

Bowker Creek to receive some TLC



Oak Bay secondary teacher David Lock and student organizer Sonora Godfrey lie in Bowker Creek Park as they get ready for this Saturday's 11th Rubber Ducky race fundraiser for Bowker Creek restoration. Duck numbers will be sold for \$2 and prizes awarded to purchasers of the winning ducks.

Sharon Tiffin/News staff

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Saturday is cleanup day in Bowker Creek. Oh, and there's a little matter of a duck race.

Organized for an 11th year by environmentally conscious students at Oak Bay High and the Friends of Bowker Creek, the cleanup and fundraiser aims to raise community awareness of the need to monitor and rehabilitate the stream.

"We're trying to focus on restoration of this urban creek so that at some point, maybe in the not too distant future, we might start to see a more sustainable waterway," said Oak Bay environment club teacher-sponsor Dave Lock.

Bowker Creek winds its way through Saanich, Victoria and Oak Bay, emptying into the ocean between Willows Beach and Oak Bay Marina.

Water levels are low at this time of year, which might make cleanup efforts somewhat easier in the creek bed. But the increased growth of brush does tend to hamper access.

Past cleanups have found an assortment of items carelessly tossed into the creek.

“We might treasure our green spaces but we don’t always think about them,” said Sonora Godfrey, a Grade 11 who is student head of the school’s environment club. “This is a way to help people take pride in these things.”

Getting involved in the cleanup allows people to see more of the consequences of not taking care of the environment, she added.

The cleanup portion of the day gets underway at 10 a.m., with participants meeting creekside behind Oak Bay High, and runs until 11:30.

The official ceremonies begin at noon on an area of the creek known as St. Ann’s pond, across from the Oak Bay firehall on St. Ann’s Street. Displays illustrating the Bowker Creek Watershed Initiative will be on site, and snacks will be available for those in attendance.

The duck race happens on the pond shortly afterward. Ducks cost \$2 each, with prizes for winning entries donated by local merchants. All proceeds go toward Bowker Creek restoration efforts.

For more information, go to www.bowkercreekinitiative.ca

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