, beautiful, healthy, and alive;

and, most of all,

We are committed to having fun!

Suicide Prevention Day

>> BY CLAIRE COUPLAND & AUBREY BALDOCK



World Suicide Awareness Day committee members Aubrey Baldock, Jordana Duffy, Mary Rumsby, Claire Coupland. Missing: Katherine Cook and Kari Marshall.)

SUICIDE IS A MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE worldwide, accounting for approximately 1,000,000 lives lost each year according to the World Health Organization. Each year about 4,000 Canadians die by suicide. On average, over 500 are British Columbians. Every year September 10th is designated as World Suicide Prevention Day. For the past three years Victoria's NEED Crisis and Information Line has hosted a memorial event to honour those whose lives have been touched by suicide.

This year NEED will hold their memorial gathering on September 7th, 2008 at the UVic's Interfaith Chapel from 2-4pm. Join NEED Crisis and Information Line, special guest Alex Nelson from the Musgamagw Tsawatainek First Nation and other guests and community partners for the opening ceremony at 2pm.

NEED marks this important occasion for those whose lives have been touched by suicide. It is a safe space for people to come together in remembrance of those lost to suicide and to learn about community resources. World Suicide Awareness Day is an opportunity to break the silence that clouds suicide by sharing experiences and uniting in healing. The Interfaith Chapel is next to Finnerty Gardens, where guests can take part in a memorial walk. World Suicide Awareness Day will also include music, a healing circle, and an opportunity to place a flower on a memorial tree.

NEED invites community members to come celebrate life and to honour lives lost to suicide.

This year's theme is "Think Globally, Plan Nationally, Act Locally," which was adopted to encourage communities, governments, and organizations across Canada to work together (1) to prevent death by suicide and (2) to assist, educate and comfort those who have been impacted by suicidal behaviours.

the Fernwood buzz



Photo: Beth Threlfall

STROLL, BIKE, SKATEBOARD, OR JOG DOWN Fernwood Road between Gladstone and Pandora and you won't be able to stop from bursting into a smile. The Fernwood Pole Painters have been on a mission. With the approval of B.C. Hydro, Beth Threlfall and crew set out with stencils and paint to adorn the once-bleak poles with flowers, butterflies, and birds. They've transformed the hydro poles into works of art. Stay tuned to the *Village Vibe* for pole painting updates. Or grab a brush, cut out a stencil, consult with your neighbours, and begin with the poles on your very own street.

CLARIFICATION: The July Buzz reported Fern Fest recyclers reminded festival goers that: "chip bags can go in the blue box."

Fernwood NRG would like to clarify that chip bags and other foil-type bags and wrappers are not recyclable through the CRD curbside blue box program. They are, however, recyclable at **Fernwood's Outrageous Recycling Day** – second Saturday every month, 10am-1pm across Gladstone from the Fernwood Community Centre. Recyclable foil – and all other discarded plastics collected at Fern Fest – went to Fernwood's Outrageous Recycling Day. We hope to see you there with your recycling on Sept 13th!

Many countries have developed National Suicide Prevention Strategies, often in consultation with Canadian experts. In 2003, the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention began developing a blueprint provinces can use to guide their suicide prevention, education and support initiatives, as government leadership has yet to formally promote a National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. For more information about suicide prevention across Canada, visit The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention website at www.casp-acps.ca.

NEED Crisis and Information Line also provides Suicide for Youth Presentations (SAY) at Greater Victoria schools including Vic High. These presentations operate from the philosophy that youths are each other's best resource, since they are most likely to turn to each other in times of need.

Statistics show that suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth in Canada. By equipping peers with knowledge of warning signs and ways they can help suicidal friends, youth are actively helping prevent suicide in their schools. Since 2002, Vic High students have participated in 72 SAY presentations.

Vic High students can also get support at www.youthspace.ca, which provides the same anonymous and confidential support and resources as NEED's Youth Line, but online. Youthspace.ca includes live one on one Chat, E-counseling, and Peer Support Forums.

For information on NEED's World Suicide Prevention workshops in early September, see www.needcrisis.bc.ca NEED Crisis & Information Line: 250-386-6323 or 1-800-SUICIDE

views from the street : What homegrown food are you indulging in?



Bobby Arbess with Mischa and friends

Balmoral Street Chicken



Lisa Helps

Eggs benedict on homegrown fried green tomatoes and zucchini.



Maia Gibb

Simply, a tomato.

North Park Festival



Photo: Alex Kerr

>> BY ALEX KERR

On Saturday August 16, 2008 the North Park Neighbourhood Association held its annual summer festival.

Although the weather was very warm and there were a lot of other activities going on in the city, a good number of people came to Franklin Green Park for the fun, entertainment and food. The children's play area, complete with bouncy, castle was a hit.

A great big thank you to the business community for all their support. Thank you to everyone who attended the festivities. All in all a fun time was had by all. See you again next year.

Fernwood NRG AGM and Dialogue with Mark Lakeman

>> BY TRISH RICHARDS

HEY FERNWOODIANS! WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO in the 'hood lately? Enjoying Cornerstone coffee and conversation? Or home-grown music on a Saturday evening? Browsing the Tuesday night market? Cooking up local veggies at a Community Kitchen? Or treating yourself to Burger & Beer at the Inn or Stage's Mussel Mondays. Checking out local art at the Galleries? Or the latest Belfry play? Contributing to our Outrageous Recycling Saturday? Out with your kids for Sunday morning soccer in Stevenson? Enjoying tea & talk in the Square in the afternoon? Painting a Hydro pole, perhaps? Not to even mention Fernfest, the new Park Place Housing on Yukon St., the Food Security and Placemaking groups' work and the myriad of other ongoing activities.

Whatever your preference, you have got to appreciate how, with all our combined energies,



Photo: Pete Rockwell
Mark Lakeman speaking in March of 2008

Fernwood has blossomed even more this past year So come and celebrate with your neighbours at the Fernwood NRG Annual General Meeting, Thursday, September 25th, 7:00pm at the Fernwood Community Centre Gym, 1302 Gladstone Ave.

Mark Lakeman, co-founder of Portland's City Repair Project and renowned advocate of 'building neighbourhood from the grounds up' will be joining us for a keynote and dialogue. Mark came to Fernwood last April and was so excited about our neighbourhood activism that he asked to return. So, we have invited him back to the 'hood to talk with us about what we have accomplished and where we want to go from here. It promises to be an outstanding evening.

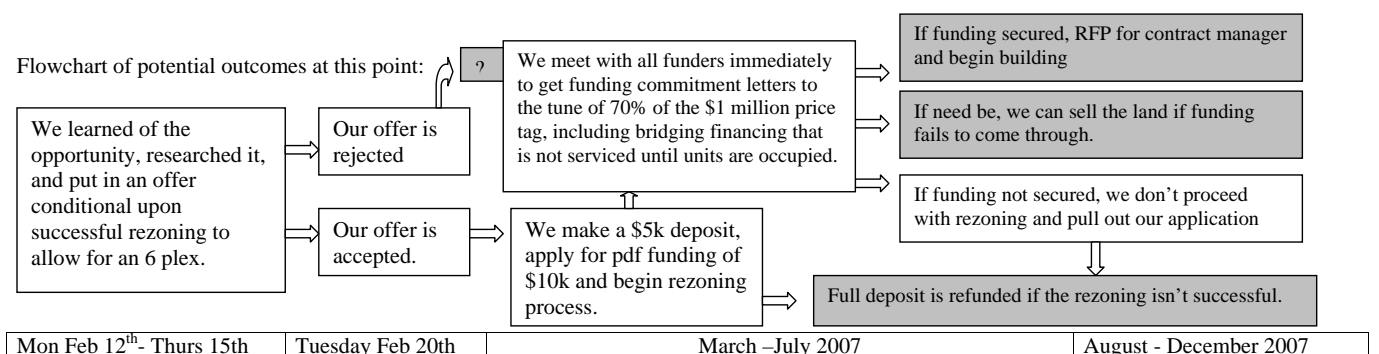
Come and share it with us. Be part of Fernwood's continuing 'resident powered neighbourhood evolution'.

Park Place | from page 1

Park Place demonstrates the viability of small-scale, neighbourhood-driven projects on in-fill lots. Given that there are no more great undeveloped tracts of land in our cities, we feel that small infill projects that maintain the integrity of the neighbourhood while increasing density are the way of the future. This smart growth minimizes urban sprawl and supports urban sustainability. We made significant efforts to 'green' this development including solar hot water heating panels, dual flush toilets, outstanding and beautiful bike parking, natural building materials and an edible, organic landscape.

It is our hope that other neighbourhood groups will be inspired to take on their own small housing projects, and Fernwood NRG would be honoured to assist them in any way. It is our belief that 'Park Place' will be a

source of pride for the neighbourhood and for the families who will occupy these units for years to come. At Fernwood NRG, we are looking at what comes next....



feature :

Ryan St Greenway

The lives of native plants

>> BY TARA WELLS



New green spaces are rare in fast-developing Victoria. The fabulous new greenway on Ryan Street in the Oaklands area of Fernwood is an exception. The new greenway is part of a plan to link native plant zones via boulevard plantings which would encourage biodiversity and help safeguard vanishing native animals, birds and insects.

Oaklands School and the Cridge Centre have two of only six important stands of Garry Oak remaining in Victoria. Currently these zones of native trees are separated from each other, but they could be linked by the creation of native ecosystem corridors — i.e., boulevards landscaped with native plants — thereby creating breeding opportunities for endangered and threatened species.

The idea of connecting green spaces had initially met with approval from some city staffers. However, it wasn't until community activist Ludo Bertsch, with the successful Ryan Street greenway project under his belt, went to a consultation meeting on changes to Hillside Park and raised the idea of connecting the Cridge Centre ecosystem node with Saanich's Summit Park that the change began to occur.

It is clear that one dedicated citizen can make a difference in city planning. Bertsch demonstrated this through his commitment to making the Ryan Street greenway a reality. The new green space was possible only because a few blocks of Ryan Street are double the width of normal streets. No one is quite sure why this is so; possibly an error occurred when the area was originally surveyed. Before the greenway was in place, people commented on the ugliness of the bare patch of gravel and compacted sandy earth. No plants survived save the beautiful old Garry Oak trees.

Bertsch says that he wanted to bring some nature into the city. He notes that "As energy costs go up, people won't drive as much. We need to make the cities more livable so people can walk through their neighbourhoods and escape to a bit of nature." I point to the people walking by carrying bulging re-usable grocery bags. "Yes," he says, "people tell me they're walking to the mall instead of driving now."

In 2003, the Oaklands Greenway Working Group, comprised of Bertsch and other community members,

submitted a proposal to the city greenways committee. They proposed linking the wide area of Ryan St. that runs from Belmont to Asquith, to the rocky, grass-covered strip up Ryan hill. There is also a vacant lot at the top of the hill, at 1436 Ryan St. Controversy surrounding the fate of this lot sparked the community interest that ultimately led to the creation of the new greenway.

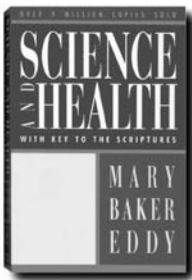
In late 2004, neighbours spotted city workers surveying the vacant lot. A packed neighbourhood meeting convinced the City that the lot should not be sold, and a proposal from the greenways group convinced City council to make the lot into a park for the purpose of preserving native ecosystems.

After extensive community input, Council passed a bylaw in 2005 to protect the entire Ryan Street hill. They also approved a special project grant of \$4,800 for remediation of the 1436 Ryan Street site. The plan was to connect the lot to the proposed greenway at the bottom of the hill. The first step was for community volunteers to get together and pickaxe out some of the blackberry and poison hemlock that had taken over the site. Later that year, after a great deal of dedicated volunteer effort, the Ryan Street greenway was awarded the first greenways grant under Victoria's new Greenways Plan, for \$20,000. The next two years were a whirlwind of planning, mapping and liaising with city.

Preserving the Garry Oak on the site was a driving force in planning the greenway. Bertsch explains that there is a dearth of teenaged Garry Oak trees, probably because at that age the trees are gawky and unattractive, and people who don't know their ecological value just cut them down. Now, because of the canopy of older trees — some of them over 130 years old — and the other native plants that have been planted in the newly created greenway, young Garry Oaks have the appropriate ecosystem in place to foster their growth.

Other plants in the greenway came from plant rescues. The Municipality of Saanich has a native plant salvage program which teaches volunteers how to extract native plants from areas slated for development and notifies the trained volunteers when plants become available for rescue.

While the newly transplanted plants will require some care and watering for the first few years, eventually the greenway will be a zeroscape: self-sustaining and requiring little to no care. However, there are some concerns from community members. Bertsch says that



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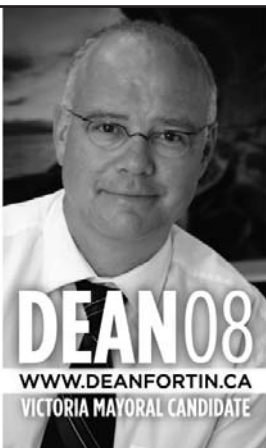
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many people think the long native grasses are messy looking, to the point that well-meaning neighbours actually mow the city-owned patches of wild grass at the top of the Ryan Street hill. They don't realize that when they mow the grass, camas bulbs don't have a chance to seed, which effectively destroys the next generation of plants. A sign showing how to identify native plants is in the works for the greenway.

Another complaint came from users of the nearby church hall, who had been accustomed to parking their cars anywhere on the site. Bertsch responded by noting that what was once an underutilized and ill-defined area had now become multi-use, with defined spaces for pedestrians, native plants, and parking. "It's true that a person may have to park half a block away on the odd occasion, but then this can happen," says Bertsch. He points to a three-inch high Garry Oak growing in the shaded mulch near the church.

But what about those who don't want native plants on their boulevards, those who prefer grass? Bertsch responds by saying that there are a lot of different types of native plants, and that what people need is education in the varieties available. He also notes that the city of Victoria's *Greenways Plan* is focused primarily on people, and he suggests that the goals of

greenways need to be broadened to include an emphasis on ecosystem interconnectivity. "If you don't have biodiversity and the ability for native critters to go from one area to another to breed, then you don't have stable populations."

Fred Hook, an environmental technician for the city, has pushed for more native species to be included in the city's plantings. Fred notes that most of the Garry Oak trees in Victoria are not in parks; they are in people's yards. If each resident planted native species around the native trees on their properties, each tree would become a stepping stone for biodiversity. After all, most of the yards in the city are connected to at least one neighbour.

What would you plant under a Garry Oak? See the sidebar for a list of tried and true native plants that provide food and shelter to butterflies, birds, bees and other pollinators.

If you are interested in volunteering to help with the Ryan St. greenway, please email Ludo Bertsch at greenways@blockcommunities.com

Plants that butterflies like:

- > Yarrow
- > Goldenrod
- > Fireweed
- > Wild Aster


Bees and other pollinators like:

- > Willows and Pussywillows
- > Wild Rose
- > Woolly Sunflower
- > Mock Orange
- > Pearly Everlasting

Birds and mammals eat seeds and fruit from:


- > Wild Honeysuckle
(hummingbirds love this)
- > Oregon Grape
- > Dogwood
- > Huckleberry
- > Pine
- > Flowering Redcurrant
- > Indian Plum

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Serving Our Community

garden gleanings : Foliage problems

>> BY MARGARET HANTIUK



MOST FOLIAGE PROBLEMS CAN BE AVOIDED BY purchasing disease resistant plant varieties and also with smart gardening practices: the right plant in the right place, proper watering and feeding, and adequate spacing for ventilation. Powdery mildew is a common foliage problem, which looks like a soft, white growth on leaves. Our humid, coastal air and dry soils, due to summer droughts, are a perfect environment for mildew, and stressed plants are all the more vulnerable to it and other foliage diseases as well.

To minimize mildew, water your soil well (deeply and less often is better than frequent sprinkles) and avoid watering foliage in the evening; drip irrigation or hand watering underneath the foliage is best if you must water late in the day. Mulching will help greatly by keeping your soil moist longer, and if your mulch is good compost

(or 'Seasoil') applied yearly, your plants will be well fed, stronger and more resistant.

Here is a safe home remedy for most foliage diseases: mix 2 Tbsp. of horticultural oil (or 1/2 tsp mild dish detergent), 1 tsp. baking soda, and 2 tsp plant food, in 1 litre of tepid water. Shake well and spray on both sides of affected leaves in the evening. Applying on a hot, sunny day can burn the leaves. It's also a good idea to water plants well before you spray to avoid washing the mixture off by accident later. After a rain it is necessary to reapply.

out that are improvements of the old ones and are more disease resistant. A good nursery will carry these and can recommend the better varieties for our climate and for your yard. Talking to experienced gardeners in your neighbourhood or at the various garden clubs in town can also be a valuable source of info. Note the plant variety tags at local teaching gardens (Glendale, Finnerty at UVic).

There are now many roses that are disease resistant. I grow several that I never have to spray. With ample

Powdery mildew is a common foliage problem, which looks like a soft, white growth on leaves.

Remember to check for good bugs (like ladybugs) beforehand, and to gently knock them off. Small, inexpensive hand sprayers can be purchased at garden stores. This mixture can also be used for black spot – the bane of rose growers – which looks just like its name.

Badly diseased leaves should be removed from the plant and from the ground below the plant. Throw them into the garbage; it's best to not compost them, as these diseases spread through tiny spores, etc. They should be removed completely from your yard.

There are many plants that I do not grow because they are so prone to mildew, black spot and rust (tiny orange bumps on leaves). Perhaps my garden is just not right for them due to soil or light conditions. Also, some plants just don't do well in our coastal climate. That being said, there are always new plant varieties coming

watering, nutritious mulching, and enough sun they are always healthy with glossy, rich green foliage. Others, I have pulled out and destroyed because they are not worth the effort. They never look good, and I refuse to pamper them or spray them with even home remedies, much less toxic chemicals.

The larger your investment (shrubs and trees), the more important it is to make a good choice. I choose plants that do not need much pampering, as I am not that kind of gardener, and I don't have that kind of garden.

So if you have your heart set on a particular plant, find the best and most suitable variety and put it in the right place. Then keep an eye on it and take care of it. You will be rewarded with a beautiful, healthy, and happy plant and garden! ♦

Fall Recreation @ FERNWOOD NRG: Highlights

Women's Drop-in Soccer

Sundays 5-6:30pm

**\$3 per person or \$30 punchcard
(for 12 visits)**



Homework Club (Free)

Ages 8 to 14. Wednesdays 3:30-5pm

Reflexology (by donation)

Thursdays 1:30-4pm

Adult Drop-in Floor Hockey

Tuesdays & Thursdays 7-9:30pm

Saturdays 2:30-5pm

**\$4 per person or \$40 punchcard
(for 12 visits)**



Fairuza Fridays (Free)

for Ages 10 to 14. 7-9:30pm

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Yoga

Hatha: Tuesdays 3:30-5pm

Flow: Fridays 5:30-7pm

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faces : Ken Lambert—Another face; another time



>> BY AARON ELLINGSEN — *from a conversation with his neighbour Ken*

I WAS BORN IN MUNICH IN 1931. MY FATHER WAS British — a translator and an equerry at the British Consul. My mother was Viennese, from Grunsing. They married and produced my twin brother Ron and me.

Munich wasn't a healthy place to be, with regular street fights and riots through the '30s, so my father sent Ron and me to a private boys' school south of Munich in the Bavarian Alps. We were there in 1939 when England declared war on Germany.

My father was immediately arrested and put into Dachau, and my mother was sent to a labour camp in Vienna. At nine-and-a-half years old, my brother and I ran away from school, thinking we were heading home. We were caught at the train station, and dragged to a camp where foreigners and arrested aliens were held. We spent nearly three weeks in a cell.

We were interviewed by the brown sisters — a nickname for the Lebensborn, the all-female youth services branch of the SS who wore a uniform like a brown nun's habit. They were authorized to decide whether a person was Aryan — by looks, by family, or by any means necessary. Having ascertained there had been no Jews in our family for three generations, they gave us Aryan certificates.

Each certificate had a number, which was then tattooed on the instep of our foot to serve as a quick proof of identification. These certificates were important to our wellbeing since despite having been born in Germany we had recognizably foreign accents. We faced a similar situation when we returned to England following the war, where we were attacked for our German accents.

With the certificates came free board and school fees at the school we'd just left. We spent most of the war there, but school life changed radically under the Nazis' "new

order." Classrooms became platoons; classroom monitors became corporals or sergeants. Every morning students assembled in the great hall and swore a blood oath of allegiance to Hitler. Ron and I kept our fingers crossed. At ten years old every student now joined the Jungfolk, and at 14 the Hitler Youth. The headmaster and teachers were replaced by a new group of teachers with Nazi qualification and a new title: "Masters of Life."

At 14 we were sent to Munich for civic service. Ron and I rode telegrams around the city on bicycles, often during air raids. We also had station duty. Six or seven of us would be sent down to the SS post, where a young officer would hand out whistles, then march us to the train station. Our job was to blow the

whistles, point and lie down flat on the ground at the sight of Jews or deserters — anyone suspicious looking.

Every young boy was assigned a group number by age, and enlistment was run using these numbers. Every day at 5 o'clock the only legal radio station played a youth hour. At the beginning of the hour they announced a group number. When your number was called, you were to report immediately to the nearest Wehrmacht barracks for military service.

Our days were spent scrounging through bombed-out buildings for food and ducking SS patrols

We were 14 years old, and our numbers were getting close. Initially they'd looked for taller, older-looking boys, but as time went by they weren't so selective. During that year my brother and I, with our friends Dieter and Hans, hatched a plan.

Dieter was a year older and a sergeant in the Hitler Youth. As a sergeant, he led regular exercises, route marches around the city and region, for groups of Hitler Youth. Over about three months Dieter, Hans, Ron and I pilfered the materials we would need to survive in the wilderness, and stowed our goods in a hand cart — like a small auto trailer, but meant to be pulled by four youths. We scrounged tools, wire for traps, seeds, camping materials, and a good stock of tinned rations.

The four of us concocted a set of false orders for Dieter. We sent his unsuspecting platoon off on a march to the West, while we headed for the hills with our cart of supplies. Ron, always a great navigator, found us an out-of-the-way valley in the shadow of Wallberg Mountain, where we camped by a little river, planted a garden, and lived in the bush for the next nine-and-a-half months. Eventually we were living completely off the land, trapping rabbits and scavenging roots and leaves.

Cold and hunger drove us back to the city. About the only supply we still had was soap, which we had carefully not used, and we looked like little mountain men — filthy, with long ragged hair and clothing in tatters. We made our way back to Munich on trains full of wounded soldiers, who we helped the nurses move about. On arriving back in Munich we were helped by a civilian police officer, who took us to the SS canteen for the first square meal we'd had in months.

Munich had been devastated, with great swathes of the city in bombed-out rubble. We remained focused on keeping under the radar, so we chose a bombed and demolished part of the city as a base in which to await the end. Dieter, Hans, Ron and I spent the remainder of the war living in a cellar there with two other boys. As we had no ration cards, it was a time of terrible starvation. We ate anything we could find — including unlucky cats and dogs — and our days were spent scrounging through bombed-out buildings for food and ducking police and SS patrols.

In the months before the war came to an end, bombing raids claimed the lives of Dieter and Hans, and Ron was wounded in the arm. Although his wound was minor, it became septic. We waited in hopes we would be able to get antibiotics before it was too late.

We were lucky. Although the SS in Munich held out, the U.S. General Patch successfully quelled resistance

through a three-day artillery bombardment that flattened many of the remaining buildings in the north of the city. Ron's infected wound drove us to make contact with the invading force quickly, and our ability to speak English surely helped us get the assistance we needed.

Our war was over, but life remained hard. Over the next few months we were reunited with our father and mother. Mother had been released from the labour camp, and had lived out the war in relative comfort in Vienna, working as a professional zither player. She didn't even recognize her two sons at first.

Our father spent the entire war in Dachau, and was rescued at a roadside with many other camp occupants who had been marched out at the impending arrival of Allied forces. He was 78 pounds; his health was broken. He never ate solid food again, and survived only three years before succumbing to his deteriorated condition.

My brother and I ended up back in England where, after undergoing assessment exams, we were enrolled at Acton Technical College and elocution lessons. 📍

To be continued...

COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS



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CAROLE JAMES,
MLA
VICTORIA - BEACON
HILL

local poets : Victoria High

by Mark Idczak

Standing tall proud and free
Scraping the Fernwood neighbourhood sky.

A welcoming stately presence
her mighty pillars holding
the school beckons the students
and visitors exuding a nostalgic
learned essence.

School Days oh precious
golden rule days. Learning the
proper educational ways.
Making cherished friends
supporting and loving one
another closer than a sister or
a brother.

Not giving in to pride anger
conceit or deceit but aspiring
to be a model student who is
totally sweet
trying not to miss our favourite class
and desperately working hard to pass.

Palma non sine pulvere
the school slogan, motto that rings
very clear.

As I wander your glorious
halls filled with melodious
rambunctious laughter
and chatter.

I envision how this school
serving the community for its
hundred years echoing the strains
of laughter and cherished tears.

I can almost picture a walk
down memory lane to see Elvis
and Annette walking down the hall
blending in well
in this beloved architectural
piece. And dwelling
fondly and remembering the many
students and teachers and their
ghosts within these hallowed
halls. And shedding a
tear trying not to cry.

As I gaze upon this glorious structure
scraping the Fernwood sky
known and loved
for over a century as Victoria High.

what's on in Fernwood

Arts, Theatre and Entertainment

Belfry Theatre.

HALF LIFE. by John Mighton. Sept 16-Oct 19. 1291 Gladstone Ave. For info contact Belfry Box Office at 250-385-6815 or www.belfry.bc.ca

Bluegrass Wednesdays.

Fernwood NRG and the Fernwood Bluegrass Association present Wednesday night bluegrass jams at the Cornerstone Café. 7:30-10pm. FREE!

Collective Works Gallery.

Harumi Ota (solo show) Aug 22 to Sept 11. "Blues" (associate members' show) Sept 12-Oct 2. Gallery hours>11am-6pm Tues-Thurs; 11am-8pm Fri+Sat; 11am-6pm Sun; closed Mon. 1311 Gladstone Ave. www.collectiveworks.ca

Cornerstone Collective Records.

Cornerstone Collective Records (Fernwood's own non-profit community-driven record label) welcomes new members Sun, Sept 14. 2:30pm. Drop-in to "talk shop" with us and launch your music career! For info call James: 250-381-1552 ext.25.

Live at the Cornerstone: Lucas Cates.

Madison, Wisconsin's award-winning singer-songwriter at the Cornerstone Café (lucascates.com). Sun, Sept 14. Doors: 7pm. Show: 8pm. By donation. An artist from The Cornerstone Collective will open the night.

Live Music at Fernwood Inn.

Open Mic Thursdays. 8:30-11:30pm. 1302 Gladstone Ave. FREE!

Live Music at Logan's Pub.

1821 Cook St. www.loganspub.com

Puppet Theatre.

Help put on a grand puppet show from scratch using recycled materials, write the soundtrack and perform it live. Seeking puppet-makers, puppeteers, musicians/songwriters, set designers, audio-visual techs, script writers, etc. Sun, Sept 21. 7pm. Fernwood Community Centre.

Victoria Bluegrass Association Jam.

Tuesdays 7:30-10pm. Orange Hall. 1620 Fernwood Rd. \$2 to play. FREE to listen. www.victoriabluegrass.ca

Victoria Folk Music Society

Sundays. 7:30pm Open Stage. 9pm Feature Performer. (Sept 7>TBA. Sept 14>BRUCE COBURN TRIBUTE. Sept 21>GARETH HURWOOD and ALEXANDER McCUAIG. Sept 28>MICHAEL LOPEZ). Norway House. 1110 Hillside Ave. \$5 feature performer nights/\$3 all open stage night. www.victoriafolkmusic.ca

Kids and Families at the Fernwood Community Centre

New!! Mother Goose Circle Time, in partnership with Success by 6 South Vancouver Island.

10-week program to encourage attachment

parenting. Wednesdays, Oct 15-Dec 17. 10:30-11:30am. Fernwood Community Centre MPR. FREE!! To register or for further info, contact Shelley at 250-381-1552 ext.132 or email shelley@fernwoodnrg.ca.

Family Community Day.

Family Fun directed and facilitated by the participants. Snacks, crafts, play equipment and varied themes. Mondays 9:30-11:30am. Fernwood Community Centre Gym. FREE!

Parent and Tot Playgroup.

Snacks/Crafts/Circle Time. Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-11:30am. Fernwood Community Centre Gym. \$1 per family.

Youth, Adults and Seniors

Ear Acupuncture at the Fernwood Community Centre.

Ear Acupuncture is signing off for the fall!! Thanks for your support and positive energy. See you all in the winter! Christina.

Falun Gong.

Peaceful meditation practice. All welcome! Wednesdays 5-7pm. Fernwood Community Centre MPR. FREE!

Family Floor Hockey.

Sundays 3:30-5pm, Fernwood Community Centre Gym. \$5 per family.**

Fernwood Autumn Glow.

55+. Gentle exercise, lunch and activities. Monthly special guest speaker. Fridays 11am Fernwood Community Centre MPR. \$5.50 for lunch.

Floor Hockey.

Drop-in Co-ed. Adult (18+). Tuesdays and Thursdays 7-9:30pm. Saturdays 2:30-5pm. Fernwood Community Centre Gym. \$4, or get a punchcard: \$40/11 sessions.**

Hatha Yoga.

With certified instructor Elke. Focus on gentle poses, breathing practice, deep relaxation and meditation. Tuesdays 3-4:30pm. Fernwood Community Centre Gym. Suggested donation \$5.

Fairuza Fridays.

Drop-in Co-ed. Ages 10-14. Nintendo Wii, big screen movies, basketball, floor hockey, roller skating. Fridays, 7-9:30pm. Fernwood Community Centre. Registration not required. Info: 250-381-1552 ext.25 FREE!

Photography Club.

Saturdays, 3-5pm at Fernwood Community Centre, 1240 Gladstone Ave. Come out and meet other photographers, work on projects, exchange ideas, and have a coffee. FREE!

Power Flow Yoga with Jenny Hyslop.

This more intense yoga session will leave you invigorated and rejuvenated! Adults>Fridays 5:30-7pm. Children ages 3-6>Saturdays 1-2pm. ages 7-12>Sundays 2-3pm. \$5. Fernwood Community Centre Gym.

Scrabble Saturdays.

Ages 13-adult. Saturdays 2-5pm. Fernwood Community Centre. Drop in and meet fellow Scrabbleheads. FREE!

Tot Soccer.

Ages 3 to 5. Instructor Bobby Kenny. Sundays 11am-noon. Rain or shine. Learn the basics and have fun. Whether you call it soccer or football, this game is great for one and all. Please bring a kickable ball. Field behind Fernwood Community Centre. By donation.

Women's Soccer.

Drop-in. Sundays 5-6:30pm, Fernwood Community Centre Gym. \$3.**

***We accept Sports Trader Bucks and Canadian Tire Money at face value!*

Special Events

Fernwood Business Network.

Everyone welcome. Tues, Sept 2.10am. Fernwood Inn. For info contact Ryan Rutley at ryan@rutleyventures.ca

Chambers Block Watch Party.

Sun, Sept 7. 11am-2pm. There will be snacks, tea made from the Spring Ridge Commons, and kids activities. Come and meet your neighbours.

Victoria Green Drinks.

An inclusive gathering of the sustainability-minded for refreshments and conversation. Tues, Sept 9. 5-7pm. Canoe Brew Pub, Marina and Restaurant 405 Swift Street. For info see www.greendrinksvictoria.ca

Seniors Open House.

Enjoy lunch with the Fernwood Seniors, a tour of the facilities, a stroll through Fernwood Square to the Cornerstone Cafe for a free coffee, and live entertainment! Fri, Sept 12. 11:30am-1:30pm. Call James to RSVP: 250-381-1552 ext.25. \$5.50 for lunch.

Fernwood's Outrageous Recycling Day.

Bring your CLEAN plastics, styrofoam packing and food trays, electronics and foil-lined coffee bags. Sat, Sept 13. 10am-1pm. Across from Fernwood Community Centre. By donation. Fernwood's Outrageous Recycling Day seeks volunteers! Come help us make it all happen! For info contact villagevibe@fernwoodneighbourhood.ca

Fernwood Place Making Troupe.

All Welcome! Bring your ideas for the square and the neighbourhood. Mon, Sept 15. 7pm. Cornerstone Café.

Fernwood NRG Food Security Collective.

All welcome! Tues, Sept 16. 7-9pm. Fernwood Community Centre MPR. foodsecurity@fernwoodneighbourhood.ca

Fernwood Village Night Market.

Tuesdays until Sept 16, 5:30-8:30pm. Corner of Fernwood and Gladstone.

Fernwood Community Kitchen.

Cook nutritious, creative meals with your neighbours! For info contact Tracey at tveldhuis@gmail.com

Fernwood Sharing Gardens.

Have a garden but no time? Time but no garden? Contact Rainey at 380-5055 or sharinggardens@gmail.com.

villagevibe

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The views expressed in the Village Vibe do not necessarily reflect the views of Fernwood NRG.

Nordic Festival.

Sept 19 (11am-8pm) and Sept 20 (10am-6pm). Norway House, 1110 Hillside Ave. Come help us celebrate with cuisine, culture and entertainment from the Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Raffle grand prize - Scandesigns recliner valued at over \$1900. Admission \$2. Door prizes. For info contact nordicfestival@gmail.com.

Spring Ridge Commons Workparties!

Come get your hands dirty in Fernwood's only public food garden. Thursdays, 5-7pm. Please bring tools if you've got 'em.

Fernwood NRG invites you to: Park Place Grand Opening

Tues, Sept. 2, 11am. 1222 Yukon St.

Fernwood NRG Annual General Meeting & Community Dialogue with Mark Lakeman

Thurs, Sept. 25th 7-9pm. Fernwood Community Centre Gym.

If you have a workshop or special event idea for the Fernwood Community Centre or the Cornerstone Café email james@fernwoodneighbourhood.ca

If you have a Fernwood event you would like listed in the Village Vibe calendar please send an email with the subject line "vibe calendar" to villagevibe@fernwoodneighbourhood.ca



The Fernwood Inn

HAVE A COLD ONE ...

ON OUR HOT NEW PATIO!

OPEN DAILY FROM 11:30

1302 GLADSTONE 412-2001