



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Closing Early Makes a Big Difference

On Thursday, June 15 First Credit Union (FCU) branches around Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast will close at 2pm as more than one hundred employees head out into their communities to volunteer at beach cleanups, community gardens, a seniors' residence and more.

Post pandemic, Community Impact Day is back, and staff are excited, says Tara Chernoff, VP Impact & Marketing. This is a day, once a year, that all eight FCU branches close three hours early. For those three hours employees spend time at an organized volunteer activity in their community.

"Community Impact Day started in 2015, and it was such a success we started holding it annually," Chernoff says. "At this year's event we expect there to be a total of 320 hours volunteered."

This year the following events are happening:

- On Texada Island employees will be volunteering at the Texada Guiding Thrift Store, a community-based non-profit that supports the local Girl Guides.
- In Powell River employees will be choosing to help with cleaning and maintenance at Powell River SPCA, with gardening and visiting seniors at Willingdon Creek Village Residence, or with trail maintenance at the Resource Recovery Centre.
- On Bowen Island and in Union Bay employees will be participating in local beach clean ups.
- In Bowser employees will be participating in a community cleanup.
- Hornby Island employees will be celebrating Community Impact Day a day earlier, on June 14, by volunteering in their community from 12-3:30pm.
- Employees in Courtenay and Cumberland will be gathering at LUSH Valley's Tsolum Garden Project, which serves as a school garden for learners of all ages through local agriculture and food security projects.

"Food security is a big issue in the Comox Valley, says Chris Higgins, Regional Manager of Retail Banking. "LUSH Valley resonated with us as an organization for Community Impact Day because they're a little bit smaller and grassroots—very much about community, like First Credit Union is.

"Hopefully through this event we'll be able to provide some awareness raising for all the great things they're doing, and at the same time be able to help with some of the practical work they're doing."

The benefits of Community Impact Day are layered, Chernoff says—it isn't only about benefiting the supported organizations. Employees also enjoy the chance to get out into the community, working together for a good cause.

"Many times, the activities give our employees the opportunity to try something new, and everyone enjoys the chance to have a break from their regular routine."

Ultimately this day is about community building and fostering relationships. "The people who work for First Credit Union are community-oriented," Higgins says. "Community Impact Day is a chance for us to pack up at the tail end of our day and actually go out into our communities and try to make a difference."

About First Credit Union

First Credit Union is a values-based financial cooperative serving the needs of over 15,000 members in Powell River, Texada Island, Courtenay, Cumberland, Union Bay, Bowser, Hornby Island and Bowen Island. As a certified B Corp, First Credit Union works to improve the financial well-being of its members while at the same time helping to build communities that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable by returning 10% of net profits to members and the communities they serve.

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