

# Spring Quarterly Update



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*Executive Director – Lori Leduc*

Renovations to the Day Home were completed and Elizabeth Kyikavichik was successful in obtaining her license from Yukon Government, Children Services. The multiplex was placed on hold for a number of reasons; one being the site is not ready for the foundation.

The tank farm is progressing right on schedule and is to be commissioned by September 2015.

Our temporary store has now been closed and the Old Crow Retail Coop held its official grand opening. There are minor construction deficiencies to be completed, but Arctic Coop is working hard to address these.

VGG completed minor deficiencies to the two 2013-14 homes and submitted all financial accounting to CMHC. An Expression of Interest was submitted for two homes for 2015-16. Peter Frost organized a cleanup of the Solid Waste Facility and VGG will be reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding with Yukon Government allowing VGFN to oversee the operations for a further year.

The Executive Office will be negotiating with Yukon Government for further funding for the Caribou Lobby. We are hopeful that the terms of the contribution agreement can be expanded to allow other caribou related activities and events.

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## Native Graduation 2015-Congratulations!

Jared Lord, Tristan Peter, Bohdi Elias, Caleb Charlie, Kristen Frost, Ashlynn Frost, Rhianna Kyikavichik, Dawn Villacorta (Reti) & Clayton Rumley-Nukon



## Cell Service in Old Crow



Northwestel has completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation (3G) cell service rollout for Old Crow. This means that smart phones, such as iPhones, etc. will now work here. Currently the only service providers that seems to work now are Bell Mobility and Virgin

Mobile. TELUS is currently not working, but may work in the future.

There has been talk of 4G cell service for Old Crow. The main difference between 3G and 4G is that data transfer rates are faster with 4G. That is, you

would want 4G if you were interested in transferring large amounts of data. This may not be the case for most people in Old Crow. If you need to transfer large amounts of data, you could connect your phone to Wi-Fi.

## Vadzaih Choo Drin - Caribou Days

Caribou Days took place from May 15-18<sup>th</sup> 2015. Events focused on celebrating the caribou, hunting ethics, gun safety and fun games for all ages. This event is primarily funded by VGG Natural Resources with contributions and support from the North Yukon Renewable Resources Council, Department of

Environment, RCMP Air Services, VGG Health and Social and Porcupine Caribou Management Board and donations of wild game from community members James Itsi and Hal Frost. We also want to recognize the community for taking part in this fun filled weekend.

***Vadzaih Choo Drin,***  
*A time to celebrate the caribou.*



Heritage Department: The next manuals for production are: hide tanning, "Nits'oo Diik'itr'iindhat ~ How We Were Raised Up" about what Gwich'in boys and girls need to learn about their culture.

## Chief & Council



*VGG is working closely with other YFN is opposing several problematic proposed changes to YESAA and support of the Peel Watershed court case.*

## Summer Student Employment & Activities

**I started on June 1<sup>st</sup> as the Summer Student Coordinator.** are willing to take on students and provide them with valuable and meaningful employment so students can gain knowledge and employable skills. We hope to post the jobs on June 19<sup>th</sup>. I would like to thank everyone for their input on activities to do with the students; we've already put some of those ideas into action and will be working on getting them completed for the community. Please keep a look out for postings. If you have any input or concerns you would like to share, please feel free to call me and "we" can work on them together. – Cheryl

## Human Resource Department

The HR office is always busy with day to day administrative functions as well as recruiting for vacant positions. Some employees have come and gone over the last few months, with new employees coming on board presently.

Kenji Welsh, Nancy Stevens, Maxine Thunderchild, Greg Colburne and Mymee Chow, who all left on personal matters. We wish them all well.

New Staff:  
 Director – Greg Newton  
 Property Manager – Stan Njootli Jr

Property Maintenance Worker-Brian Cameron  
 Maintenance Helper: Ronald Frost  
 Manager, Mental Health & Support Programs – Odile Rousselle  
 Justice Coordinator/Native Court Worker – Elizabeth Anderson  
 P/T Rec Assistant – Liannah Charlie  
 Summer Student Coordinator-Cheryl Charlie  
 On-Call Receptionist: Jenna Lord.

We've bade farewell to



## IS Dept. - Employee Workstation Computers

We are in the process of installing some new employee workstation computers. We will be replacing our Mac-Mini computers and selling them to the public.

Please watch for sale notices.



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*Education & Recreation Department*

*June Teen Challenge.* A challenge to the youth age 12-18 to be more active, healthy and positive towards themselves and others. They can earn points by completing checklist tasks daily. Points earned independently based on the honor system, but we will meet as a group 1/week to do an activity together and discuss progress. \* There will be Incentive prizing, but encourage the community to support teens in task completion.

*YC Garden Project.* Wednesday Afternoons starting with planting seeds at the Youth Center, transplanting to community garden and maintaining through to harvest.

Community-wide *Wednesday Night Slo-Pitch.* Practice and skill development with youth from 7-7:30 followed by an all ages' game. Rec dept. will run a small canteen at the diamond to fundraise for programs. \*Would like to also put and adult team together to go down to Dawson for the Labor Day tournament (Interested players come down play on Wednesdays).

*Summer Paddling Program.* Starting off with a weeklong camp the first week of July focused on water based skill development and safety training with certified Paddle Instructor and Certified Lifeguard. The paddle program will run 1-2/week for the remainder of summer with focus on canoeing as a means of transportation, fishing and gathering food, visiting traditional and cultural places along the river, and as a way to maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.

*Martial Arts Program/Ninja Camp.* With the goal to teach youth martial arts skills and provide a better way for them to be physical with each other we plan to run a 5 Day Youth camp (split into 2 age groups to include the 4-6 year olds) with focus on physical activity, outdoor games, nutrition, and crafts all with a ninja theme.

*End of Summer Camp at "Ti'oo K'at.* 5 or 6 night Camp with a focus on Crime Prevention, Anti-Bullying, and Leadership Development. We received significant funding for this to properly staff, pay Elder Honorariums, bring up B.Y.T.E. facilitators to run workshops and games, and purchase prizing. \*Volunteer and Employment Opportunity

Community Engagement Matters – For two days in May, we gathered in the community hall to talk about community engagement and student supports. With a detailed agenda in place and a group of eager staff and facilitators ready to go we hoped to get down to work and find some direction. We did find some direction, and had a powerful discussion on community and student engagement. Although after only a few short moments, on the recommendation of our elders we threw out the agenda. The group was very powerful and had a strong message that they wished to discuss; a message of supporting community. How can we support each other and our students? No simple answer was achieved. But one that is reoccurring is opening the school to the community and engaging everyone in the education of our youth. We are working with CZGS to come up with a plan of how we can make that happened. The action items from the workshop will guide us towards those goals. One recommendation of the group and a plan of the school administration is that we will come together again in the fall as a focused group to work on our goals and desired outcomes. We hope that this can spring board community engagement and success again in the next school year to support the growth of these initiatives. Thank you to all who participated. Your insight, knowledge, and personal stories give us the strength and information we all need to keep improving.

Lastly, the Education Department would like to congratulate all the graduates!

## Heritage Department

### Traditional Routes Mapping

We have confirmed Community Development Funding for trail breaking three routes this year.

### Historical Lifeways Project

The main focus for the project as directed by the Heritage Committee is to focus on involving youth and researching deeper into the oral history that has been recorded through experiential learning.

### Tr'ahtsii Manuals

Cultural skill and how-to manuals have been created for Aih Tr'ahtsii (Making Snowshoes) and Tr'ih Tr'ahtsii (Making a Canoe). The next manuals for production are: hide tanning, *"Nits'oo Diik'itr'iindhat ~ How We Were Raised Up"* about what Gwich'in boys and girls need to learn about their culture

### Chapter 13 Heritage Manual

VGG joins several other First Nations in consultations with Yukon Government on the YFN Heritage Act. This Act will represent YFN management of heritage on First Nations lands.

### Rampart House Reconstruction Project and LaPierre House

This year reconstruction work by Gwich'in crew and historical reconstruction experts from Yukon Government will continue at Rampart House after the ice goes.

LaPierre House will have a boardwalk installation contract for the same time.

### Language

Language focus is on documenting verbs and immersion. CYFN's Language Vuntut Gwitchin language plan. Lexique Pro language database program will have Gwich'in words and audio files with guidance from Yukon Government linguist Chris Cox. Gwich'in bird book is heading to the printers with 100 Gwich'in bird names, photos and text.



## Natural Resources Department

### Seabreeze

Natural Resources is working with Seabreeze on a solar power generation project to ensure that Old Crow had alternate energy sources that make use of natural resources.

### Water Strategy

VGG has a Water Strategy and work has commenced on gathering information for baseline data on water resources in the traditional territory. This will assist with development applications and monitoring of projects that will have an impact on water.

### Land Use Planning

Implementation of the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan continues. Priorities for this year include concluding the assessment of existing disturbance on the landscape (old seismic lines, airstrips, trails and roads etc.) and vegetation re-growth rates and patterns. This information will contribute to determining the amount of new industrial activity allowed, based on limits for disturbance described in the land use plan.

Preparation of a land use plan for the Dawson region (including the southern part of the VGFN Traditional Territory where it overlaps with TH Traditional Territory) is now on hold until resolution of the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan legal challenge.

### **Protected Area Planning**

The North Yukon Land Use Plan recommended the creation of two new protected areas in the VGFN Traditional Territory. The planning team for the Whitefish Wetlands Habitat Protection Area is currently reviewing existing heritage information for the area, and is in the early stages of drafting management recommendations. Boundaries for the Bell River Summit Lake protected area have been proposed and VGG is working with Yukon Government, Parks Branch, in establishing the level of protection.

### **Yukon Environmental Socio-Economic Assessment Act**

VGG is working closely with other Yukon First Nations in opposing several problematic proposed changes to YESAA. These amendments are contained in Bill S-6, which is currently making its way through the federal parliamentary system. The House of Commons standing committee responsible for reviewing Bill S-6 came to Whitehorse in March to hear testimony from a wide range of Yukoners, including First Nations and industry representatives. Deputy Chief Stanley Njootli Sr. represented VGG at these hearings.

### **Oil and Gas**

Northern Cross Yukon's multi-well exploration program is still at the project assessment stage with YESAB.



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## Health & Social Programs Department

The Women's Sewing Circle was run all winter by Maxine. Ladies of Old Crow got together twice a week to socialize and share their skills and patterns with each other. The H&S department purchased some skin and other supplies for boot making and after many weeks of hard labour the boots were finished. The finished projects are beautiful and these ladies should be extremely proud of their efforts.

We are freshly into our new fiscal year and busy planning and implementing programming for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. The Health and Social department has been working closely with Education/Recreation on

the Old Crow community garden. We recently received a small grant from the Scott's Miracle Grow *GRO100 Garden Grants* program. This money will go towards buying supplies to ensure the community garden flourishes again this year. In the fall we will be putting on a Harvest and Cook – Healthy Eating workshop using the bounty from the community garden. We're looking forward to eating all the delicious produce grown this summer. We are also working on bringing in a Diabetic Nurse to provide some information and education to those in the community living with diabetes on how to properly manage their diabetes, what foods to eat, what foods to avoid and how to live a long,

healthy life with diabetes.

Alcohol and Drug Services has created a Community Addictions Worker based in Dawson City. The worker will be travelling to Old Crow. He or she will provide counselling, help our Mental Health Manager with treatment referrals and most importantly will be providing aftercare support and counselling to those returning to the community after treatment.

