



Community Services Department June Highlights

Date: June 6th, 2011
To: Chief and Council
From: Communications / Community Services

Community Services is a valuable asset in providing, as the name suggests, services to the Westbank community. Their programs run the gamut, from health, to recreation, to counselling.

Many of the programs run throughout the year, while some are offered on a special basis. During March, April and May of this year, the Employment and Training Program, facilitated by Coreen Bernier, was particularly successful.

Coreen's department offered several specialty training courses to the community, namely Chainsaw Training, Fire Suppression Training, a Fire Arms Course and the Worldhost Certificate.

These programs had almost 50 (fifty) participants, many who came out on Saturdays and Sundays to upgrade their skills to become more employable or to perform better in their current positions. For others, their participation was based on personal, rather than professional interest. Kudos to all who invested their time to these sessions, and to Coreen Bernier and Wanda McDougall for organizing them.

The Fire suppression course was offered between April 11th to the 15th. Eight Members and seven non-Members enrolled in the course, the goal being to enhance employment and to target the forestry industry. The facilitator of the course works closely with the Ministry of Forests and is certified to deliver the training. He will forward the participant's names to Forestry contractors seeking employees. Four of the individuals taking the course are already employed and one will return to work in July for the firefighting season. The Firesuppression and Chainsaw training included both theory and hands-on experience to give students confidence with all aspects of chainsaw safety, operation and maintenance.

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The Chainsaw course was offered to the WFN community on March 16th and 17th, 2011. There were nine enrolled, five of which were WFN Members and four non-Members. The training was delivered to target the forest fire season and a project from Merritt to Coquitlam that BC Hydro and Fortis are bidding on. This project will need to hire people with Chainsaw experience. Contacts were also made with Fireline who will be calling potential workers for clearing and slashing during the fire season. Members were encouraged to put a crew together and to be ready if and when forestry calls during the fire season. Three of the Members who took the course were already employed but needed the training to continue with their employment.

Worldhost training was offered in response to employers requesting the training for their staff. Students from Kekuli Café and many of the others took the training to enhance opportunities to work in the tourism/hospitality industry. Many of the participants are already working in the industry, including our very own Wanda McDougall!

*Wanda McDougall
June 2nd, 2011*

Re: Worldhost certification

Coreen, I attended the Worldhost workshop on Saturday, May 7th, 2011.

I work at reception and like to go to some of the workshops that WFN provides, to challenge and improve myself. When this course was offered, it made me think: how am I doing in my job and how can I help others?

I've been in reception for ten years and I was able to contribute to the class and help the younger participants with situations that may occur.

It was a great class to help a person find their way in life, boost one's spirit and be able to contribute to others.

Thanks Coreen!

Patrick Henry
June 02, 2011

Re: Fire Suppression and Chainsaw Training

Hi Coreen, I just wanted to send you a note in regards to the fire suppression training and chain saw training. These two courses, which I took, were sensational. Great training system! I learned a lot and will prosper from these courses. I think that training system was excellent. Hands on training was absolutely the best, when compared to classroom training.

Thank you for your efforts in providing this valuable opportunity!

Cheers!

Patrick Henry.

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