Burnett helps tribe stay on track

Lead for Facilities & Maintenance has big goals for future

By Frazier Myer

Chehalis tribal member Jimmy Charles “Chuck” Burnett is the Facilities & Maintenance Director for the Chehalis Tribal Government.

His family and friends have called him by the nickname Chuck his entire life. He said embracing it occasionally causes confusion when having to use his real name because the majority of people know him simply as Chuck.

Burnett’s parents are Nadine and Jimmy Burnett. His father was a minister while raising his children, which led to the family moving around a lot. They left Washington to relocate to Idaho during Burnett’s early years. He finished high school in Alaska.

As Facilities & Maintenance Director, Chuck Burnett has tackled numerous projects to benefit the Chehalis Tribe.

See BURNETT, page 6

Project upgrades treatment plant

New wastewater system to better protect tribal community and environment

By Frazier Myer

The Chehalis Tribal Planning Department kicked off installation of a new wastewater treatment system on the Chehalis Reservation on Sept. 14.

The system will enable the tribe to monitor wastewater activity and know exactly what is being put back into the ground. Ultimately, the project will better protect the community.

The ground on the reservation is highly concentrated with sand and other gritty minerals, which causes water to seep through it quickly and doesn’t allow for proper filtration. The wastewater plant is crucial for community health.

The project delivers an upgrade from the previous system. The new sewage treatment plant is larger with updated equipment. This will lead to less maintenance and allow it to service the entire Tribe and Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel.

The system will keep drinking water safe for those who live on or visit the reservation and offers protection from natural threats created in the environment.

The water treatment program is constructed to have waste transfer through it to create what is known as class A water, which is clean enough to put in rivers or lakes. The tribe stores its water in a man-made pond.

Brian VonCluck, Utilities Project Manager for the Chehalis Tribe, led the project on the reservation.

See PROJECT, page 8

The Chehalis Tribal Planning Department leads a major project to update the wastewater treatment system.
Charles Latch pivots to career sharing stories

Chehalis tribal member Charles “Chuck” Latch joined the Information Technology department as Communications Trainee in September.

Latch grew up and lived most of his life on the Chehalis Reservation. He is the son of Janice Latch and has two brothers (Calvin and Kevin Bray) and three sisters (Sheilah Bray, Stephanie Pickernell and Selena Kearney), all enrolled Chehalis tribal members. He also has two children, Olivia and Charles.

Latch is passionate about Native American art and history. His favorite style is carving, and he is currently working on a wooden mask crafted from an alder. Latch has put countless hours into studying the craft and has worked with artists throughout the Pacific Northwest.

He has many years of experience working with his fellow native people on the Chehalis Reservation. Latch worked for both the Tribal Government and Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel. He worked in food and beverage for 10 years at the casino. While at LEC&H, he moved from busser and server to supervisor and trainer. Latch also worked in construction as an operating engineer apprentice and heavy equipment operator.

During the months COVID-19 has impacted the tribal community, Latch was hired by Facilities & Maintenance to help clean and sanitize buildings. He also worked with Social Services as an assistant cook and delivered meals to Chehalis tribal elders.

As he spent time engaging with the community, he saw the Communications Trainee position as an opportunity to become even more involved with his people.

Latch is looking forward to his new career in journalism and sharing fellow tribal members’ stories.

He views multimedia journalism as an outlet to connect the past, present and future generations and strengthen tribal cultural knowledge and identity.

Housing uses money to offset COVID reverberations

Department provides much-needed assistance

The Chehalis Tribal Housing Authority received $324,515 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2020. This is what the funds were used for:

- Purchased gloves, masks and cleaning supplies for staff.
- Sanitized and disinfected three units.
- Provided one-time utility assistance in the amount of $400 per household to all tenants in housing, homeowners in housing and participants in CTHA’s Rental Assistance program.
- Supplied 89 homes with cleaning supplies.
- Forgave rent and mortgage payments for half of March, April and May for all tenants and homeowners in housing.
- Provided technology for remote work and video conferencing.
- Installed air purifying ductless heating and air conditioning to four units.
- Provided dumpsters to tenants for spring cleaning.
- Offered curbside garbage pickup for two weeks.
- Assisted three participants with emergency rental assistance.
- Purchased office furniture for social distancing.
- Rehabbed one unit because of severe water damage.

If you received emergency assistance from CTHA already, you might be eligible to receive more help.

CTHA has authorized an additional three months of assistance.

Contact the office at 360-273-7723 for more information and to see whether you qualify for emergency rental or utility assistance.

In March 2021, Chehalis Tribal Housing Authority received $1.3 million in Emergency Rental Assistance Funds from the Department of Treasury. So far, this is what the funds have been used for:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>TYPE OF ASSISTANCE</th>
<th>PEOPLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prospective utilities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total funds: $299,616.73
Support for healing journey

On Sept. 16, The Chehalis Tribe's Caring For Each Other House hosted an open house to share with the Chehalis community that we are open and ready to help.

The Healing House provides support services for trauma and crime survivors. Crime victims, domestic violence and youth prevention programs are available. We offer cultural teachings, body movement, grief and trauma counseling and training.

The open house was well attended by the community and Chehalis tribal employees. Healing House staff members would like to thank everyone who visited. Special thanks to Health Director Denise Ross for supporting our event and mission.

Youth Prevention (Caytee Cline), Domestic Violence (Samantha Sandstrom) and Victim Services (Jody Lusk) programs are now housed in the Healing House!

Please watch for announcements about upcoming events for youth, family and the community.

Jessica Small tackles new role at clinic

Family Nurse Practitioner ready to serve community

Congratulations are in order. After working as a nurse in tribal health for the past 11 years, including six years as a registered nurse with the Chehalis Tribal Wellness Center, Jessica Small is pleased to stay on as a Family Nurse Practitioner.

Small is a graduate of Washington State University’s Doctor of Nursing Practice, Family Nurse Practitioner program. She completed her clinical rotations at family practice locations throughout western Washington.

Small values the patient/provider relationship and building trust with each of her patients. She enjoys getting to spend time face to face and learning how she can help community members through their health care journey.

She is passionate about functional medicine and will return to school to obtain a functional medicine certificate. This type of medicine is a systems biology-based approach that focuses on identifying and addressing the root cause of disease. Small also has started the process to provide treatment to those with substance use disorders.

Small has been married for 23 years and has two sons. During her free time, Small’s focus is on quality family time. Her family enjoys camping, hiking, exploring local rivers and traveling.

She also works on projects at home, such as creating a mini-farm to help take steps toward becoming completely self-sufficient.

Small looks forward to getting to know the community well and help serve through her practice.

GIVING THANKS

Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel honored Native American Appreciation Day on Sept. 24 by gifting tribal members a cedar bowl and cutting board. The boards were customized with the Chehalis Tribe’s basket logo. Pictured are tribal elders who picked up their gifts at the LEC&H Events Center.

The Chehalis Tribal Government used the occasion to show its appreciation for employees by giving staff the day off.
CORTNEY BECKWITH
ANDREA BORDELON-LANnez
AVA BOYD
JOEL BROWN
TREY BROWN
JACKSON BROWN
RITA BURKE
MADISON CARTER
WILLOW CAYENNE
WELSEY CHRISTJOHN
TABITHA COLSON
ANTHONY COMBS
ANGELA CORTES
TODD DELAMATER
JOSEPH DELAMATER
RAMONA FRICKE
TALIYAH FULTON
VIRGINIA GARITY
LESLEY GILLIE
DYLAN HJELM
KAYTLIN
HOLMES-PICKERNELL
LEON HOUSE
CANDICE JANSEN
SELENA KEARNEY
JOLI KING
TANYA KINKADE
PAULITA KLATUSH
CONNIE KLATUSH
DALE KLATUSH
KAREN KLATUSH
BRUCE KLATUSH
ARYANA KLATUSH
CORRENA KLATUSH
LYDIA KLATUSH-FROMM
WALTER LEWIS
RICKIE MARION
ELAINE MCCLOUD
MARLA MEDINA
KADYN MITCHELL
MADDEX MOWITCH
ALYSSA MULLINS
ESTRAEA MUSIC-OLNEY
AMBER OLIVER
EDWARD OLNEY
LEILANI ORTIVEZ
DYLAN PALMER
ABIGAIL PALMER
DANIEL PENN
ANDREA PHILLIPS
CASEY PICKERNELL
RYAN PITZENBERGER
HILARY POWELL
DAKOTA QUEZADA-KLATUSH
KAHLI REYNOLDS
RAYNA ROMERO
SCARLETT ROMERO
LETICIA ROMO
AMARIA ROSADO
DELORES ROURKE
EDWARD SANCHEZ
GEORGE SANCHEZ
ANJOLYSA SANCHEZ
JANET SANCHEZ
TOMAS SANCHEZ
STORMIE SANCHEZ
WILLIAM SECENA
JOHN SHORTMAN
CARMEN SHORTMAN
LOI SIUFANUA-BOYD
TRISTAN SMITH
ROBERT TEAGUE

Kaytlin Pickernell: Happy 13th birthday Kaytlin (aka Piggy), love Mom, Dad and Emily.
Estraea Music-Olney: Happy birthday to the most amazing little girl who is kind, sweet, loves all animals, is helpful, artistic, musical and strong like her Daddy. Mommy and Daddy love you to infinity and beyond!!!
Lydia Klatush-Fromm: Rock ’n’ roll soul mama says happy 40th birthday, love Mom.
Program helps tribe maintain strong cultural connections

By Charles Latch

The Chehalis Tribal Heritage & Culture Program strives to preserve traditions by hosting a cultural Native American arts class twice a week.

Community members ages 5 and older are welcome to join the instruction-based courses from 4:30-6 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Classes provide an opportunity for tribal and community members to gain a better understanding and greater respect for generations that thrived off the land and its resources. Native American people collected and foraged material off the land to create necessities for thousands of years prior to colonization.

The program promotes and emphasizes the significance of cultural preservation. The Chehalis Tribe recognizes how important identifying as a Native American is to its members and encourages maintaining a strong connection to the land.

Essential history

Class participants have the chance to work with materials their native ancestors used to make what are now known as traditional artifacts that were once used as essential everyday items.

Instructors Karen Klatush and Skylar White-Eagle Rosbaugh, both enrolled Chehalis tribal members, explain how to work with raw materials such as cedar, cattail, sweet grass, deer hide and much more.

Klatush is surrounded by artwork, including items she keeps near her desk that remind her of her ancestors. She has special memories of her grandmother, who gave her a handwoven coil basket that Klatush shares with pride.

“I sat and watched my grandma since I was a little girl,” Klatush said.

She remembers that her grandmother was often surrounded by cattail and raffia. She would watch and learn as her grandmother worked.

Klatush said the best part of her job is working with tribal youth, giving them a break from electronics. She hopes they will carry on their Native American ancestral traditions.

Develop skills

The program’s classes teach students a variety of skills, such as weaving techniques (baskets, roses and hats); beading; and creating drums, moccasins and dreamcatchers. There is something for everyone.

Don’t worry about skill level. The program offers opportunities for both aspiring and more advanced artists.

Participants will be able to learn about exclusive rights tribal members have to collect materials, how and when to harvest items such as cedar, display their artwork and meet fellow artists.

Although dedicated times are available to work on art projects, the program is flexible and will provide the time, space and materials needed for community members to work on specific projects. An open classroom is offered throughout most of the week and staff members can assist with artwork.

Klatush and White-Eagle Rosbaugh operate the program and arrange classes with assistance from Youth Support Services Coordinator Melanee Stevens. Prior to joining the Chehalis Tribe team, Stevens had 10 years of experience working.

See TRADITIONS, page 6
Think pink for breast cancer awareness


The Native Women’s Wellness Program asks men and women of all ages to wear pink and share photos on social media using the hashtag #indigenouspink.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death and the most common cancer found in American Indian/Alaska Native women.

The goal of Indigenous Pink Day is to educate all Indigenous people on the importance of early detection and remind men and women to keep up to date on screenings. One in eight women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime. Wear Pink to honor relatives who have faced or are now facing breast cancer.

CONTACT US

The wellness program has mobile mammography clinics at each SPIPA site. To find out if you’re eligible for a free or low-cost mammogram, contact Community Wellness Manager Christina Hicks at 360-709-1741 or chicks@chehalistribe.org.

CREATIVE WITH PINK

A group photo will be taken at 11:55 a.m. Oct. 21 at the Wellness Center. Send Hicks a photo of you rocking pink via email or text 360-628-2638.

GET SCREENED

Talk with your health care provider for advice and information on breast cancer screenings.

TRADITIONS

From page 5

with the Alaskan Natives. She specializes in plant medicine.

During the COVID-19 shutdown, Stevens partnered with the program to maintain participation. Heritage & Culture and Youth Services made adjustments to continue serving the tribe.

Amidst the shutdown, Klatush, White-Eagle Rosbaugh and Stevens put together and distributed nearly 300 kits for adults and 300 for youth. The take-home kits were intended to keep community members active and culturally aware.

“I want people to know we’re still here,” Stevens said.

Though she doesn’t work directly with Heritage & Culture, her program collaborates on activities year-round.

Stevens said it’s crucial to discover ways to be involved and connect with the environment and culture. She explained that each individual needs to feel grounded to properly function and reach his or her full potential.

CONTACT US

To learn more about the program, to-go kits, volunteering and how to become an instructor, please call Skylar White-Eagle Rosbaugh or Karan Klatush at 360-709-1721.

Heritage & Culture recently held its first Culture Camp. Attendees learned techniques for beading, carving, painting, wire wrapping, sewing and more at the free event at the Chehalis Tribe’s Community Center.

BURNETT

From page 4

and moved back to Washington for school and to start a family of his own.

Prior to starting work with the Chehalis Tribe in December 2020, Burnett worked on the Quinault Reservation for 35 years. He worked for the Quinault Nation and Bureau of Indian Affairs. Burnett was responsible for numerous jobs, from general manager for a logging company on the Quinault Reservation to operating heavy equipment. He also managed a road maintenance crew through completion of major construction projects.

Working for his own tribe “has always been a dream of mine since I was a young man,” Burnett said. He remembers his childhood days when he and his siblings would attend general council meetings.

“I remember thinking that it would be fun to work here for our own people and try to contribute and do my part,” Burnett said. He thought of it as his duty as an enrolled member to help the tribe grow and prosper. After hearing about the Facilities & Maintenance director vacancy, he was encouraged by his daughter to apply and become more involved with the Chehalis people.

Burnett oversees janitorial, transfer station, grounds crew, water and wastewater building maintenance, HVAC and fleet. A major project he headed this past year is a complete overhaul of the infields at Tomahawk Stadium and Legends Field Complex to prepare for Tribal Days in May.

Burnett secured a company to repair the roof on the Wellness Center. Also on the horizon are plans to paint the water towers to ensure proper function for the future.

A long-term project Burnett is leading is restructuring the sewer system for Tribal Government buildings and housing districts. He also is overseeing installation of a generator to back up the wastewater system in case of a lengthy power outage. Burnett wants to play a part in crisis management.

When Burnett first became director, he focused on wrapping up ongoing projects. Now that he has settled into his role and provided a structured staff schedule, he is developing goals for the future. Burnett wants to reduce the number of calls regarding repairs to allow his crew to provide maintenance and upkeep.

“In my mind, if things are operating smoothly, most people don’t even see or hear from us,” Burnett said.

He wants to make sure the department is efficient while developing a solid working relationship with the rest of Tribal Government employees.

Two of Burnett’s favorite pastimes are spending time with loved ones and staying involved with baseball and softball. Burnett has two daughters and one son. He had his oldest daughter, Christibeth, with his first wife. After reconnecting with his childhood sweetheart and second wife, they welcomed son Ryan and daughter Arielle. His children are grown and have careers, but a love for baseball and softball is something they all share.

Burnett played ball in his younger years and coached his kids through high school. He has taught baseball and fast-pitch softball to generations of youngsters and continues to give pointers to players at tournaments.

Burnett looks forward to growing with the Chehalis Tribe and being involved with the community. His goal is to maintain buildings and infrastructure on tribal lands as daily operations expand.

He hopes to bring the Indian National softball tournament to the Chehalis Reservation, which is a big task but would generate recognition for the tribe.

“In my mind, if things are operating smoothly, most people don’t even see or hear from us,”

- Facilities & Maintenance Director

Chuck Burnett

Karan Klatush at chicks@chehalistribe.org.
Chavez Secena unearths strength, determination

By Frazier Myer

Chehalis tribal member Chavez Secena, 21, completed 22 weeks of basic military training from Feb. 5-July 9 at Fort Benning Army Base in Columbus, Ga.

Secena grew up and was raised a majority of his life on the Chehalis Reservation. His mother is Rachelle Wells-Ferguson and his grandparents are Bill Secena and Georgette Wells.

“I’ve always been interested in the Army ever since I was a kid,” Secena said. His grandpa played a major role in his upbringing and taught him a lot about how to approach life.

“He taught me how to always care for people and treat everyone with respect,” Secena said. “It is just how my grandpa raised me.”

Secena believes joining the Army and serving his country shows compassion for others. He hopes to be a role model for fellow tribal members and the general public, especially the younger generation.

Secena was given the job of indirect fire infantryman and is a member of the mortar squad. He will provide the first support to soldiers on the front line. Only 1 percent of the United States population joins the U.S. Army; out of those, just 1 percent are placed in the infantry, where close-range combat is possible.

Building strength

The six-month training was hard mentally and physically, according to Secena. Drill sergeants pushed them close to their limit every day.

“I’m very grateful that they did that because it made me humble,” Secena said. “It broke down the civilian part of me and built me back up as a soldier.”

Secena got in great shape and built up his endurance from the daily workouts, running and drills. He lost 21 pounds training thanks to activities such as running while carrying a heavy bag and hauling mortar equipment.

He shaved his 1-mile time down to six minutes and 18 seconds, 2-mile time to 13:35 and 5-mile run to 40 minutes. Secena braved an endurance run called a ruck, which requires a change of pace and is intended to become more challenging with each mile. After a couple months of getting in shape, he was able to complete the 5-mile, 8-mile and even 12-mile runs easier.

The housing situation at Fort Benning was very similar to the movie “Full Metal Jacket.” They were placed in a giant room with rows of bunk beds stacked next to each other. Each building housed 56 troops sleeping in one room. The oldest trainee was 36 and the youngest was 17. They went to bed at 9 p.m. each night and woke up at 4 a.m. every day to began physical training.

5 phases of training

Training was split into five phases: red, white, blue, black and gold. In the red phase, soldiers built confidence. The white phase introduced training in firearms such as pistols and machine guns, throwing hand grenades and mounting grenade and rocket launchers. The blue phase taught proper techniques for repelling down towers and introducing the mortar system.

In the final two phases, troops learned how to perfect tactical movements for specific scenarios in the field, began simulated fire and practiced with live rounds.

Forge ahead

Secena said the hardest part of his entire training experience was the forge, which came after the blue phase was complete. He described it as “one full week of just sweating.”

“It was the breaking point for a lot of people,” Secena said. “I got close to one of those pipes and it blew up right in my face,” Secena said. It caused his ears to ring and the mud in his face distorted his vision, but he kept crawling through the mud and completed the course.

Important skills

The tough mental challenges of training is designed to help teach soldiers how to work through challenges they encounter. Some people were unable to complete the training and were sent home. The camp started with 236, but only 219 completed the full 22-week program.

Additional training included rifle shooting. Secena improved tremendously while in training. His stress shooting score rose from 21 out of 40 to 39 out of 40. He was motivated by his peers in training as well as the drill sergeants. He trained with people from diverse backgrounds. His best friends at camp were guys he met from West Virginia.

Inspiration from home

Throughout the six months at Fort Benning, Secena was able to contact family and friends only by letter or phone. He was given one 10-minute phone call each week, which he looked forward to almost every Sunday. He called his mom, grandparents and close friends.

“Just hearing them talk on the other side of the phone inspired me to keep moving on and pushing forward,” Secena said.

He was able to leave the Army training base on rare occasions. Those days included holidays such as Memorial Day and the Fourth of July. The drill sergeant also allowed troops to leave camp to relax and recover after the forge.

Fresh outlook

“Going through basic training made me humbler and made me appreciate everything that I have because they take that all away,” Secena said. “I see everything differently now ... I really appreciate everything that I have.”

Secena said he no longer takes for granted the quality food he is able to eat, being able to choose his meals and drinking anything besides water.

The worst part of the experience was getting punished and having to do drills whenever someone in his camp was disciplined. If one person messes up, the whole team is punished.

The drill sergeants would always remind them “one team, one fight.”

A new life

After he completed training, Secena was honored with and received his crossed rifles pin, which signifies troops turning into soldiers. He briefly visited Washington to see his friends and family for 10 days.

Secena is stationed at his first base in Fort Hood, Texas. Because the U.S. is not at war at this time, he will be stationed and continue training to prepare for active combat.

Secena encourages anyone interested in joining the Army to never give up on being a part of the military.
Construction began after years of planning and development and a lengthy process to finalize the new system’s design. It was important to ensure the project would be done correctly and fit the tribe’s needs.

The Planning Department worked with the state and filed applications through the Department of Ecology to receive a loan from the Clean Water Safe Evolving Fund (CWSRF) for the project.

The Chehalis Tribe contracted with Roglin’s Construction. Roglin’s is the company that completed the roundabout project during the summer of 2020.

The structure the Planning Department and designers developed increases the system’s ability to move water in and out, creating more efficient water flow management. They also enhanced the electronic equipment that runs the main plant to control the entire system better than in the past.

This project benefits the Chehalis Tribal Government because it will now control the membrane bioreactor, which determines what goes into the ground. The Utilities team will manage the system and provide services to those living in the area. Additionally, the project will better equip LEC&H and allow room for growth.

VonCluck headed the project with assistance from various other project managers. He reorganized the agreement with the state, developed the scope of work, selected the design team and put together the proposal for the construction crew to make this major overhaul successful.

In total, the wastewater project will span more than five years, from when the need for an upgraded wastewater plant was realized to completion. It’s scheduled to be wrapped up by early spring.