

Uchucklesaht Times

ʔiyaqhmisuk Huuč uqłisʔath

September 2025



Uchucklesaht Tribe
Government

Inside this issue:

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| Road Closure: Latest Update | PAGE 3 |
| What's New: Engagement Session Reminder | PAGE 4 |
| Special Event: 49th BC Elders Gathering | PAGE 5 |
| Cultural Highlight: Totem Pole Raised | PAGE 6 |
| Contributor of the Month: Ina Dick | PAGE 10 |



FIND OUT ABOUT THE LATEST SURVEY BY DLR ON PAGE 3

Inside this issue

LANDS AND RESOURCES 3

IMPORTANT NOTICE 3

EVENTS 4

WHAT'S NEW 4

SPECIAL EVENT 5

CULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS 6

HEALTH AND WELLNESS 8

FISH DISTRIBUTION 8

ELDER SPOTLIGHT 9

CONTRIBUTOR 10

PHOTO GALLERY 11



The Uchucklesaht garden in full bloom.

Nuu-Chah-Nulth



The Nuu-chah-nulth phrase 'Quu?as' pronounced as kw-OO-?-us, has been used in the context of residential school survivors to mean identity or an Indigenous name that was taken away by the colonial system, reflecting the spirit of reclaiming and remembering.

Lands and Resources

Geer Islet Clam Survey 2025

This past month, the Department of Lands and Resources conducted a clam survey on Geer Islet. This is the 4th year the survey was completed on Geer and is part of a long-term monitoring initiative. Eleven sites were established throughout the beach, with each site being labelled with a marker. At each site a 50 cm x 50 cm square was laid down and staff dug to a depth of 30 cm. All clams found on a site are identified by species, and their length and weight are recorded. Data from these surveys is used to monitor long-term biodiversity, assess the health of clam populations, and is part of the greater Marine Stewardship and Monitoring program.

The Department of Lands and Resources is looking for interested citizens to join future surveys. If you are interested in participating and meet the physical requirements for the survey, please contact Rachel Andolfatto (Rachel.andolfatto@uchucklesaht.ca).



Important Notice

Road Closure Status:

Canal Main 34km - CLOSED from AUGUST 10 - SEPTEMBER 23 - the detour route of Kous/Kanyon will be in effect and should not cause any major issues. This closure also won't affect Ehthlateese travel as the main concern will be the closure on Hucuktli Lake Main happening concurrently.

If you require a detour map or more information on the closures, please email Moses Towell at Moses.towell@uchucklesaht.ca

If you require a shuttle, please email Lysa - lysa.ray@uchucklesaht.ca with your requested dates. A minimum of two business days notice is required for booking.



September Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 OFFICE CLOSED	2	3 Woman's Group <u>11 - 1</u>	4 Warrior's Group 4:30 - 9ish Parents's Group <u>11 - 1</u>	5	6
7	8	9 Nurse at Wellness Center in Ehtlateese	10 <u>Language - Zoom</u> <u>7 - 8</u> Candle Light Vigil 5 - 7	11 Warrior's Group 4:30 - 9ish	12 Hike & Coffee 9-11 - TBA	13 Mental Health Workshop 10:30 - 12
14	15 <u>Language - In Person 12-2</u> Teen Puberty Chat 5-6 - Girls	16	17 <u>Language - Zoom</u> <u>7 - 8</u> Elder's Breakfast 10 - 12	18 Warrior's Group 4:30 - 9ish	19 <u>Resume Workshop 2-4</u>	20
21	22 <u>Language - In Person 12-2</u>	23 Nurse at Wellness Center in Ehtlateese <u>Needs Assessment Engagement 4-6</u>	24 Men's Group 11 - 1 - Barclay	25 Warrior's Group 4:30 - 9ish	26 After School Language 3-4	27
28	29 Truth & Reconciliation Luncheon 11-2	30 OFFICE CLOSED				

What's New

Planning for Future Generations

Uchucklesaht is conducting a needs assessment for early learning and childcare services.

Join us on September 23 - Citizens of all ages are invited to share their thoughts. This engagement session will be held at Nucii. There will also be a virtual option for those who can't make it in person.

Join us on October 24 - Children and youth under 18 are invited to join us for a Story Walk. A Story Walk is an outdoor installation that brings a story to life with interactive activities. Children and youth will be encouraged to share their thoughts on what they have learned and what they value about their community, land, and culture.

Not able to attend either event? We will also be sending out an online survey in the fall.

For more information, contact Human Services at Human.Services@uchucklesaht.ca or 250-724-1832

Special Event

Uchucklesaht Elders Join in Celebration at 49th BC Elders Gathering

Under the theme “Moving Forward Together,” the 49th Annual BC Elders Gathering was held at Vancouver’s Canada Place on August 26 and 27. The event was filled with energy, warmth, and the wisdom of more than 2000 First Nations Elders, helpers, and service providers.

The powerful sound of drums marked the Grand Entry, as Elders and cultural leaders from many Nations came together in celebration, sharing stories and history. The Squamish Nation Elders (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Siiyúxwa), as hosts, offered a warm welcome to visitors from across the province.

The BC Elders Gathering is organized each year by the BC Elders Communication Center Society and continues to serve as an important opportunity for connection and cultural sharing.

Uchucklesaht Elders including Chief Wilfred Cootes, Ha'wilth, Executive Councillor Thomas Rush, Marie Samuel, Gloria Rush, Rowena Cootes, Cheryl Ginger Levina Johnson, Travis Styn and Sharon Styn were proud to be part of this important gathering, standing alongside Nations from every corner of B.C. For Uchucklesaht, the Gathering was a reminder of the central role Elders hold in guiding our people, being knowledge keepers, preserving our traditions, and supporting our future generations. As we look ahead, we carry forward the theme of unity and healing, walking together with all Nations in respect and strength.



Cultural Highlight

Totem Pole Raised in Honour of Retired Chief Councillor Charlie Cootes Sr.

On August 15, community members gathered to witness a special moment, the raising and reawakening of a commemorative pole for retired Chief Charlie Cootes. Youth Taylor Johnson took part in the reawakening of the pole by circling the pole while the reawaken song was sung, marking the beginning of its life in front of the Ethlateese Wellness Centre.

The pole was created under the guidance of carver Tim Paul, who explained the meaning behind the ceremony. "We had closed the eyes before travelling here, and now we are opening them again to bring our grandparent to life," he shared.

The totem honours retired Chief Councillor Charlie Cootes Sr., who led the Uchucklesaht Tribe for over five decades, from 1967 until his retirement in 2023. During this time, he guided the Nation through major changes and growth, helping build a path toward self-sufficiency. "It's a small nation with a big footprint," said retired Chief Councillor Charlie Cootes Sr, reflecting on the day.

Over his long career, Charlie Cootes was re-elected many times and became a steady presence in leadership. Under his watch, Uchucklesaht created and adopted a constitution and successfully negotiated treaty. He expressed that he is happy to see the young people stepping up to leadership roles.

Charlie Cootes' stepbrother, Stan Lucas, also shared memories. "The last time I was here was the late '60s, when there were only three houses," he recalled. "It's wonderful to see how much has changed. The rain today feels like a blessing, washing and purifying this place."

The surrounding mountains, known as the Thunderbirds Nest, are deeply tied to the identity of the Nation. The pole includes carvings of the eldest thunderbird, Tuutuuchpiika with the youngest, qalaatik, beneath.

As the ceremony concluded, Charlie Cootes was gifted a Nuuchah-nulth name for the first time: muučinʔaqʷ (pronounced moo-chin-achlt), meaning "four directions." Grateful for the honour, he expressed his thanks: "I'm so thankful to everyone who came today to be part of this moment."





Health and Wellness

Cold and Flu season

With school back in session, cold and flu season seems to be just around the corner. A few helpful tips to try to avoid getting sick are frequent handwashing, and or hand sanitizer if water and soap are not available. To effectively wash your hands, you should first wet hands with water, then apply soap and focus on scrubbing for 20 seconds, paying attention to back of hands, between fingers, and under fingernails. Rinse hands well in clean water. Other ways to protect yourself are to get the Flu shot ([watch out for the flu clinic to be announced](#)), limit exposure to people with cold or flu symptoms, get plenty of sleep, clean common surfaces/areas frequently, and stay home if you are sick to prevent spreading to others. Signs of cold and flu may include,

Flu: cough, fever, sore throat, body and muscle aches, runny or stuffy nose, fatigue, and headaches.

Cold: can often have similar symptoms as a flu, but usually milder. Colds often produce a runny or stuffy nose and are less likely to result in serious health problems.

Please reach out to Human Services with any questions or concerns
Humanservices@uchucklesaht.ca 250-724-1832



Fish Distribution

Food fish distribution is scheduled on September 17, 2025, at 9:30 am -12:30 pm at the Thunderbird building.



Elder Spotlight



Phyllis Halvorsen Elder/Beach Keeper Uchucklesaht Tribe
First Nation Name: Oochah

Meaning: Whales Tale slapping the water - Named after Grandmother Ellen Rush My parents were Helen Rush & Samson Robinson.

I come from a large family of artists full of tradition and culture. My parents spoke our traditional first nation language their whole lives before they passed on. My mother very talented with weaving grass and my father talented with carving and fishing. My parents had ten children and we were the only family from what I remember that grew up in the first village Cowishilth. My father built a home there for us and we continue to visit this important area every year and practice our cultural traditions. As family passes, we also bring their items here to burn and let go as that is our culture.

I now live at the second village of Ehtlateese with my husband John. I have four girls Ivy, Carla, Sabrina and Tina. I worked in forestry and was a captain of our



nations school boat for many years before my youngest daughter Tina took over. My brother Vincent Robinson used to hold the position as Beach Keeper for our nation, that ended up being passed down to me when he left us.

The beach keeper role is to protect our shores and beaches and greet any guests that arrive properly and re-spectfully. We have nations that arrive in canoes every once in a while and I must greet them and ensure that they are fed and have a place to stay during this time. I also protect our river edges, this river is sacred to us, and we must protect it for our people, our wildlife and our resources.

My youngest daughter Tina Halvorsen helps me with this role, and I hope that one day, she takes this important role on herself. She has lived in this village her whole life and helps keep our waters and fish in good shape. Working on the fish fence each year is something very important to her and that makes me proud. It is important to keep our territory protected and our culture and traditions alive.

Contributor of the Month



Uchucklesaht citizens including Lorraine, Gabriel, Sharon, Martha and Brandi enjoyed a day of blueberry picking at Cox Bay Blueberry Farm.

Thanks to Ina Dick for sharing this wonderful photo.

Ina Dick - Health Care Aide | Ina.dick@uchucklesaht.ca

Become a Contributor

Would you like to see your creative media featured in **ʔiyaq̓h̓misuk ʔuuʕuq̓lisʔath̓**? Send your contribution to **communications@uchucklesaht.ca** with the subject "Contribution" and you could be featured in next month's issue.

Photography

We are looking for citizen submissions of landscape photography, events (yes, your campfire party can count!), pictures of arts and crafts you are working on, or even scans of historical photography you may have of friends and family over the years.

Stories, Photos and Opinions

We are looking for citizen submissions of short stories, opinion articles, news stories, Elder bios, recipes and more. If you are a talented writer or even an amateur who wants to share your experience and knowledge, consider being published in **ʔiyaq̓h̓misuk ʔuuʕuq̓lisʔath̓**!



Annual Picnic 2025 Gallery



Maren Yeager with her boys Tristan and Killian



Matt Titian and Marie Samuel in beautiful regalia



Uchucklesaht citizens and staff enjoying the picnic



Angeline Frank with her family



Charlie Cootes, John Cootes and Thomas Rush



Dinner song and prayer



Uchucklesaht Tribe Government

The Uchucklesaht Government blends hereditary and modern governance to ensure responsible, transparent, and accountable leadership. It upholds the Uchucklesaht Tribe's political, social, and cultural strength while exercising law-making authority under the Maa-nulth Treaty. Governed by a legislative, executive, and People's Assembly structure, it remains committed to honouring the past while embracing the future.

Address

Suite A, 5251 Argyle St
Port Alberni, BC
V9Y 1V1

Phone

250-724-1832

Fax

250-724-1806