

# Hoonah Schools Newsletter

November-December 2017

(Nov.) *Kukahaa Disi: The Month in Which You Start to Shovel Snow*

(Dec.) *L-kiyeekee.u.eix: The Month When You Can't See the Four Corners of the House*



## Veterans Day Program at HCS

Hoonah City Schools held a special program to honor our nation's military veterans on November 10th. All Hoonah veterans were invited to the program, which included songs and instrumental music. Diane Bean was the guest speaker. The Quilt of Valor was presented to Glen Johnson. The Fourth and Fifth Graders did a special ceremony called the Setting of the Missing Man Table. A display honoring the Tlingit Code Talkers was prepared by the middle school and high school Tlingit classes. The veterans and their families were invited to have lunch in the cafeteria afterwards. Thank you to

Bob Hutton for his help with the stage and sound system, to Pearl Miller and Judy Bitz for decorating, to Kathy Harris for preparing the wonderful luncheon, and to Donna and Dave Austin for presenting special music. *Photos, above: Second & Third Graders sang two songs; left: Caroline Peterson helped present the Quilt of Valor to Glen Johnson. Below: Lingo and Make & Take at Wooch.een Turkey Tuesday.*



## Wooch.een Turkey Tuesday

**Wooch.een Turkey Tuesday** was held November 14th. Despite the snowy weather, we had a great turnout of families and friends who enjoyed Sisterhood Stew prepared by the High School Tlingit class. Afterwards, there was time to Make & Take card games, play



Lingo (Tlingit Bingo), and a chance to gather family Tlingit names. The evening ended with a jam session and door prize drawings. Five lucky winners took home frozen turkeys. Gunalchéesh haat yeey.aadí (thank you all for coming)! This event was presented by the Haa Kusteeyí Áyá Program.

## Superintendent/Principal's Message



On behalf of the Staff at Hoonah City School, may I wish all of our families a most peaceful and happy holiday season. Thank you all for being so supportive and committed to our School – I really believe that our students continue

to make a difference, not only in their own lives, but in the lives of so many others.

The holiday season can be a busy time filled with the hustle and bustle of gift shopping for friends and family near and far. It means traveling to visit family or opening our homes to receive guests. Traditions such as visiting Santa, singing carols and decorating our homes in beautiful lights are all part of the holiday celebrations.

Life at school is also very busy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, students and parents for their continued support. Our school is truly a community school, and it is at this time of year when the closeness of friendship shines in our students' faces. The new year will bring new learning experiences, new challenges and new fun. I look forward to what lies ahead for us as a school community in 2018.

I wish you all Peace, Joy, Hope and Happiness during this Holiday season and throughout the New Year.

Sincerely,

*Ralph M. Watkins*  
Superintendent/Principal

**About this newsletter:** this is a project of the Native Education Program at Hoonah City Schools. It was started in 1986 as a means to increase parent involvement in the school by "getting the word out" about school activities and programs. If you have suggestions, questions or comments, you can contact Daphne Wright, newsletter editor by email at [wrightd@hoonahschools.org](mailto:wrightd@hoonahschools.org) or by calling 723-1223.

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## Greetings from your School Board!

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The board held a retreat during August in order to reflect on the past year and prepare for this school year. Lon Garrison of the Alaska Association of School Boards was our facilitator.

During the retreat, we completed our board self-evaluation for 2016-2017 and set goals for 2017-2018.

Our self-improvement goal is:

*The board will take personal and collective responsibility to educate ourselves on understanding the budget. We will formulate an appropriate format for reviewing the budget. We will seek professional help to achieve this goal.*

During our September meeting, Amy Stevenson, our district business manager, took it upon herself to present the monthly budget report using a new format that board members found to be far more understandable and informative. Self-improvement committee members Dillon and Heidi are considering inviting Lon Garrison back to Hoonah to work with us in better understanding the entire budgeting process.

Another goal:

*The board supports the development of a district technology plan that enables Hoonah City School District to partner with other entities statewide, thereby improving opportunities for student success and achievement during 2017-2018.*

Partnering with other entities would allow us to offer additional courses to our students. With the help of Ralph Watkins, the district has made significant strides in our use of technology and we enthusiastically support his continued leadership in this area.

We also chose to continue this goal from January 2017: *The board will seek alternative options to increase district revenue.*

In early October, Dillon Styers, Bob Hutton and Grace Villarreal were re-elected to the board. By the time you read this column, our board will have elected new officers.

As always, I encourage anyone with concerns about the school to email me at [huttonr@hoonahschools.org](mailto:huttonr@hoonahschools.org) or call or text me on my cell phone (907-209-0996). Gunalchéesh!

*Bob Hutton*  
HCS Board President



## Spotlight on New Staff at HCS

We have several new staff members at HCS this year. In this issue, we will spotlight a few of them, with other stories to come next time.

**Rita Crouch** is the English, Spanish and Guitar teacher. She worked recently for the North Slope Borough School District as a School Counselor. She is originally from Texas, and earned her B.A. in English at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas. She earned a Master of Education in School Counseling in 2011.



*About her family:* Rita said that she has been married to David Crouch since 1984. They have one son, Jacob, who will graduate from Stephen F. Austin State University with a Master's in Geology. Their son is married and the couple is expecting Rita and David's first grandchild in March 2018. Most of their extended family live in Texas but others live in Seattle and Canada.

When asked about special interests, Rita said, *"David and I love to hunt and fish. We have been a subsistence family for most of our adult lives. David is an amazing artisan, carpenter, welder, and all around handy guy. I love to play guitar and sing with friends. I also love to participate in local theater and sew. If it involves camping, riding bikes, you name it in the outdoors, and we're there."*

Another question was: How is it that you ended up here? *"I tried 5 years ago to come to Hoonah as a School Counselor. It wasn't meant to be, as I wasn't contacted about my application. So, when I found out about the ELA position, I went out on a limb and took the chance that I might be called. So far, I have loved every moment with students."*

More questions, and Rita's responses:

How do you like Hoonah so far?

*"I have loved every minute of being in Hoonah. I have learned so much about the wonderful Tlingit culture and continue to learn more every day. There is no match for the natural beauty here in Hoonah so I immediately have a reverence for this place and the rich history of the people here."*

What are some things you would like to accomplish in the near future?

*"I would love to begin an odyssey of becoming a beginning Tlingit speaker. I hope to attend regular classes, study the literature, and share in community events."*

*I also want to continue my studies as a counselor and would like to begin on work to earn my status as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). I believe that in that way, I could offer even more services to the school and community as a whole.*

*I would also like to further my musical interests by playing in a band. Anyone interested? (hint-hint)"*

**Christina Carrick** is the new Kindergarten/First Grade teacher. Before moving to Hoonah, she and her family lived in King Cove, Alaska for two years where she taught 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Before that, they lived in the village of Golovin, Alaska, where she taught kindergarten for three years.



Christina is originally from Lynnwood, Washington, where she lived for 18 years before moving to Salem, Oregon to go to college. She went to Western Baptist College and got her undergraduate degree in Intercultural Studies. In 2010, she received her MA degree in Early Child/Elementary Education. Salem is where she met and married her husband Nathan and where their first daughter Gracie was born. In 2010, they moved to Saipan, where Christina taught Kindergarten for two years.

When asked about her family and her outside interests, Christina said, *"My family and I would like everyone to know that we love living here in Hoonah. We ended up here because we were looking for more opportunity for everyone in our family and we wanted to live in a place that had more access to either the road system or the ferry system."*

*"My family and I love the outdoors. We love to fish and hunt and love the subsistence lifestyle. Some things that I love to do when I have time are painting/drawing, knitting with a loom, and baking/cooking. I also love to just hang out with my family. In the near future I would like to accomplish hitting a target with my new gun. I would love to say I would like to get my first deer, but I need to hit what I am aiming at first!"*

**John Vlaun** is the new science teacher at our school. Most recently, he lived 45 miles from the Mexican border in Las Cruces, NM. He worked at a residential day treatment section of the Mesilla Valley Hospital



with severely at-risk students who had been incarcerated, hospitalized due to drug overdose or suicide attempts, and wards of the state who had been abandoned by their families. It was a very rewarding, and sad, job.

John was born in Ketchikan and attended Bear Valley Elementary until 4th grade, then moved to Oklahoma with his mother. Except for his junior year of high, when he returned to Ketchikan to attend Kayhi, he spent the rest of his school years in Oklahoma. He earned his Bachelor's degree from UAF in Fairbanks, and his Masters in Education from UAS in Juneau.

His wife Tara is currently living on Prince Edward Island, Canada, where she is building a B&B. They have many French bulldogs, but no children. He had two children with his first wife: Abby, who is 18, and Vincent who is 16, and both of them were born in Ketchikan. His father still lives in Ketchikan as he always has, and his mother is still in Oklahoma.

When he is not teaching, Mr. Vlaun enjoys video games, kayaking, and just enjoying the scenery.

He is very happy to be in Hoonah and hopes to stay a long time; he finds it much more scenic and peaceful and laid back than Ketchikan. Mr. Vlaun would like to buy a boat with live-aboard potential and do some trolling in the summers.



Eli Derenoff



Mimi Antal

Two more new teachers are Eli Derenoff, who teaches math in grades 6 to 12, and Mimi Antal, the 4th-5th grade teacher. We hope to have more in-depth articles about these teachers in the next newsletter.

Also new on staff : 1)**Miguel Contreras**, a Hoonah High grad, class of 2014. Miguel is working as an instructional aide and is also the Middle School basketball coach. 2)**Aleesia Martuscelli**, HHS class of 2013, is working in the cafeteria as the assistant to Kathy Harris, the school cook.



Miguel Contreras



Aleesia Martuscelli



Melissa Fisher

3)**Melissa Fisher** is working in the

cafeteria also, as the Food Service Clerk, keeping track of the number of meals that are served.

### A Very Special Thank You!

Soon after the start of school each year, each student goes through a routine Health Screening.

With the team of Valarie Gosselin, Public Health Nurse, Tesh Miller, Carol Williams and Ladonna Dybdahl, we were able to complete the health screening for the Pre-school through Twelfth Grade students.

A huge thank you, especially to Tesh Miller, for her expertise in finding good solutions for getting hard tasks completed!

Vision, hearing, height and weight were completed on September 18<sup>th</sup> to September 20<sup>th</sup>.

Hoonah City Schools is quite lucky to have Valarie Gosselin, PHN assigned to our community. The next time she is in our wonderful community, please extend a nice thank you for her dedication.

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### A Few More Gunalchéesh Notes:

To Susan Gonzalez, gunalchéesh for the donation of *Haa Kusteeyi*, a treasure from her late mother's home library.

To Lisa Andersson, gunalchéesh for mats and frames for Kids with Cameras project.

Gunalchéesh to the volunteer bookmark makers: Karen Mills, Glenda Hutton, Arely Wright, Judy Hankla, Linda Dellazoppa, Sally Dybdahl and Daphne Wright. This summer, 172 handmade dried-flower bookmarks were sold to ISP; we received \$516 to benefit student activities. Watch for bookmarks for sale at the Community Christmas Bazaar December 9th.

Gunalchéesh to Wilma Davis, for the donation of a beautiful button dance blanket.



## Haa Kusteeyí Áyá Highlights



*Haa Kusteeyí Áyá*, is the name of our language and culture program here at Hoonah City Schools. It translates to: *This is Who We Are*. Here are some highlights:

In July, *Haa Tóo Yéi Yatee Culture Camp* was held at Freshwater Bay. It was geared towards students ages 10 to 18, with many visitors of all ages stopping by during the three-day camp.

Some of the camp activities included fishing, cutting, fresh-packing and smoking salmon, harvesting and processing beach asparagus, and cooking salmon in a pit on the beach (photo above.) Tlingit language was an integral part of the camp, with multiple instructors. The students composed a new song, “Yaa At Wooné Daa Sheeyi”; all of the HCS students are now learning the new song.



Shortly after school started in August, students in grades 6 to 12 went berrypicking. They harvested kanat’á (blueberries) & tleikatánk (huckleberries.) Drumming and singing Tlingit songs added to the fun. Some of the berries were used for math lessons afterwards, and some will be used in future art lessons.



Grades 6, 7 & 8 Berrypickers



Gunalchéesh to L’eiw tu Éesh, Herman Davis, L’uknaḡ.ádi Clan Leader, who spoke with all the students while here on a visit from Sitka.





## Tlingit Language and Culture Program at Hoonah City Schools

In the **Pre-school**, we are working on weather phrases, color names, and body parts. We also count in English and in Tlingit whenever we play with cards. Lately, we have been having fun with “Shá K’únts” (Potato Heads) as we learn the names of body parts. In the **Kindergarten/First Grade**, we have been doing calendar activities since September, which include learning about the Tlingit names of the months, days of the week, counting the days of the month, and figuring out patterns. This month, the images on our calendar are of Tlingit regalia. We are also learning Tlingit colors, songs, weather and animals.



In the **Second/Third Grade**, the focus this month has been on food and eating; last month we practiced saying feelings phrases. As we learn new material, we will continue to review what we have already covered, by playing games using cards and other materials. (Ask your second or third grader about how we play Balloon Volleyball in Tlingit class!) The **Fourth/Fifth Grade** has focused on a feelings unit for the first quarter, using vocabulary cards to play games for review and practice.



All of the students practiced how to “**Trick or Treat**” in Tlingit for Halloween. At various homes around town, the way for them to get a treat was to ask in Tlingit.

The **Sixth Graders** have several different teachers and areas of focus: for the first part of their class, they meet with Carol Williams, who has been teaching them how to make their own button blanket. They also meet with Daphne Wright, with the focus on Tlingit language. At times, they join with the 7th and 8th graders, taught by Heather Powell, for a special activity.



There are two Tlingit classes in the upper grades. The 4th period class includes the 7th and 8th graders as well as high school peer teachers, who are creating lesson plans that they will be teaching. The sixth period class is composed of 9th and 10th graders.

These two classes have had a variety of learning experiences, including harvesting s’ikshaldeen (Hudson Bay Tea) and beach asparagus, singing and dancing at the Senior Center, and making deer calls with Jacob’s berry leaves. They learned about the Angoon

Bombardment, an event that occurred over 100 years ago. The students created decorations and a Tlingit Code Talkers display board for the Veterans Day Program.

Their Tlingit language study includes games such as *Jeopardy*, *Spot It* and *Lingo*. They worked as Lingo callers at the Wooch.een Tuesday event November 14th. They are up to 150 nouns and 20 phrases, which they will be tested on before the end of the semester. A new project is creating our own Tlingit language app; the students are helping to put in the words and phrases that will be included. When completed, the app will have learning activities, including interactive story books and games.





## Haa Kusteeyí Áyá, continued.

**Guwakaan Camp** was at Freshwater Bay the weekend of November 17-19. Boys in grades 8 through 11 took part. They learned hunting and survival skills, including gun and bear safety, and also were able to butcher and process deer. We hope to have more opportunities of this kind so that more students can benefit. Gunalchéesh to all the “uncles” who served as teachers during the camp: Levi Mills, Dave Hay, Cody Mills, Corbin Harris, Chris Mills and Miguel Contreras. And a big Yak’ei (Good Job!) to the boys were attended: Robert Wilkin, Dylan Johnson, Orion Osborne, Gary Glover, Eddie Williams and James Carteeti. *Photos: deer butchering (Dylan, Gary & Levi), processing (Orion) and boys with jarred deer meat to take home (Dylan & Robert.)*



## Fourth-Fifth Grade Class News

The students in Mimi Antal’s 4-5 Class went on a field trip to the Forest Service, where they learned about bear safety. They got to see several bear skulls, and learned the difference between predators and prey. They want to thank Robin Hasselquist for teaching them; Robin also did a painting lesson with them; during the lesson, they each painted a picture of a bear.



They also went on a hike with Stephanie Harold. While on the hike, they did some nature journaling and plant sketching. During the hike, each person was instructed to find a quiet spot of their own to sit still and listen, then to write in their journals about what they heard. They want to thank Ms. Harold for teaching them.

Just before the Thanksgiving holiday, the students in this class enjoyed a special meal together in their classroom. They want to thank all the families who contributed to the meal.





## ***We Can Preschool***

Greetings from the *We Can Preschool*. The name for our preschool was chosen because it is not only the name of our curriculum, but also very appropriate for our students. We believe our students can learn so many things! They can learn to share, take turns and be kind to their classmates. They can learn to walk respectfully down the hall. Our students can learn the benefits of good choices. They can learn to count and know the names of shapes and colors. These children can begin to learn alphabet names and sounds and recognize their name. Our preschoolers can listen to the adults in their life and enjoy the benefits of safety, guidance and knowledge.

We begin our day in the K/1 classroom and enjoy learning about the calendar and numbers during Number Corner with the whole class! This is an extremely valuable experience to get us ready to



fully participate in the class next year. Thank you, Mrs. Carrick, for teaching us during this time! Then we go to the preschool room for “just right” learning at our level. During this time Mrs. Wright teaches us Tlingit each day; we all enjoy our time learning Tlingit; gunalchéesh, Mrs. Wright!



In addition to math and Tlingit, we have studied our families; who is in them and how each family has things that are the same and some things that are different about them. We are learning the benefits of choosing good nutrition and exercise to stay healthy. We have experienced the mystery of mixing colors like red and yellow to make orange and blue and yellow to make green.

We have begun a unit about community helpers to help us understand how important firefighters, police, doctors and other helpers are to our safety and well-being. Who knows - maybe some of our students will discover that being a community helper is a job they would like in the future.



Our team of educators for the preschool consists of Mrs. Carrick, Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Bitz, Mrs. Wright and visits from Mr. Contreras from time to time. Thank you for trusting us with your precious children for a few hours each day. We believe each child has the potential to become a successful caring



adult, and it is a joy to help these students reach their full potential as they grow and learn more each day.





## Kindergarten/First Grade News

In the Kindergarten/First grade classroom, we have been really busy so far this year. In Language Arts, we are learning to read and write and have learned how to recognize, read, and write 10 letters so far. With these ten letters we have learned to read and write many words and sentences. Recently many of the first graders have begun filling their pages and writing much more than one sentence. They are definitely getting excited about writing. In math, we are learning to count to 100 by 2's, 5's, and 10's. We are learning to add and subtract numbers within 10. In Social Studies, we are learning to read maps, and learning about how the world and the people in it work around us through community helpers. In Science, we have learned about the weather, seasons, and temperature. We are currently learning about animal life and that all animals have a life cycle. A few weeks ago, we dug for worms and are excited to use the dirt they are preparing for us in our garden after Christmas. Through this experience students are learning that all organisms contribute to the ecosystem they live in.

The Kindergarten/First Grade classroom is a great place to be this year! I am so thankful that Mrs. Bitz and Mrs. Lee are a part of the students' learning experience. They are a great team to work with. I am excited to see how the students continue to grow and change throughout this school year. If you would like to help out in the K-1 classroom, we could always use help with areas such as organizing our classroom library and helping students practice reading. If you would like to donate to our classroom, we could use healthy snacks, Kleenex, antibacterial soap, paper towels, and dry erase expo pens.



Picture above: Aislinn, Charlie, Michaela, Malachi, Devlin, Gabe and Corbin, showing Tlingit regalia. The class is learning the Tlingit words for mocassins (at xáshdi téel), vest (l.uljini), drum (gaaw), headdress (shakee.át) and button blanket (yuka.óot' x'óow) as part of their daily Tlingit calendar activity.

## Playground Renovation News

Hoonah Fun & Fit Partnership has continued to raise money for elementary school playground renovation needs. The total balance is \$57,875.07. Thank you, Hoonah, for your support of our efforts. Soon, a landscape architect will meet with Maintenance Supervisor Jeremiah Byers to begin plans for renovation.



Thank you for fundraising help from June to the present: We received \$455.50 from donation jars at Hoonah Liquor, Hoonah Trading, and Colette's Cupboard; \$55 was raised

from Pearl Miller's painted rock sales; Icy Strait Point gave \$500 to "pay" volunteers Jennifer Bidiman, Wilma Davis, Daphne Wright, and Sally Dybdahl for leading scavenger hunts during the port calls of Disney Cruise Lines; we also received \$40 from Disney cruisers. In addition, \$33.00 worth of metals was donated to the playground fund from Mary's Restaurant, John Thein, Debbie Picken and Paul Comolli.



On the July 1st Independence Day Celebration, \$709.26 was raised at the Ring-a-Pop, Cupcake Walk and Lucky Duck booths. Thank you to cupcake bakers Kristi Styers, Wilma Davis, Robin Hasselquist, Dottie Johanson, Sally Dybdahl and Daphne Wright.

Thank you to Mary Beth Moss and Owen James, who donated a huge amount of canned and bottled drinks for the Ring-a-Pop booth. Thank you also to Johanna Iverson & Pat Wicken and HIA (David See) for the loan of tents to protect us from the rain. Our booths were very busy that day. (Too busy to take pictures!) Thanks to workers Wilma Davis, Karen S. Mills, Jen Bidiman, Daphne Wright and Sally Dybdahl. Gunalchéesh to all who helped, and all those who supported our projects!

Another donation was \$100 given at the T'akdeintaan ku.éex'. Gunalchéesh, T'akdeintaan!

A donation of \$1000 was awarded by the Liquor Board at their September meeting.

Thank you, Hoonah, for turning in 619 **Box Top\$ 4 Education**. That's \$61.90 for our Playground Fund. Keep on saving them; turn them in to Hoonah Trading Company, Colette's Cupboard, or the school.



## Second & Third Grade News



It is hard to believe that the first quarter has already come and gone! Thank you, parents, for taking the time to come to parent teacher conferences and discuss your child's progress. There is much more to learn, so I'm

grateful that our routines and classroom expectations are in place and being followed. Every student has an agenda that goes home each night. There is required reading every night, and I'm seeing students progress as they are putting in that much-needed reading time outside of school. Currently in reading, we are learning about the elements of a story: the setting, characters, problem, solution, plot, and theme. Students are now creating their own fictional narratives during writing time, including these story elements.

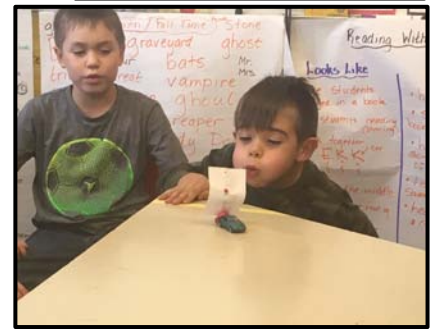
During math this past month, the second graders learned addition and subtraction strategies, while the third graders worked with story problems and learned to pay attention to crucial information needed for finding the answer. Third graders also reviewed the concept of multiplication being equal groups, and most of them are diligently practicing their multiplication facts at home!

Science is proving to be one of our favorite subjects. We are learning about different types of energy; in one science class, students worked in teams to create a car that moved with wind energy. Each team had a Matchbox car, toothpicks, clay and a few pieces of paper to work with. They had to make sails to create a car that would move as far as possible when they blew on it. We had a competition and Fisher Skaflestad's team won! His teammates were Haydn and Nevaeh. Way to go, guys!

This time of year is a wonderful time for reflection on all that we are thankful for. We recently learned about Veterans and the history behind Veterans Day in Social Studies. We are so thankful for you, Veterans, and the sacrifices you made for our freedom and this great country we live in.

Our class is especially thankful for the many parents who have provided snacks for our class. We are also thankful to Glenda Hutton and Diane Bean for the extra help you give students in reading.

We would like to send a special thank you to Janet Taylor, sister of Diane Bean, for making hats and scarves for the students in our class. The smiles in the



picture below show how the kids felt about the gifts!

I hope that this Thanksgiving holiday was a memorable one for you and your families. Happy Holidays!

Until next time,  
*Jen Bidiman*

## Giftwrap Sale

Our *Believe Kids* fundraiser was a success; the students did a great job in going out and getting orders for the various products. They sold \$6100 worth of merchandise! We will get to keep roughly half of that for the elementary activity fund. Gunalchéesh to everyone who supported our students by placing orders. We expect the giftwrap and other items to arrive soon.



## Varsity Volleyball News

The Hoonah Braves Mixed Six Volleyball team just returned home from the Region V Tournament in Kake. We placed 2nd in Southeast and earned a bid to the State Tournament in Anchorage on November 30th! With six seniors on the team, we are excited for this opportunity.

Not only did we bring home a team award, but many individual awards as well. Wea Bigelow and Rusty Williams made the Good Sport Team. Ronie Roberts won the Passing Competition, which Hoonah has now won five years in a row!

Jerry White III made the All Academic Team. Ronie, Jerry, Monique Glover, and Treston Lafferty were each selected for the All Conference Team. I'm very proud of all of our student athletes and look forward to representing our community at State!

*Coach Jessie Dybdahl*

*Team Photo, back row: Zada Michel, Monique Glover, Ronie Roberts, Wea Bigelow, Brandon Guthrie, Jerry White III, Rusty Williams, Coach Dybdahl. Front: Aiyanna Williams, Treston Lafferty, Liyah Jewell, Ashlyn Gray, Tessa Williams Photo at right: Monique, Treston, Ronie and Jerry, Mixed Six All Conference Team picks.*



←**Cross Country Team:**  
*Jeff Devlin, Brandon Guthrie, Jerry White III, Cooper Ross, Josh Wright, Tyler Watkins, Esias Kohler.*



**The 2017 Cross-Country season** ended in late September. Although no runners qualified for the state meet this year, our times got faster and faster throughout the year. We had meets in Juneau, Haines, Sitka, and Ketchikan. I am very proud of all the runners that started and finished the season. I am looking forward to the 2018 season. *Coach Adam Gretsinger*



## Hoonah Student Takes Part in World Oceans Day at the United Nations

The communities of Hoonah and Gustavus played an important role in the 2017 World Oceans Day celebration at the United Nations (U.N.) in New York City on June 8 where students Leah Moss and Lily Hooge (from Gustavus) represented the Kluane/Wrangell-St. Elias/Glacier Bay/Tatshenshini-Alsek Marine World Heritage Site. The theme of this year's World Oceans Day was **Our Ocean,**

**Our Future**, so international planners decided to celebrate the event by bringing youth from among the 43 Marine World Heritage Sites to New York to participate in the World Oceans Day Conference, a "ground-breaking event bringing together Heads of State, high-level dignitaries and actors from across the world, to build partnerships and strengthen the commitments needed to ... conserve and sustainably use an ocean that gives humankind the keys to its survival..." The U.N., an intergovernmental organization with 193 member states was established in 1945 to promote world peace and to improve living conditions for people all over the world. Protecting the world's oceans – oceans that sustain global populations and provide livelihoods for many is a key concern for the U.N.'s General Assembly.

Leah explained her own connection to the ocean in her letter to the UNESCO Marine World Heritage Site event planners:

*The ocean is important to me for many reasons. First, because it provides food for my family and me. We depend on halibut, salmon, octopus, cockles, clams, herring, seaweed, and harbor seal to survive. We also get medicine from the ocean; for example, bladder wrack seaweed soothes burns or cuts and some people say it cures arthritis. Also, my father catches halibut and sells it and we use the money for things we need. The ocean is also a fun place to play. Even though the Alaskan ocean is cold, I still like to jump off the dock and swim! While splashing our legs in the water, whales and other sea animals swim right in front of us! The ocean is also*



*important to my clan, the T'akdeintaan. Our clan owns a mourning song called The Wave Song that reminds us of when our ancestors got washed out of Lituya Bay on the outer coast of Glacier Bay by a massive tidal wave. Now the ocean holds the souls of my clan ancestors and my clan claims the big ocean waves as our crest. Lastly, the ocean always carries me back to my homeland. Oceans connect islands, countries, and cities together and help people stay connected. We travel by boat, ferry, and canoe from our village to Glacier Bay. That's how I met my friend, Lily Hooge. Now Lily and I are friends across the water!*

More than 50 children and chaperones travelled to New York to make presentations to the General Assembly at the United Nations, asking that world leaders sign a pledge 'to protect the ocean for future generations.' The students had two days to prepare, practice, and rehearse music, speeches, and the unveiling of a large scroll made from tapa cloth (a paper-like substance made from the bark of a mulberry tree) which contained the pledge.

In addition to Lily and Leah, children travelled great distances from remote locations including Papahānaumokuākea (in Hawaii), Lord Howe Island (Australia), Aldabra Atoll (Seychelles), the Wadden Sea (Denmark and Germany), Banc d'Arguin National Park (Mauritania, Africa), and iSimangaliso Wetland Park (South Africa). One 12-year old boy travelled for seven days on a boat from Gough Island to get to South Africa



where he flew for two more days to get to New York City. Despite language and cultural differences, the children were soon laughing, eating, and playing tag on New York streets, peering into cages at the Central Park Zoo, and lounging in the reception area of the Explorers Hall, a major sponsor of the event. One evening, the government of Flanders brought the children to their top floor office for a dinner buffet, where students could look **down** on the nearby Empire State Building lit up in the night sky.

*Leah: "What was it like being with kids from all around the world at the U.N.? Well, it was very different. Some of the kids didn't speak English and two teenage boys from Africa wore long white robes with brown scarves, which is their traditional clothing. My favorite person there was Julian, who is in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and lives on a small island called Lord Howe Island near Australia. His school is very involved in trying to help with global warming and plastics pollution. He told me that every day during school, the students walk the beach and pick up trash. All around the island there are recycling bins for paper, plastic, and cans.*

On the day of the event, the students quickly dressed and gathered for one last practice before travelling to the United Nations General Assembly Hall. To enter the United Nations grounds, students and chaperones passed through rigorous security procedures as the property is considered international territory. Once inside, the students, accompanied by a handful of chaperones, were escorted up to the floor of the General Assembly Hall and seated amidst thousands of representatives from countries as varied as Senegal, Brazil, and Austria. Leah, Lily and the other students sat nervously for almost 3 hours before their part of the presentation began. Suddenly, they were called to the edge of the stage and ushered up onto a platform in front of many hundreds of international representatives.

Leah opened the event by singing and drumming the Tlingit Paddler's Chant with a drum especially made for the occasion by her father, Owen James, bearing a design painted by Gordon Greenwald. Afterwards, she made a brief speech

about the Tlingit's reverence for the ocean. Several students from the Seychelle Islands, Hawaii, and Everglades National Park gave speeches and called on international leaders to sign the Ocean Pledge following the ceremony. A group of Hawaiian students blew on conch shells to end the ceremony. The entire ceremony was broadcast on cable TV.

*Leah: I knew I had spoken in front of people before, but this time I felt really nervous - like a cat with its hair standing up on its hunched-up back. But I was with new friends and they encouraged me. And when I started drumming it made me feel as if I was back home in Hoonah singing with my family."*

In a foyer just outside the General Assembly Hall, the students gathered around as dignitaries streamed in to sign the pledge and international media snapped photographs and recorded interviews. His Supreme Highness, Prince Albert of Monaco II was the first to sign The Ocean Pledge, followed by Ms. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, actor Adrian Grenier (Entourage), United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for the Environment, and Victoria, Crown Princess of Sweden.

*Leah: Being at the U.N. for World Oceans Day was a once in a lifetime opportunity. I am really and truly honored that I got to attend.*

#MyOceanPledge was started by children living in UNESCO World Heritage Marine Sites around the world who have pledged to protect these ocean treasures. Now they are calling upon the leaders of the world - and you - to protect the ocean from negative human impacts and preserve it for all future generations. Video pledges have been posted from across the planet including sites such as the Galápagos Islands in Ecuador, The Great Barrier Reef in Australia and the Phoenix Islands

Protected Area in Kiribati to name a few. You can still sign the pledge yourself using the following link: [whc.unesco.org/myoceanpledge](http://whc.unesco.org/myoceanpledge) or post on social media using #MyOceanPledge. You can watch a video of the students practicing and performing here: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BxiO8tzJgRDQTnFOX3JYR05fckEThe> children's participation in the World Oceans Day Conference was made



possible by the generous support of the Government of Flanders, the Explorers Club, Stefan & Irina Hearst and the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation.

## Big Brothers Big Sisters News

A rainy summer didn't dampen our spirits for our local one-to-one mentoring program, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hoonah.

Two hallmark projects continued in 2017: We adorned Hoonah with 32 hanging baskets of flowers with our Big Brothers Big Sisters' banners. Thanks goes to Karen S. Mills, Mother Earth, and Jeremy Martin



Just a few of our Thursday Troopers during a Litter Patrol.

for help this summer.

Thursday Troopers continued sweeping litter off the streets and byways of Hoonah. Thanks to ALPAR (*Alaskans for Litter Prevention and Recycling*), Hoonah Liquor Board, and all who took part: Joshua, Joseph, Dietrich, Hunter, Fisher, Leona, Kenny, Cheyanne, Jenna, Charlie, Tyrell, Mitchel, James, Nevaeh, Gracie, Ian, Cayenne, Aryah, Gerred, Teddy, Johan, Matthew, Andrew, Riley, Gracie, Daphne Wright, Karen S. Mills, Girl Scout Daycampers & Leaders, Sharon Pate, Travis Lewis. Most frequent attendees enjoyed a discounted



ride in the *Xunaa Kusteeyi* Dugout Canoe (thank you, Hoonah Indian Association). To our delight, humpback whales put on a bubble-feeding show for one group of paddlers.

Statewide Raffle salespeople helped earn \$ for Hoonah: Karen S. Mills sold her tasty blue homemade popsicles and tickets at a 1<sup>st</sup> of July booth, Adrien Lee sold at Hoonah Liquor Store. Thanks to Hoonah

Trading Company for allowing Kali, Gracie, Sophie, and Ava to sell in their parking lot. Thanks to all who purchased tickets, as well.

Donations to our program came from Daphne Wright, PJ Ford Slack, Minnie & Jimmy Dalton, Diane Bean and Arely Wright.

Our ship came in on July 17. Benefactor, JJ Haines Company employees, cruised into Icy Strait Point, hosted a reception, and donated \$1610 in checks and cash, \$1340 in assorted gift cards, and \$101.05 worth of



Makia holding a \$1,000 check from JJ Haines Co.

arts & crafts supplies. Our match with the most longevity spoke to the group about the positive effects of their friendship in their lives. Little Sister (2017 Hoonah HS Grad & current UAA coed) Vanessa and Big Sister Daphne Wright were matched in 2005 when Vanessa was in Kindergarten! Makia, Zada, and Leona joined in afterwards to sing, drum, and dance to the song written by our students about our ancestral homeland, Glacier Bay.

Peninsula Community Foundation of Virginia and Hoonah Recyclers each donated \$1000, as well.

Hoonah Trading Company donated wading 50+ wading pools to use as prizes. (We're hoping for better weather next summer, so they will get more use!)

*In August, we celebrated a new Community Match: Big Sister Amelia Wilson and Little Sister Michaela.*

→→→

*More recently, we celebrated another Community Match; Little Sister Tatiana and Big Sister Rita Crouch.* →→→







Our Jeet Challenge Water Table Group

BBBS of Hoonah had a water table for the *Jeet's Challenge Race* on August 26<sup>th</sup>. A group of intrepid youth and adults under umbrellas cheered, drummed, and sang Tlingit songs to encourage the wet runners on their uphill climb.



Big Sister Glenda & Little Sis Teresa

BBBS of Hoonah offered a FREE Swim on September 15<sup>th</sup>, the grand reopening of the pool after a summertime closure. We had 14 adults and 66 youths who got wet and joined in the fun.

Our annual Halloween Party was held October 28. Over 55 signed in for the fun, food, and fellowship! Many thanks to those who helped: Krista, Kathie Deitering, Kelli Gretsinger, Dodie Lunda, Mary Beth Moss, Judy Brown, Kimberly Gordon, Robin Hasselquist, Karen S. Mills, and Teddy. Gunalchéesh to Heidi Jewell for donating Halloween costumes.

## Hoonah Recyclers News

We have many fine folks to thank for their donations and help since the last newsletter:

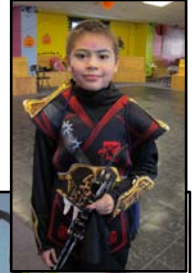


Thank you to **Alaska Marine Lines** for working with us to transport our container to and from Seattle Iron and Metal.

Thank you for donations of cans:  
 Jessie Dybdahl & Jeremy Martin  
 Paul & Sally Dybdahl                      Diane Bean  
 Nicki & John Shelton                      Karen S. Mills  
 Jack, Elena & Howard Diamond  
 Anasia & Ryan Neal      Daphne & Frank Wright  
 Dave & Jen McKillican                      City Shop Crew

Party highlights included digging for small toys in Bob & Dodie's Fear Factor Noodles and Tapioca Mix, bobbing for apples, face paint, mummy wrapping, making cracker spiders, dress up, playing Pass the Pumpkin and Candy Corn Relay Race.

Judging the fantastic costumes at this year's Halloween Costume Walk were Kassie Pesch-Johnson, Randy Roberts, and Kelli Gretsinger (Kelli also made the awards for Most Original, Funniest, and Spookiest categories.) Thanks to photographer Daphne Wright and all who attended this traditional event.



WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO BECOME BIGS! We have 14 Hoonah youth waiting on the Ready-to-be-Matched list. Please contact Sally Dybdahl about this life-changing program @ [sally.dybdahl@bbbsak.org](mailto:sally.dybdahl@bbbsak.org), (907)209-9326, or in person.

Phyllis & Jeff Tischer  
 Minnie & Jimmy Dalton  
 Marj and Floyd Peterson  
 Vagabond Queen crew



Thanks for helping:  
 Kenny Worrell, Jake Yandell, Karen S. Mills, Daphne Wright, Paul Dybdahl, Sally Dybdahl, Hoonah Harbor Staff and AML Staff

Thanks for donating metals: Paul Dybdahl  
 Paul Comolli      Bill Veler                      Frank Wright  
 Stronghold Construction                      Everett Glover, Sr.

With our profits from the last container sent to Seattle, we were able to make a donation of \$1,000 to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hoonah, and will donate \$200 to the Community Christmas Tree Program also.

Hoonah City Schools  
P.O. Box 157  
Hoonah, Alaska 99829

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#### **Dates to Remember**

Book Fair	Dec. 9-15
Community Christmas Bazaar	Dec. 9
Picture Retakes	Dec. 13
Holiday Program	Dec. 18
Christmas Vacation	Dec. 25-Jan. 5
Return after Vacation	Jan. 8
HOME Basketball games w/ Thorne Bay	Jan. 9-10
End of 2nd Quarter/1st Semester	Jan. 12
Teacher Workday—No School	Jan. 15
HOME Basketball games w/ Hydaburg	Jan. 19-20
HOME Basketball games w/ Klawock	Jan. 22-23
Teacher In-Service—No School	Jan. 26
HOME Basketball games w/ Kake	Feb. 5-6
Teacher In-Service—No School	Feb. 19-20
Teacher Workday—No School	March 16
Spring Break	March 19-23
Teacher In-Service—No School	April 23-24
School Ku.éex'	April 27
Last Day of School	May 16

#### **Community Christmas Bazaar**

**Saturday, Dec. 9**  
**10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**  
**Alumni Gym**



#### **Book Fair**

**December 9**  
(Open during the Bazaar)

**December 11 -15**  
(Open after school, 3:30 -5:00)

Books make great gifts!