Cooper Wilson, Danny Bellis, Jim Stafford, Lynn Hughan, Tysen Husband, Nick Reinhardt and Scott Hornidge in the forest. See the story ABOUT SEEING: the land, page 14.
Iljuuwass, Reynold Russ
1930 – 2011

Iljuuwass, Chief of Old Massett was born in 1930 at K’iis Gwaay, Langara Island and passed away, Sunday, November 13, 2011. Iljuuwass took his chieftainship in 1984, following Gaalaa, Oliver Adams.

Iljuuwass was survived by wife, June (nee Williams); daughters, Sheila and Marlene; sons, Marshall, Mitchell, Ron, Chris, Dwight, Irvin and Craig; and adopted daughters, (Dosie) Hans and Nancy Wilson. He is predeceased by sons, Herb and Clayton.

Taan Forest Now FSC Certified

Taan Forest now has Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for all of its forestry and harvesting operations on Haida Gwaii.

FSC certification assures customers that Taan Forest products come from sustainably managed sources.

The areas covered under this certification include Tree Farm License 60, and the Haida Woodlands Tenure on Moresby and Graham Islands, representing a total area of 358,100 hectares with an annual harvest of 52,000m3.

“Change starts with us and the way we approach forestry,” said Gunjiaro, President of the Haida Nation. “We know that we can maintain our culture, respect nature, and still derive a livelihood from the forests.”

Bob Brash, President of Taan Forest, said that the company is on the leading edge of sustainable harvesting and forestry practices and these practices meet the stringent objectives of the Haida Gwaii Strategic Land Use Agreement.

“This FSC Certification is a big step forward for [the company]. We can now leverage some of the world’s best tree growing lands and wood products together with FSC certification to provide our customers with the assurance that their products come from sustainably managed sources,” said Brash.

Taan Forest achieved FSC certification in just 11 months, and Krista West, Forest Management Coordinator at the Rainforest Alliance Program, said this shows the forestry and harvesting operations on Haida Gwaii.

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The annual House of Assembly, held in Skidegate this year, reflected the state and attitude of the Nation in 2011. There was continued support from citizens to move forward on the Nation’s path, but not without close scrutiny of how that is being done and a thorough discussion of how to do things better. And of course, as at any House of Assembly, there was an expectation of concise answers to tough questions put to CHN reps and the reps of HaiCo’s fledgling businesses.

The four days of meetings began with Guujaaw, President of the Haida Nation, reporting on the activities of the Council of the Haida Nation’s Executive. The President spoke of the political changes that have occurred over the last 30 years and said that although the route the Nation has taken—one of protecting and maintaining the culture—has meant sacrifices for many people, he believes the Nation made the right choice. Guujaaw met with Clarence Louie of the Osoyoos people recently. The Osoyoos people have been very successful economically with more than ten Band-owned businesses, including a golf course, a winery and a daycare. But Mr Louie said that even with their flourishing economy, they are now faced with the very difficult challenge of recovering their culture.

With the CHN’s economic strategy in full play, which includes the recent acquisition of Tlell River House, West Coast Fishing Resorts and the future sale of carbon credits, Guujaaw says that the Nation is moving toward an economic independence that “we have not seen for 100 years.”

“It is the positive outcome of this economic initiative,” said Guujaaw, “that will ensure good levels of service in health and educational opportunities to give our people a better life.” “It will also bring the Nation into a stronger position,” he said. “This is not imaginary but real.”

In attendance this year was HaiCo, represented by Board Chair, Dr Roslyn Kunin, and Board member, Reg Davidson. Dr Kunin presented a Draft Strategic Plan 2011-2016 outlining HaiCo’s principles and values, and how HaiCo will measure their performance.

The Strategic Plan also details what the board would like to accomplish between now and 2016. Included in the 25 succinct goals are succession planning and mentorship at all levels of HaiCo and the subsidiary businesses; wide recognition of, and respect for, the culture. 
2011 HoA - from page 5

for the quality of HaiCo’s products; and the generation of significant profits for the businesses and Haida treasury. The plan was adopted in-principle with the exception of a chart showing the CHN/HaiCo governance and operating structure. The chart will be redrawn to reflect the structure adopted previously by the House.

HaiCo also tabled for examination the Letter of Expectations. This foundation document describes the working relationship between the CHN and the Nation’s business arm, HaiCo. The letter spells out the CHN’s strategic involvement, its governmental role, the accountability of the corporation, the corporation’s reporting procedures, and the ways in which the CHN will support the corporation. The Letter of Expectations was adopted by the House.

Members of the public were expecting to see the Managing Director of HaiCo and the President of Taan Forest in the House to field questions from the floor, but in their stead, Board Chair, Dr Kunin, and Director, Mr Davidson, responded to detailed questions as they could. A resolution was passed, requesting the presence of the Managing Director of HaiCo and the President of Taan Forest at the 2012 House of Assembly.

On many people’s minds were what plans HaiCo has to mentor, train and hire citizens for positions within HaiCo and its subsidiaries, such as Taan Forest and West Coast Resorts. Subsequent to that discussion, HaiCo was asked to provide a human resources strategy that spells out the types of jobs the corporation sees having to fill in the future, and the schooling and skill-sets required for those positions. A human resources strategy would be of benefit to both Band Councils when allocating funding for their post-secondary school education programs. Also part of this discussion was an exploration of ways to move Haidas into management positions of the HaiCo businesses.

The HaiCo Board receives no compensation and is made up of Dr. Roslyn Kunin and Directors Reg Davidson, Kelly Russ, and Bill Dumont. There is one seat vacant with the resignation of Patrick McGuire. See page 3 for HaiCo CEO update.

Taan Forest

The big news from Taan Forest is the the 2-year negotiation and purchase of TFL 60 from Western Forest Products for approximately $12 million. WFP acquired the license in 2006 from Brascan. The purchase gives Taan access to about 136,000 hectares of forestland. Taan’s target this year is to log 220-250,000 cubic metres.

The logging of that land is regulated by the Haida Gwaii Strategic Land Use Agreement, which sets out rules that also protect Haida values in the forest.

“The new management regime will balance ecological, cultural, and social matters while ensuring long term success of the business,” said Guujaaw.

There are about 120 people working for contractors on-Island, and of those, 41% are Haida.

Since the HoA, Taan Forest has received Forest Stewardship Certification on all its holdings – see page 3 for the update.

West Coast Resorts

HaiCo now owns West Coast Resorts and this year the company provided a report to the House of Assembly. WCR was started in 1995 and today is the largest destination sportfishing-lodge business in BC.

The two lodges that operate out of Englefield Bay and Hippie Island during the fishing season will be wintering this year in Alliford Bay. Upon startup to next year’s season, the report said, the lodges will be prepared for the season using as many products and services available from on-Island suppliers as possible.

During the winter, WCR has 4 staff located at the floating facilities and 16 at head office in Richmond. The number of employees working all five lodges grows to about 122 during the fishing season. The company says that bookings for 2012 are strong and they expect the Sandspit Inn, also a property of WCR, to experience an increase in traffic.

ENERGY COMMITTEE

Chair of the Energy Committee, John Yeltzusie, said that the National Research Council project, which is looking at the Islands’ energy needs, is on track. Phase 1, which looks at fossil-fuel free options for the northern electrical grid, is near completion.
The now-retired Justice Douglas Lambert was invited by the Council of the Haida Nation to speak at the 2011 House of Assembly. His wide-ranging and detailed speech touched on the beginnings of aboriginal law, the conceptual shift from which today’s law has evolved, and the contemporary interpretation of that law – specifically in relation to the Haida title case. In Canada, Section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982 protects existing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, and, since 1982, the process of reconciling the rights of First Nations with Canada has gone to court countless times.

In 1978, Justice Lambert was appointed to the BC Court of Appeal. There, he wrote over 2,000 decisions, which included the Meares Island case in 1986, the Sparrow, Van Der Peet, and Delgamuukw cases, and the Haida Nation’s 2002 TFL 39 case. He retired from the bench in 2005, and since then has specialized in aboriginal law; he also worked with the Council of the Haida Nation’s Legal Team. Justice Lambert began practicing law in 1959 and his storied career has left a legacy of legal decisions that has seen advances in aboriginal law – decisions that favour Aboriginal people. While sitting on the BC Court of Appeal, Justice Lambert ruled in favour of the Haida Nation in the Weyherhaeuser Case.

Justice Lambert began his presentation to the HoA by speaking about the European world-view pre-1585. At that time it was assumed that anyone could row ashore in a “new” land, plant a flag, and claim the territory, disregarding the people who already occupied the land. But that way of thinking was changed in 1585 by Grotius, a Dutch lawyer who argued that anyone who could come into a territory, either by military conquest or occupation of the land in any other way, had no effect on people who were originally there, on their land ownership system, on their laws and customs – those things, he maintained, remain the same.

That conceptual shift established the root of aboriginal law. But it took almost 200 years for the idea to take hold: it was written into the Royal Proclamation of 1763. Since then, the development and interpretation of aboriginal law have been argued by lawyers, and built-up by court decisions. Courts are supposed to reflect community values, Justice Lambert said. Unfortunately, if a community has a strong bias or prejudice, then these values also influence court decisions.

Justice Lambert said that if we reflected on how people were thinking about aboriginal law 100 years ago, then those insights could bring us to a better understanding of how we got into the current predicament and interpretation of what aboriginal law is today.

It has been about five hundred years since the European concept of aboriginal rights and title was conceived. That is a long time, and things change, but there is still resistance on the part of the Crown to recognize the concepts of aboriginal title, which were accepted in 1846. That is the date when Crown Sovereignty began in British Columbia and, as a consequence, the date when the nature, scope and content of aboriginal title crystallized in British Columbia.

Today, the Crown still argues that Aboriginal Title resides only in the village sites. Lambert sees this interpretation of the law as a strategy to try and cut down the scope of what aboriginal title is and all that it can encompass. He said that this argument does not reflect, in his opinion, the current state of the law, nor where Aboriginal Title comes from, nor how it is evolving. With 50 years of legal experience in arguing cases and judging them, Justice Lambert, in effect said that the Crown’s approach has little to do with upholding the ‘Honor of the Crown’ and, in fact, is an impoverished view of the law.

Justice Lambert received a standing ovation from the House prior to, and following, his talk.
Giving Things Due Consideration or Being There to Resolve Issues

During any four of the House of Assembly was to determine the resolutions put forward for consideration by the House. This open process of considering resolutions, some of which will direct the CHN’s next year of work, is interesting, often lively, and, at times, heated. Debate ranges far and wide and calls on the knowledge, experience and skills of citizens to give fair consideration to each resolution.

This year, 18 resolutions were put on the floor. Of those, two were tabled, as in one instance, the mover of the resolution was not present to speak to it, and in the second instance, the resolution was not seconded. Three resolutions were referred to the Policy Committee—two for possible constitutional amendments, and one to develop policy—two resolutions were defeated and the remaining 11 were passed.

What citizens expect of HaiCo produced a full list of the resolutions is available at CHN office.

The Language of Love

A small group of language lovers gathered the evening of Thursday, October 20th, at the Haida Gwaii Museum, to close That Which Makes Us Haida, an exhibition of photographs by Farah Nosheh documenting many of the Nation’s fluent Haida speakers.

Museum Director, Nathalie Macfarlane, opened the evening with an overview of the exhibition and acknowledged the speakers who participated in the exhibition and book. Co-curator Jessup Amando Bedard expressed thanks to the speakers for the inspiration she received from them while working on the projects.

Ms Bedard travelled from Gwaii with singers Carole Cartt, Savannah Pelletier, Tiffany Vanderhoop, and VernWilliams Jr, who were supported by young Brian Vanderhoop and Nora-Jane Edenshaw. Together, they closed the exhibition with four songs – the final being I Love Haida Gwaii, composed by Mr Williams.

Although the exhibition is closing on Haida Gwaii, Ms Macfarlane said there are plans for the show to travel to other institutions in Canada.

A Richness of Place

SHIP unveils Gwaii Haanas maps with Haida place names

A number of people spoke about the importance of the project and acknowledged not only the importance of the maps but the vast amount of work required to collect and document the words and phrases. “The richness of those names,” said Guujaaw, President of the Haida Nation, “enhance that beautiful place.”

The maps are available for viewing at the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program.

Coastal First Nations

Keystone XL Decision Shows Risk of Tar Sands Project

The Coastal First Nations, an alliance of 10 First Nations, are reaffirming their opposition to the Enbridge Gateway pipeline in the wake of last week’s announcement that the Keystone XL pipeline will be delayed, says CFN executive director Art Sterritt. Sterritt says CFN, which represents 20,000 members and whose traditional territory extends from the Alaskan border to Rivers Inlet, says the delay in the Keystone project reafirms their reasons for opposing Enbridge’s proposed Gateway pipeline.

“The U.S. government is concerned about the level of risk posed by crude oil pipelines on water sources necessary for sustenance and agriculture, and we oppose [the proposed] Gateway [project] for the same reasons.”

“We will do everything in our power to protect our coast from Enbridge’s risky pipeline and tanker proposal. It’s a future Coastal First Nations cannot imagine. It’s a future we won’t allow to become a reality,” says Sterritt.

Last year, the Coastal First Nations issued a declaration banning tankers from carrying tar sands oil through First Nations’ traditional lands and waters – a ban they have vowed to defend “by whatever means necessary”. “Our people are fishing people,” Sterritt added, “We thrive, despite high unemployment, because we have access to traditional foods like wild salmon, halibut and shellfish. Why would we allow a pipeline that would destroy our most important food source?”

The Coastal First Nations are joined by the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the Nuxalk Council, the Nakwaktoxw Council and 60 other Indigenous Nations extending along the Fraser River watershed who have formally banned the proposed Enbridge Gateway pipeline.

DID YOU KNOW?

On October 1, 2011, using two-way communications technology such as cell phones, humans gathered 65 exabytes of information through telecommunications — the equivalent of every person in the world communicating the contents of six newspapers every day.

Science Daily, Feb. 11, 2011

Science and Society
Collaborating Kids
Old pole and young spirits create new energy

by Valine Crist

A nyone who was lucky enough to see the Raven pole while it was standing in Jasper, Alberta, saw that the pole stood proudly and with presence — but it also carried the wear and tear of over a century’s exposure to the elements.

The fragile pole arrived back in Old Massett on June 21, 2010 and, since then, the Old Massett Economic Development Office has been working with funders and stakeholders to ensure that the pole is protected from weather and taken care of.

At an interesting turn of events, the Raven pole has energized a project that defines community development in a whole new way.

The process began with the idea of building a modest structure next to the fire hall on Raven Avenue, to house and protect the pole. Parks Canada agreed to provide financial support for this start, but, soon after, Patricia Moore, Economic Development Planner and recent graduate of the Project Management Certificate Program at Royal Roads University, started thinking about and dreaming of ways to expand the project and collaborate with local groups to turn this beginning into something more.

“We needed something functional that would house the Raven pole, but we also wanted to incorporate a sustainability plan for the building,” Ms Moore said. “We thought about the building also housing a museum, or a gallery, or a tourism information center, or a recording studio, and a gallery for the poles in our community. For example, the two poles standing in front of the Band Office tell one story and I think it’s important for us to share that.”

As the plan to house the Raven pole in a simple building evolved, Ms Moore and the team at the Economic Development Office had to find more funding before construction could start, and organizations did step up. In addition to Parks Canada, they included Coast Sustainability Trust, Gwaii Trust, the Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment and Training Association, and of course the Old Massett Village Council.

Construction of the 2,400 square-foot building began in September and will be completed before the end of the year. The Old Massett Economic Development Office donated Ms Moore’s time and expertise, and the Capital Works Department helped by clearing the lot and doing the plumbing. Also involved in the construction is the crew from a carpentry program that the Old Massett Economic Development department initiated nearly four years ago.

Stay tuned — this collaboration promises to give new meaning to community development.

A fter much discussion, the youth handed over their wish list and it was decided that the building would house the Raven pole, have a mini-museum to hold objects, and provide a much-needed space for youth to gather.

“In the space the youth wanted a wood stove – so they would know the meaning of hard work, and a fish processing area – so they could learn how to prepare their harvest. They also wanted to be close to, and be able to learn from the elders. “It was clear that this idea was going to be a perfect fit for all us,” Ms Moore recalls.

The focal point of the facility will be the Raven pole and the youth will be the custodians of this cultural treasure. The building will also include room for students to study, a recording studio, and a gallery for the young and apprenticing artists. Longer-term goals include youth-managed tours of Old Massett poles, which will operate from the youth centre. Another partnership between the Haida Health Center and the Economic Development Office has already resulted in the purchase of a bus that will be used to carry visitors around to the poles.

“We want to make sure that all the summer students are trained in running the tours, so they learn the different crests and stories behind the poles,” Ms Moore said. “It’ll be a great way to see continuity in teaching about our culture and the poles in our community. For example, the two poles standing in front of the Band Office tell one story and I think it’s important for us to share that.”

In an interesting turn of events, Ms Moore recalls.

Very soon, she was working with Carrie Samuels, Band Administrator, and the pieces started to come together. Harmony Williams and the Old Massett Youth group were in search of a home and had begun designing their ideal space. Patricia met with Harmony Williams, Youth Coordinator for Old Massett, to discuss the project’s potential and the possibility of combining a few uses for the building. Ms. Moore presented Ms Williams with a conceptual drawing of the building.

Ms. Williams took the idea to the teens to see what they thought, and to ask: If the project were to go ahead, what would you like to see in the space?

In early days, Framing almost done – the finished building will be about 2,400 sq ft.

Early days. Framing almost done – the finished building will be about 2,400 sq ft.
About Seeing: the land

The days of one industry moving onto the Islands and providing jobs for all are long over. Capacity building is done one job at a time! - Bill Beldessi, Manager of the CHN Heritage and Natural Resources Department.

For the past 10 years, Haidas have been working in the forest to identify and protect the cultural values that are critical to the Nation. This groundbreaking work has informed and subsequently redefined what land-use management, protection, and planning is today.

The Land-Use Plan, signed in 2007, protects about half of Haida Gwaii from logging, and the remaining forestland is now subject to ecosystem-based management; the decisions about how that land is used are made by the CHN and the province of BC.

Under ecosystems-based management, everything – from birds, to bears, to plants – is considered. This is a huge change from the previous system of management that took only timber values into account. Bill Beldessi, Manager of the CHN’s Heritage and Natural Resources Department, says that Haida Gwaii is one of the first places that clearly understood and incorporated this approach to managing the whole forest.

One important set of data that managers consider when making decisions about the land is a Cultural Features Survey. Cultural Features are defined as “any Haida traditional forest feature, Haida traditional heritage feature (heritage features can include villages, burial sites, spiritual sites, caves, petroglyphs, and canoe runs), or culturally modified tree or monumental cedar”. To conduct a survey of Cultural Features you must be trained and certified in the identification of cultural plants, monumental cedars, heritage features, and culturally modified trees. The Cultural Features Training and Survey Program accomplishes this through courses and fieldwork developed by the CHN.

Nick Reynolds, Stewardship Planning Coordinator for the CHN, helped to develop the Cultural Features Training and Surveying Program for the Nation. “Exams aren’t for everybody and classroom learning isn’t for everyone;” Mr Reynolds said. “We wanted to do something that’s a little bit more hands-on and give students a number of ways in which to succeed. We want the course to accommodate their individual ways of learning.”

Mr Beldessi also admits that even with the flexible teaching style it’s a tough course and tough work. “Even some Registered Professional Foresters have had trouble meeting the requirements of this training,” he said. And the requirements are stringent but, even so, 15 people were certified in the 2010 Cultural Features training course.

In addition to the Cultural Features training, this past year has seen a number of other opportunities created by the Heritage and Natural Resources Department, including a Mentorship Program and a summer youth work placement program. Both programs gave solid hands-on experience to students interested in many aspects of heritage resource management. In addition to providing field training, the programs have the added benefit of a low student-teacher ratio, so that students get the attention they need.

Four young Haidas participated in the Youth Mentorship Program and part of their training included study in Cultural Features Identification. In addition to study, they spent 4-6 weeks in the field with Taan Forest and BC Timber Sales gaining hands-on experience. Upon completion of the course, two of the students were offered full-time work and one has returned to post-secondary school to continue their education.

“This is a real success story!” said Mr Beldessi. “We’re hoping that every time we do a program like this, it will generate its own energy and that, each time, there will be more students interested.”

Mr Reynolds also shares in the excitement, saying, “This is a good way for Haida youth to get out and in to the forest to actively manage and protect cultural values and resources. These courses are for people interested in pursuing careers in forestry and it’s a great opportunity to be a part of day-to-day decision-making in forest management.”

CoAST invites the JRP to tour Haida Gwaii

Submitted by CoAST

Enbridge’s Northern Gateway proposal is currently under scrutiny in Canada’s environmental review process. The Joint Review Panel is the three-member panel reviewing all of the information submitted by the public and industry – it includes oral and written evidence from intervenors, and oral and written statements from community members.

CoAST is actively working in the Islands’ communities to see that Haida Gwaii’s strength and opposition are heard. As of November 8, we received notice that two hearings will take place on the Islands: one in Masset and the other in Queen Charlotte. Dates will be announced later.

As we all know, we have very unique ecosystems and an amazing lifestyle and in order for the JRP to make an informed decision (to reject the Northern Gateway proposal, that is), we think they need to experience this place first-hand, so we’ve invited them to tour the Islands while they are here.

CoAST also plans to help prepare people to make their oral statements at the community hearings. Whether you’re looking for more information about the Northern Gateway proposal, or want advice on public speaking, CoAST can help! CoAST members throughout the Islands will be facilitating gatherings so that everyone is prepared to get up and speak up when the JRP comes to town!

Haida Gwaii CoAST works to maintain the integrity of our coastal ecosystems, communities, and sustainable economies by opposing oil supertankers in the waters around Haida Gwaii.
Number 4 in the series – WORKING ON-ISLAND

by Valine Crist

Ali Pearson – A quiet determination goes a long way

For the past five years, Ali Pearson has been working on her post-secondary education in Vancouver while gaining professional work experiences on Island. After graduating from Moscrop Secondary School — a French-Immersion school in Burnaby — Ali returned home and started working for the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program in Skidegate.

Just 17 years old at the time, Ali spent two months as a Watchman at K’uuna Lingagay and T’amsu Lingagy. Raised in the metro-Vancouver area, this was a huge transition for the young woman. “I went from big-city life, to going down to Skedans with somebody I’d never met before, to being in a place I’d never been, with no TV or anything! It was total culture shock but probably one of the better life-changing experiences I’ve had,” she said. “It was really the first introduction I had to Gwaii Haanas. It was so cool to be immersed in my culture and have the opportunity to share that with people visiting the villages.”

Following that summer of cultural immersion, Ali worked as an administrative assistant for the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program for one season. From there she moved up to a full-time co-manager position and by the age of 21, she was general manager. Ali said that taking on this important position at such a young age was both rewarding and challenging and a great exposure to the way the program operates.

“We worked with the Archipelago Management Board — the governing body for Gwaii Haanas, now made up of representatives of the Council of the Haida Nation and the federal government, the Skidegate Band Council and Parks Canada, was definitely a great opportunity for me to understand how local governments and systems work,” she said.

After six years with the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program Ali decided, in 2006, it was time to begin her post-secondary education. She applied and was accepted to Capilano University in North Vancouver and moved to Burnaby. The first few months were hard and expensive, she recalls. “It took an hour and fifteen minutes to commute from my place to the campus. It was the only apartment I could afford by myself,” she said. At university Ali was interested in learning about business, but in order to get into the Bachelor of Commerce program, she had to upgrade her math, which set her studies back a bit.

Today, just short of a degree and enrolled in the Thompson Rivers University, with a specialization in Human Resources, Ali has continued to take advantage of opportunities that come along, picking the courses and credits she needs to complete her degree. Most recently, she was a student of the Haida Gwaii Semester, which was offered, this past January, by the Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society. She, along with two other Haidas, took the courses at Kay L’ingagay in Skidegate, and the completion of that program earned Ali nine credits towards her degree through three intensive courses: History and Politics of Resource Management, First Nations Natural Resources, and Rainforest Ecology.

“What I really liked about the Haida Gwaii Semester was that it was relevant to me in my personal life and in my career, because Haida Gwaii is where I live,” she said. “I found it to be one of the most valuable educational experiences that I’ve had in post-secondary.”

The connection between Ali’s studies, jobs, and her professional interests is clear. “My experience working as a Watchman helped me see that I wanted a career related to Gwaii Haanas,” Ali said. “That experience led to me become a manager of the Watchmen Program and that led me to want an education in management and a continuing involvement with Gwaii Haanas.”

Over the last five years, Ali has taken on several different jobs at Gwaii Haanas. In 2007, she was hired as a Young Canada Works student — YCW is a national program that offers students work opportunities — which was her first introduction to working directly at the Gwaii Haanas office. This was also her first introduction to a formal interview process. She remembers there was a three-member interview panel: Gwaii Haanas’ Human Resources Manager, an Interpretation Coordinator, and a representative from the Council of the Haida Nation. As part of the process Ali had to submit a writing sample, answer standard interview questions, and also prepare a presentation. The process, though a lot of work, was also a big learning opportunity, she said.

After her first summer as a Young Canada Works student, Ali worked the following two summers in temporary 4-month positions as a Visitor Services Attendent. In 2009, Ali’s seasonal term was extended and she decided to take a break from her studies for one semester so that she could work with the External Relations team as an assistant, for the establishment of Gwaii Haanas Marine Protected Area. During that time, she learned a lot from the people she worked with and through attending marine-project team and advisory committee meetings. One of the highlights and more intimidating challenges Ali exhibited, it’s clear that this is just the beginning. Opportunities with Gwaii Haanas have influenced her and her partner of 4 years, James Bulbrook, to move home permanently. They’re in the process of buying home and both continue to work for Gwaii Haanas – James works as a Skilled Labourer and Ali finishes her degree. When asked if she’ll be looking for a long-term career with Gwaii Haanas, Ali said, “Yes, of course - I’d definitely like to stay within the organization.”

The series, WORKING ON-ISLAND, is a collaboration between Haida Laas and Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site.
Number 5 in the series – WORKING ON-ISLAND

SASCHA JONES – The ins and outs of marine mechanics

by Valine Crist

Sascha Dean Jones, 36, is a dedicated family man and the only Outboard Technician working for Gwaii Haanas. Born and raised on Haida Gwaii, he and partner, Debi Laughlin, live in Skidegate with their two sons, Michael Carver, 7, and Teemo Cooper, 5. Sascha’s oldest son, Schon, from a previous relationship, lives with his mother in Old Massett.

Sascha and Debi have busy lives, both working full-time and raising a family. Debi teaches at the high school in Queen Charlotte – but still, the end of their workday usually entails going to the beach with kids, hiking, doing yard work or working on boats. Family trips are split between summer vacations in the Comox Valley (where Debi is from), road trips to visit relatives in Prince George, and weekends fishing at Copper Bay.

This family doesn’t sit around waiting for something to happen; Sascha spends his spare time volunteering at the Canadian Coast Guard, Auxiliary Station 66 in Sandspit. This activity is also a family affair with everyone taking part in Coast Guard community events; taking advantage of training opportunities offered by the Coast Guard; and even taking the occasional tour around the inlet in a very fast zodiac – “Go faster, Dad!”

Before starting his current position with Gwaii Haanas nearly 10 years ago, Sascha worked as a prep cook; in an auto body shop; and as an engineer on the fishing boat Southern Provider (now the Haida Provider). He also worked for Gwaii Haanas during the summer, maintaining and monitoring composting systems at Powrivco Bay.

Sascha appreciates much more than the security of his job. “My favourite aspect is that nothing’s really the same – every day is different and challenging.” He also enjoys working with his colleagues. “We function as a team and we work together – we work really well with each other.”

To get to where he is today, Sascha spent three years completing his post-secondary education at what is now Vancouver Island University (VIU) in Nanaimo. He said there was a wide variety of things he could have done after high school but he decided to take mechanics because it seemed like it would require never-ending learning — something Sascha values highly. “It definitely motivates your mind and you think in different ways,” he said about studying and his career. It was the mid-1990s when Sascha moved to Nanaimo and enrolled in the Outboard Technician course. After completing the nine-month program, he moved home to look for work that would count toward his apprenticeship. As Sascha explained, trade school involves class time (usually 9-10 months), followed by an apprenticeship of 3-4 years. During the apprenticeship portion, students continue to study in the classroom for about a month each year.

Sascha was fortunate to be able to do his apprenticeship on Haida Gwaii through an arrangement with Parks Canada and a mentor at Rocky’s Equipment Sales in Queen Charlotte; he completed his class time at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), spending one month in each of his second, third and fourth years on the campus in Vancouver.

“It’s such a wonderful place to learn,” Sascha says about his BCIT experience. “Manufacturers donate their newest machines to the institute so students can get hands-on experience with the latest and greatest.” In his classroom time he worked on everything from snowmobiles to quad bikes, and had a lot of fun gaining practical experience.

All of his hard work paid off when he completed his apprenticeship and obtained his Journeyman Ticket in 2004. But, as in any trade, his learning hasn’t stopped. Sascha participates in regular professional development and training with Parks Canada and is pursuing specialized training through Yamaha, which he will complete in the future.

WORKING ON-ISLAND – Sascha Jones

The series, WORKING ON-ISLAND, is a collaboration between Haida Laas and Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site.

Sascha was talking with colleagues and soon realized that he was the “only Outboard Technician in Canada” within the Parks Canada system. Being an Outboard Technician requires Sascha to have knowledge and skills beyond repairing engines. “It looks after pretty much everything on all of Gwaii Haanas’ vessels — from bow to stern — whatever is broken, I fix it,” he said.

Sascha’s typical day includes checking over the boats that are in the shop and making sure they’re running smoothly. Maintenance is paramount — grease, and checking plugs, gear oil, and props. In addition to maintaining the eight boats, which range in size from small life-tenders to a 30-foot vessel, Sascha is in charge of all the radios and electronics onboard. Welding, working on trailers, and mechanical-maintenance trips into the remote Gwaii Haanas are also within his job description.

Sascha says that patience is the most important thing required when working with intricate outboard-motor mechanics. “Tons of patience. You have to take your time and be very methodical about it,” he says. “You need to know your math and physics, and you have to know English. Of course, to be an outboard mechanic, you also need to have problem-solving skills and a great memory.

When asked why he looked to Gwaii Haanas for work, Sascha said, “At the time, it was the security of a steady job and knowing that I would be working year-round.” Today, Sascha enjoys the variety of his job. “It definitely motivates your mind and you think in different ways,” he said about studying and his career. It was the mid-1990s when Sascha moved to Nanaimo and enrolled in the Outboard Technician course. After completing the nine-month program, he moved home to look for work that would count toward his apprenticeship. As Sascha explained, trade school involves class time (usually 9-10 months), followed by an apprenticeship of 3-4 years. During the apprenticeship portion, students continue to study in the classroom for about a month each year.

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STUDY & SCHOLARSHIP

The Power Sports & Marine Technician Program

The nine-month Power Sports & Marine Technician program at Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo, is the equivalent of the training Sascha took in the 1990s and includes class room lectures, labs and field training. Students gain theoretical and practical knowledge for the maintenance of chainsaws, outdoor power products, and outboard and inboard/outboard motors. Admission requirements include completion of Grade 12.

Graduates of the nine-month Power Sports and Marine Technician program receive credit toward the technical portion of the first year of the Inboard/Outboard Marine Technician Apprenticeship Program. In order to complete an apprenticeship, students need to find an employer who will provide on-the-job training.

Detailed program information is available online: www.viu.ca

Black Bear Bust

On October 17th, 2011, acting on information received from the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) at Sandspit, Queen Charlotte RCMP started an investigation into the illegal possession of bear parts and illegal hunting. CATSA contacted RCMP when they noted a passenger transporting bear paws. With the information received Richmond RCMP met the flight from Sandspit and detained three adult males in connection with this investigation. Approximately 250 lbs of bear and deer meat and several bear paws were seized.

The provincial Conservation Service unit in Vancouver continues the investigation and the suspects are being investigated for several offences related to illegal hunting of black bears and failing to comply with regulations associated with the transport of deer.

The hunting of black bears has been closed on Haida Gwaii since Spring 2011.
Request for Written Comments  
Haida Gwaii Timber Supply Review

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to Section 5.b of the KaayGuu Gag a Kyah ts’as – Gin ’inaas ’laas ’waaluuwan gud tl’a gud giidaa (Haida Stewardship Law) and Section 5 of the Haida Gwaii Reconciliation Act, the Haida Gwaii Management Council has been authorised to determine an annual allowable cut to define how much timber may be harvested for all of Haida Gwaii.

The public is invited to comment on the Public Discussion Paper on the Timber Supply Review for a review period commencing November 3, 2011, and ending on December 17th, 2011.

In December of 2009 the Haida Nation and the Province signed the Kunst’aa guu-Kunst’aayah Reconciliation Protocol which included a commitment to establish a Haida Gwaii Management Council as a strategic-level joint decision-making body for land and natural resource decisions on Haida Gwaii. The Haida Gwaii Management Council has been authorized by the Council of Haida Nation and the Province of British Columbia to establish a new AAC for commercial timber harvesting on Haida Gwaii.

The Haida Gwaii Management Council has enlisted the work of a joint team of Haida and provincial government timber supply specialists. Their technical analysis of the current timber supply on Haida Gwaii is documented in this public discussion paper. The Public Discussion Paper describes the geography, natural resources, forest management, socio-economic profile, and AAC history of the Haida Gwaii Management Area, and presents alternative forecasts for future timber supply.

The new annual allowable cut will be determined by the Haida Gwaii Management Council on the date the notice of the decision is published in the Gazette and posted on the HGMG Website.

Written comments must be sent to Marlene Liddle, Haida Gwaii Management Council, PO Box 157, Masset, Haida Gwaii, V0T 1M0, or by email to: admin@haidagwaiimanagementcouncil.ca

Copies of the Public Discussion Paper are available at the following offices:

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
1229 Cemetery Road
Box 39
Queen Charlotte, BC V0T 1S0

Council of the Haida Nation
133 Front Street Skidegate
Box 98 Queen Charlotte
Haida Gwaii, V0T 1S0

Council of the Haida Nation
504 Naanii Street Old Masset
Box 589 Masset
Haida Gwaii, V0T 1M0

Copies of the Public Discussion Paper are also available online at: www.haidagwaiimanagementcouncil.ca