



by  
City Councillor Dean Fortin



See a Play!  
Chance to  
win a kayak!  
8 pm  
See below

# FERNWOOD NEWS

SUMMER 2004

News from the Fernwood Community Association

## FCC Hits 25 Year Milestone Two Major Events In August Celebrating Fernwood

by James D. Thornton

Amidst the recent turmoil created by the threat of Recreation Renewal decommissioning Fernwood Community Centre, staff at the Centre are optimistic that their upcoming twenty-five year anniversary will be a turning point towards a progressive future. The Centre's gregarious Executive Director Roberta Martell recently expressed her reaction to the Fernwood neighbourhood's support.

"It was heart-warming to see the outflow of appreciation for our programs and staff by Fernwood residents," Martell said. "People were stepping forward to say how much they appreciated the work we do and our dedication to bring pro-social recreation and service programs to the community."

Fernwood residents sent a multitude of e-mails and handwritten letters to the Mayor and councillors, attesting to the importance of their neighbourhood community centre.

"The letters of support came from everyone," Martell explained, "from people who regularly use the free internet to Parent & Tot drop-in participants, childcare parents, seniors, and those who make use of our many free and low-cost recreation programs." As it now stands, Mayor and Council accepted the idea of redeveloping Crystal Pool, yet directed City staff to come back to them in September with a strategy to do more community consultation.

In celebration of their twenty-fifth year anniversary, staff at Fernwood Community Centre – colloquially known as "Big Fernwood" – are currently busy preparing for their anniversary bash, which will include two special events:

On Wednesday, August 18, there will be a gala evening at The Belfry Theatre, featuring the musical comedy "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change." The forty-dollar ticket price to this

special evening buys a seat for the show, and the main door prize is a \$3400 skin-on-frame kayak, which is being handcrafted by Martell herself.

And just when you think those are enough reasons to run to the Belfry and get your ticket, here's one more incentive: every penny raised from this event is going towards opening up the community centre's brand new Infant & Toddler Daycare, to be housed in the portable behind the Centre and scheduled for launch at the beginning of September.

The other half of this celebration is the 9th Annual Fern Fest on Saturday, August 28, a day which promises to surpass Fern Fest events of the past. The all-day festivities (from 10am to 10pm) will include live entertainment by ska band The Hoochie Girls, country-rock classic cover band Rockville, local folkies James Kasper and Cat Ratusny, a Children's Nickel Carnival, a barbecue concession, a beer garden, The Fernwood Spa, a silent auction and raffle, a Seniors' Tea, community service groups, and CD Release Party for the "It Came From Fernwood" compilation CD.

Long-time Fernwood resident and musician Mike Demers recently spoke to the purpose of the Fernwood CD: "The intent is to foster a sense of pride for Fernwood residents," Demers said, adding that it was also to "promote awareness for other people in Greater Victoria of the wealth of talent in our community."

With a plethora of childcare and recreation programs and special events keeping Fernwood Community Centre lively, and having recently conquered the wrath of Recreation Renewal, this place seems nothing if not...unstoppable.

Martell summed it all up in her unique way, "Our door is open. Come play with us."

Event of the Summer!

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august 28

10am - 4pm  
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11:30am: Seniors Tea  
4pm: Release Party for "It Came From Fernwood" CD featuring performances by the album's recording artists

6pm: Ska Band  
The Hoochie Girls  
7:30pm: Classic Rock Band  
Rockville

Plus: Beer Garden, Craft Sale and lots of food!

stevenson park  
behind fcc  
1240 gladstone ave

We hope you enjoy the summer edition of the Fernwood News. Fernwood is defined most broadly as the neighbourhood of Victoria bounded by Quadra, Fort, Shelbourne and Hillside Roads. If you live outside of Fernwood and have received this newsletter - consider yourself lucky!

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Graphic design and typesetting by Mark and Jane Bateman

The Fernwood News is a community newspaper, open to anyone wishing to share information or offer an opinion of interest to the people of Fernwood. Opinions expressed are those of individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the FCA or contributors. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the City of Victoria, our advertisers, and the hard-working volunteers who help produce this newspaper.

Fall issue: mid-November. Deadline for submissions: mid-October.  
 We welcome your Fernwood stories and photos.

Please support our local advertisers

## This Old House

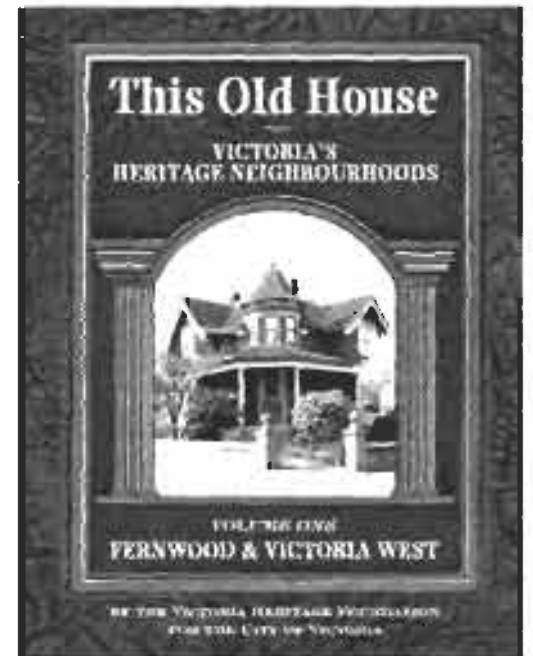
### FCA involved in new edition

The life and times of more than 150 Victoria homes are recorded in a brand-new edition of the City of Victoria's long out-of-print *This Old House*. The FCA partnered with the Victoria Heritage Foundation to get a City of Victoria grant to publish *This Old House, Victoria's Heritage Neighbourhoods, Volume One: Fernwood & Victoria West*. This is a completely updated 4th edition of the 1979 publication with never-before-seen archival photographs, plan elevations and other illustrations, 156 properties and 379 images.

This edition is fully indexed with newly-researched histories of each residential neighbourhood and each property. There are maps and an illustrated guide to local residential styles with a glossary of architectural terms.

Heritage advocate Melinda L. Seyler of Metchosin states: "This new publication is so far above the previous in its extent and quality, that it is truly a social as well as architectural history of Victoria."

The book is available for only \$19.95 in local bookstores, including, Bolen Books, Munro's, Crown Publications, the Uvic Bookstore, RBC Museum, Craigdarroch Castle Gift Shop and Charles Rupert in Oak Bay. The book is also on sale at the Victoria City Hall Planning Department and the City Hall Public Service Center. Alternatively, you may like to purchase your copy at Fern Fest, held at the Fernwood Square, Saturday, August 28th.

For more information call 389-1864 or email [vhf@victoriaheritagefoundation.ca](mailto:vhf@victoriaheritagefoundation.ca)

There are three more volumes in the works:

Vol 2: James Bay

Vol 3: Rockland, Burnside, Harris Green, Hillside-Quadra, North Park, Oaklands

Vol 4: Fairfield, Gonzales &amp; Jubilee

Melinda says, "This Old House presented the buildings in the context of the people and events of the city," and that is what heritage is all about.

## Don't forget Fern Fest!

Saturday August 28 

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## Hello, Goodbye

The Fernwood Community Association welcomes Kim McKay as our new coordinator. Kim began working in the office officially on July 23rd. She brings with her an English degree from UVic and lots of volunteer experience, principally with the Moss Street Market Organizing Committee. "I'm very happy to be here and I would like to thank Carolyn Masson for her hospitable and friendly help, easing me into the job", said Kim. Meanwhile, our outgoing coordinator, Carolyn Masson, is now the outreach assistant with the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT), based in Bastion Square. We wish you the best of luck Carolyn - see you around the neighbourhood!

# NEXT

AUGUST 3 - 31

### I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

by Joe DiPietro & Jimmy Roberts  
 Hit Musical Comedy

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## What's Your Story?

Paris had Balzac, Colette, Bresson. Moscow had Tolstoy. Las Vegas had Hunter S. Thompson. Fernwood has you. You walk around Fernwood - see the houses, some of them old wood framed, some newer, some fixed up more than others; look at the gardens, the projects going on in people's driveways and in apartment building parking lots; you walk past the empty store fronts, see people eating and drinking beer in the sun on the patio across the street; you walk through the Square, notice people, some tattooed, some pierced, milling around, a couple of Harleys parked under the gazebo. You walk around Fernwood and you realize that it's, well, more interesting than your average neighbourhood, looks like more's going on - the diversity and all. But what exactly? And who? SUBMIT YOUR STORIES, PHOTOS, and DRAWINGS to the Fernwood News. Fiction, fictionalized, or just plain told like it is.



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# Fernwood Update

by City Councillor Dean Fortin

As Fernwood Community Liaison, I enjoy helping community members get answers and ensuring service to the neighbourhood. I imagine that for every question asked of me, there are probably 50 people who would also like to know the answer. So here is a list of several of the items I have been helping community members with and some of the answers supplied by City staff. If you have a question or concern, please do not hesitate to contact me at City Hall (361-0218) or on my cell (217-9273).

## 1. The planting of traffic circles on Denman Street

"I am wondering why only one traffic circle has been landscaped (at the Shelbourne end of Denman). The others look unsightly and collect garbage. When will the remainder be landscaped? It has been at least 2 years or more (if I am correct) since those traffic circles were put in."

*Many residents on the campaign trail requested that the circles be planted. The original one in Fernwood was a pilot to see how successful the planting would be and determine the costs. Thanks to Council's approval, money has been allocated to upgrade the remaining 6 islands. This will be done in 2004.*

## 2. Park behind Fernwood Community Centre

"I see that there has been a new playground installed at this park, which is a welcome improvement on the very old equipment there formerly. However, the park grounds are still unattractive and look unfinished. What is the plan for this park?"

*Council has approved funding to do additional upgrades in Stevenson Park this year. Parks design staff have been working with the community to ensure that all opportunities are reviewed. Residents may talk to one of the community representatives (see plans in window of FCA office or article on page...) or call Deborah Bate at Parks at 361-0607. There will be more consultation and construction this year.*

## 3. Alexander Park

"The playground at this park is aging and needs replacing. Some aesthetic improvements to the park would be very welcome, as many families in the neighbourhood use this park with their toddlers. Also, it seems that in the spring and summer months, there has been a history of inadequate care of the playing field, which is generally full of weeds. Sometimes the grass is knee-high before it is cut. Are there any plans for this park?"

*The playground at Alexander Park was replaced in 1996. We still have many older playgrounds and this year we will be replacing one that was installed in the 1960s. However, we will look at Alexander Park and see if there isn't something we can do to 'spruce it up.'*

*Many of our parks are still not irrigated. Thankfully, Council approved funding for installing underground, fully automated irrigation systems which will not only save water and money but will improve the quality of the playing surfaces by improving turf vigour which will create less of an opportunity for weed growth. We will eventually get to Alexander Park after we have installed irrigation in some of our parks like Beacon Hill that presently are being watered by hand in the daytime when evaporation is the highest.*

*Mowing is done on a 10-day schedule. Sometimes, at the peak growing time this is not enough; however residents are encouraged to call for more information or to report a concern. The number is 361-0600.*

## 4. Fernwood Road (between Balmoral and Pandora)

"I walk this road every day with my daughter. A section of the sidewalk on the east side has two areas with very overgrown hedges, which make it impossible for two people to pass each other on the sidewalk. This is dangerous in this area which is a busy commuter intersection. Can the property owners be required to trim the hedges? Also, the edge of the sidewalk along here is disintegrating, and in several places is missing."

*Letters have been written to request owners to trim their hedges. If the problems continue, then it may also involve our bylaw section but we will look after it.*

## 5. Road cleaning

"Does the city clean streets? On our street, there are grass and weeds growing directly on the street because the sides of the street have never been cleaned and the homeowners do not do it. Is this a city or homeowner responsibility? If it's a homeowner responsibility, can homeowners be required to remove weeds, grass etc?"

*Yes, the City cleans streets. The entire city is swept on rotation. Downtown is swept daily (we are planning twice daily in the summer). Arterial roads are done weekly, and quieter streets once every 6 weeks. Any immediate problem (like a spill or dumping) is dealt with right away in response to complaint or notification.*

*Street sweeping cleans up dirt, broken glass, debris, litter and the like; grass and vegetation are not so easy to get rid of. We avoid use of chemicals, and in my experience, citizen requests to dig out grass and vegetation are carried out promptly by street cleaning staff. In discussing the issue with staff it was noted that when streets have many cars parked on them the cleaner can't get to the gutter. We have considered parking restrictions but that can be difficult.*

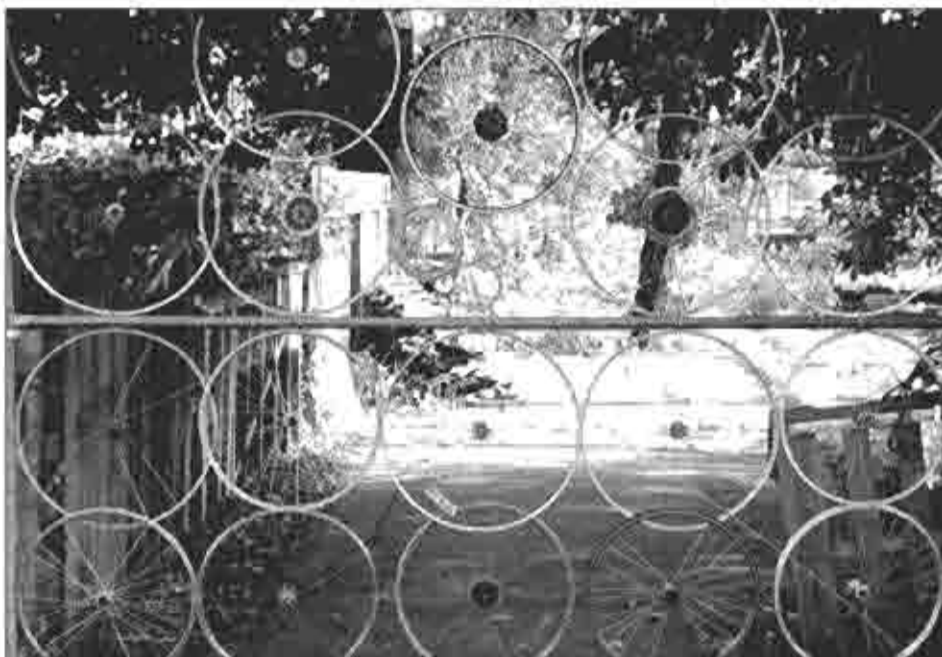
## 6. General landscaping and improvements

"I have noticed general street landscaping and improvements in areas like Harris Green, the Quadra business area, and Finlayson Street. These have really made a difference the appearance of the neighbourhoods. I would like to know why some neighbourhoods have been selected for this, and whether Fernwood will have these kinds of improvements."

*The projects mentioned were a joint venture between the City and the local businesses. Much of this work was accomplished on a 50/50 cost-sharing basis. There is no reason why this couldn't be done in Fernwood. Council has recently approved a special project grant in the amount of \$5000 to the Fernwood Community Association and Centre for the beginning of the revitalization of Fernwood Square.*

## POLICE - Call if you need assistance

911 - if someone is in immediate danger.  
995-7654 - report desk, non-emergency number. A file will be created.  
386-8477 - Crime Stoppers Tips Line - anonymous report number.  
361-0466 - Graffiti Hotline for graffiti on public property.  
995-7654 - Report graffiti on private property to Constables Banky or O'Neill



Entrance to Up From the Ashes City Farm

Photo: Mark Bateman

## A Sense of Place

by Tatiana Schneider

The Crescent Moon article by Beth Gibson in the Spring issue of Fernwood News touched a string. I liked the article very much and hope to see more of them. We moved to Victoria and more precisely to Fernwood in July 2003 and somehow I felt from the very beginning that I had come home. The real estate agent was trying to discourage us, saying that this district has pockets of ups and downs. But we think that real life is where diversity coexists. And with the fresh look of newcomers we can see it. Most of the time we walk or bike to all needed destinations and this way we see the neighbourhood intimately. On one of our walks last fall we discovered quite a big, for such a central location, neglected garden with very colourful and healthy looking chickens roaming around. From then on we deliberately chose this route to see the birds. But early this February we noticed some changes in the yard: the chickens were confined to a smaller area close to the house. As the weeks passed, the yard started taking a different shape: the piles of leaves transformed into raised beds. Then some plants appeared on them. Then the interesting gate constructed from old bicycle wheels appeared.

Finally, on a sunny day in April, the mystery of transformation was revealed to me. While buying bread in the Wild Fire bakery, I noticed a young man passing bags of crisp fresh lettuce to the vendor. I also noticed a few pots of nasturtium plants he brought to plant in their window containers. I asked if I could buy some and was told that if I lived in Fernwood it would be delivered to me. And two pots of beautiful nasturtiums were delivered by bicycle a few hours later. Seeing the freshness of the salad greens I asked where they were coming from, and guess what... from the yard that used to be occupied by the chickens! Thanks to the people of Up From the Ashes City Farm, we have the privilege of regularly receiving fresh and very local salad greens, culinary herbs and vegetables. Rev, the farmer, uses organic methods of production for all the bounty from the garden. The produce not only tastes good, but also looks beautiful with greens dotted by bright edible flowers. And on numerous occasions I have seen people stopping and looking at the garden.

Another event gave us historical insight into Fernwood: In May, a revised volume of *This Old House* was published on Fernwood & Vic West heritage neighbourhoods, and over a number of late evenings I have been immersed in pages of architectural and social history of many houses in the neighbourhood. With each page the history of the district and its houses open amazing stories, and these houses become the threads in a continuing tapestry of this colourful and diverse community [see more about *This Old House* on page 2].



DEAN FORTIN

City of Victoria Council  
Liaison for Fernwood

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## Jeff Bray, MLA

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# Reclaim The Commons!

by Geoff Johnson

Imagine a public green space in the heart of your neighbourhood designed and cooperatively developed to provide free, fresh organic food, conserve and recycle resources, create native bird and insect habitat, and generally improve the local quality of life. If you live in the Fernwood area, you may be aware that the development of such a project has been underway for the last several years at the corner of Chambers Street and Gladstone Avenue. Indeed you may be one of many volunteers who have helped to transform this once barren gravel lot into the young forest of useful perennial plants we now see emerging there. It seems that almost every time I ride by the commons these days, all kinds of folks can be seen harvesting from and enjoying some part of this uniquely public community garden.

The site, which is currently owned by School District 61 and leased by the Fernwood Community Association, has a varied and fascinating history. Its various incarnations over the last century have included: a public spring for drinking water, an old time wooden schoolhouse, a parking lot for school buses (yes the soil has been tested!), a derelict lot, and, more recently, an open pedestrian thoroughfare bounded by car-excluding boulders. At one point a coalition of groups attempted to establish drought tolerant plants in some areas of this unforgivingly arid site (by then known as Spring Ridge Commons). But during the summer of 1999, when I began to get involved, most of the plants which had survived were struggling to do so.



Medlar, one of many rare fruit trees growing at Spring Ridge Commons  
Photo: Mark Bateman

What I saw in the site at that time was an opportunity to build on the past efforts of others and continue to develop the neighbourhood commons, but with permaculture design as the main focus. For those unfamiliar with the field, permaculture is a way of designing homes and communities to take into account basic human needs like food, clean water and clean energy. It can be applied on any scale, and uses what we know about the way natural systems work to create "agriculturally productive ecosystems" right where people live (to learn more, do an internet search).

Permaculture at Spring Ridge Commons would mean designing and establishing a diverse, multi-layered garden of trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials, and groundcovers which would be able to provide food, medicine, and other useful materials for

local folks. It would provide these things throughout the year instead of all at once, and would be able to attract enough beneficial insects to balance out any pest problems that might arise. Unlike a vegetable plot, it would produce more and more as time went by, while requiring less and less from the people who managed it. And unlike a fenced allotment garden, it would be there for everyone.

(Important Digression: As invaluable as allotments are to urban agriculture these days, it is worth considering their origin in England as a compensation scheme sold to peasants during the enclosure of their common lands by the ruling classes. To protest this fraudulent exchange, many took what we would now call "direct action." As the well known folk song goes, "In 1649, St Georges Hill, a ragged band they call the diggers came to show the people's will. They defied the landlords. They defied the laws. They were the dispossessed reclaiming what was theirs.")

In order to make possible the kind of garden we envisioned at the Commons, we realized the need for another permaculture strategy: sheet mulching. By utilizing abundant sources of urban waste, we kick-started the soil's fertility-generating ecosystem and dramatically increased its capacity to retain moisture while choking out weeds – all without digging! During a long series of volunteer work parties, literally tonnes of organic waste was diverted from the landfill and carefully applied in layers on top of the existing gravel. Cardboard, newspaper, landscaping waste, manure from the carriage tour folks, okara from the tofu factory, and kitchen scraps from local restaurants formed a magical rotting lasagne to begin healing the parched urban soil.

In addition to the initial soil-building and planting, Spring Ridge Commons has



Geoff Johnson proudly stands before a Desert King Fig tree, "for the people"  
Photo: Mark Bateman

benefitted over the past few years from the labour of countless volunteers who have weeded, watered, and built features including: rock walls, a herb spiral, a trellis, an arbour, and even a cob oven. Throughout this time, I've been coordinating these activities (with occasional assistance) on a volunteer basis, and have thoroughly enjoyed it. But the uncomfortable conclusion I've come to is that although the will exists in the community to work on the Commons, nothing productive tends to happen there without my involvement.

Clearly what this project needs, especially as I find myself no longer able to be as involved, is for more Fernwoodians to take responsibility for the Commons and form a coordination group (the FCA Friends of Spring Ridge Commons perhaps?). Currently I'm installing micro-spray irrigation, and there are several other exciting projects waiting to be taken on. The central idea of the project is that people can work together to cultivate common abundance in their public urban places. Free food and medicine grown close to home boosts food security, needs no fossil fuel, deepens our relationship to place, and really requires no more time and energy than do the relatively useless plants in your average city park.

The model of urban agriculture that Spring Ridge Commons provides poses a greater challenge to our individualistic culture than the allotment plot or backyard garden. But what if, in accepting this challenge to reclaim the Commons, we nourish not only our bodies, but our culture as well?

Special thanks to the Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre, Fernwood Community Association, Chris Wells, Bobby Arbess, and all other volunteer/activists for their support of the Commons.

Geoff Johnson is a local permaculture activist and Site Educator at the Compost Education Centre.

## Free Harvesting Workshops

Geoff Johnson will be leading two free workshops at Spring Ridge Commons to familiarize people with the garden:  
Sunday, August 29, 9 - 10 am and Wednesday September 1, 5 - 6 pm.

Come and find out what's there, how and when to harvest, and become familiar with your neighbourhood resource. Call Geoff at the Compost Education Centre for more info: 386-WORM(9676).

There will also be a work party at the Commons on Sunday, September 5, 9am - noon. Come out and get your hands dirty!

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# Colour On The Corner Mosaic Fernwood

Neighbourhood mural at Fernwood and Gladstone

by Harley Smart



Jai Balaam (front) and Miles hard at work on the mural Photo: Harley Smart

The mural that popped up in June at the corner of Gladstone and Fernwood is a group painting by local Fernwood artists. It was made possible with considerable help from Roberta Martell of the FCC, Carolyn Masson of the FCA, Mary Desprez of the Belfry Theatre, and the cooperation of building owner Robin Kimpton.

Harley Smart, an artist who sells his paintings in the Bastion Square Market, presented the design at a community meeting, and with the go-ahead, rounded up several young artists to help him with the project. The building has been subject to graffiti for ages, and an eyesore for the community. All of the artists involved were motivated to help beautify Fernwood Village, and agree that the mural will help deter future graffiti 'tags.'

On a Monday morning the white primer was rolled on, and for the following six days the artists toiled away. Harley was joined by Jai Balaam, Lucho Barahona, Andrew Dick, Arock, Eric Volet, Miles, JOE, Jules 1 and Indo, who contributed by adding a character on the wall or by sticking it out for the duration, doing colour fills and making sure the design was complete. Many people briefly stopped by and enjoyed painting a character to help "fill the neighbourhood." People waiting for the bus across the street and other passers-by were entertained by the sight of the artists at work. Drivers slowed down or stopped to get a better look.

The composition is based on Harley's design, and features a panorama of Fernwood Square, with activity and detailed characters dotted all across the wall. For information about Harley's paintings or murals go to [www.Finewest.ca](http://www.Finewest.ca).



Artists apply many colourful details as the mural progresses

Photo: Harley Smart

by Shylene Schlackl

This summer, Mosaic the City, along with the FCA and FCC, hosted Mosaic Fernwood Phase I. Together with local organizations, community groups, businesses and the people of Fernwood, we built mosaics to go around this community.

Design and building workshops ran over the summer months and we invited the community to participate in the whole project from the collection of materials and tools, writing of journal stories, to the actual designing and building of the mosaics.

Seeing as Mosaic the City was imagined and started at our home on Chambers Street, we thought a project just outside our house would be perfect. After five years in this house, my husband Jonathan and I are leaving for a four-month adventure in Europe (where I will start Mosaic the County in South Dublin, Ireland). But there was no way we could go without leaving our mark on the Chambers Street wall (2400 block Chambers). Integrated into a great Fernwood community-inspired mural, the mosaics create a beautiful urban silhouette depicting "Our Community in Action." Mosaics were also created for Fernwood Square, which used ideas gathered from the design workshops.

At this time you are invited to join the Community Unity project, as we are going to be in the planning stages of Phase II this coming fall and winter. Get involved to learn more about the history of Fernwood, create some new public art for the area, and best of all, meet other people from your community. To get involved in the planning of Phase II log-on to [www.mosaicthecity.com](http://www.mosaicthecity.com) or contact the FCA or the FCC directly.

I wish you all a year full of new relationships and adventures in our community and I look forward to working on Mosaic Fernwood Phase II with you when we return in January.



Shylene cutting pieces for the panels Photo: mosaicthecity.com

Shylene is the Founding Director of the Mosaic the City Initiative

## JOIN US

The Fernwood Community Association wants you.

**MEMBERSHIP** - If you live or work in the Fernwood area (boundaries Quadra, Hillside, Fort, Shelbourne) **make your voice heard.** \$5 per year (families \$8).

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Or drop by the office sometime at 1923 Fernwood Road and speak with Kim McKay, our coordinator  
Phone: 384-7441. email: [fernwood@highspeedplus.com](mailto:fernwood@highspeedplus.com)  
Office hours are Tuesdays 12-6 Wednesdays & Fridays 10-4.

**Strong neighbourhoods build strong cities.**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

for August and September

- Aug 21st 2-4pm **Planning your Veggie Garden**  
Compost Club members free, \$10 non-members
- Aug 28th 10am-5pm **Introduction to Permaculture**  
Compost Club members \$40, non-members \$50
- Sept 11th 2-4pm **Composting Basics - Free!**
- Sept 18th 2-4pm **Seed Saving**  
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# Greening Of Fernwood George Jay Elementary Marches Forward

by Pete Rockwell

Trees. Green watered grass. An arbour boasting vines and flowers. A drinking fountain. Bike and walking paths. Soon you'll be able to ride your bike or stroll through the cooling green fragrance of Stevenson Park behind the FCC. You'll be able to toss frisbees on a watered playing field to the sounds of happy children playing in the new play area.

## The plans for the coming year are:

- An arbour - which will be located next to the new play area and will provide an armature for flowering vines and feature a drinking fountain. It will be fabricated by Fernwood resident Al Dand.
- An irrigation system - to keep the playing field green all summer.
- More trees and shrubs - many of them flowering.
- An improved bike path - a three meter width of compacted gravel to replace the current diagonal path cutting through the playing field.
- A walkway - both the bike path and walkway will be lined with trees and shrubs and will extend the original Greenways Bike/Walking corridor which Fernwood proposed to the City several years ago.
- A long concrete bench - will extend along the field edge of the basketball court as the first stage of an outdoor performance area and to provide seating for future community events.

Layout drawings and further information are posted in the windows at the FCC building on Gladstone Avenue and the FCA building on Fernwood Road. Please pass along your comments to committee members.

Other ideas under consideration include dowsing for the old spring, which was an original source of water for 19th century Victoria, and if rediscovered, using the water for the park. A wading pool, a stream, a hand pump, are among the possible uses for the water.

These improvements are being made to Stevenson Park through the ongoing efforts of the Fernwood Parks Steering Committee. Community members Jim Starck, Dave Kesson, Todd Doherty, Bill Goers, Roberta Martell and Margaret Hantiuk have been meeting with City of Victoria staff Joe Daly, Deborah Bate, and Sue McKay for over a year to come up with the plan. This effort has been afforded by the ongoing cooperation of the Fernwood Community Association, the Fernwood Community Center, the Fernwood Healthy Communities Coalition, and the City of Victoria.

by Principal, Janine Roy

George Jay staff are getting geared up for an exciting year ahead! Our key goals for 2004-2005 are: improve student reading, writing and math skills. To accomplish this, staff and parents have worked together to develop the following plan:

1. We have a common time for teaching reading, writing and math so that teachers can work together to present lessons, develop activities and group students based on needs.
2. We have increased support time for students. We have three part-time teachers who will provide learning support in literacy and math at the Kindergarten-Grade 1 level, the Grade 2-3 level and the Grade 4-5 level. We will also continue to have Reading Recovery, which is a special reading and writing support program for Grade 1 students.
3. George Jay staff are participating in a District Literacy Pilot Project where a literacy expert will work with teachers each day to focus on specific literacy skills with students.
4. We will continue to have our school-wide 'Home Reading Program'. Children are encouraged to read each night and we celebrate their reading success in newsletters, announcements and assemblies.
5. We will continue to assess individual students three times per year in reading, writing and math, and we will use these results to improve our programs so that we best meet student needs.

What Exciting Programs are at George Jay? We know how important it is for children to be ready to learn each day. To help our students, we operate the *Toast Club* in the morning so children can get a light breakfast before their lessons begin. At lunchtime, children can be part of our provincially funded *Hot Lunch Program*. If children are in need of clothing, they can access clothes through our community-run Clothing Exchange at the school.

Our school will now be home to the district's First Nations Kindergarten program, which is a full-day Kindergarten program for First Nations children around the district. We look forward to welcoming this exciting program to our school. This program is in addition to our current First Nations Support Program, which provides cultural education and learning support to our students.

We have a Family Resource Room at George Jay. It is staffed by our Family Liaison, Lisa Clarabut. George Jay parents are welcome to come to the Family Resource Room to access information about programs and services available in the community, connect with other parents, talk to Lisa or check out the Clothing Exchange. George Jay parents and preschoolers are always welcome to drop in!

The federally funded HIPPY Program (Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters) is based at George Jay. This program provides in-home support for families of three and four year-olds. The families learn a variety of games and activities that will help their child get ready for school. The families meet monthly at George Jay. For more information, contact Sue Bourque at 384-9466 Extension 29.

George Jay Elementary and Fernwood Community Centre are proud to offer Before and After-School Care at George Jay. We also have Kinder-Care at the school for Kindergarten students. This September, we will have Preschool for three and four year-olds in George Jay School. For more information, contact Lynn at 381-1552.

Some of our students and their families need counseling support during the year for advice and help. We have three counselors based at George Jay. Parents are welcome to give them a call at 385-3381 if their child needs help with a problem.

## Sports Teams

George Jay has had a long history of team sports in our city. During the past school year, we had many students participate in our fall and spring Cross Country teams. Our Basketball team was involved in local tournaments. The Rugby team participated in the District' Rugby tournament. Our Track Team competed in the city-wide track meet in June, 2004. We also offer noon-hour activities in the gym twice per week. We are very proud of our athletes!

## Club Activities

George Jay has lots of noon-hour clubs. The Kiwanis Club offers K-Kids, which is a club that helps Grade 1 - 5 children contribute to our community by making posters for local events or creating dolls and toys that will be sent to children in Africa. Approximately 60 children participated in this popular club last year. We also have Student Leadership, which encourages children in Grade 1 - 5 to develop their leadership skills by planning special school events. Friendship Club works on social skills and friendship skills by singing songs and playing games that promote acceptance and respectful play. We also have 'Arts and Crafts Club' for children in Grades 1 - 5 who would like to create a craft at lunchtime. As you can see, there is a lot happening at George Jay!

If members of our community ever have a question or they would like a tour of the school, please give principal Janine Roy a call at 385-3381. We value the support we receive from the Fernwood community and we want to welcome families to our school.

## DO YOU HAVE A SECONDARY SUITE?

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For more information, contact Eliza at Burnside Gorge Community Centre 388-5251.

## THERE IS A NEW INFANT & TODDLER DAYCARE IN FERNWOOD!

Fernwood Community Centre is proud to announce the opening of their newest daycare in Fernwood. Fernwood Infant & Toddler Care offers quality childcare for children ages birth to 36 months. Our daycare includes:

- A newly renovated daycare centre
- Nutritious Snacks
- An enclosed outdoor playground
- Trained & loving Infant & Toddler Educators
- A safe, clean, busy environment
- Low rates

We are now accepting registrations for our opening in September 2004.

For further information or to register your child please contact Lyn at 381-1552



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# Victoria High School Central Middle School



Vic High will be welcoming over 1,000 students on September 7th. Please note the following dates for the 2004-2005 school year.

**Professional Development Days (students not in session)**

- Monday, September 27, 2004
- Friday, October 22, 2004 (province wide)
- Friday, November 12, 2004 (Vic High)
- Friday, February 18, 2005
- Friday, April 22, 2005
- Friday, May 20, 2005

**Other Important Dates**

- School Opening is September 7th
- Winter Vacation starts Monday, December 20th to January 3, 2005 inclusive
- School reopens Tuesday, January 4, 2005
- Spring vacation starts Monday, March 21, to Tuesday, March 29th (includes Good Friday and Easter Monday)
- School reopens Wednesday, March 30th
- School ends Thursday, June 30th.

## News from the Vic High PAC

by Margaret Hantiuk

The Vic High PAC would like to invite all parents and guardians of Vic High students to our monthly parents' meeting. The first one will be held Tuesday, Oct 5th, at 7:30 pm in the Vic High staff room (after entering the main entrance of the school on the Grant Street side, turn right and it's the second last door down the hall.) The meetings are always there the first Tuesday of the month. The principal is usually in attendance to tell us what's going on in the school, to explain the system to us, and to answer our questions. This year we hope to have other staff invited at each meeting to explain their areas and to answer questions. Also, we sell Thrifty and Fairways food certificates as no-cost-to-you fundraisers, so please remember to bring your cheques to the meetings if you would like to participate. The PAC receives 5% and 7% back respectively, thanks to these community minded businesses. We have most of our executive in place for the next school year.

We find that by attending these meetings, parents can stay in touch with their kids' world without being too intrusive. We can also be more informed and assist in providing options as our kids grow up and begin making their own decisions. And we can have our concerns addressed and questions answered in a friendly and supportive way.

The Vic High PAC also disburses gaming funds from the BC Gaming Commission. Last year, we allocated funds for Athletics: tournament and referee fees, uniforms, traveling costs, weight room upgrades; Fine Arts: a pug mill for clay, video camera and props for Drama, IMAC computers for graphic art, mats and frames, equipment for the R & B band; Tech Ed: Skills Canada Competition, mixers, pans, and dishwasher for the Cooking Club; Special Ed: TVs and VCRs; and Student Services: student handbook, fridge magnets, subsidized tickets to the Belfry and other performances.

The Vic High R & B Band has had another great year: after playing around town (including the Oak Bay Tea Party), and at the BC School Trustee's convention, they had two engagements at Jazz Fest. They were great - as usual!

Enjoy the rest of the summer and see you in September. ☺

## Mending Fences



Earlier this year, Janette Hennigar, who lives on Fernwood Road, was awakened at 2am by her dog, Jenny. Janette was shocked to discover someone had destroyed most of her front garden fence. Sometime after the unfortunate event, Carter Giesbrecht (above right), a teacher at Central Middle School, who had heard of the incident, knocked on Janette's front door. Carter offered the services of his enthusiastic students to rebuild the fence for free as a community project. Janette is thrilled with the outcome. Carter and his students from Central Middle School have brought new meaning to the expression, "mending fences". *Photo: Mark Bateman*

## GEORGE JAY OUT OF SCHOOL & KINDERCARE REGISTRATION SEPTEMBER 2004

George Jay Out of School Care & Kindercare offers the following services:

- Quality childcare Before & After school
- A full Day program on every Professional Development Day
- Camps for Spring, Winter & Summer break
- Quality Childcare before & after kindergarten class
- Snacks Arts & Crafts Trained Staff Low Rates Well equipped classrooms

For further information or to register your child please contact Lyn at 381-1552

## PUDDLE JUMPERS PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION SEPTEMBER 2004

Puddle Jumpers Preschool is accepting registrations for our "Success in School" Preschool Classes to begin in September 2004. Some spaces are still available. Registration is on a first come first served basis.

Preschool Classes include:

- Monday, Wednesday & Friday
- Tuesday & Thursday
- Monday to Friday



For further information please contact Lyn at 381-1552

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**See you at Fern Fest!!**

**Sat. August 28**





# Fernwood Community Centre

1240 Gladstone Ave., Victoria B.C. V8T 1G6 • Phone: 381-1552 Fax: 381-1509

## PROGRAMS & SERVICES

### Seniors' Programs

#### Autumn Glow

Join our friendly group of older adults for a delicious home cooked lunch, followed by games and activities. Before lunch, participants join in on a gentle exercise video featuring Blanche Black from "Fit as a Fiddle". Drop by and pick up a calendar of weekly menus and activities.

Date: Fridays, exercise at 11:00 am, lunch at 12:30 pm  
Cost: \$5.50 per person.

### Rentals

Looking for space? Rent our place! Fernwood Community Centre has rental space for meetings, activities, parties, music and sports activities. We have the space to meet your rental needs. For more information please call: 381-1552

#### Birthday Party Rentals

Is your child's birthday coming up and you don't know what to do? We'll leave the organization to us while you sit back and enjoy the day. Our leaders will organize a busy party complete with games and activities in a fun safe environment for your child and all their guests. Call Lyn at 381-1552 for more information on availability and rates.

### Adult Programs

#### Community Kitchens

Community Kitchens is a program where adults join together to prepare five main meals for their families. Each group meets twice a month to plan and cook their own meals. Learn recipes, have fun and stretch that food dollar! Call the Community Centre for more information and to register.

#### Free Internet Access

Fernwood Community Centre offers FREE Internet access to community members as part of the Community Access Program funded by Industry Canada. Stop by the front desk Monday to Friday from 10 am to 8:30 pm to find out how you can book computer time. Printing is available at a nominal fee.

#### Fernwood Qi Gong

Qi Gong is an excellent and enjoyable way to start your day. In most Eastern cultures health is seen as the movement of energy, qi or chi, through the body. Those eighteen easy to learn, meditative movements help circulate and balance energy. Qi Gong promotes flexibility and clarity of mind, enhances mood and releases stress. Join us Wednesdays from 10 am -12 pm, everyone welcome.

Free!

#### Holistic Healing

This informal group meets to do Qi Gong exercises, meditation and discussions of Chinese medicine. Everyone welcome. Please come out and join in Wednesdays 10-11:30 Free!

#### Adult Drop In Volleyball

Volleyball is a great way to have fun while exercising. Our group of adults ages 18 + meets every Monday in the gym for drop-in volleyball. We provide all the equipment except your gym shoes. Come join us, Tuesdays from 7:00 - 9:00 pm.

#### Adult Drop In Floor Hockey

Adult floor hockey for ages 18 + takes place every Thursday night from 8:30 - 8:00 pm in the gym. All the equipment is provided, however participants are welcome to bring their own. Come join in every Thursday from 8:30 - 8:00 pm. No wooden sticks please!

### Childcare Programs

#### Fernwood Infant & Toddler Care

Our licensed Infant & Toddler Educators offer a loving and safe daycare program for your children. This new daycare, set to open in September 2004, offers care for children ages birth to 36 months. For more information or to put your child's name on the waiting list please call the Centre at 381-1552.

Visit our Open House during Fern Fest August 28.

#### Fernwood Daycare

Our licensed daycare offers a full day program delivered by qualified Early Childhood Educators providing the highest quality of care. This full day program incorporates a preschool class, which focuses on school readiness skills all delivered in a safe, loving environment. Some spaces available for September 2004!

#### Puddle Jumpers Preschool

Join our exciting theme-based multicultural preschool program. Each month we will explore and learn through play, art, music, stories, science and movement. Make new friends while developing a life-long love of learning. Now taking registration for September 2004.

#### George Jay Kindercare

Help make your child's transitional year easier on them and you. Our qualified and caring ECE staff offers participants a wide range of opportunities and activities to engage their creativity and imagination while enhancing their social and cognitive skills and abilities. Equal time provided for free play, outside time and just plain fun! Now taking registration for September 2004!

#### George Jay Out of School Care

This licensed program is designed for school aged children 5 to 12 years. Operating on site at George Jay School our qualified staff offer quality care for your child before and after school, and full days on all school holidays and Professional Development Days. The program includes a learning environment full of challenging and rewarding opportunities. Snacks provided, full and part time spaces available. Now taking registration for September 2004.

#### Fernwood Kids Summer Camp

Our trained camp leaders have planned a busy summer camp program for children ages 5 to 12 years of age. Camps include: field trips, arts & crafts, sports, games, swimming, carnivals, and so much more. Registration is available by the month, week or day. Limited spaces still available.

#### Day Trippin' Youth Summer Camp

Our youth leaders have planned fun day camps for youth ages 13 to 18, every Tuesday & Thursday all summer. Camps include: field trips including: Rock climbing, kayaking, swimming, go carts, mini golf, and so much more. For more information or to register please call 381-1552. Limited spaces still available.

### Family Programs

#### Mother Goose

Mother Goose is a group experience for parents, caregivers and infants/ toddlers (0-2½) and young children that teach rhymes, songs and stories. This program is held every Saturday morning from 10 am to noon in the gym. Pre-registration is required.

#### Parent & Tot Playgroup

Join us for parent and tot time at the Community Centre. An opportunity to socialize with other parents while your child enjoys toys and playtime. Coffee, juice and snacks are provided.

Every Tuesday & Thursday from 9:30 - 11:30 am. Cost: \$1.00/ family  
Every Second Sunday starting April 18 from 1:00 - 3:00 pm, Cost: \$1.00/ family

family programs continued.....

#### Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program

Nobody's Perfect is a program for parents of children newborn to 5 years of age. The program includes: learning how to understand your child better, information on children's health, safety, and behaviour, coping with stress, sharing ideas, tips, and experiences, and how to take a break from your busy day. Each session includes a nutritious snack and child minding. There is no charge to attend. Upcoming classes will be held in March, May & October 2004. Pre-registration is required.

#### Victoria Best Babies

Offering support & programs for expectant & new mothers, Victoria Best Babies is your baby's best start. Services provided include: support, nutritional & lifestyle counseling, pre & postnatal education, food supplements, referrals, weekly support groups. Call 385-8979 for more information.

### Youth Programs

#### Afternoon Adventures

Youth ages 11 - 14, are invited to join this fun drop in-group every Tuesday & Thursday after school from 3:30 - 5:30. Activities include: sports, games, arts & crafts, outings, and so much more.

Date: Tuesdays & Thursdays

Time: 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Cost: \$1.00 each

#### Introduction to Rhythm Guitar

Learn the basics of playing rhythm guitar, including 15 different guitar chords and different styles of rhythm playing. Learn to play your favorite songs! Participants must bring own acoustic guitar. Classes are held Thursdays starting October 7. Pre-Registration is required.

Date: Thursday October 7, 14, 21 & 28

Time: 3:30 - 4:30 pm

Cost: \$50.00

Minimum 5 participants

Instructor: James Thomson

#### Fernwood Music Shows

Fernwood Music Shows are planned and organized by an all ages committee in an effort to offer pro-social recreation for youth and young adults. Music shows are open to the public. To join our committee or for more information on upcoming shows, please check out our web site at [www.fernwoodcc.ca](http://www.fernwoodcc.ca) or call the community centre at 381-1552.

#### Beauty From the Inside Out

Join our workshop exploring the many different interpretations of beauty. Each participant will leave with a healthy understanding of body image, self-esteem and a makeover. Designed for youth ages 12 to 18.

Date: July 21

Time: 10 am - 4 pm

Cost \$15.00 each

### Special Events & Celebrations

#### Benefit at the Belfry

Join us as Fernwood Community Centre celebrates its 25th Anniversary with a fundraising gala at the Belfry Theater. Tickets are now available for the musical comedy "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change" with proceeds going towards our new Infant & Toddler Daycare. Tax receipts are available. Door prize is a hand made kayak designed and built by our Executive Director Roberta Martell. Join us as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary with a night of musical fun while we support our new Infant & Toddler Daycare Centre.

Date: August 18

Ticket information: 381-1552

#### Fern Fest

It's the event of the summer! This year's Fern Fest celebration is guaranteed to be the biggest and the best with tons of fun for the entire family. Activities will include: entertainment, children's games and activities, a craft sale, community tables, adult games, contests, a silent auction, a beer garden and lots of food. The newest Fernwood compilation CD will be launched at this year's Fern Fest, the CD will be made up of Fernwood artists with proceeds towards the Fernwood Community Centre.

Date: Sat August 28

Time: 10 am - 4 pm

Fern Fest is looking for crafters wanting to sell their works. We have tables to rent in the craft area. For more information please call 381-1552.

#### Fern Fest Outdoor Dance

Join us for an evening of entertainment & food following Fern Fest. This free outdoor all ages music show will feature local artists "The Hoochie Girls" and "Rockville".

Date: Sat August 28

Time: 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm

### Upcoming Special Events at Fernwood Community Centre

Plans are still underway but here is a listing of some special events that will be taking place at Fernwood Community Centre this fall.

#### Fernwood Halloween Howl

Join us for a family Halloween celebration with a children's party and an outdoor bonfire. Lots of warm cider, games, & treats.

Location: Fernwood Community Centre & Stevenson Park

Date: Sunday October 31, 2004

Children's Party: 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Bonfire: 7:00 - 10:00pm

#### Fernwood Christmas Party

Join us for a family Christmas celebration including an open house, games, treats, arts & crafts, and a visit from Santa.

Date: Saturday December 18

Time: 1:00 - 4:00pm

#### Christmas Shopping Childcare

Need to go Christmas shopping? Looking for someone to watch the children so you can shop in peace? Fernwood Community Centre offers a solution. Our trained childcare staff will keep your child busy and entertained while you shop, relax and prepare for the holidays.

Saturday Dec 4, 11, 18

Time: 10:00 am - 8:00 pm

#### New Year Eve's Overnight Childcare

Looking for safe, reliable childcare while you ring in the New Year? Fernwood Community Centre is here with a solution. Our trained childcare providers will offer overnight care for children ages 3 to 12.

Date: Friday Dec 31 - Jan 1, 2004

Time: 6:00pm - 12:00 pm

#### New Year's Eve Dance

Join us as we ring in the New Year with an all ages dance and refreshments. Leave your child at our drop-in childcare program while you enjoy yourself.

Cost: \$8.00 each

Date: Friday Dec 31

Time: 8:00 pm - 1:00 am