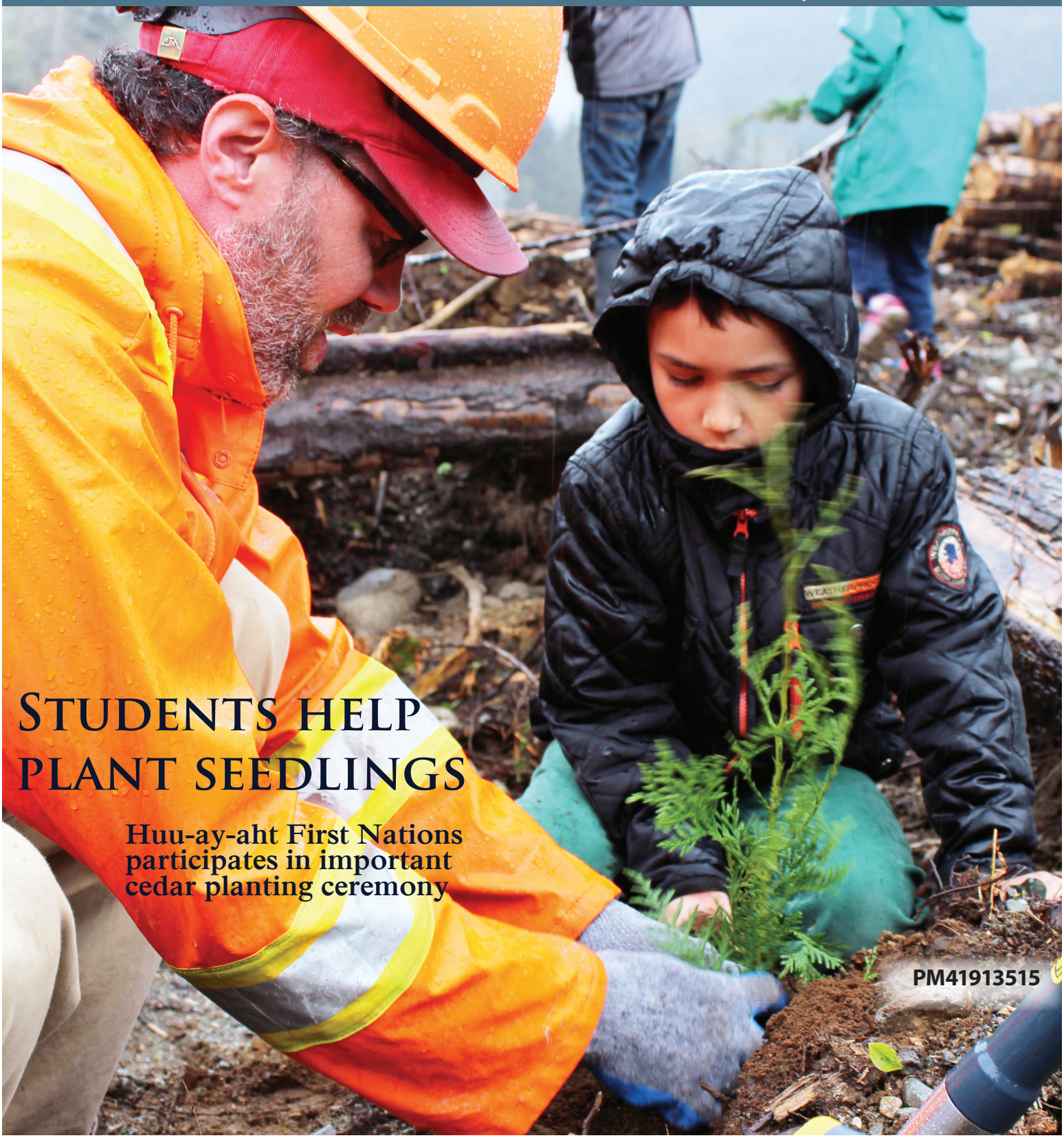
Uyaqḥmis

May 2015 Issue 37



STUDENTS HELP PLANT SEEDLINGS

Huu-ay-aht First Nations participates in important cedar planting ceremony

PM41913515

Election set for June 20, nominations released

The Election Act sets out the process for electing the Chief Councillor and elected Councillors on the Huu-ay-aht Council. Beginning in 2011, general elections are held on the third Saturday in June every four years. That makes this one an election year, and the vote is set to take place on June 20.

Executive Council appointed Kit Spence as the Election Commissioner on April 9, 2015 – the first step in the election process. On May 4, 5 and 6, Spence spoke at a special round of community engagement sessions focused on the election process. These took place in Anacla, Port Alberni and Vancouver, respectively. These sessions were non-political events and offered citizens an opportunity to get information from the elections commissioner prior to the election.

The nomination period began on Monday, May 4 at 9 a.m. and ended at noon on Thursday, May 14. Any eligible voter can run for a seat on Council, including the Chief Councillor position, as long as they meet the criteria detailed in the Elections Act. A candidate can run for both Council and Chief Councillor, but if elected they can only hold one seat

Three citizens put their name forward for the Elected Chief Councillor, they are Jeffrey Robert Cook, Robert Jack Dennis and Connie Mabel Francis Waddell. Thirteen citizens are running for the five councillor seats, and they are Sheila Charles, Benny Ryan Clappis, Molly Clappis, Jack Cook, Trevor Lee Michael Cootes, Johnson Kelly Ginger, John Alan Jack, Britanny Johnson, Kiana Taylor Mio, Duane Nookemis, Connie Mabel Francis Waddell, Kenneth Roy Werner and Irene Delores Williams.

All candidates submitted the nomination package to the Election Commissioner during the nomination period. In the package, the candidate collected 10 nominees and included a certified copy of a current criminal record check. Other information submitted with the nomination package included one form with basic information on the nominee and a second one that contains a colour photograph and solemn declarations of a nominee.

Huu-ay-aht citizens who are eligible to vote are encouraged to do so. In order to qualify, the citizen must be 18 years of age by June 20, 2015, and must meet all the criteria set out in the Elections Act.

More details on the election are available in www.huuayaht.org. Under the "Our Government" tab you can find the *Elections Act* (Current Legislation). Please review this section regularly for updates on the process.

2015 Candidates

Chief Councillor

- Jeffrey Robert Cook
- Robert Jack Dennis
- Connie Mabel Francis Waddell

Councillor

- Sheila Charles
- Benny Ryan Clappis
- Molly Clappis
- Jack Cook
- Trevor Lee Michael Cootes
- Johnson Kelly Ginger
- John Alan Jack
- Britanny Johnson
- Kiana Taylor Mio
- Duane Nookemis
- Connie Mabel Francis Waddell
- Kenneth Roy Werner
- Irene Delores Williams

huu ay aht

ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

We, the Huu-ay-aht People, envision a proud, self-governing and sovereign nation. ʔiisaak will guide us as we work together to establish a healthy, prosperous and self-sustaining community where our culture, language, spirituality and economy flourish for the benefit of all Huu-ay-aht.

Huu-ay-aht Uyaqḥmis is printed up to six times per year in order to foster community engagement among a population of over 700 citizens. Huu-ay-aht Uyaqḥmis promotes the recovery and sharing of the Huu-ay-aht dialect of the Nuu-chah-nulth language, as well as knowledge of Huu-ay-aht culture.

Please send all comments and questions to the Huu-ay-aht Communications Department.

communications@huuayaht.org
Mailing Address:
Huu-ay-aht First Nations
3483 3rd Ave., Port Alberni, BC
V9Y 4E4

www.huuayaht.org
for the latest news and events, job postings, and a digital archive of Uyaqḥmis

Keep up to date with Uyaqḥmis on social media:
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Students help plant trees of tomorrow in Sarita

On Friday April 10, 2015, students of Bamfield Community School gathered in Sarita to plant the 40-millionth seedling for Island Timberlands.

The students were joined by representatives from Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Island Timberlands, a number of tree planters and other forest professionals.

The event was organized by Island Timberlands. It took place on a cut block approximately 57 kilometres from Port Alberni that is surrounded by Huu-ay-aht Treaty Settlement Land.

Elected Chief Councillor Jeff Cook took part in the official tree planting, along with Island Timberlands Chief Forester Bill Waugh and its President Darshan Sihota. The students were there to witness the planting of the 40-millionth seedling, a cedar tree, and they also had an opportunity to plant a number of seedlings on the cut block.

"I hope these youth will be able to remember where they were today, so they can come out here and recognize where they planted trees," Chief Cook says. "They will then know that they made a difference today by planting these cedars."

According to Sihota, Island Timberlands replants many more trees than it harvests. The company's goal is to reforest each area within one year of it being harvested. The 40-million trees were all planted within the past 10 years on sites owned and harvested by Island Timberlands. The cut block in Sarita will be reforested with mainly cedar seedlings, but some Douglas fir will also be planted closer to the road. Hemlock is also native to the area, but it will return on its own as it is a prolific seed producer. The plot was originally cut approximately 65 years ago.

(Front page photo) Andrew Philip Clappis helps one of the seeding crew and learns to plant a cedar in Sarita. His Bamfield Community School class helped out when the 40-millionth seedling was planted on April 10. [Photo by Heather Thomson]



Kaylee Taylor, 4, and her mother Michelle Mickey practice with other Huu-ay-ahts at the Tseshaht Cultural Centre, getting ready for the potlatch on June 6 to celebrate the wedding anniversary of Ty'ii ha'wilth Tliishin and Homin'niki Irene D. Williams. [Photo by Heather homson]

Uyaqḥmis Community Calendar

Upcoming celebration

- Ty'ii ha'wilth Tliishin (Derek Peters) and Homin'niki Irene D. Williams invite you to help them celebrate their wedding anniversary. They will host a potlatch on June 6, 2015 at the Alberni Athletic Hall, beginning at noon. Make sure to attend dance practices leading up to this special event, so you will be ready to join in.

Huu-ay-aht First Nations Election

- Tentative dates for All-Candidates forums: Port Alberni on June 3 and 19; Anacla June 4.
- Election Day is June 20, 2015
- Mail-in ballots must be received prior to the close of the polls, so they cannot arrive by mail any later than June 19 in order to be included in the count.

Education and Training Road Show

- Anacla Government Office, Monday, May 25, 3-6 p.m.
- Port Alberni - North Island College, Wednesday, May 27, 5-8 p.m.
- Nanaimo - Vancouver Island University Aboriginal Gathering Center, Thursday, May 28, 5-7 p.m.
- Vancouver - Aboriginal Mother Centre, Monday, June 1, 5-8 p.m.

Community Engagement Sessions

- The next round of Community Engagement Sessions will take place following the election. Until then, please go to http://huuayaht.org/2015/05/04/engagement-survey/ to fill out a survey on the engagement process. Thank you in advance for your time.



Huu-ay-aht First Nations Elected Chief Councillor Jeff Cook is joined by staff and citizens to celebrate the arrival of their new truck. The truck was purchased through the Generations Fund and will be used to distribute fresh food to Huu-ay-aht citizens. [Photo by Heather Thomson]

Generations Fund will provide training, education, programs

On May 8, 2015, Huu-ay-aht announced the establishment of a Generations Fund to finance a wide range of programs aimed at increasing citizens' access to employment, skills training and a wide range of community services.

Funded by Steelhead LNG, this initiative is part of the partnership with the Nation and aims to improve the quality of life for present and future generations of Huu-ay-aht citizens and set the Nation further down the path of self-reliance that began with Treaty implementation in 2011.

In its first year, the Generations Fund will bring investment to programs and activities in three key areas: trades, technical and professional training for Huu-ay-aht citizens, economic development, and increasing capacity of the Huu-ay-aht government to meet the goals outlined in the Nation's 20-year Strategic Plan.

"We're pleased to have secured this important funding for our people through our participation in the proposed LNG Project," said Elected Chief Councillor Jeff Cook. "Through community consultation, Huu-ay-aht citizens have identified issues and initiatives that are important to our people. Through this funding, we can have a real and immediate positive impact on the lives of our children and families, and can free up much-needed resources to better support our Ḥaẇiiḥ."

The Generations Fund will finance a number of projects to be rolled out over the coming months. Among the first of these is a fresh food box program, which will support Huu-ay-aht families and improve their health through the delivery of fresh, nourishing food. Each month, the program will deliver one free box of fresh fruits and vegetables and basic staples to Huu-ay-aht families in Anacla, Port Alberni, and Vancouver, with a focus on families with children under 18, elders, and people on Social Assistance.

The deliveries will be made in a new refrigeration truck that was purchased for the program this month. The truck will also be used to deliver traditional foods including food fish. It is expected the program will make approximately 1,440 food box deliveries to Huu-ay-ahts each year.

Huu-ay-aht's refrigerator truck rolls into town



Another initiative that will receive funding through the Generations Fund is a new Huu-ay-aht Child Protective Services Program. This program will support the goal that was identified by citizens and enshrined in the Huu-ay-aht Strategic Plan: by 2034, our children will grow up safe, healthy, connected to the community and will exemplify Huu-ay-aht values. This direction came out of the recognition that providing a Huu-ay-aht approach to children's care, with input from Ḥaw̓iiḥ, elders and other Huu-ay-aht citizens is the best way of achieving this outcome.

Through community consultation, Huu-ay-aht citizens and Bamfield area residents have identified concerns regarding the safety of people walking between Anacla and Bamfield. In response to this concern, the Huu-ay-aht government is leading the development and construction of a safe pathway, allocating additional funding through the Generations Fund in addition to the $10,000 initially set aside through the Opportunity Development Agreement in 2014. At this time, work on the path is focused on determining the best route between the two communities and securing the rights of way required, which currently pass through numerous properties including some held by unidentified landowners.

Employment-related initiatives will represent another key focus under the Generations Fund. "We have heard from Huu-ay-aht citizens loud and clear that they want meaningful employment, including opportunities to work for and with the Nation", said Cook. "One of our strategic goals is to become a major employer in the region and to provide new economic opportunities. This training funding will help to ensure that members of the Nation are at the forefront in stepping up for these jobs and benefitting from these opportunities."

The funding will be used to support Huu-ay-aht citizens to identify their skills and interest areas, connect citizens to job shadowing opportunities, and provide financial support for tuition, textbook, and living expenses while pursuing their education. Prospective students will also be encouraged to consider careers in high-demand jobs, such as trades and healthcare. The goal is ultimately to fund 12 red seal trades training positions for Huu-ay-aht citizens.

Steelhead LNG CEO Nigel Kuzemko expressed thanks to the Huu-ay-aht government and citizens for the ongoing and open dialogue, explaining that this has helped the project remain tuned in to citizens' needs and priorities at every step of the way.

"Over the past few months, the Huu-ay-aht government and Huu-ay-aht citizens clearly identified the conditions that must guide the proposed Project for it to proceed," said Kuzemko. "The Generations Fund will help us address many of those conditions together and will help provide the Huu-ay-aht with the funding and internal resources needed to carry out the Nation's strategic plan."



(Top) Huu-ay-aht First Nations Elected Chief Councillor Jeff Cook hands the truck keys over to Director of Community Services Kathy Waddell. (Left) Jeff Cook and Steelhead LNG CEO Nigel Kuzemko sign the Generations Fund agreement in Vancouver.

Logs from Huu-ay-aht's traditional territory part of Saanich hospital

The W'SANEC Carving Project started about one year ago. Its main goal is to provide a more culturally safe environment at the Saanich Peninsula Hospital for people from its four Nations.

Unfortunately, the hospital lacks of features that reflect the First Nations culture or honour the traditional territory in which the facility is built on. However, Island Health is committed to strengthen its relationship with Aboriginal People, improve their access to services and, therefore, their health.

Huu-ay-aht, as a supporting neighbour within Vancouver Island, donated four 17 foot long yellow cedar logs to the program. Tsartlip- Charles Elliot (Brentwood Bay), Tsawout- Doug LaFortune (Saanichton), Pauquachin- Mark Henry and Tseycum- James Jimmy (both from North Saanich) are the carvers in charge of crafting four totem poles with the wood.

"By having four beautiful welcome poles on hospital grounds, we hope this will welcome and encourage people from the communities to feel they can use the hospital services," stated Jane Fox RN, Aboriginal Liaison Nurse, Saanich Peninsula Hospital.

The blessing

The blessing was performed by Rob Dennis Jr., Wish Key, with the assistance of Cheryl Thomas, Cultural Program Coordinator, on February 12th. They wore traditional regalia for the occasion. The ceremony is called Eagle Down and helps to thank the Creator (Naas) for the life and spirit of the tree and to guide the artists in their journey to transform the wood.



Huu-ay-aht Citizens Robert Dennis Jr and Cheryl Thomas bless the log in the Cowichan Valley.

The unveiling of the totems is expected to coincide with the Elders Gathering between July 7th and 8th this year or happen by early August.

More about the cedar

Cedar is considered the tree of life, a symbol of strength and revitalization, but yellow cedar has healing powers too. Hilary Stewart explains in her book "Cedar: Tree of Life to the Northwest Coast Indians" (1984, p. 25) that the yellow-gold inner bark is exceptionally strong, like satin to the touch, more durable than red cedar's and, therefore, the most suitable for carving.

Alice Huang wrote a detailed online article about Cedar for Indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca. Some of the beliefs included in that article are:

Someone who cuts a tree down without permission would be cursed by other cedar trees.

A pregnant woman should not braid baskets as the umbilical cord would twist around the baby's neck.

Because cedar is a long-lived tree, some Coast Salish groups guaranteed longevity by placing the babies in the stump of a large cedar.

Just to refresh or enhance your Nuu-cha-ɲulth, try this expression: ʔuxaapwiṫasaḥ ḥumi̓is (Oogh-sop wit us saḥ ḥuu-mees), which means I am going to cut down cedar.

Do you have an event or announcement you would like to see included in the community calendar? Email us at communications@huuayaht.org, and we will include it.

Huu-ay-aht steps up to fitness challenge

Health is one of six values outlined by Huu-ay-aht First Nations in its Strategic Plan. The rest are professionalism, respect, effective communication, trust and support.

With that in mind, Director of Community Services Kathy Waddell set out to find fun and easy ways to promote a healthy lifestyle for citizens and staff of Huu-ay-aht.

In the fall of 2014, the First Nations Health Authority offered a grant to Nations across the province with the goal of health and wellness and, particularly, to get people moving.

Waddell applied for the grant, and she successfully received a $1,000. That was enough to purchase a number of Fitbits to kick off the program. The first round of Fitbits were handed out to Huu-ay-aht staff.

A Fitbit is a small device that records steps, calories burned, distance travelled and many other health factors. It can also be linked to a Smartphone or computer to track progress. This feature also allows members to join groups and add friends to offer up friendly competitions.

The program was so successful that Waddell soon started receiving more requests for the popular steppers. The Fitbits cost between $50 and $80, and the grant money was spent.

“I didn’t want to discourage anyone, especially with the value of health,” she explains. “And so I found extra money in the budget and expanded the program.”

That additional funding made it possible to offer Fitbits to more staff, but also she was able to give them out to Executive Council members, committee members and citizens. To date, more than 30 Fitbits have been handed out, and people are still enthusiastic about the program.

Waddell estimates that approximately half of the Fitbits went to staff and Council, with citizens receiving the others.

“It is really cool that it has become so popular,” she says. “I had no idea it would be so well received and people would be so into it.”

She said the results are positive for various reasons. In some cases, it has made daily physical exercise a part of some people’s lives who had realized that they were not moving very much during the day. Others have noticed significant weight loss as a result of the steppers.

“I’ve heard some really neat stories,” Waddell says.



Huu-ay-aht council members and staff Jeff Cook, John Jack, Helen Robertson and Stephen Rayner are busy tallying their steps thanks to the Fitbit challenge at Huu-ay-aht First Nations. [Photo by Ambar Varela]

“We see people marching on the spot at the office or doing loops in meetings to make sure they get their steps in. It has really inspired people to get moving.”

The program has also had the added bonus that it helped build staff morale and comradery through friendly challenges and rivalries. Huu-ay-aht First Nations has a group within Fitbit that sees the leaderboard flip between Huu-ay-aht staff members Helen Robertson, Heather Thomson and Ian Benoit and Elected Chief Councillor Jeffrey Cook.

The challenge inspired Robertson to get a treadmill at home. She uses it in the morning before work, and goes for walks on her coffee breaks.

“It just gets me closer to my step goal and I like that feeling that I’m going to meet my goal for the day,” she says. “Having my Fitbit really motivates me to get up and move and seeing weight loss results are a real bonus for me too.”

Cook has dropped 15 pounds since he got his Fitbit, and he can be seen most mornings or evenings at Bob Dailey Memorial Track clocking his steps.

“I knew in my mind that I was not physically fit and was reluctant to get a Fitbit on the first go around,” he says, admitting he was afraid he would not use the device. “When I saw staff talking about their goals and accomplishments and friendly challenges, I made the commitment to join the club.”

Waddell says if people are interested in joining the Fitbit challenge, they should contact the Port Alberni Government Office and indicate they want a stepper. She is hoping the First Nations’ Health Authority will offer the same grant this year, and she will apply again based on the success of the program last year.

Cultural Corner - Culturally modified trees



Last month, a culturally modified tree was removed from Huu-ay-aht's land in Sarita and transported to Anacla for preservation.

The log was identified in 1995 as a pre-formed canoe, when the site was surveyed prior to logging in an archeological reconnaissance survey. M&B did not log the site at the time, but it is now slated to be cut by Island Timberlands, the previous owner of the land. The CMT is located in Sarita on the section of land that was recently purchased from IT by Huu-ay-aht First Nations. When Huu-ay-aht purchased the land, it was under the agreement that IT would be able to log the area.

Representatives from Huu-ay-aht decided the canoe blank is a significant piece of Huu-ay-aht's history to justify removing it prior to logging.

"I am confident, that if we had not removed it, the blank would have been destroyed," explains Rita Johnson, Lands and Permitting Administrator. "We took great measures to protect it because initially we thought it was rotting. But when we cut into the log it was solid."

Huu-ay-aht First Nations made the arrangements to move the log, but the recovery operation was paid for by Island Timberlands.

The plan for the pre-formed canoe is still in the works, but Huu-ay-aht will find a way to preserve it and mount it on display for generations to enjoy in the future.







It's official! Port has a Paawats



Nellie Dennis, Edward Johnson Jr., Robert Dennis Jr. and Elected Chief Councillor Jeff Cook officially open Huu-ay-aht First Nations' Paawats in Port Alberni. A ceremonial cedar ribbon cutting followed the drumming and singing. [Photo by Heather Thomson]

Two more spots available on Huu-ay-aht's newly formed LNG Advisory Committee

The LNG Advisory Committee has held its first meeting and is accepting applications for two additional members.

The LNG Advisory Committee will meet monthly to review reports, plans and presentations regarding the development of the proposed LNG Project. The Committee will also provide advice and recommendations to Huu-ay-aht Executive Council, Ha'wiih Council and the People's Assembly. Materials being reviewed will include technical and project plans, communication and engagement plans, environmental reports, status updates and options analysis. The main goal of the committee is to increase citizen involvement and communication in the process and ensure that Huu-ay-aht feedback is incorporated into project planning and design.

The committee will be made up of five citizens, and chaired by Elected Chief Councillor Jeff Cook. The current committee members include Connie Waddell, Becki Johnson and Brian Lucas.

If you are interested in participating on the LNG Advisory Committee, please submit a one-page cover letter outlining why you are interested along with your current resume to lawclerk@huuayaht.org. If you require assistance with the cover letter or resume, please contact Heather Thomson in the Port Alberni Government Office at 250-723-0100.



Winning photo captures happiness

Jadine Happynook has captured an image that won a photography contest.

The prize for the award-winning photo was the honour of being featured on the cover of the Saanich Parks and Recreation Summer Living Guide.

The winning image features her daughter Tehya Anderson leaping through the air at Beckwith Park last summer. The photo is also on posters around the recreation centres.

“This picture was a happy accident. It was an absolute beautiful day. I took the photo. I post it on Facebook and friends encouraged me to make it to the cover of some magazine”.

Saanitch needed one photo for the edition. She participated because it was taken in a local water park of theirs and during the summer.

Tehya is a modest winner who celebrated her eighth birthday on May 10. She was embarrassed to let her friends know about the contest.

The day when the picture was taken, she was so happy that Jadine just captured the moment. Photography is just a hobby for her.

Education and Training Road Show is bringing opportunities

Huu-ay-aht First Nations wants to offer its citizens a convenient way to access information on trades training and other education opportunities and begin their education journey. Huu-ay-aht’s Education team will be travelling to communities to offer advice, career counselling and information about labour market trend employment opportunities. They will be at:

• Anacla Government Office, Monday, May 25, 3-6 p.m.

• Port Alberni - North Island College, Wednesday, May 27, 5-8 p.m.

• Nanaimo - Vancouver Island University Aboriginal Gathering Center, Thursday, May 28, 5-7 p.m.

• Vancouver - Aboriginal Mother Centre, Monday, June 1, 5-8 p.m.

Staff will be on site to help people apply for funding, educational programs, and upgrading. We can offer guidance on next steps and set up personalized one-on-one meetings.

These sessions provide an opportunity for people to receive the information they need to set them in the right direction for the future.

Sessions are for people of any age who are interested in furthering their education to create a better life for themselves.

If you have questions or can’t make it to a session and want to set up a meeting to discuss your goals, please call 778-421-1022 for more information.

Nuu-chah-nulth students explore drama through studio, college tour

On January 30, Cst. Scott MacLeod, Port Alberni's First Nations Community Policing Services, invited four Port Alberni Friendship drama students, to North Shore Studio sound stages to observe how feature films are produced. The students were aged 12 to 14, and included representatives from different Nuu-chah-nulth nations, including Huu-ay-aht.

"The hope was to introduce the students to the motion picture film business by exploring sound stages, and introduce them to people who have made and are making a career in the industry," MacLeod says, explaining this could be writers, actors, carpenters, electricians, truck drivers, set designers, caterers and sound engineers.

Along with two Friendships staff members to help chaperone the students, seven of them left on the 8 a.m. ferry from Nanaimo to Vancouver.



"The ferry trip started with dry weather, a sunrise over the Georgia Straight and a whale passing by the ferry's starboard side as we exited Nanaimo harbour," MacLeod says. "Three hours later we arrived at the North Shore studio gate and greeted by studio President Peter Leitch, whom I have known for 13 years through my own film efforts."

The studio was built in the late 1980s, formally known as Lion's Gate Studio, where films (50 shades of Grey, Terminator, Twilight Sagas and the next Star Wars) and TV shows (X-files and iZombie) have been and are currently being shot.

Leitch was presented with a Tseshaht bent wood box as a traditional gift from Port Alberni artist Wayne Dick. Students were given a tour of Studios 7 and 8, the outside lot grounds and make up trailers.

In Studio 7, we were brought on to the set of iZombie, a police show set in Seattle that aired on the CW Network in February. The students got to explore the morgue, police station and the main character's residence. In studio 8, the students walked onto a pilot TV program set that had a 50x50 foot green screen.

After lunch, Leitch arranged a tour of North Vancouver's Capilaino College campus and its dedicated career training in the Motion Picture/global media industry.

"Our students mingled with 'Cap' college students in the middle of their classroom lessons of animation, set dress and costume design, sound-scaping/ editing engineer studio, props, and two sound stages, including a 'hot' set where Cap student were recording a film," he says.

The students were introduced to several Aboriginal film program students who are a part of the four-year Bachelor degree offered at the college. The Cap College students were gracious enough to show the visiting students the cultural documentary films they were working on in post-production.

The Capilaino College tour completed with a tour of the campus theatre, and the students getting a chance to speak on the theatre mics.

"We all arrived back in Port Alberni at 8:30 p.m. with students commenting about their interest in pursuing a post-secondary education in animation," MacLeod adds.

(In photo) Nuu-chah-nulth youth join Cst. Scott MacLeod on a tour of North Shore Studios in Vancouver, thanks to a drama program offered at the Port Alberni Friendship Center. They also went to Capilaino College.



Ms. Russell and students: Erica Geall, Riley Gerbrandt, Andrew Jacob, Vanessa Young, Victoria Williams, Andy Clappis, Grace Geall, Seth Nookemus, Alexyss Howard, Natalie Clappis, Jagar Williams, Brady Butler, Jayson Nookemus, Cierra Nookemus, Helena Howard. Also in attendance: Elected Chief Councillor Jeff Cook, Kristen Young, Tauri and Nolan Young, Nicole and Dave Gerbrandt, Sarah Johnson, Megan and Parker Geall, Tammy Howard, Emily Wenstob and James, Cory Howard Jr., Mrs. Herbig, ECE Coordinator Clara Clappis and Janet Simpson-Smith. [Photo by Ambar Varela]

Students make a difference on Earth Day

On Earth Day, April 22, more students gathered at the junction of Bamfield mainline and Spencer mainline to welcome about 500 red cedar seedlings brought to the place.

The Treaty Settlement opening is actually one kilometre up the Spencer mainline from the junction. The A.W. Neill Middle School Grade 7 students were joined by representatives from Huu-ay-aht First Nations, ADSS students, two teachers (ADSS forestry and Neill), and HFN Management LP and Group of Businesses representatives. Together they marked Earth Day by planting the red cedars. Each tree takes from 50 to 80 years to fully grow. The ones we see on the logging trucks might be 250 years old even.

Planning Forester Paul Dagg says that since he started working for Huu-ay-aht Forestry LP in 2003, “We have planted in excess of 1.2 million trees in the Huu-ay-aht Territory.”

When asked about their personal efforts to take care of the planet, Huu-ay-aht citizen and ADSS student George Johnson mentions reading instead of watching TV, as it saves energy and nourishes the mind. His instructor in the forestry class he is taking called him a great prospect for the industry.

Manager of Natural Resource and Trade Christine Gruman says planting a few trees with youth on Earth Day was a great treat. “I’ve long felt that people are more compelled to take care of what they personally know and love,” she says. “Getting young people out in the natural environment helps to build that connection and to foster respect for the ecosystems that support them whether they pursue resource-related careers or not.”

Later that day, students, parents and teachers Bamfield Community School were cleaning Pachena Bay. They discuss how to reduce, reuse, and recycle all year. Teacher Kristin Russell said that they pay special attention to it in the month of April because of Earth Day, but she stressed students take steps every day at the school to make a difference.



Chief Councillor Jeff Cook, Councillor Charlie Clappis, HFN Management LP & Group of Businesses’ Stanley Coleman, Paul Dagg and Trudy Warner, Christine Gruman, A.W. Neill Middle School teacher Sherri Cook, her daughter Saryta Dick and her Grade 7 students (Ecosystems) Raegan Dudoward (Tseshatht), Scott Coulthart and Kobe Solda (Tsmimshian); ADSS forestry instructor Ryan Dvorak and his students George Johnson (Huu-ay-aht), Jamie Berry and Desiree Price. [Photo by Ambar Varela]