



Cowichan Social Planning Society
135 Third Street Duncan,
British Columbia V9L 1R9
tel: 250.746.1004 fax: 250.746.8819
email: info@socialplanningcowichan.org
website: www.socialplanningcowichan.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 28, 2010

FIRST ANNUAL ABORIGINAL HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

June 1-31, 2010. The people of Cowichan, along with all of Canada, will celebrate the first ever National Aboriginal Month.

The awareness and interest drawn to Aboriginal history and culture revived at the 2008 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) has spread and various community organizations and agencies have partnered with Social Planning Cowichan's Cultural Connections Council to bring that same spirit of discovery, adventure and fun to the Cowichan Region. The community is invited to discover, experience, and celebrate Aboriginal history and culture while taking part in the many events taking place throughout the Valley during the month of June.

Individuals and families will have the opportunity to enjoy canoe races, Aboriginal arts, music, food, dance events, Artisan Markets, experiential workshops, and other family-styled fun activities. Most activities are free or by donation.

"The Celebration of Aboriginal history and culture during the month of June will provide opportunities for our community to know and appreciate a part of our rich heritage in the Cowichan Valley", said Candace Spilsbury, Co-Chair of the Cultural Connections Council. "It is our hope that through these experiences, new and meaningful cultural connections will be made".

HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday, June 3-26: Aboriginal Arts Display

"AAA Aboriginal Arts Aware" features the work of local Cowichan Salish artists from private collections as well as work of other artists of Aboriginal descent will be on display.

Reception June 3, 4:00-6:00pm

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Friday 11:30 - 3:00, Saturdays 11:00am - 2:00pm.

Location: Cowichan Valley Arts Centre, Station Street, Duncan.

Contact: Jeffrey Birkin 250-746-1633 or www.cowichanvalleyartscouncil.ca

Saturday, June 5: Cultural Gathering and Picnic

A fun-packed afternoon celebrating cultural diversity and Aboriginal history will happen at Alexander Elementary School. Listen to live entertainment performed by First Nations Drummers and Dancers, DDT Drum line, One World Youth Dance Theater and Masimba Marimba; watch a puppet show, enjoy the free barbeque, or try your hands at the arts and crafts table.

Location: Alexander Elementary, Beverly Street.

Time: 11:00am-4:00pm.
Contact: Gus Williams 250.748.0871.

Saturday, June 12 and Sunday, June 13: War Canoe Races

The Cowichan Nation hosts their 120th annual at the Cowichan Bay waterfront First Nations youth and adults from B.C. and the U.S will be competing in various types of authentic canoes. These canoes reach 50–52 feet in length. Enjoy a taste of traditional Bannock and the excitement of War Canoe racing while relaxing on the beach.

Time: June 12, 10:30am–6:00pm; June 13, 11:00am-5:00pm.
Contact: Wayne Paige Sr. 250.748.3196

Saturday, June 5: Cheryl Bear in Concert.

Cheryl Bear, from the Carrier Nation, is an accomplished recording artist: having released 2 CD's and won a number of music awards. One of Cheryl's goals is to help build relationships and understanding between native and non-native peoples through her music.

Location: New Life Church, 1839 Tzouhalem Road
Time: 6:30pm
Contact: New Life Church 250.748.6521 or www.newlifechurch.ca

QWU' UTSUN' CULTURAL CENTRE ACTIVITIES

Every Saturday: Aboriginal Artisan Market

Through the months of June through to September, beginning Saturday, June 5, the Quw' utsun' Cultural Centre will host Coast Salish artists showcasing their craftsmanship. Items such as Cowichan knits, bead work, carvings, paintings, and clothing will be on display.
Time: 10:00am-2:00pm

Every Saturday: Quw'utsun' Dancers

The Quw' utsun' Dancers will perform at the Artisan Market, with additional performances Friday, June 18 and June 25.
Time: 1:30p.m

Monday, June 21: National Aboriginal Day

Enjoy First Nation dance performances, movie screening, cultural tours, and other activities to be announced.
Time: 10:00am-4:00pm

Contact: Kathy Parkinson 250.746.8119 or www.quwutsun.ca

Monday, June 21: Walk for the Wild

Wilderness International Canada is hosting a fundraising event to raise money for old growth conservation in the Cowichan Region. 200 - 300 students from three schools in the Region will run laps at Duncan's Chesterfield Track. Money raised from this event will also help support students

to participate in regional and international environmental and indigenous education projects, and leadership building activities.
Time: 9:00am-12pm

Contact: Hwiemtun, Fred Roland 250-710-5384 contact@wilderness-international.org

COWICHAN INTERNATIONAL ABORIGINAL FILM FESTIVAL SOCIETY

FILM SCREENINGS:

Thursday, June 10: "Six Miles Deep"

An inspiring and compelling portrait of a group of women whose actions have led a cultural reawakening in their traditionally matriarchal community.

Location: Quw'utsun' Cultural Centre

Time: 6:30-8:30pm

Thursday, June 17: Three award winning films created by youth:

"Our Children Our Future": A 50 minute documentary on HIV and AIDS and how it is affecting the youth in rural BC communities. This is a youth film filmed by Harold Joe & Youth Team.

Dominic": Short Drama, Sto lo Youth Film on domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse.

"I'm a Lucky One" Video Remix: A Cowichan Youth Empowerment music videos remix about the effects of abuse, drugs and alcohol.

Location: Cowichan Theater

Time: 6:30 (doors open)

Contact: Michele Staples 250.746.7930

Friday, June 11 and Saturday June 12: "Building Bridges through Understanding the Village"

In this experiential one day workshop, the effects of Canada's policy of Assimilation and residential schools will be explored. It is an open, multi-cultural workshop for people of all backgrounds.

Location: Quw'utsun' Cultural Centre, Quamichan House

Time: 10:00 am-4:00 pm lunch included

Suggested Donations of \$10-\$20

Wednesday, June 23: Drum making Workshop

Location: Quw'utsun' Cultural Centre, Quamichan House

Cost: \$125

Limited to 20 people

Thursday June 24: A Day of Celebrating Diversity

Days events include:

Felting Workshops and a Guided Walk: Discussion focused on the river & wild plants.

Visit www.aff.cowichan.net for more details as they come in.

For more information about CIFFA activities or to register, contact: Michele Staples 250.746.7930 or email michele.staples@cowichan.net

The Cultural Connections Council was formed to carry on the vision of the Cowichan 2008 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) – “To create broad-based community understanding and respect among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples of the Cowichan Region and to act as a catalyst building bridges between cultures”.

Media Contacts:

Dianne Wilbee
Project Facilitator
Cultural Connections Council
250.746.1004 ext.250
info@socialplanningcowichan.org

Candace Spilsbury
Co-Chair
Cultural Connections Council
250.710.4959