Dentists Bring Smiles To Tahsis

Beverly Lynch
The Record

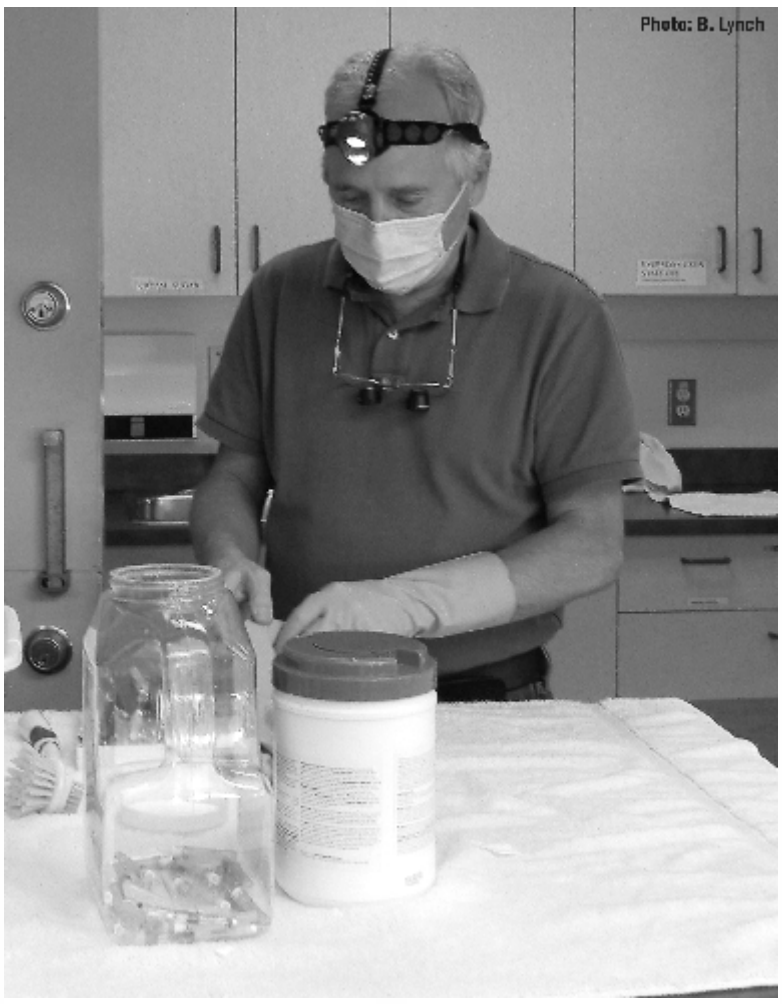
Dental care can be difficult to come by for people who live in remote areas. A free dental clinic sponsored by Share a Smile Society was offered at the Tahsis Recreation Centre on October 26 and 27. Dental care and dental hygiene treatment was available for children and adults free of charge on a first come first served basis with priority given to the most urgent cases.

Dentists Dr. Larry Hill and Dr. Jim Guild along with RDH [Registered Dental Hygienist] Heather Cooper and hygienist student Amy Borst volunteered their time and at their own expense cared for the people in Tahsis regardless of their ability to pay. The volunteers are not compensated for their time and the cost for supplies, equipment, transportation, food and lodging comes out of their own pocket. "I've had 26 years of practice and it was time to give back," said Dr. Hill. Donations help offset some of the costs. "Patterson Dental Supply and Sinclair Dental Supply donated to this trip," said Ms. Cooper. The Uchuck, Fern's Place Bed and Breakfast also donated their services.

Share a Smile is a registered not for profit charity that provides care and instruction to remote Canadian and international communities. "Just getting out to a dental office costs an easy $100 so it was great having them come here. They did a good job taking care of as many people as they did in the time allotted. It would be nice to have them come once or twice a year," said patient Curtis Savell.

Dr. Hill, Dr. Guild and Ms. Cooper all have experience volunteering their services in impoverished areas of the world such as Africa, Mexico and South America. "While on my volunteer trip to Ecuador I recognized that many of the people we serviced have identical issues with poor diet, lack of dental education and lack of access to dental care as do many of the people in our own province, particularly in First Nations populations and in remote areas," said Ms. Cooper.

Ms. Cooper organized a "Share a Smile" pilot project in the summer of 2011 for the Nootka Sound region of Vancouver Island. At this time she treated people in Esperanza and met with community members from Tahsis, Zeballos and Ehattesaht. "It was clear that there had not been any professional dental services in the area for quite some time and the need was great. This prompted me to turn share a smile into a society. Currently we provide free dental services from volunteer dental professionals across Canada to people in remote areas of British Columbia," said Ms. Cooper.





Pictured above: Dr. Larry Hill, and RDH Heather Cooper with Jack Luca.

The free dental clinic in Tahsis was a success. "They were really friendly and helpful. You know, open to answering questions. I have no way of getting to a dentist so it worked out well for me," said Ashianna Tearne. "In a remote community like Tahsis access to a dentist is almost impossible unless these groups come here. I hadn't seen a dentist since I was 18 and I'm 52 now," said Mike Keller.

"It's been a wonderful experience," said Student Hygienist Ms. Borst. "I would like to put out a big thank you to Tia Russell and Sharon Taporowski for all their help organizing the event in Tahsis and to Susan Johnson in Ehattesaht for her help organizing the event at the youth centre.

Our next trip to the area will be sometime in 2014. We will include a trip up to Kyuquot to provide service there. Our goal is to establish some regular care into your communities and with enough volunteers this could be possible," said Ms. Cooper.

Tahsis Council

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"Capital kudos to the Tahsis Fire Department and the Tahsis Ambulance Station for their extremely hard work (all laughing while they did) on the haunted house. I had the pleasure of participating in the frightening of the Tahsis children and adults alike. Nothing says good times like chasing people out the haunted house doors with a fake chainsaw. They were so great they had to do an encore; no one wanted to miss out on that. I most certainly cannot forget to mention the spectacular fireworks courtesy of our Fire Department. The people that live in a city are sure missing out. I have no idea how they can improve next year but with their imagination I have no doubt they will," said Councilor Overton.

Councilor Overton also reported that the senior's group has been busy. Its open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 am to 3 pm. "I f anyone gets a chance they should check it out. I heard through the grapevine they don't ask for ID. They also put on a flea market this past weekend. It was great to see the community come out and support them. I myself used the venue to recruit volunteers for our Emergency Social Services team. I'm happy to report within the next two weeks we will have our first meeting and as fast as possible we will start training," said Councilor Overton.

Councilor Taylor reported that the draft recommendation from the Recreation Centre Task Force is being prepared. They will hold one more meeting for its approval following which the report will be brought to Council.

Councilor Bertoia had no report nor did Councilor VanSolkema though he did report that he had been to a few meetings.

The RCMP statistics for Tahsis were received. The offences included July 1 - September 30, 2013. There were four incidents of uttering threats, three common assaults, three home break and enters, five incidences of theft under $5000, one theft over $5000, one bylaw infraction, one illegal grow op, one impaired driving, six calls regarding bears and/or cougars, one driving while prohibited, one collision and two false alarms. Other offences/calls included an incident under the family services act, two suspicious persons/vehicles, two assists with the coroners act, two overdue traveler incidents, three calls for general assistance, three cancelled files, one abandoned 911 call, one assist to DFO, two abandoned vehicles, and one offence under the firearms act.

Correspondence was received from the Nootka Sound Economic Development Corporation [NSEDC] regarding the receipt of a dividend cheque. A letter was received from Suzanne Anton, Attorney General, Minister of Justice as a follow up letter to the UBCM Convention.

A follow up letter to the UBCM Convention was received from Mary Polack, Ministry of the Environment. Correspondence was also received from the UBCM regarding 911 services in British Columbia.

New business brought forth a letter from Denis Lemelin, National President Canadian Union of Postal Workers requesting support for two resolutions. It was decided that a letter of support would be sent to the union.

A request for membership renewal was received from Claude Dauphin, President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Tahsis will renew its membership. The Northern Communities Waste Transport Assessment report was received. Council decided to send a letter of support for option five.

Correspondence was received from MLA Claire Trevena regarding hospital services. A letter of support will be forwarded. The date of November 25 was set for a Committee of the Whole meeting. This meeting will be prior to the meeting Council has with Western Forest Products.

Due to theft and general disrespect of the gravel pit the gate has been locked and the public no longer has access. Some discussion has taken place but as of yet there are no plans to reopen the pit to the public.

A motion was made to recess the regular meeting of November 5 at which time Councilor Taylor brought forth an amendment to the motion. Chief Administrative Office Doug Chapman suggested that the mover and seconder of the recess motion withdraw their motion and that Councilor Taylor move his amendment to number seven under new business. The following motion was passed.

I move that Council cease and desist from its current practice of recessing into an in-camera meeting and subsequently reconvening the regular meeting in order to "rise and report" where applicable and adjourn and instead hold separate in-camera meetings and that any "rise and report" become part of the next regular meeting. And further that Council resolves to amend the procedures bylaw to allow for a question period at the conclusion of business so the public has an opportunity to address the "rise and report" as well as any decisions that Council has made during the regular meeting.

Mayor Schooner adjourned the regular council meeting of November 5 at 8:07pm.

Campbell River Doctors Speak About Bed Shortages



Claire Trevena
MLA, North Island

Campbell River, November 04 - Plans for Campbell River's new hospital will leave the community woefully short of beds, according to doctors practicing in the city at the moment.

"We had 103 patients at the hospital a couple of weeks ago," said Dr Deke Botsford, a Campbell River orthopedic surgeon. "It was about that number for five days.

"That's about 20 people more than the current hospital should house. The new hospital is going to have just 95 beds. That's not looking to the future."

Dr. Botsford was joined by Dr. Peter Olesen and Dr. Bob Gordon at his Willow Point office to voice their concerns. With the project still out to tender and the expectation that building will not start until next year, it is hoped that plans can be changed and bed numbers increased.

In the spring, a meeting of Campbell River hospital doctors agreed to the plans but many now feel that they were coerced, with the threat that if they did not agree there would not be a new hospital.

"This whole development has been handled extremely badly by the health authority," said North Island MLA, Claire Trevena. "We keep telling them that there will not be enough capacity at the new hospital.

"The bureaucracy has not listened to the community. We can only hope it will listen to the doctors."



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Thank You For Continued Support

The Gold River Volunteer Fire Department would like to thank the Royal Canadian Legion Ladies Auxiliary and Western Forest Products for their continued support of our communities. Recently, the Ladies Auxiliary purchased a new clamshell spine board for our rescue truck and WFP supported an emergency first responder call with their Emergency Transport Vehicle. In times of need, we are always stronger when working together.

Thank you for being a part of our safe and helpful communities.

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