

# Hoonah Schools Newsletter

May-June 2021

*May--Kayaaní Dísi: the month when grass starts to sprout*

*June—At Kadaxeet Dísi: increasing month*



## ***Congratulations, 2021 Hoonah Graduates!***

Hoonah High School's Class of 2021 received their diplomas June 7<sup>th</sup> in an indoor ceremony with family and friends in attendance. Class speakers were Salutatorian Cooper Ross and Valedictorian Ethan Ruerup.

The class had invited Alexandria Tannehill-Smith, Secondary Science Teacher, as their special Commencement Speaker.

Being the exemplary science teacher that she is, Ms. Tannehill-Smith gave what she called *"one last science lecture in hopes of inspiring you and giving you hope as you move into this next phase of your lives. Let's recap some of the most important concepts of chemistry and apply them to this new chapter you are beginning. In chemistry this year, we focused on a few main concepts and I am going to be as cheesy as possible when attempting to apply them to the life lessons and advice I give to you."*

A special thank you goes to Donna and David Austin for providing music for the occasion. Along with scholarships and gifts given to the graduates were handmade quilts made by Kris Skaflestad. Gunalchéesh to Kris for carrying on this tradition. This year's graduates, shown in the picture are, from left to right: Duane Jack, Jr., Cooper Ross, Ethan Ruerup, and Esias Kohler. Not pictured is graduating senior Jonna George.



Graduates received beautiful quilts handmade by Kris Skaflestad.



The Eighth Grade Class had their promotion ceremony on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Pictured above are the members of the Class of 2025: Atkaheen Budke, Mia Smith, Kali Harris-Membreno, Shawn Mills, Israel Boe, Krista Howland, RJ Didrickson and Collin McClement

## A Message from School Superintendent Norma Holmgaard

Dear Parents, Students, Staff, and Community of Hoonah,

I want to say hello to all of you and to thank the Hoonah City School District School Board for allowing me to serve all of you. This is an honor for me and I am quite excited to work with you. For several years I have been working with the grant programs here and have felt that Hoonah is truly one of the best-kept secrets in Alaska. This is a very special place.

We have just come through a difficult time with the Pandemic and need to recover from this. We will not, however, let down all of our protections against Covid 19. We will be diligent to keep all of our students and staff safe and healthy. As we do this, we do have some challenges ahead of us. Together we will meet these head-on.

As a school community we will work toward realizing the mission, vision and goals of the recently developed Strategic Plan. Many thanks to the committee that came together to develop this for us. In the fall we will spend some time with all of the staff helping them to understand the Plan and their role in helping Hoonah City School District to achieve the goals.

I believe strongly in communication and transparency. As I work with the School Board, the students, staff, parents and community I will do my best to be a listener and a problem solver. We will continue to hold the Round-Table discussions so that the lines of communication remain open. It is my hope that everyone will take advantage of each and every opportunity to provide input and feedback for us.

Again, I thank you for allowing me to serve you. I hope your summer is safe and successful.

*Norma Holmgaard*

*Superintendent of Schools*



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**About this newsletter:** *This publication 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, programs, students and staff. As this is the last issue of the 2020-21 academic year, I want to say gunalchéesh to everyone who has submitted articles and photos for the newsletter this year. Everyone is busy, so I appreciate their taking the time to help spread the good word about our school. Gunalchéesh also to my faithful proofreaders, Sally Dybdahl and Karen Mills. Without the two of them, who knows what terrible spelling errors, upside-down captions and mistakes in spacing and punctuation would go uncorrected?*

*For everyone else, gunalchéesh for taking time to read what is on these pages. FYI, you can also find an electronic copy of all of our newsletters on the school website at [hoonahschools.org](http://hoonahschools.org). If you have questions, suggestions or comments, you can contact me at [wrightd@hoonahschools.org](mailto:wrightd@hoonahschools.org).*

*Gunalchéesh,*

*Daphne Wright, Newsletter Editor*

**First Day of School for the Next School Year: September 14, 2021**



# Good-bye and Gunalchéesh

With the end of each school year, we not only celebrate our graduating seniors, but also take time to thank those of our staff who will be moving on. We say a big Gunalchéesh to all



those staff who are leaving our school.

**Ralph Watkins** came here for the start of the 2016-2017 school year as our new principal, then moved into the position of Superintendent/Principal a year later. We want to thank him for all he has done for our school

during his time here. From leading the whole school in a game of *Simon Says*, to singing the National Anthem at basketball games, to joining the students as they danced in for the *Ku.éex'*, Mr. Watkins has left his mark on our school. Under his leadership, the students in grades 6-12 were able to take many different elective classes during a special Elective Phases program. The electives covered vocational, academic, art and cultural areas, often giving students opportunities to look at possible career choices.

We want to say *Aatlein Gunalchéesh* to Mr. Watkins for his unwavering support for our cultural programs. As he moves on to take the Superintendent's position at Valdez School District, we wish him and his family well.



Secondary teachers Renée Gray, Alexandria Tannehill-Smith and Rachel Priser on the last day of school. Ms. Tannehill-Smith and Ms. Priser are moving on after this year.

Middle and High School Science teacher **Alexandria Tannehill-Smith** is also leaving our school, after spending two years in Hoonah. She

has taken a teaching position in Haines for the next school year. Gunalchéesh to Ms. Tannehill-Smith for sharing her many talents with us at HSC. Besides being a dynamic Science teacher, she willingly shared her skills as a photographer to do senior portraits, share great photos of what was happening in her classes, and was the editor of this year's yearbook as well.

**Rachel Priser** is leaving our district as well. She taught Second-Third Grade last year, and moved to the Secondary School this year, where she taught Math and Art Elective classes. She was also teacher-in-charge of the dual credit Fisheries Technology class 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester.



**Morgan Reeves** has moved on, after teaching Secondary Language Arts this year.



**Mark and Sascha Smith**, the teachers in the First Grade and Second-Third Grade this year, have headed to Anchorage, where they have accepted teaching jobs with the Anchorage School District.



**Deborah Badertscher** has been here for one year. She was the School Counselor and Team Leader for the Family Engagement group. See page 9 for her report on the Career Exploration activities she did with the elementary students and page 11 for the latest Family Engagement event. She has taken a position in another Southeast district for the next year.



**Michael Akes** taught Secondary Math and Carpentry/Construction. He is also leaving our district after this year.

Gunalchéesh to all of these staff members for their contributions to our school. We wish you all the best in your future jobs and adventures!



Mr. and Mrs. Smith (AKA Cat in the Hat) on Read Across America Day

## Spotlight on Culinary Elective

Kristi Styers took on the task of teaching the Culinary Elective Class during the second semester. She taught two sections: one for middle school and one for high school. Kristi explained that her goal was to teach her students basic cooking skills, so that they could prepare some meals at home for their families. She found it interesting to hear about the different dishes that the kids' families cook at home. One of the favorites that the classes prepared was croissants; the students were amazed at how much work went into making them!

Sixth grader Sophie Didrickson was asked what she enjoyed most about Culinary Class. She said her favorites were the pasta dishes they cooked in class and making Eggs Benedict. Sophie said she learned how to make blueberry muffins, and enjoyed making them for her family.

Kristi Styers is a 2005 Hoonah graduate, who went on to cooking school and is now owner of *The Fisherman's Daughter* restaurant, where she employs many of our students and former students. We want to thank Kristi for sharing her skills with our kids and our community!

*In the photo above, the class is getting ready to sample their project for the day, a halibut curry dish.*



## Update on Close Up

We are finally going to be attending Close Up during the week of August 1-August 8. Eight high schoolers will be spending five days in Washington, DC, learning about our government and what it means to be a well-informed citizen. After that, they will take a bus up to New York City and get the opportunity to experience the sights and sounds of the city.

This has been a long-delayed trip, so we are extremely excited. Thank you to all of those who have supported us in this endeavor.

*Renée Gray, Close Up Advisor*



**Carnivale** was June 5<sup>th</sup>. This was a special event for students in grades 8-12, similar to Prom, but with lots of games and great prizes, thanks to the many donations that came in from businesses and individuals. It turned out to be great fun for everyone. Thank you to all who supported this special night for our kids!



Senior Duane Jack, Jr. (above) and 4th grader Justin Sheakley (below) collected and recycled more than 700 brown paper bags this spring from grades K-12.





## Elementary Tlingit Classes



We ended our year, sadly without our annual Heritage Celebration K̓u.éex', but we hope to have it next spring. It will be our 30<sup>th</sup> annual event, and we are really looking forward to it.

In the Fifth Grade, we worked on their traditional Tlingit introductions and made some video and audio recordings of the students presenting their speeches. Next year, they will have the opportunity to speak in front of the K̓u.éex' audience as sixth graders. This class also got to play Quizlet Live with the fourth graders during the last few weeks of school.

The Fourth Grade, besides playing Quizlet Live, used Quizlet to study and review Tlingit vocabulary sets on their own. In the Second-Third Grade, we made mini-books with Tlingit Beach vocabulary and pictures so they could take them along with them on their field trip to the beach. We played *Lingo* (Tlingit Bingo) and Memory (*Wooch Yax Ditee!—They Are the Same!*) games to have some fun while we reviewed the Tlingit language we have been learning this year.



The First Grade continued to work on Dís Wooxéiyi (Calendar); during May the focus was on beach critters and during June it was on baby animals. They

also had fun playing Memory games in small groups, which gave them the opportunity to review Tlingit vocabulary words from this year. We played a few other games to help with our year's review. *Lingo* was a favorite.

The Pre-K/Kindergarten class spent the last part of the year reviewing all they had been learning since back in September. We played with their vocabulary cards, sang all the Tlingit songs they have learned, and even got to play some new games.

## Haa Tóo Yéi Yatee Boots & Books Beach

**Camp for Littles** was held June 26 & 27 in Hoonah for ages 3-5. The Littles were each given a new pair of boots and a book to take home after the camp. Activities included beach walks, books, snacks, and Tlingit language songs and games. Gunalchéesh to all who were able to participate!



**Looking for books?  
Check this out:**

# ALASKA MAIL SERVICES

## Spread the Word!

Please tell your friends about our extensive library services for Alaskans who live remotely!

Alaska Mail Services  
Juneau Public Library  
292 Marine Way  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
juneau.org/library  
go to: Services  
go to: Mail Services  
907.586.5379  
mailserv@juneau.org  
Fax: (907) 586-5383

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## Broadcasting Elective

The Northwest Coast Broadcasting Program is proud to announce more video production, and upgrades in the KHOO radio station. Led by Lgéik'i Heather Powell, and co-taught by Scott Burton of Authentimedia, the program filmed culture bearers like Kaa Tlaax Owen Lyle James, who taught Kuxwuduyáa Leah Moss and Deitxoon R.J. Didrickson how to process tsaa dleeyí (seal meat.)

Look for that video soon on Hoonah Schools YouTube channel. (To see it, go to YouTube and search for Hoonah Schools. While you're there, check out our video on s'ikshaldéen, or Hudson Bay Tea, harvesting.)

Students in the program also filmed basketball games, culture bearers teaching in the school, and are working on a video to highlight the school's variety of learning opportunities.

*Photo: Shgaté Ava Didrickson (far right) and Scott Burton (far left) film Kaa Tlaax Owen Lyle James teaching Kuxwuduyáa Leah Moss and Deitxoon R.J. Didrickson how to process tsaa dleeyí (seal meat.) Photo by Lgéik'i Heather Powell.*

## Northwest Coast Art Elective Class

The focus for the last elective phase of the year for this class was carving. The students worked with Herb Sheakley and Gordon Greenwald down at the Carving Shed. This group had worked on their own regalia project during the earlier phases of the semester.



NWC Art Students and Instructors --- Back: Cheyanne Jack, Kaci Jewell, RJ Didrickson, Tyrell Cromer, Anthony Johnson, Sean Mills, Alona Howland, Krista Howland. Front: Herb Sheakley, Will Dalton, Gordon Greenwald.

*Photo at right: Tyrell, Anthony and RJ being interviewed by the Broadcasting Class. Scott Burton (far right.)*





## STEAM Camp 2021

Sealaska Heritage Institute's STEAM\* camp was held in Hoonah June 14-19. A group of students in grades 6-9 took part in the week-long camp that included an overnight trip on the fishing vessels *Donna Ann* and *Vagabond Queen*. The group gathered seaweed at George's Island and stopped off to visit Elfin Cove. During the rest of the week, the campers processed some of the seaweed, leaving some to be worked on at Culture Camp and sharing many bags with community elders. They started carving halibut hooks under the direction of Herb Sheakley; wove cedar bark headbands with Shgen George, and learned how to be "pullers" on the big canoe, taught by Owen James and Herb Sheakley.

They spent a day at Icy Strait Point, where they heard stories from Auntie Carol Williams and Uncle Owen James, got to ride on the new gandolas, and spent some time fishing off the beach. In addition to Herb, Shgen, and Owen, instructors were Michelle Martin, Levi Mills and Camp Coordinator Heather Powell. Special thanks go to Bill Veler and Frank Wright, Jr., for allowing the use of their fishing boats for this camp. For many of the kids, the boat trip was a highlight of the week.

\*STEAM= Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math.



At the end of camp, Lgéik Heather Powell had this to say to the campers: *This has been an epic week of becoming stronger together. From the fresh yellow cedar bark in the air, to the black seaweed falling between your fingers, the salt water in your hair as you sing ancestral songs on the canoe, and the cut of your adze as you listen to your uncles tell stories of long ago, the way you feel as you gently weave the cedar bark between your fingers like you were born to do this..... and words of encouragement from our aunties, the same aunty even that encouraged your parents, with the same kindness and prayers... this is who we are... this is Xunaa Káawu.*



## Haa Tóo Yéi Yatee Culture Camp 2021



Our Haa Tóo Yéi Yatee Culture Camp was held June 21-23. Our first day was spent in town, with a variety of activities. We had a demonstration of the NYO event, the seal hop. After that, the campers learned about seal processing; gunalchéesh to Johanna Dybdahl for providing that opportunity for our students. We also began weaving cedar bark headbands, continued working on halibut hooks, and did a beach scavenger hunt with Littles. Gloria Wolfe worked with a group on beaded earrings as well.

Days Two and Three were spent at Freshwater Bay,

with many different activities for the students and participating adults. We ground our seaweed (collected during the STEAM camp trip the previous week), picked beach asparagus, did cedar bark weaving, dug spruce roots, finished carving halibut hooks, made copper tinaa's and created a Lingít First Aid Kit.

Gunalchéesh to all families, staff, and volunteers who made this happen:

**Donations** of food, water, funds came from: Hoonah City Schools, First Alaskans Institute, Sealaska Heritage, Tlingit & Haida, ISP, Sarah Lampe, Mary Beth Moss, Jamie Erickson, Phyllis Tisher (use of seaweed grinder)

### Culture Camp Staff and Volunteers:

- Heather Powell, Camp Coordinator
- Levi Mills, Lead Male Counselor
- Gloria Wolfe, Beading instructor and Cultural Leadership
- Ralph Wolfe, Cedar Bark Weaving Instructor and Youth Leadership, Camp Uncle
- Lisa Andersson, Tlingit Botanical-Tlingit First Aid
- Sonya Johnson, Cedar Bark Instructor
- Owen James, helped carve halibut hooks, make halibut spreaders, Camp Uncle
- Jennifer Nu, beach and plant walks
- Rocko Johnson, Camp Uncle working on halibut gear
- John Marvin, shared knowledge of working on line, net and gear with extensive knowledge of fishing gear along side, Vic Bean Jr., Levi Mills
- Herb Sheakley Jr, halibut hooks, tináa-making, Camp Uncle
- Ida Jean Sheakley, Seal Processing with Johanna Dybdahl
- Bus Drivers/Camp Helpers: Mark Browning, Cheryl and Emily from Alaska Humanities Forum, School Board Member Amy Courtney
- Kitchen Crew: Deb Picken, Terri Rae Mills, Tristen Powell, Deborah Shorty
- Bear Watch and All around Camp Crew: Corbin Harris, Cody Mills, Chris Mills, Sr.





## Preschool & Kindergarten Class News from Ms. Steele

The Preschool and Kindergarten classroom was a busy place the last few months of school! In English Language Arts, we worked on blending and segmenting our letter sounds in order to read words, sentences, and even books. We also worked on writing and understanding the basics of how sentences are formed. In Math, we focused on shapes and on

comparing objects based on their length and weight.

In Science, the students learned about the life cycle of plants. We planted our own flowers and watched them grow in the classroom. Working with all that dirt really sparked the

students' interest in worms as well! We then used this interest to create our own worm farm.

The class also learned about the ocean that surrounds us. We participated in the Herring Derby and Beach Week. During Beach Week, we participated in many science lessons; we even went to the beach for the day to get more hands-on learning.

The students were always eager and excited to keep learning and participate in the class! This year has really been a joy working with all these Preschoolers and Kindergarteners. I really have enjoyed every day with these students!



## Community Careers Exploration for Hoonah Elementary Students

Spring brought warmer weather and sunshine. It also provided the opportunity for Elementary students to get out and explore the community. All school year, the students have been learning about different careers and jobs during their weekly guidance hour. The warm weather allowed them to get out and see local jobs first hand. They visited the Police Station, Fire Station, GEMS Training Center, Icy Strait Lodge, the Airport, and City Hall. Many thanks to all the local businesses and agencies that hosted the students and shared their knowledge and experience with them!

*Gunalchéesh to Deborah Badertscher for this article and pictures.*





## Fifth Grade Students Travel to Glacier Bay

The 5th grade took part in the First Bloom program this spring by doing a handful of Zoom lessons put on by the National Park rangers in Glacier Bay. We learned about plants native to SE Alaska and their uses. We were able to visit Glacier Bay as a class on June 7th. Here is what the students thought of the lessons and our field trip to Bartlett Cove.

My favorite part of working with Ranger Steve and Ranger Megan on Zoom was when we made a flower with a lollipop and tissue. It was fun until the tissue we were using kept ripping. My other favorite thing was when we made a bookmark and we got to write our names in picture form --- it was fun. When we went to Glacier Bay, my two favorite things were getting to go to the Tribal House and listening to a totem pole story. ~Jenna Jack

First Bloom lessons on Zoom were fun. We learned about all different sorts of trees, we learned about different seeds for the plants, and we used a tulip for one of the projects.

When we went to Glacier Bay, we put up signs for the plants that were there. We also went to the Tribal House, but before we went inside, we had lunch. When we went in the Tribal House, we sat down to watch a welcome video from our ancestors and elders. We saw when they had built the Tribal House in the welcoming video.

When the video was done, the Park rangers at Glacier Bay said that we could look around the Tribal House. After looking around, it was almost time to come back to Hoonah. I thought that going to Glacier Bay was really fun, and I can't wait to go again. ~Jazlene Cranston-Sheakley

My favorite lesson from First Bloom was when we studied trees. My favorite tree was the maple tree because of the leaves and color. When my class went to Glacier Bay, we planted signs that said the plant name in front of that plant. Then we went to the Clan House and sang a couple songs. Then we went on a trail and studied spruce, alder, hemlock, and Sitka spruce trees. After that, we headed back to Hoonah.

~Riley Neal



What I think of 5th grade and going to Glacier Bay: first, 5th grade actually wasn't that bad. I had fun this year. I was able to have fun and not be in lockdown because of Covid. Glacier Bay was fun, too. I liked learning new things. Being on the boat back to Hoonah was fun, too. We got to sit in front and I told puns --- ha-ha. And that's what I liked about the school year and going to Glacier Bay. I hope you enjoyed reading this!

~CeCe Thein



This year 5th grade did First Bloom. I enjoyed everything. I had so much fun during the Zoom calls with Ranger Steve and Ranger Megan; they were so nice and sweet. We got to separate seeds and make a fake flower. At the end of the year, we got to go to Glacier Bay. The first thing we got to do was dig holes so we could put a sign into the hole. We got to use a shovel, a post hole digger, a pick axe, and a mini shovel. Afterwards, we went to the Tribal House for lunch. We didn't eat in the Tribal House, though. After lunch, we went inside the Tribal House to watch a video. We got to drum and dance. Then we went for a little walk. After that we started to head back to the boats.

~Reigna Sharclane

What I loved about our field trip to Glacier Bay was meeting new people and meeting Ranger Steve and Ranger Megan in person. I loved when we put up signs in front of plants. What I loved about the First Bloom lessons is when we got to draw legs, and that's what I loved most.

Harlee Brown





## Family Engagement May Zoom Event

The HCS Family Engagement Team held our second Zoom event on May 12<sup>th</sup>. This group had not held an in-person gathering since last October. During the other months, informational and activity packets had gone home with students. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, the group held our first-ever Zoom meeting.

May 12<sup>th</sup> was our second virtual gathering. The May event included some Earth Day Haiku (short poems with a specific length and structure), a video of the Second-Third Grade Class singing the Herring Egg Song in English and Tlingit, Disappearing Pictures, a game played with images and Tlingit vocabulary, and a discussion about the importance of family engagement in education.

Candy Keown was our special guest; she told about her college experience and answered specific questions from the group. Candy is a 2005 Hoonah graduate who attended Stanford University, then after earning her degree, came back home to work. Candy currently is working with the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center. Gunalchéesh, Candy, for attending our event and sharing your experiences with us.



*The 2-3 Class sang The Herring Egg Song in English & Tlingit.*



## ENJOY READING TOGETHER THIS SUMMER !

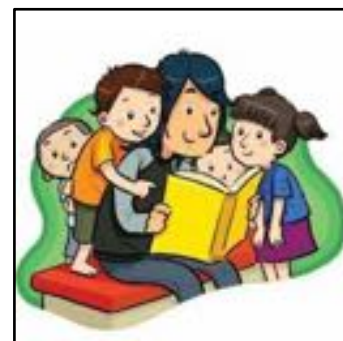
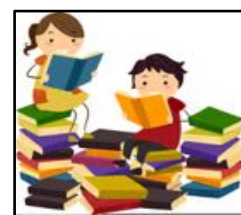
When you want to be a better basketball player, you practice and play regularly, right? With so many things, practicing makes you better, and whatever you practice gets easier - and that holds true for reading as well.

Our students have worked hard this year and it would be awesome if that progress continues throughout the summer. Having your children read to you, or to their brother or sister, or to their aunt or uncle or grandparent....is so important. Having someone read TO your child is just as important! It may help to make it a family goal to read regularly, keeping track on a calendar is an idea-and then reward yourselves! Reading at the same time each day may be helpful, putting reading practice into the regular day-to-day routine. Trading books with friends and family is an easy way to find reading material. Whatever families can do to help maintain/improve their child's reading level is so helpful! Once students have learned to read, they learn so much more! "Learn to read, read to learn."

I loved working with elementary students on their reading this school year. It was so exciting to see them grow as readers and seeing their improvement from week to week was fantastic! Thank you, and have a wonderful summer.

Read On!

*Teresa McConnell*  
Reading Teacher

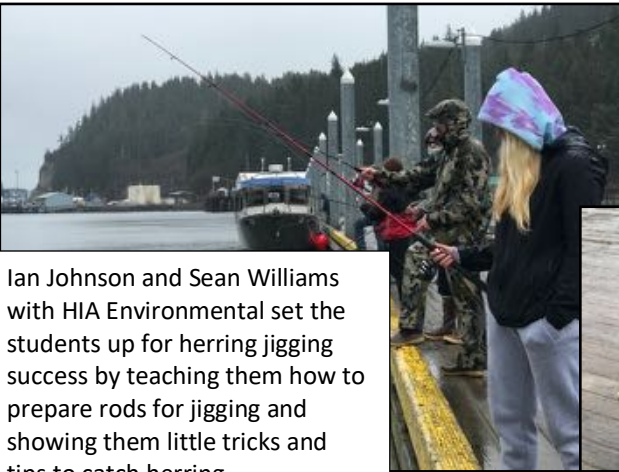


## Fisheries Technology Dual Enrollment Class

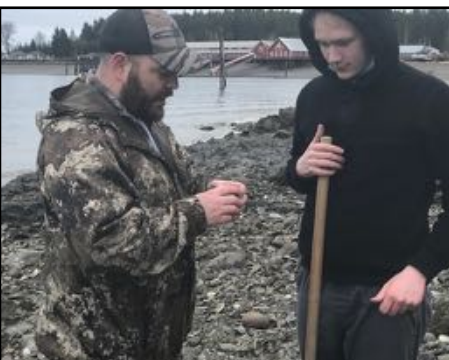
The Fisheries Technology dual enrollment course with University of Alaska Southeast completed another fun packed elective block! During the first Elective Phase, eight Hoonah high school students began the UAS course and learned about fisheries management with a focus on salmon, halibut, and crab fisheries. During the second phase, they learned about sockeye salmon in Bristol Bay, clam fisheries, skates, and the sac roe herring fishery through their online video lectures.

While their video lectures (provided by UAS) covered required course material including life cycles, fisheries management styles, gear and technology, ongoing research and other related topics, HIA Environmental supplemented the class by helping coordinate and prepare field trips, guest speakers, and other activities. This allowed students to learn in diverse ways and from interdisciplinary perspectives to help engage and connect with the material. Plus,

learning through hands-on activities and community members is just more fun!



Ian Johnson and Sean Williams with HIA Environmental set the students up for herring jigging success by teaching them how to prepare rods for jigging and showing them little tricks and tips to catch herring.



The class took another field trip to Gartina and Shaman Point to take shellfish samples with HIA Environmental's IGAP Coordinator, Jeromy Grant. Jeromy regularly takes shellfish samples from these two sites to monitor what and how much harmful toxins are in our blue mussels, cockles, and clams. We harvested 10 cockles, 10 clams, and 60 blue mussels from each site and sent them to our partner SEATOR in Sitka to do the analysis. About a week later we found out that, while all of them had paralytic shellfish poisoning (or PSP), only butter clams had over the safe limit of PSP.



The class took a field trip to the boat yard where we met with local commercial fisherman, Jim Dybdahl. Jim's boat the Carol Ann had been dry docked for maintenance. He discussed the importance of maintaining your boat while they used a travel lift to carry and set it back into the water. It was cool to see the travel lift in action! We then met Jim at the harbor where we hopped on the Carol Ann, looked at and discussed some of the different types of gear, and Jim shared a few of his experiences commercial fishing. Thank you, Jim, for sharing your boat and knowledge with us!



Examining phytoplankton from a water sample under the microscope.



## Adventures in the MOBY Greenhouse

*An abbreviated story about eleven 4<sup>th</sup> Graders and a weird teacher who think they can feed Hoonah, AK.*

Somewhere in the middle of the summer months of 2020, the ferry dropped off at the Hoonah Ferry Terminal a 20-foot-long trailer filled with a bit of dirt and some planters, much dust and spiders, and a few trays of empty growing plugs. However, this trailer held a little surprise waiting to happen. Over the course of the year, I wrote several grants in an attempt to secure money to use the old shed between the school and the community center as a greenhouse once again. Thus far it has not manifested itself -- though there are yet still opportunities



around the next corner. Of this, I am sure. Instead of focusing on the “shed greenhouse”, the 4<sup>th</sup> graders and I decided we would transform the

little MOBY into Hoonah’s most productive grow space per foot planted.

Over the last two months of school, 4<sup>th</sup> graders went on a mission. We spent hours of our time researching soil qualities, worm composting, and then collecting various soils and seeds. We rebuilt the growing beds both inside and out. We made numerous addenda to



the soil, and we constructed (with the help of Dr. Ake’s Construction Elective class) an entire second layer of growing space within the greenhouse. And then we planted... man, we did plant!

We planted eight beds of leaf vegetables and two full beds of herbs. Within these there are: spinach, kale, mixed lettuces, and collard greens; and in the herb beds there are basil, oregano, dill, and cilantro. Over the course of the next few months, we fully expect it to explode with green foods. We will need the help of all of Hoonah to keep up with this crop. Please come down to the City Park and pluck and pull, but always leave enough for the next person! And when you are in there, feel free to pull a few grass blades and horsetail stalks that are helping themselves to our dirt.



Over the last month, students and I have had some garden starter sales to raise money for improvements we wanted to make. Money raised from these sales: \$348.62! It is being used to purchase materials to upgrade the greenhouse and transform it into a completely self-contained and automatic vegetable growing machine! These improvements include a self-watering system and a cooling system. All the money we raised went into ordering supplies to make these happen. We will continue improving the MOBY and replanting in it until it leaves the community after the summer of 2023.

So, please come down and visit the MOBY Greenhouse this summer at Kéidladee Park. Bring a little bag and make a salad

or pick some herbs. Enjoy the bounty, and thank a fourth grader for all their hard work!

*Mark Browning*



# Benji, the Monster Slayer

By: Ethan Ruerup  
March 2021

This is Benji. Benji loves to play make-believe with his friends. They fight monsters and save frightened villagers with their swords and shields.

Recently, however, Benji's family has gone through some changes. Now he lives in a new town, away from his old friends.

On top of that, he's having some trouble making friends at school.



"This is no fun..." Benji says to himself.

All of a sudden, Benji feels an ominous energy coming from the forest behind his new house. He has to explore!

A terrifying beast appears!

Luckily for Benji, he has been training for this his whole life. Benji's true form is revealed! With a zap from his mighty sword, the beast is vanquished.



And so, Benji goes back to the forest every day to fight fearsome monsters. He spends so much time in the forest, his mother starts to worry. "You need to spend more time on studying and less time on make-believe," his mother says.

"This is no fun..." Benji says.

"But maybe it can be!"

Benji donned his signature pointy hat, and brandished his pencil.

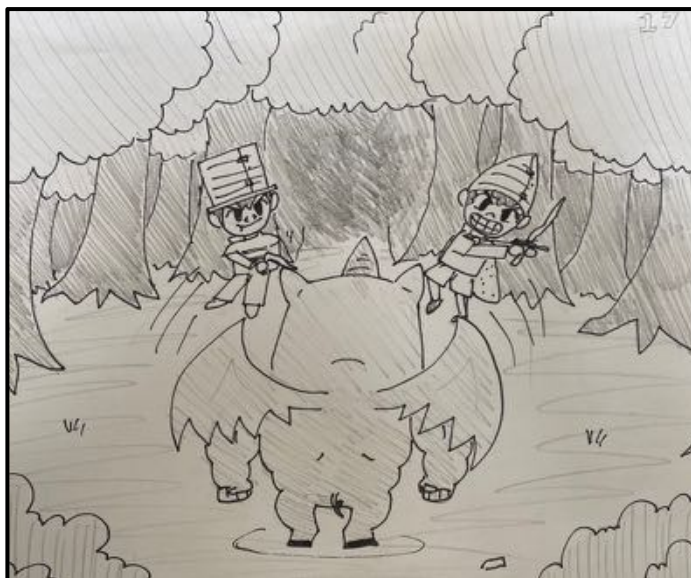
All of a sudden, a new foe appears! Benji's homework has come to life. It's the strongest monster yet!

Benji dodges, blocks, slices, zaps the monster!

Finally, with a triumphant downward strike, Benji emerges victorious!

"Did you finish your homework?" Benji's mother asks.

"Yes, I did, Mom! Does this mean I can go play outside now?" Benji replies proudly.



"I don't see why not!"

And with that, Benji returns to the forest, brandishing his "sword," ready to face any monster that crosses his path. But instead of a monster, Benji encounters.... A boy.

"Hello!"

"Hello!"

"My name's Benji, what's yours?"

"Thomas. What're you holding?"

"A sword. What're you holding?"

"A laser gun."

"So...would you like to play 'monster fighting' or something?"

"Sure."

Suddenly a monster appears!

It looks like Benji has some help with these monsters from now on.

THE END

*This story was written during the Creative Writing Elective taught by Renee Gray during Second Semester.*



## Varsity Girls' Basketball End of Season Coach's Report

The Lady Braves had a very eventful, stressful, yet fun season this year. I would like to recognize the athletes for doing everything that they could to be a part of this organization and to represent their community on the basketball court, whether it was morning practice, sharing a gym, wearing a mask at practice, to even playing in one. Thank you.

As many of you know, I love basketball because of the lessons it carries through the sport, but also through life. One lesson is respect, and these girls showed the upmost respect to any team at any moment of the game. The Braves team got the Sportsmanship Award at the 2021 Spring Region V Basketball Tournament.

Some of my favorite moments from this season were playing against teams that underestimated our passion for the game, the foundation of trust we built over time, and our willingness to go to battle until the last buzzer sounds. That is bigger than the sport of basketball.

I am going to share some of my favorite characteristics about each athlete:

**Aubree-** Aubree is a feisty, hungry, defensive animal. I remember one time during a very close game, we were in a huddle at a timeout, and I told the girls that no matter what happens in the game, we have to make sure we are protecting the ball like it's our life. And Aubree did just that; we come out of the huddle, there is a loose ball, and the next thing I see is Aubree's basketball shoes are above her head holding onto that ball like it was her life.

**Kali-** Scribs is a perfectionist; she needs to know every single detail of what is happening in the game and how can she make sure NOT to make a mistake. One of my favorite memories with Kali is at Regionals in Sitka. We set up a play to try and get our young players some opportunities to score. We drew up a play in the huddle, and immediately after the timeout, the play is run. Scribs is wide open for a mid-range jumper, she calls for it, and lets it fly, then SWOOSH for two. She turns around before the shot even went in and was jumping in excitement down the floor.

**Krista-** Krista is quiet, respectful, and always willing to listen. She works so hard for her goals and does not want to ever let her teammates down. One of my favorite moments from this season with Krista was when we were in Angoon, she was one of our leading scorers as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader and did not show fear against the region champs.

**Leah-** Leah is another one of the athletes that truly loves playing defense; she will do anything and everything she can to make sure you do not get in between her and the basket. One thing I really enjoy about Leah is that she is always willing to battle, it does not matter if it was a box-out drill, shooting drill, or a game, she was always willing to give it 100%.

**Teresa-** TESA! One of my favorite things about Tesa is that she is very coachable; she loves to ask questions about the game, and is 100% honest about them. She is always willing to guard anybody and truly just has passion to help and support her teammates on and off the court. Several times during the season, Tesa made some incredible clutch shots in the final



*Back: Alona Howland, Hallie Wilson, Leah Moss, Kali Harris-Membreno  
Middle: Teresa Lewis, Olivia Morrison, Krista Howland  
Front: Sierra McClement, Aubree Hinchman*

seconds to either tie the games, or to put us ahead. She got an offensive rebound and putback up in Skagway to give a Win on the road in the final seconds.

**Alona-** HOWARD! One thing I really enjoy about Alona is her shoe game is always fresh, and she takes her shooting drills very seriously. She is always willing to step into any situation to back up her team. A fun moment in the season was when I had to asked her to try and set a scoring goal on offense for the game, and she achieved that in the first half, scoring double digits for the night.

**Hallie-** Hal! A few things I really enjoy about coaching Hallie is her willingness to learn, willingness to try, and not be worried about judgement or making a mistake. Many of you don't know this, but this is only Hallie's 3<sup>rd</sup> year ever playing basketball on an organized team, and in this season alone she took two charges and got to the foul line consistently.

**Olivia-** Olivia, I am thankful to be your coach; we set goals this year and we exceeded them. I know you would do anything on that floor to represent not only your teammates, but also your community in a respectful fashion. There were times that I watched you perservere and give every last ounce of blood, sweat, and tears into the game for your team and community.

**Sierra-** Last but not least, Sierra. I am very thankful to have Sierra on this team because she is the backbone of this team, she is the glue. When times got tough in the game and we needed a morale boost, or a solution to issues on and off the court, she was willing to do that for anyone on the team. For that, she is rewarded the MVP Award for this season.  
---Coach Miguel Contreras

*Gunalchéesh to Alexandria Tannehill-Smith for the team photo and to Cory Hill for the game photo.*





## Hoonah Boys' Basketball Team Coach's Message

The 2020-2021 basketball season has come to an end. I am very proud of the effort that the team gave this year.

They played very well together and were an exciting group to watch play.

I would like to say thank you to the community of Hoonah for all the great support throughout the basketball season. You all provided us with a great atmosphere during our home games, and your continued support for the team is amazing.

Hoonah City Schools was also awarded the Good Sportsmanship Award at the Region V tournament. This award is given to the school that displays good sportsmanship during the tournament and is chosen by the officials and a committee from the host school.



Left to right: Esias Kohler, Jermaine Johnson, Tyrell Cromer, RJ Didrickson, Ethan Ruerup, Alejandro Contreras. Isaac Jacobsen, Cooper Ross, Anthony Johnson. Not pictured: Duane Jack, Jr.

Thanks,  
Coach Gretsinger



Gunálchéesh to Alexandria Tannehill-Smith for the team photo, and to Cory Hill for the game photos.

## Village Hoop Basketball Camp

**Dates: July 12-17, 2021—City Gym**

**What to bring:** exercise clothes, gym shoes, water bottle. Also bring a fun, respectful attitude. Masks are not required. Please arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled session starts to allow for transition time.



### Schedule:

Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
11 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Monday – Friday

7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade

2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Monday – Friday

Lunch will be provided daily after each session.

On Saturday, there will be a family picnic down at the Park with lunch provided for all age groups.

**Contact Miguel Contreras with any questions  
at 907-209-9177**

**or email him at [contrerasm@hoonahschools.org](mailto:contrerasm@hoonahschools.org).**





Both teams: Anthony, Leah, Dietrich, Izaac, Mia, Teresa, Coach McLuckie in front.

### A Robotics Season Like No Other!

The fun-loving, hard-working members of the Hoonah Robotics Club completed the 2020–2021 competitive season with an abundance of flexibility, persistence, and resilience. As coach, I am in awe.

Normally a season is about three months of after-school practices three times a week, with a fourth month added if a team qualifies for the Alaska State Robotics Tournament.

This season, Hoonah divided into two teams that kept at it for six full months: “Da Squad” (Izaac Jacobsen, Teresa Lewis, Leif Gray, Dietrich Lewis, Leah Moss) and “Mighty Mega Marshmallows” (Mia Smith, Anthony Johnson, Alona Howland). Statewide, roughly half the teams finished the season. Because of Covid-19 precautions, the season was a mix of in-person practices, think-about-the-robot-in-absentia, virtual competitions over the Internet, team judging presentations over Zoom, and numerous other hurdles unique to this year.

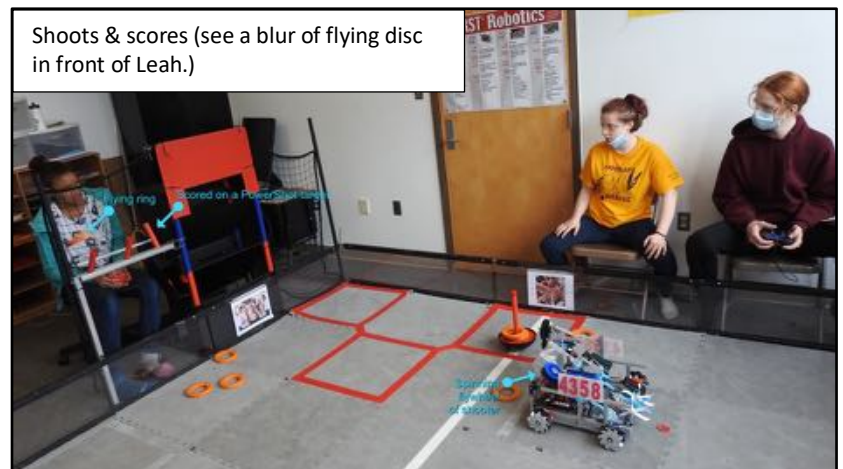
To the credit of the parent FIRST organization, they reworked the format of the robotics matches to allow for remote play, a bit like a game of Solitaire with competitive score reporting. At the final qualifying competition, Hoonah’s “Da Squad” ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in matches and the “Mighty Mega Marshmallows” earned an “Innovate Award”, 3<sup>rd</sup> place. These rankings are especially honorable given that we were up against 23 other teams dominated by Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau and representing a mixture of after-school clubs (like us), during-school



engineering courses, and homeschool programs. The game itself changes every season, which requires teams to develop new play strategies, design and build original scoring mechanisms, and write new robot code. This season the game was all about goals: wobble goals delivered to target zones, rings stuffed into a low goal, rings shot at a distance into medium and high goals, power shot targets knocked down by hard ring shots, and more.

Our teams found shooting a lot of fun, but making a shot that scores reliably most challenging. We should save our game elements and robots for a booth at the next Hoonah Fall Carnival—fun!

A strong robotics team requires an incredibly diverse mix of skills and learnings. Team members rarely know-it-all, but rather, each brings their own area of expertise to the team mix. The robot drivers must develop offensive and defensive strategies from a deep understanding of game rules, as well as lots of practice executing on those strategies. Building robots includes mechanical design, 3D part modeling, parts fabrication and assembly. Giving the robots smarts means coding the robot



controller (an Androidphone) for both driver-controlled and autonomous sensor-controlled modes. The ‘business’ side of the team requires outreach, fund-raising, communications, documentation in an engineering journal, team management, and more.

Every team member has a niche where they can make unique contributions to the team. Keep an eye out for the Hoonah Robotics Club this coming year as we tackle a new game theme, “Freight Frenzy.” All we know about the game at this time is that “teams will race against time to transport hard-to-move essential goods.” Sounds like a lot of fun mixed with real-world challenges.

The successes of the Hoonah Robotics Club were made possible by the generous support from Hoonah City Schools, parents, and Hoonah’s 1% Student Activities Fund. Thank you!

–Robotics Coach Ben McLuckie

Gunalchéesh to Al James for the photos.

## The Herring Derby Review

What started out some time in January as an idea of a persuasive piece soon took on a life of its own. Elementary teachers were working during their PLC times to formulate an elementary school-wide plan to assess how well kids



could write persuasive pieces, or arguments if you will. Soon the idea took on a life of its own.

Guest speakers were brought

in, including Thomas Thorton, an anthropologist from UAS; a whale biologist, Christine Gabriel, from Glacier Bay National Park; Neal Schoenfelder from the Forest Service; and Chuck Miller, a longtime Egg on Branch fisherman from Sitka. Students spent the months of March and April learning about the plight of the herring and the dangers that surround this small but powerful fish.



The month-and-a-half-long unit culminated in a blowout herring Derby on the docks all along Hwy 366 from the harbor up to the old city plane dock. At 3:00 on Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup> staff convened down at the float on the City Dock. Tents were pitched and, and the oil began to heat up. Soon, dozens and dozens of kids and families began to show up. Participants all registered and were off

fishing. Some hung out on the City Docks and fished the afternoon away, while others traveled down to the harbor and fished from the docks down there.

Those who stayed on the City Docks had a long hard day with few herring caught, but those down at the harbor caught herring by the sackful. However, Michael Akes and the kids and families on the dock covered with his Cajun-made fried Doughnut Blobs. And they were exceptional. Mike and Deb Badershter fried doughnuts for two hours straight and made close to 800 doughnuts. Even though the fishing was slow, a good time was still had by all.

Families hung out on the docks for nearly two hours with lines in the water, lessons being learned, and flounder brought in. The largest herring caught all day in the K-3 division was James Jack's whopper- a 3.6 oz herring. In the 4-7 division, the partnership of Taylour Mills and Ashley Johnson produced the largest herring all day at 5.1 oz.



And finally, in the upper division, Aubree Hinchman's 4.7 oz monster beat the rest. The smallest herring of the day was a tie between James Jack's, Raelyn Gray's and Mathew Mills' 1.1 oz fish. However, all kids received a prize for just coming and having fun. Thanks to all those who purchased gifts for Herring Derby Fisherkids, including: Huna Heritage, ANS, the Fisherman's Daughter, and a slew of individual donors. Thank you to all those mentioned, and those not! The crew from Game Creek Bible Camp turned it up and caught the majority of all fish caught. Their 8 gallons of fish were then donated, frozen, and the majority were passed out to Elders through Darlene See at HIA.

It was an all-round great day of fishing. The weather was great! There were fish to be had, and there were smiles and memories made. Thanks to all those participated- and here's to next April/ May when we do it again.



*Editor's Note: GUNALCHÉESH TLEIN (BIG THANKS) to fourth grade teacher Mark Browning, for being the mastermind behind all things herring at our school this spring, and for writing this report for our newsletter. Gunalchéesh tsú (thanks also) to Nicolle Egan for the photos used with this article.*



## Earth Day Clean Up

Hoonah Recyclers had Earth Day Clean-up on April 24<sup>th</sup> in partnership with the HIA Environmental Department, U.S. Forest Service and City of Hoonah. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we did not serve lunch this year, but we did have a sign-in table and held drawings for prizes at the end. The HIA crew had a different kind of prize distribution. They had decorated and hidden rocks all over town, and awarded prizes according to who brought in special rocks (which were numbered.) The kids (of all ages) enjoyed finding the rocks. It was a requirement that they had to turn in trash along with each rock that they found.



### Gunalchéesh for Donations:

- **Icy Strait Lodge** gave us a good deal on pizza certificates, which we awarded to family groups. They also donated a gift card as a prize.
- **Hoonah Trading** donated some gift cards. Recyclers also purchased gift cards as prizes.
- **The Garrison Family** donated Hoonah Trading gift cards.
- **Skeek Family** donated Hoonah Trading gift cards.
- **ISP** donated small toys.
- **Bob & Glenda Hutton and Mary Beth Moss & Owen James** donated pizza certificates.



Here is a list of all 36 volunteers who signed in that day: Bambi Jack, Duane Jack, Jr., James Erickson, Mary Erickson, Mitchel Michel, Leah Moss, Mary Beth Moss, Owen James, Heather Wheeler, Marlene Duvall, Easton Ross, Basia Trout, Alexandria Tannehill-Smith with Arrow & Summit, Jora Savland, Andy Savland, Shaylee Hill-Bate, Trinity Worrell, Elaine Hatmaker, Cathy Lindoff, Nicolle Egan, Monica Savland, Charlie Jack, Jenna Jack, Ashley Johnson, Taylour Mills, Marti Lee, Jordan & Kana Mills, Mark Browning, Michael Cheslock, Daphne Wright, Karen Mills, Arianna Lapke, Sean Williams, Ian Johnson, Jillian Schuyler. Gunalchéesh to all who helped!

## Hoonah Recyclers Update

We have just sent our van South to Seattle. Thank you to Alaska Marine Lines for donating the freight cost. Thank you also to the following for donations of metals the past few months: Jessie & Jeremy Martin, Paul & Sally Dybdahl, Arely & Sam Wright, Minnie Dalton, Bob & Glenda Hutton, Daphne & Frank Wright, FV Vagabond Queen, Xiu Farley, Nicki & John Shelton, Marj & Floyd Peterson, Deb Picken, Elena & Howard Diamond, Sherry Mills, Brian Bitz. The Recyclers made a cash donation to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration. We also bought some can crushers with an ALPAR (Alaskans for Litter Prevention and Recycling) grant. We will be giving these out to those who need them. Ask about it the next time you bring cans to our van.



Watch for signs and Facebook posts for when we will re-open, hopefully sometime in July.

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

Bulk Mail  
Permit #2  
Hoonah

## Boxholder

### Hoonah City Schools Newsletter May-June 2021

#### In this issue:

High School Graduation	1
Eighth Grade Promotion	1
Superintendent's Message	2
Good-bye & Gunalchéesh	3
Culinary Elective	4
Close Up	4
Carnivale	4
700 Brown Paper Bags	4
Elementary Tlingit Classes	5
Books & Boots Camp	5
Library Books by Mail	5
Broadcasting Class	6
NW Coast Art Class	6
STEAM Camp	7
Culture Camp	8
Pre-K/Kindergarten Class	9
Career Exploration in Elementary	9
First Bloom in Fifth Grade	10
Family Engagement Zoom Event	11
Read Read Read this Summer!	11
Fisheries Dual Enrollment Class	12
MOBY Greenhouse Report	13
<i>Story of Benji</i> by Ethan Ruerup	14
Varsity Girls' Basketball	15
Varsity Boys' Basketball	16
Summer Basketball Camp	16
Robotics	17
Herring Derby	18
Earth Day Clean Up	19
Hoonah Recyclers	19

#### Dates to Remember for Next School Year

First Day of School	September 14, 2021
Thanksgiving Break	November 25-26, 2021
Christmas Vacation	December 20-31, 2021
Spring Break	March 21-25, 2022
Last Day of School	June 15, 2022



*Photos from  
Haa Too Yéi  
Yatee Culture  
Camp and  
Books & Boots  
Beach Camp  
for Littles.*