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VALLEY VIBE

FALL 2021

PORT ALBERNI

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CITY

GO DOGS GO

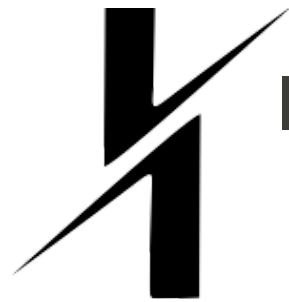
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to the Alberni Valley for your support. By enjoying this issue you're supporting our community.

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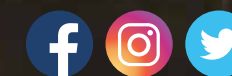
Welcome
to
Port Alberni
A SLICE OF ISLAND PARADISE

#EXPLOREPORTALBERNI

In the heart of Vancouver Island, kissed by the sun and connected by the ancient sea, sits a valley filled with opportunity, adventure and wonderment.

As the community fortunate enough to be surrounded by the towering peaks of the Beaufort Mountain Range, lush canopies of the west coast rainforest and salty waters of the Alberni Inlet, we have the privilege of showing each other and the world just how lucky we are.

So, to the residents looking to rekindle their sense of adventure, those thinking of making this magical place home, visitors seeking an authentic Vancouver Island experience, the young and the young at heart, we invite you to lace up your hiking boots, dust off your kayaks, polish your golf clubs, grab your fishing rods and pack your cameras - it's time to roam near home and explore Port Alberni.



Port Alberni The Hub City



The Inlet has been used by the Hupacasath and Tseshaht First Nations for hundreds of years; they followed the salmon migration from the Broken Islands at the entrance of the Inlet, all the way to Stamp Falls where the salmon finally stopped to spawn. In more recent history, the Inlet was discovered by Captain Don Pedro de Alberni, a Spanish officer who commanded Fort San Miguel at Nootka Sound between 1790–1792, and Port Alberni was later named after the Captain. The Inlet was originally believed to be a channel, which is a deep and narrow body of water, proven to be deadly and dangerous for most larger ships to travel through. Luckily for Port Alberni and the surrounding ports, the Inlet has proven to be large enough for massive cruise ships to travel down to come visit our beautiful town on more than one occasion, which has allowed Port Alberni

to become “one of the finest deep sea harbours in North America” according to David McCormick.

While the Ports in the Valley have been used for hundreds of years to ship mainly logged materials, The Port was officially established in 1947 as a Harbour Commission and was governed by the Harbour Commission Act in 1964. The Port Alberni Port Authority is a continuation of the Harbour Commission and was proclaimed on July 1st, 1999 within the Canadian Marine Act. PAPA (Port Alberni Port Authority) is an Agent of the Federal Crown, meaning that the Canadian Government is “within arms reach” at all times, mandating fair market prices among other mandates. In 2000, The Port Authority conducted a review of its practices and created a master plan to maintain

viability and stability of the Port. Since then, they have spent time building relationships and making connections within the community and globally, which has led them to be recognized around the world.

The Port Alberni Port Authority located down the inlet from the Harbour Quay has a lot of exciting things in the works for the Alberni Inlet, the community, and British Columbia. We had the pleasure of speaking with David McCormick, Mike Carter, and Kate Smith who all play important roles within the Port Authority and their many departments.

There are three berths within the Port Alberni terminals; berth 1 & 2 are one in the same, spanning over 300m in

length and 10.1m deep, while berth 3 spans 183m long and 12.2m deep. Recently, PAPA has partnered with the San Group to take over Berth 3 and all shipping related activities out of that berth. Together, they are working towards upgrading the current shipping facilities, including dock infrastructure improvements, new loading cranes, storage, and conveyor systems. PAPA has also partnered with the Independent Seafoods Canada Corporation out of Berth 1, and have witnessed successful operations of both of its factory fishing vessels: Raw Spirit and Sunderoey. The addition of Sunderoey last summer has more than doubled the amount of jobs offered, directly supporting the Port Alberni economy.

The Canadian Maritime Engineering is another partner



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of PAPA and they have utilized their large warehouses for building larger vessels. They are working hard together to install and operate a new floating dry dock ship building and repair facility, which would create approximately 70 new jobs and dozens of training opportunities within the first year of operation. CME and PAPA have also partnered with North Island College to create specific courses and training that allow people to go straight from college into the workforce.

With any industry, sustainability is an important factor, both within the industry and on a global scale. PAPA has been a certified member of Green Marine, an environmental certification program in North America, since 2016. Green Marine focuses on key environmental issues through its 14 performance indicators, which cover ship owners, ports and seaways, and terminals and shipyards. To maintain their certification, PAPA has to report annually on community impacts, community relations, dry bulk handling and storage, environmental leadership, greenhouse gas emissions, spill prevention, underwater noise, and waste management.

The Port Alberni Port Authority plays a major role within Port Alberni's economy. They are providing new jobs, new opportunities for small businesses, as well as maintaining a viable and sustainable port for shipping and receiving goods. They are a dedicated team of people looking forward to creating a successful and prospective future for Port Alberni.

The Dock+ and Port Alberni Food Hub is one of the many branches of the Port Authority and a flurry of activity throughout the day; fishers coming into the harbour loaded up with the day's catch, which is then taken into the Dock+ Food Hub to be processed, while chefs utilize the commercial kitchen for research and development, creating delicious master pieces to share with the community.

Located beside Tye Landing, the Dock+ appears to be a typical port; bustling with ships coming in and out of the harbour, while workers transport fish and seafood from the ships to the processing plant. The Dock+ building itself, that sat dormant for ten years, has been transformed into a full scale food processing facility and commercial kitchen, complete with state of the art equipment specific to fish processing. Smelling distinctly like fish, The Kitchen at the Dock+ is busy with small businesses canning and cooking freshly caught fish, creating new and tasty recipes, and utilizing the phenomenal space provided by the Port Authority.



Photo credit: Port Authority

The Port Alberni Port Authority has put a great deal of thought and effort into this facility, and it is quickly being recognized around the world. Locally caught salmon that was once transported outside of the Valley for processing, is now stimulating the economy by being processed locally. Working closely with the City of Port Alberni, the Dock+ is a fully certified facility that allows fishermen to catch, process, and package fish and seafood locally, before exporting it around the world. We know in the Valley that we have the tastiest wild salmon and freshest seafood, and with the Dock+, Port Alberni is finally being recognized globally.

The Dock+ has room to grow, with space for a cafe or fresh seafood bar where fishermen, locals, and tourists can sit outside and enjoy the boats coming in and out of the Harbour. The view changes dramatically on the northern

side of the Harbour, with the main views being endless boats with a beautiful mountain backdrop. By eliminating one of the biggest barriers for food processors, finding a certified kitchen and facility to work out of, the Dock+ makes it easy for new businesses to get started. They want businesses to succeed, just like we all do, so they have made it as easy as possible to utilize the space with membership fees, as well as closely working with those businesses to connect them to local restaurants, grocery stores, and farmers markets, allowing them to expand and grow.

The Dock+ Food Hub has set itself up to be a seafood centre of excellence; enriching the community through their support of local businesses and the Indigenous fishers. If you are interested in learning more about memberships or utilizing their facilities, be sure to check out www.thedockplus.ca ☐

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Photo credits: Kaicee Trott

Go Dogs Go, Again!

After over a year without hockey, it's safe to say that both the players and their fans are ecstatic to get back into the Multiplex to cheer on the Bulldogs! Last year's season, which included some exhibition games and a pod season held at the Multiplex, with no fans to fill up the arena, has left everyone eager for hockey. What is sure to be an exciting season, with the BC Junior Hockey League celebrating its 60th Anniversary and the Bulldogs gearing up to celebrate 20 years within the community, starts with the home opener on October 15th against the Victoria Grizzlies. This season, fans can expect retro jerseys and outdoor events.

The Bulldogs were established in 2002 after moving from Burnaby to Port Alberni. Since then, they have become one of the most supported junior hockey teams in the league; fans fill the stadium, coming together to cheer on the Bulldogs. This season is sure to be exciting with a strong roster of players hoping for a championship. The Bulldogs are ambassadors of Port Alberni and they can often be seen signing autographs or standing for pictures when out and about in the community. When the team is not on the ice they work hard to give back to the community through volunteer work with the Terry Fox Run, Community Coat Drives, The West Coast Hospital Foundation, and the Kuus Crisis Christmas- Sponsoring a Family, just to name a few.

One of the most exciting things about junior hockey is the speed and abilities of the players. Players are between

the ages of 16-20 and they truly play their hearts out at each and every game; many are playing for or maintaining scholarships for college hockey. This year the organization has put together a Junior B hockey team called The Bombers (a fitting name for another Port Alberni team), which means even more hockey for the community. The Junior B team is excited to get out onto the ice and play their hardest.

The Bulldogs have made some exciting partnerships this year. They have partnered with the San Group to offer free entry for local youth under 18 years of age; they want to make coming to a Bulldog or Bomber game as easy as possible for the community, hoping that more families will be able to come out and support the teams. They have also partnered with the City of Port Alberni to design an app that will allow fans to order food and beverages from their phone and pick up once it is ready, which will help keep everyone safe and fed. Panago and Twin City Brewing will also be offered from the concession stand this season.

The Bulldogs are excited to bring the community together under the recently upgraded lights of the Multiplex after a challenging couple years. If you haven't checked out a game yet, we highly recommend you do. Witnessing the community come together in support of our local hockey team, who plays exceptional hockey, is something that sets Port Alberni apart from other communities. We'll see you at The Dawg Pound! Woof Woof! ☐



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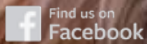
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Port Alberni An Inclusive Community to Live, Work and Play

By Corissa O'Donnell,

Instructor/Support Worker/Work Study Assistant

As another year starts up at North Island College in the Department of Accessible Learning, students share why it is important to gain paid employment in their community of Port Alberni. One student raised his hand and said he would like to help his mom out and take her out to dinner as well as purchase books and video games. Another student spoke up and said he would like to save up and buy a house. This program gives students with disabilities a chance to get into the workforce and will allow them to pay rent, buy groceries, go out for dinner, to save up for things like vacations, to buy a vehicle, or to buy a boat. These students love helping their community and enjoy going to work everyday to put their skills to use that learned through their 2021 work experience. The message is clear that everyone in class wants financial independence and to live a bountiful life.

Alberni business owners have been stepping up to help build these skills to paid employment by promoting inclusion and diversity in the workplace. Working with NIC's Employment Transitions: Grounds and Custodial Assistant training program, businesses offer 1 on 1 work experience training for students that meet and exceed the needs of the students building important natural supports and focusing on the students' abilities. In creating confidence, the students are included as an employee that is trained in WHIMIS, First Aid, Foodsafe and Worksafe BC's safe work practices make these students well equipped to take on the challenges of working hard and meeting the employers needs and expectations. Students of all ages and levels are excelling in landscaping, housekeeping, custodial, and light duty cleaning with a focus on proper disinfecting practises in public spaces.

Inclusive employers and managers are those that focus on a person's ability, set the student up for success, face challenges and offer solutions quickly and effectively. The benefits are huge; employee turnover rate lowers, it promotes a positive workplace culture, innovation and profit increases as well as public favorability. By showing the importance of diversity in the workplace

make these employers leaders in educating the public toward a greater acceptance of those with diverse abilities. Students will have the on the job training and can therefore be hired on as paid employees after their work experience if applicable. Regardless of the person's developmental disability each member is willing to work, whole and perfect as we all have abilities to contribute to the workforce and a stronger economy. As a Work Study Assistant, I know that employers are always actively searching for hard working and reliable employees. The College offers up students with this willingness to work, learn and build on their skills. Employers such as Island Inspire Contracting, The Peak Landscaping, Pinnacle Landscaping, Jody's Services, Echo Village at Heritage Place, Ty Watson House, The Dock Food Hub, Canadian Seafood Processing, Effingham Oyster, Fluer's Smokery, Lighthouse Church, Jericho Road, Nexcar, Arbutus RV, BCSPCA, Azalea Flowers are so special to our community.

Please support these businesses as they are contributing to building bigger brighter futures for all members of our community. Inclusion, citizenship and work opportunities should be available to everyone if they are willing to participate, we all have abilities to contribute and that's what makes communities like Port Alberni strong and the warmest place to live, not just in temperature but in the hearts of the employers and community members. □



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THE — ROD & GUN — IN PARKSVILLE

BY GLEN A. MOFFORD



The legendary Rod & Gun Pub in Parksville is a survivor. The establishment celebrates its one hundred and twenty-sixth year in 2021 since opening at 163 Alberni Highway in Parksville in the summer of 1895. While no longer a hotel, the Rod & Gun does offer up a tantalizing selection of excellent pub food and an even larger selection of beers, wines and other drinks that also include non-alcoholic beverages. Live music has been temporarily suspended due to Covid19 regulations, but there is still much to do and see in the pub.

John Hirst of Nanaimo purchased 300 acres of land in the area in 1873. He died in 1882 and his six sons inherited even portions of the land through their fathers will. John Hirst, Jr., arrived in Parksville (then known as McBride) in 1886 on the recently completed road from Nanaimo to develop his property where he built a store and the first hotel that he named the Sea View Hotel. It burned down

in 1894, and undaunted Hirst built the present Rod & Gun hotel on land purchased from Nelson Parks.

Sadly in 1897, John Hirst, Jr., died and his resourceful and amazing widow, Ann Hirst, ran the hotel as well as the post office while head of the household looking after her five children. Ann managed to juggle the businesses and home life quite successfully until 1919 when she sold the Rod & Gun Hotel to the Cook family. Ann would continue in her occupation as Postmistress of Parksville until she retired in 1948 at the age of 83!

In 1910, important changes came to the neighbourhood. The Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway (E&N) opened up an extension from their main line on Vancouver Island near the new Alberni highway west to Port Alberni and Great Central Lake. The advent of the automobile began to make an impact on the landscape as the “auto courts” began



to appear and highways were being built and improved. Parksville-Qualicum Beach were discovered by these new day-trippers as a perfect vacation area with its fine beaches and pleasant surroundings. The Rod & Gun hotel benefited from this influx of tourists, especially in the summer months resulting in the business expanding and the owner able to afford to make improvements and modernize her hotel.

In 1925 the owners of the Rod and Gun applied for a beer parlour license. It was granted and some modification inside the hotel were completed in order to comply with liquor regulations. Today that room has 160 seats, a games room and a massive bar. One can see the original safe used by the hotel on display near the Keno machine.

A visit to the Rod & Gun, perhaps for lunch, will give the new visitor a treat and the seasoned regular a port in the storm. There is some satisfaction in knowing that you are eating and drinking in a historic building with deep roots in the community. Enjoy. □

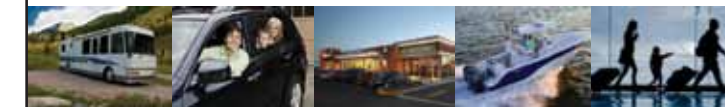


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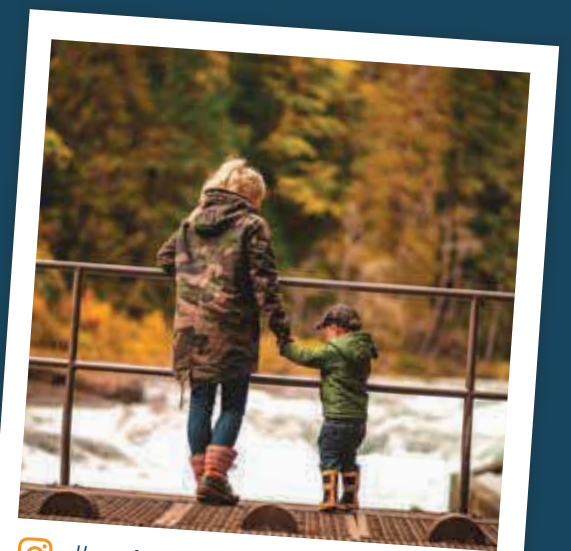
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The Place to be on the Island

Port Alberni has become a hot spot on Vancouver Island; the community is expanding as more and more people recognize the amazing lifestyle that the Valley has to offer. Surrounded by mountains covered in old growth trees, a spectacular inlet, creeks, rivers, and of course Sproat Lake, not to mention the amazingly kind people of the community, it is the place to be. "Locals have always known what Port Alberni has to offer" according to local realtor Dave Koszegi.

Centrally located in the heart of the Island, Port Alberni is within a two hour radius of Tofino, Campbell River, and Duncan, while being less than three hours to Victoria. This makes PA the hub city to many places on the island and the perfect place for families to put down roots while still being able to go on any adventure they want. While the locals, who have lived in the Valley all or most of their lives, have become comfortable in staying put at home, newcomers have recognized that the Valley isn't as remote as originally considered. Travelling in and out of the Valley is a beautiful drive, regardless of the direction you're going, and the ability to pull over and explore is an exciting prospect.

Port Alberni for many years has been considered a mill town, with many of the original loggers and mill workers now enjoying their retirement. Now, more families are moving to the Valley because new industries and small businesses have decided that Port Alberni is the place to be. The cost of living is considerably cheaper than on the Mainland, and throughout the rest of the Island, allowing families to actually enjoy being a family and living the Port Alberni lifestyle that we all know and love. Our Neighbourhood Welcome Area Coordinator Megan Warrender says, "The

new people moving to our community isn't slowing down anytime soon, there are people from all over Canada finding our community. The island, mainly Port Alberni, seems to be a popular place for the mainlanders to relocate too." Who can blame them? With every local facility you need; a hospital, fire department, pool, museum, new highschool, and the list goes on. For a small town, Port Alberni has it all in one place.

Living in a small town is a refreshing breath of fresh air; having conversations with strangers, small businesses going out of their way to help, and living on the infamous "Island time", means that people can finally pause and create the life that they have always dreamed of. There's nothing better than heading out to Sproat Lake on a hot afternoon for a quick dip to cool off, or walking into a local store to be greeted by name before asking how the family is. It's an environment that people are seeking out, especially given the state of the world. What's unique about Port Alberni is that the moment you move into the community, you are a part of the community, forever. Dave Koszegi, on many occasions has had new residents tell him this community "is a lovely place with friendly people". The community is always happy to welcome newcomers and make them feel connected. Friendly faces can be seen all around town as it truly is the community with a heart.

Welcome to Port Alberni if you're new. Be sure you reach out to the Neighbourhood Welcome Program and get yourself linked into all the amazing people and places the community has to offer. We are incredibly excited for you to be apart of this community and we hope you love it here as much as we do! ☐

Photo credit: Sharlene Patterson

A vibrant photograph of a forest stream. The water flows over numerous large, rounded rocks covered in bright green moss. In the background, a small waterfall cascades over a rocky ledge. The surrounding forest is dense with tall trees and lush green ferns, creating a rich, natural setting.

Exploring Alberni Valley by Trail

Front-country and back-country routes abound, just be sure you know what you're getting into

by Mike Youds

Staying closer to home over the past year has led a lot of Port Alberni residents down different paths to outdoor recreation, revisiting and rediscovering the valley on foot.

They started with a built-in advantage in a region well known for outdoor recreation. Central Vancouver Island holds its own with a diverse range of parks, trails and backcountry access routes, some of which lie just off Pacific Rim Hwy. 4, the well-trodden path to the Island's west coast.

Suddenly, with everyone in the grip of a pandemic, the quiet and often overlooked trails of Alberni Valley held special allure.

"I agree there has been a tremendous increase in trail usage over the past year, and I expect this interest will continue even after the COVID crisis is over," said Judy Carlson of Alberni Valley Outdoor Club. Carlson also agrees local trails are an undervalued amenity, "All the more reason to hope that local governments might recognize the need to have more areas protected locally."

Local outdoors columnist Sandy McRuer has also noticed the trend.

"It's a bit of a function of the kind of person who lives here," McRuer said. "I think, given that a lot of people are stuck at home, a lot are realizing what kind of recreational opportunities they have."

No one seems to know for sure how many trails exist in the valley; more than likely there are too many to count. And most are maintained year-round at no cost to taxpayers, making them all the more remarkable.

Alberni-Clayoquot residents rank outdoor recreation as important in their lives, so it stands to reason that formal and informal trails abound. There are broad and well-maintained trails, some suited to mixed use as cycling or off-road vehicle routes. There are lesser known social trails, boot paths, way trails and scramble paths, historic routes and abandoned, overgrown ones. Some networks are clearly marked while others are obscure, inviting exploration by the more adventurous and confusion for anyone unfamiliar with the area.

This "valley of trails" may be overlooked by travellers but it's not taken for granted. Within Port Alberni, a network of well-maintained cycling/walking trails connects with neighbourhoods, threading through watersheds, traversing ridges and ravines, accessible at multiple

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locations (most with limited parking). For directions, visit www.portalberni.ca/trail-information.

The city is planning for improved trail connectivity, including a proposed Quay-to-Quay multi-use pathway linking both sides of the city and tying into the extensive Roger Creek Trail system in the city's eastern uplands with the Scott Kenny Trail. Improvements along the creek would include habitat enhancement for coho salmon. Improved trail signage and route finding are also in the works.

Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) is completing a baseline review of its own system of parks and trails, which for the most part has remained unchanged for decades. Strategic plans have pointed to opportunities for expanding the system with the intention of building a more cohesive and comprehensive approach.

"We're taking a good, detailed look at what assets are in the parks and what condition they are in," said Michael McGregor, who recently joined Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District as land and resources co-ordinator.

Mt. Arrowsmith Regional Park, Alberni Inlet Trail, China Creek Regional Park and the Log Trail Trail are overseen by the district in addition to community parks and passive parks within the region. A new regional park will form part of the West Coast Multi-Use Trail, approaching completion on the west coast, the first addition to regional parks and trails in more 30 years.

At the same time, ACRD is lobbying for increased access to areas such as Mt. Arrowsmith, often limited through gated roads on private forest lands, McGregor said.

Gated roads remain a bone of contention. Valley residents grew accustomed to unrestricted backcountry access years ago when one company held much of the surrounding forest tenure and upheld a policy of keeping gates open.

As ownership changed, so did activities on the land. Outdoor recreation grew in popularity, hand in hand with tourism growth on Vancouver Island's west coast, drawing more people into the backcountry. More gates went up and public frustration increased. Efforts to regain access, including a rally, roundtable consultation and a report to the forests minister, seemed to have no effect.

Finally, in March, Mosaic Forest Management and ACRD agreed to work collaboratively to examine ways of improving forest access. A working group set up for

that purpose is starting a pilot project this year, allowing access on a trial basis to Scout Beach and Lowry Lake, two provincially managed recreation sites.

A vast array of alpine routes can be found beyond those gates. For anyone willing to park and hike, "the world's your oyster," McRuer says.

Many routes in the valley are maintained by volunteers. The degree of dedication, keeping trails open year-round, clearing winter windfalls, reflects an outdoors-oriented culture that has fostered a sense of stewardship over the years.

"We have great scenery and dedicated trail builders, who make them for hiking, biking and horse riding," Carlson said. "Many people also assist in keeping the trails clear by picking up branches or pruning back encroaching bushes."

"Definitely, without a doubt," McGregor attested. "The investment by volunteers is incredible. We do really rely on volunteer maintenance."

He encourages anyone interested in helping with trail maintenance to contact him.

"Giving recognition to the volunteers is really important because they are the ones who drive the parks here," McGregor said. "Now, they're 60 to 70-year-old people and retiring from it, aging out. We could use more for sure."

As spring approached, they were busier than usual around the city this year, brushing trails and posting new signs for locals and visitors alike.

"I love exploring the new trails and the old ones," Carlson said. "But 'exploring' is the operative word here and everyone should keep that in mind when they are on these trails. Many of them have not been fully mapped, and some are not on maps at all. Signage is minimal, and it is pretty much all handmade, from the carefully routed wooden signs to others just written on Coroplast. However, most of the junctions do not have any signs, so hikers always need to be mindful of where they are going." □



Photo credit: Mike Youds

“We, the Hupačasath people, are culturally grounded. We are respectful of ourselves, other people and the world around us.

We are committed to protecting our territory by honouring our past and living for our future. We work together to inclusively support each member and others.

We seek to be a community that practices strength-based and action-oriented planning to continue to accomplish our dreams.”



“We, the Hupačasath, are a sovereign Indigenous Nation. We are affiliated with/related to all other Nuu-chah-nulth nations. For time immemorial, Hupačasath has used, occupied, and explored beyond our territory. Our traditions are based firmly on the land of our ancestors. Our governance system is based on oral history that was passed down to us by previous generations.”

The Hupačasath First Nations is the amalgamation of three distinct tribes; the Muh-uulth-aht, the Kleh-koot-aht, and the Cuu-ma-as-aht (Ahahswinis). Collectively they named themselves Hupačasath which means “houses on poles” or “people residing above the water.”

Now, the Hupačasath Nation consists of five Indian Act Reservations called Ahahswinis, Klehkoot, Cous, Chu-ca-ca-cook, and Nettle Island. Their traditional territories cover some 229,000 hectares including the mountain peaks surrounding the Alberni Valley, spanning west from 5040 peak, north from Mt Chief Frank, south from Hannah Mountain and Mount Spenser, and east from Mt. Arrowsmith.

The Hupačasath First Nations have worked together with community members, to focus on the vision of the Hupačasath people in the community. This process’s focus was to aid in a community to plan for all aspects of their future. Throughout the planning process, community members have had the opportunity to

come together to voice their opinions, while identifying dreams and concerns. This process is a holistic process designed to define their wants and needs, working together to build the future that they wish to see.

Building a vision was the first step.

By focusing on the vision statement of the Hupačasath people, they have been able to move forward as an active nation within the community of Port Alberni.



hupačasath First Nation

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The logging and forestry industry has been an integral part of Port Alberni's for over 160 years, since Capt. Edward Stamp saw the potential in the Valley's lush forests, and put Port Alberni on the map for this industry. Although it has been many years since the mill operated in our community, its history is present throughout the Valley. The Somass Mill Site is just one of many mills that have operated in Port Alberni, and although it has been closed for many years, it has stirred up interest throughout the community.

Recently, the Somass Mill Site has been purchased by the City of Port Alberni, but prior to that, it was a busy mill that employed thousands, and placed Port Alberni as one of the highest per capita incomes in Canada.

The Somass Mill was built in 1934 by Bloedel Stewart & Welch, it was the largest mill in the British Empire. At the same time, the Franklin River logging camp was established six miles south of Port Alberni. Franklin River had two camps that housed loggers and their families, and was one of the largest in Canada. In 1947 they added a pulp mill, which was one of the first integrated saw-pulp operations in North America, producing softwood lumber, market pulp, and packaging. In 1951 Macmillan Bloedel bought the Somass Mill and by the time the 1960's rolled around Port Alberni was one of the largest, most diversified and lowest cost sites for wood processing in British Columbia. The forestry and logging industry took a hit in the late 1980's and early 1990's and the Somass Mill A closed in 1991. Since then, it has continued to decline before Western Forest Products had to close its doors in 2017.

The City of Port Alberni purchased five parcels of former industrial lands, the most significant of which is the 43-acre site of the former Somass Division Sawmill in August 2021 for \$5.3 million. Mayor Minions stated she has had her sights set on this location ever since she became a member of Council, envisioning the site to have a mix of

Port Alberni Waterfront

Has Always Been An Important Part of Our Local Economy



uses; residential homes, commercial space for businesses, and especially public access to waterfront complete with a pathway connecting Harbour Quay to Victoria Quay [The Connect the Quays Pathway is presently at the Public Engagement Stage. Visit letsconnectpa.ca/connect-the-quays to learn more and share your thoughts]. Port Alberni was built around logging, which has meant that although it is a waterfront community, access to the waterfront has been limited as the inlet and rivers have primarily been used to transport goods. The Somass Sawmill site offers the perfect location, in the heart of the community, for a beautiful public space that everyone can enjoy.

Since the decline of the logging industry, Port Alberni has had to pivot the economy; no longer being fueled by that industry, the city and its residents have had to devise new ways to boost and grow the local economy. This was a very thorough and intentional purchase done by the City, Mayor Minions states that it's time for them to "intentionally create the future of the community". The City is working with the Tseshah

and Hupacasath First Nations to create joint opportunities. They also have plans to include parts from the original structure to create art pieces throughout the community.

Already the City is seeing interest from businesses looking to set up on the new waterfront property. Mayor Minions believes it is incredibly important to meet the needs of local businesses within the space. Remediation can take anywhere from 18-24 months, and during that time they will be working on the redevelopment of the space alongside remediation. While the

purchase of the Somass Mill site seems like a huge amount of money, the City and Mayor are confident that they will earn back the investment and continue to stimulate the economy with this project.

As we look forward to the future of Port Alberni and this new waterfront development, we can watch with anticipation as to what the future will hold for our waterfront. □



“Why Sort N Go?”

While many of us were busy soaking up the remaining days of summer in late August, before the hectic life of work, school, and play started up again in September, the City of Port Alberni and the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) were pounding the pavement with special deliveries.

In the heat of August, crews were dropping off over 13,000 new curbside collection carts to single-family homes as



part of a progressive three-stream pickup service that's setting a new standard for waste diversion in the region. Along with the introduction of a third cart for organics comes a wider initiative to transition to an auto-cart system for all three waste streams, including recycling and waste.

It's been non-stop action behind the scenes, leading up to the September 13th launch but the hard work is paying off as new green organics carts can now be spotted along city curbs.

Unsure about how to sort an item?

Use the Sort'nGo ACRD app available for Android and iPhones to:

- Search an item and see where it goes
- Access collection schedules
- Set collection alerts
- Play a sorting game!

A desktop version is available on letsconnectacr.ca/organics

Questions? Call the Sort'nGo hotline: 250-736-7678 (SORT)

Why Sort'nGo?

In the busy days of launching a significant project like this, the reason WHY this is happening can be forgotten but shouldn't be overlooked.

In the ACRD, food waste has contributed to 30-50 % of garbage sent to the landfill and uses up a lot of precious landfill space, which is finite. As well, organic waste is unable to decompose properly in this space, which means it creates methane; a powerful greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming and other harmful environmental issues.

But not anymore. Residents are now actively helping divert organics waste into nutrient-rich compost, while also extending the life of the landfill, decreasing greenhouse gasses and avoiding pricey gas-capture systems that could be required without the service.

How Collection Works

The automated City trucks have always had a split compartment, which means they can pick up two streams in one vehicle and are now being fully utilized with the new service. (They just look new with their Sort'nGo decals!) For these trucks to do their job, new blue and green uniform carts were needed and the size of the carts chosen for the program was based on waste audits conducted within the community.

The ACRD and the City of Port Alberni understand that the new size will require some adaption for many. As the program moves forward, there will be continued discussions with the community and the program will be monitored as it gets rolling to determine if further cart options could be suitable.

Using the New Green Carts

Residents can literally “scape the plate” into their green cart. All household food waste is accepted, including meat, bones, fats, oils, dairy, grease,

dairy, and bread. Kleenex, paper towel and greasy pizza boxes are also accepted as well as garden and yard waste such as grass clippings, leaves, and small branches (2 inches in diameter and 2 feet in length).

Not to be included in the green carts is pet feces or invasive weed species (Japanese knotweed, broom, ivy, blackberries). These should remain in the garbage or be sent to landfill.

Residents are also being asked to avoid plastic bags – even those labelled biodegradable or compostable – for lining organics carts. The reason is due to a lack of regulation around compostable labels, which means they won't necessarily break down completely. To avoid contamination line green carts with paper bags, newspaper, cardboard or cereal boxes.

For those with space limitations, the new carts can be left outside and come with wheels for easier transport, and lids to protect against inclement weather. The green carts are also equipped with certified bear-resistant lid locking mechanisms.

The Collective Reward

One of the most exciting aspects of this new program is the final product: compost! While backyard composting is still encouraged, some food waste is unsuitable for home systems and can now be included in curbside pickup. Garden and yard waste like branches will also be accepted.

The organics material collected by the City will be composted at the local facility Earth, Land & Sea, and a portion of the finished product will be made available to the community for parks, community gardens and green spaces. □





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GUESS WHERE I AM? Exploring the Alberni Valley



1

Photo credit: Sharlene Patterson



2

Photo credit: #adventureportalberni



3

Photo credit: Chris Pouget



4

Photo credit: Chris Pouget



5

Photo credit: Jane Roth



6

Photo credit: Corinne Schmitz

The Story of the Christmas Kettle



We see them every year around the holidays, Salvation Army Volunteers ringing bells and collecting donations for their community, the Christmas Kettle Campaign is a long standing tradition to raise funds for those in need. The campaign began in 1891 when Captain Joseph McFee wanted to help the vulnerable in San Francisco, especially during the Christmas season. The idea came from his time in Liverpool, England where he witnessed passengers on the boats throwing coins into a large kettle to help the poor. Captain McFee placed a similar kettle at Oakland Ferry Landing and encouraged people to “Keep the pot boiling”. He raised enough money to host a Christmas dinner for the poor and the Christmas Kettle Campaign took off.

The Christmas Kettle officially came to Canada in 1903 in Toronto. Since then, the Salvation Army

and it’s volunteers hit the streets in over 2,000 locations every year to collect donations that help provide direct, compassionate, and hands-on service to 1.9 million Canadians. While the Christmas Kettle Campaign happens all over the world each year, each individual Salvation Army utilizes the donations to help support their community members. The Salvation Army focuses on restoring hope and dignity to those who might otherwise remain invisible in society.



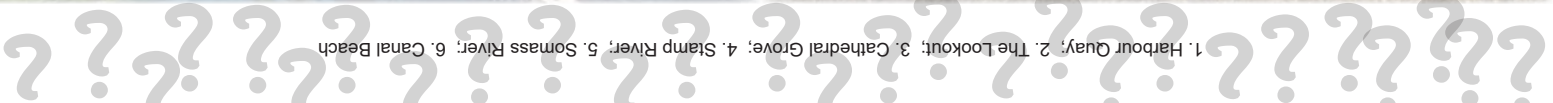
The Christmas Kettle Campaign is set to begin in November. Donations can be made in person with your local Kettle volunteers, or online at fillthekettle.com, a fast and secure site that makes donating easy. If you would like to volunteer, contact your local Salvation Army today!

Alberni Valley Corps

4835 Argyle St.
Port Alberni BC V9Y 1V9

Tel: (250)723-6913
albernivalley.ca

“For more information on ways to volunteer please contact us directly.”



Fun Fall Craft

Leaves and mason jars, you can't go wrong with that combination for your Autumn decorations. This is a super simple, cost effective, and fun craft for all ages. It'll get everyone outside searching for the best leaves. This is the perfect way to bring in those warm colours of Fall.

What you'll need: Leaves (we used real, but you could use fake), Mod Podge, Mason jars, Sponge brushes.

First, head outside and collect your leaves. Look for a range of colours, sizes, and shapes. We found that if the leaves are too dry or too fresh they won't stick as well. We pressed our leaves in a book for a day.

Now for the fun part. Cover your mason jar with a thin layer of Mod Podge and wait for it to get a little tacky (use your fingers to check), once it's tacky you can start applying your leaves. Use your fingers and sponge brush to press the leaves down from the middle out. Once you've laid them on how you like, apply another thin layer of Mod Podge over everything, sealing the leaves in. You might need to play around with your leaves here, as some might

not want to stick. Be patient and enjoy getting a little messy.

Let dry for a couple hours or overnight. You can take it a step further by adding a string or bow around the top of the mason jar. Then put your candle in, light it, and enjoy the beautiful Autumn colours reflecting through the leaves! □



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STAY IN THE KNOW WITH SORT'NGO!



In September 2021, the ACRD launched a new Organics Collection Program in the City of Port Alberni, to help residents redirect food and yard waste into compost and away from the landfill.

Now that we're actively composting, here are six things you may not know about what can and can't be added to your green cart for curbside collection.



FOOD ITEMS

Food scraps, including Halloween pumpkins, meat, bones, dairy and greases can be included



YARD WASTE

Yard and garden waste, including grass, fallen leaves, and branches can be included (max length for branches in cart is 24" (2 ft) with a 2" diameter)



PAPER PLATES

Soiled papers, like greasy pizza boxes and used paper plates can be included



INVASIVE WEEDS

Invasives such as Knotweeds, Purple Loosestrife, Yellow Flag Iris and blackberry bushes should go in your waste cart or to the landfill



COMPOSTABLE PLASTICS

Even if labelled compostable, these should be disposed of in the garbage or landfill



PRODUCE STICKERS

Please remove plastic stickers from produce before transferring to your green organics cart. These stickers should go in your garbage cart



QUESTIONS ABOUT OTHER MATERIALS?

Get help sorting items for collection, find schedules and set-up collection alerts with the **Sort'nGo ACRD** app, available for iPhone and Android.

