



Social Planning Cowichan
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

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SOCIAL PLANNING COWICHAN RECEIVES \$10,700 GRANT TO FUND THE THIRD ANNUAL WALK OF THE NATIONS FESTIVAL

Social Planning Cowichan gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage (Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage Program) to fund the third annual Walk of the Nations Festival. The Walk of the Nations began in 2008 as a legacy of the Cowichan North American Indigenous Games. Last year the Walk Committee planned the event that saw the entire community come together for a Saturday community celebration in Duncan City Square and Sunday's walk demonstrating acceptance, understanding, respect and reconciliation of all peoples living in the Cowichan Valley.

In 2009 more than a thousand people from our community walked together. This year organizers are already working hard to put together the third annual Walk of the Nations Festival which will include a free multi-cultural family event at the Si'em Lelum Gymnasium on Saturday night, including live music, food, and local artisans from 4pm to 8pm. Followed by the Walk on Sunday, commencing at 1:00pm from Centennial Park. "The Walk of the Nations is a way for people to celebrate the continuing building of relationships here in the Cowichan Region; and to join in celebrating our communities' strengths, diversity and friendship." Remarkd a community participant in last year's celebrations.

"The Walk of the Nations is a great chance for people to share a unique connection to each other while walking in unity with our community. This annual event has been receiving tremendous support and positive feedback from the community in the past couple of years and we expect this to grow even more. It is a great affirmation of the spirit of our community as the legacy of the Cowichan 2008 North American Indigenous Games continues to carry forward in Cowichan." Says Valerie Nicol, Chair of Social Planning Cowichan.

The Walk of the Nations Festival will take place October 2nd and 3rd in Duncan. On the 2nd, there will be a community gathering in the Cowichan Tribes Gymnasium, and then on Sunday, Oct 3rd, beginning at 1:00 pm there will be a 'Community Walk' commencing at Centennial Park on Second St. proceeding to the Si'em Lelum Gym, followed by a short closing program and an opportunity for local public schools to win a \$500 dollar prize for best participation, most creative sign design and attendance. Local celebrity judges will be on hand to announce the winner of the contest.

For more information and updates about the Walk of the Nations Festival, or to view Harold Joe's short documentaries highlighting previous year's Walk of the Nations events, we invite you to visit www.walkofthenations.ca.

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Contact:
Ray Anthony or Michelle Nowzek
(250) 746-1004 ext.250

