



For immediate release – 20 November 2008

2008 marks 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day

Port Hardy – On the 20th anniversary of World Aids Day on December 1, local non-profit AIDS Vancouver Island is reminding the community that the struggle against HIV/AIDS continues.

"We've come a long way since 1988, there is still much more to be done," said Katrina Jensen, executive director of AIDS Vancouver Island. "There are people in communities across Vancouver Island living with HIV who need our support and we must not give up efforts to prevent the spread of HIV."

AIDS has killed more than 25 million people globally, with an estimated 38.6 million people living with HIV, making it one of the most destructive epidemics in recorded history. In 2007, there were 57 new diagnosis of HIV on Vancouver Island.

Services offered by AIDS Vancouver Island in the Port Hardy area include a Positive Wellness nutrition program, advocacy and support, as well as short term counselling.

"For people who want to show their support for World AIDS Day, they can pick up a red ribbon at AVI's office, VIHA Mental Health and Addictions Services, or at the Salvation Army," said Shane Thomas, health promotion worker at AVI. AVI Port Hardy's office is located at 7070 Shorncliffe Road.

AIDS Vancouver Island has provided community health services focused on the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis since 1985.

For more information about AIDS Vancouver Island, please visit www.avi.org or call 1-800-665-2437 or 250-949-0432 in Port Hardy.

– 30 –

For more information, contact Shane Thomas, AIDS Vancouver Island at 250-949-0432.