



VGEN NEWS

NEWSLETTER
of the
VUNTUT GWITCHIN
GOVERNMENT



Ch'ak'oh Zrii

*January
"Cold Weather"*

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January 2006



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**VGFN
NEWS**
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**VUNTUT GWITCHIN
GOVERNMENT**

VGFN News is the monthly
Newsletter of the Vuntut Gwitchin
First Nation Self-Government in Old
Crow, Yukon, Canada.
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the employees of VGFN.

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Susan Drury
Acting Director, Human Resources

Hello:

Chief and Council asked me to work as Acting Director of Human Resources to the end of the fiscal year March 31. I was sorry to see Cheryl Itsi-Charlie leave her position at VGFN, and I wish her good fortune with her plans for herself and her family in Whitehorse.

In January, Ronald Frost returned to his position as Building Project Manager, and after a quiet December, Government Services now has a variety of projects on the go. Human Resources has been busy processing the paperwork for new hires that include GS Laborers, back up School Bus, Community Van, Fuel Delivery drivers, and Homecare workers. There is a need for people who have class 4 or 3 driver's license and more Homecare workers.

In January we hired two youth trainees in Government Services for twenty weeks. These two positions are partially funded by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Internship Initiative for First Nation and Inuit Youth program. The two youth are: Edna Kyikavichik and Vincent Tetlich. They'll work on a variety of tasks that include inventory control, material and equipment purchasing, landlord and tenant relationships, and project planning.

The Human Resources Dept. has been busying organizing training for employ-

ees. A proposal is being submitted to Advanced Education for assistance in funding a Carpenter Laborer Program in Old Crow. If approved, we hope to start this training in April. This semester, some employees are taking the self-study Accounting 120 and Computer Studies 050 offered by Yukon College. Yukon College is also organizing First Aid, Wilderness First Aid and Adobe In Design in which some staff will participate. One employee is scheduled to attend the oil burner course in Dawson in mid-February. Yukon Learn will be delivering courses to employees on Word and Excel, understanding financial statements, technical writing and office procedures. Funding has also been approved by the INAC Gathering Strength initiative for leadership training. If staff members have training needs, please let me know.

I'm also the VGFN rep on the Alice Frost Community Campus Committee, and I welcome instructors James Wood and Alison Blackduck to the campus. We're fortunate to have them living in Old Crow and willing to offer to the community their experience, knowledge and energy.

The Prohibition Committee is an important item on my to-do list. In early February I'll schedule a meeting with the folks who indicated interest in serving on the committee so that the committee work can begin. Mahsi' and have a good February!

Edna Kyikavichik
CMHC-Housing Trainee

Good day to everyone, I was hired on Jan 9th 2006 with Department of Government Services and Housing - CMHC Housing Trainee until the end of May 2006. Working at VGG again is great, keeping myself on daily routines and I'm enjoying my position.

There are different areas that interest me in the Housing Dept. and learning new skills each day is helpful. Work is work. Working with other people too is the main source in communication and socializing. Also having teamwork is the success to develop a better, healthier and positive working environment.

Spring is almost here and I hope that everyone enjoys themselves through the months ahead. We soon will be getting more daylight and now that the plane only flies three times a week; it makes us more isolated. Get out more and enjoy the weather when it warms up. Hopefully they get the Recreation Dept. going again and having things happening in town.

Easter time is coming up. I would like to see a carnival happening for everyone. It will be fun. I hope everyone have a safe and wonderful season. Keep cozy and warm because it's pretty cold. Have a wonderful day and thank you for reading, until next time.



Barry Drury
Director, Government Services & Housing

Happy new year everyone. Susan and I have just returned from a week in Whitehorse, to visit family.

This upcoming year

It appears as we will be very busy again in GS, Housing. I would like to welcome Edna Kyikavichik and Vincent Tetlich to our staff as housing interns under a CMHC funded program, for at least the next while.

Edna has been very busy in the office with some much needed updating of files and ordering supplies as needed.

Vincent has done a complete inventory of materials and supplies in the GS, shop and warehouse. This information will be input to a new inventory control system as soon as possible.

For the upcoming construction season. We have been given preliminary approval, from INAC, for another set of washrooms.

CMHC has advised that there are housing units available through a CMHC program. I will be completing a proposal for Chief and Council review this week.

Planning is continuing for a carpenter training program in Old Crow later this spring. This program will be a co-operation between VGFN, Yukon College and

YTG Education.

We are at present waiting for word with regards to funding from YTG for its' portion. At present this looks promising to be forthcoming.

We are finishing some renovations on a couple of units and hope to be able to do more, as funding permits.

I wish everyone a good spring.



Kim Rumley
CELC Area-II

Happy New Year, I trust that everyone enjoyed their time together over the holidays. The students were very glad to go home to their families. Everyone is now back and into the last portion of our first semester. Unfortunately, many of us were hit with the flu and are just on the road to recovery now.

First of all, I would like to take some time to explain how the exam period is going to work this year, as it is different from years previous. The reason for this is due to the teachers strike in British Columbia. The Yukon Department of Education follows the B.C. curriculum, and therefore we will not be commencing our exam period until, February 3rd, 2005 – February 8th, 2005. February 9th, 2005 will be a school-closed day, with Second semester commencing on Friday, February 10th, 2005.

Some grade 12 students may be required to write British Columbia provincial departmentals during second semester due to the way that British Columbia has set up the schedule.

November 22, 23, and 24th, 2005 several of our students participated in Gwitchin Literacy Week, at The Yukon Native Language Center. Randall Kendi provided all instruction; we had several elders and Gwitchin citizens in attendance. The literacy week turned out extremely well. I would like to thank Department of Education for supporting us by providing a mini van for transportation in order to get the students to and from the college. Also a big Mahsi Cho to The Yukon Native Language Center staff, John Ritter, Linda Harvey, and Andre for all their hard work and dedication to the preservation of the Gwitchin Language. Special recognition to our VG elder who took time out of her busy schedule, Mrs. Annie Lord to be with us for the week.

November 24th, 2005 twelve students and myself attended the Kwanlin Dunn Health Fair coordinated by Nyla Klugie of Kwanlin Dunn Health Center. This is an annual

event, which I try to participate in with the students as it provides much information about the various resources available to our youth in Whitehorse. It also provides many cultural and recreational opportunities for youth.

November 28th 2005, I traveled to Old Crow for the Community Consultation on Education. Our consultation meeting with the community was held on November 29th, 2005 at the community hall. This meeting was very well attended and I would like to thank everyone who participated, and provided very meaningful insight and information to help the process move forward. Special thank you's to Bob Sharpe and Tina Jules for all their hard work and dedication to this process. Also a big Mahsi, to Rosalie Abel who, once again, did an excellent job cooking as well as Joe Tetlich and Robert Bruce Jr. for their facilitation and translating skills.

Many of our youth have been busy on weekends with North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) tryouts, the first identification camps for Basketball were held early this spring, with our very own Travis Frost trying out, team selections should happen this month for Basketball. The next trial that our youth were involved with was Dene Games, with many of our Old Crow Youth making the team. The High School students who were selected are, Kyle Benjamin, Samantha Rispin, and Crystal Frost, with Kecia Kassi as an alternate. Finally this past weekend, snowshoe trials were held, again we had many youth from Old Crow try out, for the High School students Yudii Mercredi was selected. Congratulations to all our youth who tried out and made the team. You all conducted yourselves in an extremely positive manner, and did so well. You can all be very proud of yourselves.

Attendance

Perfect attendance awards for the month of September, October, November and December goes to WADE KAYE, way to go Wade. Wade only missed two days in all that time! Also honorable mention for October goes to Kathie Charlie, Dion Charlie, Travis

Frost, Floyd McGinnis and Malinda Bruce. Honorable mention for November goes to Travis Frost, Malinda Bruce, Jennifer Flood, Sherrie Frost, and Brandie Tizya. All youth will receive movie passes, or gift certificates for various restaurants in Whitehorse.

High School Student Christmas Party

On Thursday, December 8th, 2005 VGFN hosted a Christmas party at the CYFN Cafeteria for all the students and their families, and host families. It was very well attended by all the students; we had a traditional Christmas Dinner, complete with Santa and gifts for all students. Thank you to Yudii Mercredi, Malinda Bruce, Sherri Frost, Lisa Linklater, and Bobby Linklater for volunteering with set up and clean up.

Cake Decorating

Unfortunately, we have been turned down by Skills Canada for funding for this project, however, I will continue to apply to other funding sources for this project to happen.

Registration for new High School Students

Peter Cassidy and myself will be traveling to Old Crow, Yukon sometime late in April 2006, in order to register new students for High School and the Student Residence. We will also do a presentation on grade requirements at this time as well.

Student Exchange

I am continuing to find a First Nation in the lower 48 who wish to conduct a student exchange with our High School Students. Due to travel over the border and cost this may not become a reality until next year. However, I want everyone to know that I am still working to make this goal a reality.

Mahsi Cho.



Donna Marie Frost
Employment & Training Officer

Good day to one and all

It sure is good to be back to work after the Christmas holiday. It was nice having everyone from the Frost family here during the holidays. My Grandmother loved it. She was in her glory. Lots of people to boss around. The dances were great, I would like to thank Douglas Charlie and Marvin Frost for their wonderful music. If it wasn't for them we would have to dance to tape music. So I think I speak for everyone in Old Crow.... Mahsi Cho.

I also wanted to thank everyone from Old Crow, Alaska, NWT, and all the surrounding communities for all their help and support during the difficult time with Nicole. It is great how everyone comes together in a time of need. Thank you to everyone.

It is greatly appreciated by everyone in our family. A very big and special thank you to Brenda Frost-Charlie, who everyday had an assortment of different recipes for my mom to try. She was there from the beginning to the end every day. She was the shoulder to cry on, the per-

son to talk to, the person holding everything together. Brenda you are truly a gift from GOD. I don't know what our family would have done with out you. So thank you very much from all of our family.

On other notes, the Education Dept has been fairly busy. Everyone settling back in to the groove of things. All students getting back in to their routines. Nice to be back at work and keeping busy. They have the hot lunch program three times a week, I am encouraging "parents" to volunteer their time to come out and help.

I would like to wish Randall Kendi a very Happy Birthday for the 29th. Hope you enjoy your special and take advantage of people doing things for because it only comes once a year. A couple belated birthday greeting to Michael Rispin & Phillip Frost for the 12th, Trevor Thomas for the 14th, Curtis Netro for the 17th, my dear Uncle Mike for the 18th, to my godchild Brayden Frost, a very Happy 2nd Birthday to you, Crystal Frost for the 23rd, Happy Sweet 16. Hope you all enjoyed your day.

Until next time, take care one and all and stay warm as it is very, very chilly out there.



Sonja Foss
Lands Manager

Happy New Year Everyone!

My first official day back on the job after the Christmas holidays was on January 11th. I attended two days of meetings regarding the new YESAA regulations. At the meeting we had very detailed discussions on the new Decision Document Permit Enforcement Act. Once VGFN has the capability of passing its own laws, we will be able to implement this legislation as VGFN legislation. What that means is that if anyone does a project on VGFN Settlement Land they must follow the terms and conditions of their permit. If they do not follow the terms and conditions of their permit, then VGFN will have the legal authority to fine the company for \$300,000.⁰⁰ and the company's leader may have to spend up to six months in jail. This means that all people doing projects on the land must

be held accountable for their actions. This is why it is important to have your input at all of our meetings.

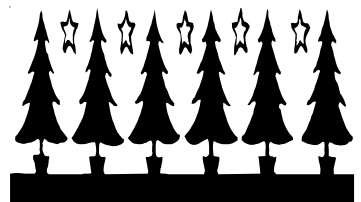
I have a few updates for you all. McNevin Construction is still going through the process of purchasing and owning the land that the Eagle Plains Lodge sits on. The sewage lagoons are still not in compliance with their water license. I will be receiving the report that will outline this in more detail soon.

The work that Devon Canada Corporation did in Eagle Plains last summer was the drilling of a gas well located just off the Dempster Highway. The well was the first to be drilled in over 20 years. Devon did not find what they were looking for and will not be doing any more drilling for a few years.

I have volunteered to coordinate "Yeendoo Nanh Nakhweenjit K'atr'abanahyaa – Environmental Change and Traditional Use of the Old Crow Flats in Northern Canada".

This is an exciting venture as it responds to many concerns people in Old Crow have about the changes on the land and in the Flats. We are working very hard at getting a proposal in to the Canadian Government for up to two-million dollars worth of funding to participate in the International Polar Year in 2007-2009. It will allow for ongoing ecological monitoring done by the community.

Finally, I have been reviewing the work of many consultants that outline the First Nation Responsibilities for Natural Resources under Yukon First Nation Final Agreements. It has been an extremely busy and interesting month. Thank you all for your guidance in these issues.



Megan Williams
Heritage Manager

Returning to work in January is always a wake up call in the Heritage Office – there are only three short months left in the fiscal year and we have many projects to complete in addition to planning for our next year.

Online Atlas

Our Online Atlas project continues to be a very interesting if time-consuming project. Mary Jane has devoted a large portion of her workday to researching oral history information for 45 Gwich'in place names in the traditional territory. We have also been working with various software programs to transfer data to our GIS technician in Whitehorse. The Online Atlas will allow users to search for and locate places by the Gwich'in or English names. They will then be able to pull up Gwich'in stories about the location, look at photographs and hear the place name spoken in Gwich'in. We are also working with another GIS technician to create a paper copy of the place name map for those who are not likely to use the Online Atlas on the computer.

Language Planning

The VGFN Heritage Committee met this month to begin our strategic planning for where to go with language over the next 5-10 years. There are great language resources in the community of Old Crow, we just need to figure out how to organize and how to spend our language funds most effectively. Watch for a language questionnaire, as we need your input into how we can keep the Gwich'in language strong.

See Mary Jane Moses' report for details on the rest of our current language activities.

Elder Interviews

A Heritage research team was very fortunate to visit two Elders in their homes this month to record their stories. We would like to thank Elder Tabitha Kyikavichik for sharing stories about her life on the land between Arctic Village and Old Crow. We would also like to

thank Elder Alfred Charlie for sharing his stories, including a Ch'ataiyuukaih story that we

had not previously recorded. These precious stories were recorded using digital audio technology tapes and high definition video footage. We hope to conduct more of these interviews over the next two months.

Archiving

Frances Bruce is continuing with the Heritage Office until March 31st. She has taken on the major task of organizing our map collection and this is almost complete. We will send the majority of the maps that we don't use to storage and are organizing and cataloguing the maps that we use regularly or that have historical value. Frances is also working with transcripts, assisting with Elder interviews and updating our archival databases. Next she will be assisting with digitizing information for the Online Atlas. It is great to have her energy and assistance in the office.

IPY

The Natural Resources Department has taken the lead on a major proposal for the International Polar Year. If this project is funded it will bring together researchers from several different disciplines to conduct a major study on climate change in the Old Crow area. Researchers on the project will cover the physical, wildlife and human dimensions of research. This project will conduct new research capitalizing on the extensive knowledge held by community members and has plans to leave a lasting legacy benefiting the community.

National Historic Site Designation for the Caribou Fences

We have decided to further explore the option to work in partnership with Parks Canada to nominate the caribou fences as National Historic Sites. The community has often identified the caribou fences as very culturally significant. We will work with Parks Canada to consult with the community, conduct the research and prepare the nomination papers if that is the direction we are given. There is information about other National Historic Sites and the nomination process in the Heritage Office if you are interested in more information.

Vuntut Gwich'in Cultural Geography Project

We are very happy to have Brenda Kaye back in the Heritage Office three afternoons per week. Brenda is putting her Gwich'in language skills to work translating interviews into English.

In addition to working with material collected over the past year, we are working on plans to produce signage for Gwich'in place names, educational material production and other products for this project. Interim reports for this project are available in the Heritage Office. Pick one up and enjoy the beautiful pictures from all over the traditional territory.

Visitor Reception Centre

Exhibit development continues for the Old Crow Visitor Reception Centre. We are still gathering information from the oral history collection and from researchers familiar with the area. By the end of this fiscal year we will have a plan in place for exhibit fabrication and shipping to Old Crow during the winter of 2006-07.

On a personal note, I will be away from Old Crow for a family holiday from February 15th to March 6th, 2006. Mary Jane Moses will be here to take care of the office and any questions you may have. Questions and concerns can also be directed to William Josie.



Mary Jane Moses
Heritage Researcher

The ongoing task of researching for the Online Atlas continues at a steady pace. Most of my time is spent on researching back into the oral history transcripts, searching out information about the particular place names in the VGFN traditional territory for the *Online Atlas Project* that has begun this fall.

This will be helpful when the time comes and an individual

©VGFN, Photo by: S Smith



who wants to know more about *LaPierre House* can go to the VGFN Traditional Territory Online Atlas, click on LaPierre House and up comes some information on this particular place name, either on audio tape only or on audio/video footage along with photos of the place. It's a lot of work but at the same time very informative with all the information that one can learn about the different places in the traditional territory once this project comes to completion. Thank you to all who are helping with this important task of getting this information online. There are lots of learning curves and skills needed to complete this but I'm confident our team can do this.

The weekly Gwich'in Classes continue at the college campus and we're always encouraging people to take time out from their busy schedules to come and join in on Wednesday evenings from 7-9pm for language activities.

Advertisements will go out soon for another *Gwich'in Language Immersion Adult Camp* to be held on the long weekend in February, from evening of Thursday, Feb 23 to afternoon of Sunday, Feb 26th. Watch for the postings. It will be held

about 20 minutes south of Old Crow. This is giving you a heads-up notice so that you can plan to attend this exciting event out on the land.

Snowshoe making course will begin shortly also – watch for postings. This will be held at the college campus. Learn how to knit

Photo by: MJ Moses



babiche onto the snowshoe frames. Students who register must commit from beginning to end of course. This is great traditional skill teaching at its best. This is a “do not miss” event that you must mark on your calendars.



Photo by: MJ Moses

Another important task on hand is of researching online at University of Fairbanks, Alaska for any collections, i.e. archival photos, transcripts that they might have of Old Crow and it's people. I am in the process of gathering information from there as they do have some information in their collections of Old Crow.

Mahsi Cho.



Melissa Valja
Natural Resources Planner

Hello!

Old Crow Flats SMA

At the end of November there was an Old Crow Flats SMA workshop in Old Crow including an Elders meeting and Chief and Council meeting, both with the Technical Working Group, and Greg Charlie, Co-Chair of the Senior Management Committee. The open house presented what information is already known. The planning process was introduced at the Community Meeting. This was well attended and people provided many good suggestions and feedback. An open house was held in Whitehorse on December 14th, and a few people also provided very good feedback. For more information on workshop discussions, please keep your eye out for an Old Crow Flats SMA Planning Newsletter, or updates linked to the VGFN website.

On January 24th, there was a Technical Working Group meeting in Whitehorse. We started working on the first steps in plan writing by coordinating a draft table of contents. Our next Old Crow Flats SMA Community Consultation will be held at the end of March.

2nd Annual Old Crow Climate Change Workshop

VGG Natural Resources Dept., NYRRC and the Community Steward are coordinating climate change related projects involving youth. These are: employing an artist to help create a mural; employing an Energy Solutions Technician to educate people on energy efficient products and to install some into peoples' homes; and, creating a Gwich'in English brochure with information on how to personally reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in Old Crow. We have been going into the school each week to work with youth since November. All of these activities lead up to our 2nd Annual Old Crow Climate Change Workshop held on February 28 and March 1, 2006. The focus this year will be 'energy solutions' and there will be several guests from Whitehorse.

ANCAP

Aboriginal and Northern

Communities Action Program has an upcoming funding deadline. We will be applying for funding to assist the energy efficient design of the Old Crow Visitor Reception Centre. From February 21-23 the ANCAP Yukon workshop and committee meeting will be held.

North Richardson Dall's Sheep Management Plan

This planning process has made a little bit of progress after several months of dialogue about political issues. The working group went over a Terms Of Reference in a teleconference on January 25. The next step is to hire a facilitator and hold a working group session, and start the development of the plan, which we expect to be completed within a year.

Forestry Planning

Right now with the very cold temperatures our reliance on firewood is more than evident. Through the years people have shared their concerns about forestry

planning and has urged our department to develop a plan. Over the past few months, some preliminary work on this has begun. I will be talking to everyone interested, especially the woodcutters to collect their thoughts on the creation of a plan that everyone will support. You can expect to see formal community consultations in the spring coordinated by our department and the NYRRC.

Announcements:

-A **North Yukon Planning Commission** meeting will be held in Old Crow on February 11 and an open house will be held at the end of March.

-The Annual Gathering of the **Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op** in Old Crow will be held March 18-19, 2006.

Recycling

The recycling program in Old Crow does not yet have someone employed to sort collectables. Hopefully soon there

will be a person employed in this position, the program will be completely up and running, the blue and yellow bins will be emptied, thus making it easier to do your part to recycle. In the future volunteers are also important to help this program succeed!

Recycling is a vital activity for this community to become a more sustainable one. We try to teach youth in the school about climate change and lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and recycling is a way to do this because it diverts waste from going to the dump. It's the message of the three R's: reduce, reuse and recycle!

How you can recycle when there is no pick-up:

1.) bring recycling to blue / yellow bins (outside VGFN, outside Northern, inside the school).

2.) Bring recycling to the shed behind the Youth Centre.

Mahsi' Cho

William Josie

Director, Natural Resources

Happy New Year Shalak Kut!

On the evening of December 1, 2005, Parks Canada, and VG NR Dept's hosted a Vuntut National Park Open House. We discuss activities that happen at the park over the past year, some highlights are;

- Staffing to replace Darius
- 5 year mustilid study and
- Approval to proceed with Wilderness Declaration!

The Yukon River met in Anchorage during the week of December 6th. Out of eight projects we submitted, six got conditional approval to the tune of \$205,800. We may get further out when the panel review our detail projects in Whitehorse at their annual March meeting.

On December 11, I had the pleasure to attending a memorial for my friend the late Bill Ferguson at Whitehorse. It was very sad because Bill looked after a lot of us from Old Crow while we were attending high school.

The Porcupine River Working Group, which I am a chair of, held our annual meeting on December 15, 2005. We re-

Robert Kaye

Game Guardian

Hello all.

I have been doing the harvest number's for the year 2005 on Traditional Territory for caribou. All the hunter's in town are doing a good job on not hunting cow's. The harvest number's for cow's this year is very low it is good to see everyone's not hunting cow caribou too much anymore.

The Porcupine caribou has been declining for quite a few year's now. This is why we ask the hunter's not to hunt cow's to much. Harvest number's have been pretty low for caribou this year, but the moose has been hit pretty hard, due to not much caribou around this fall. The cow moose number's were low and there

viewed the past 2005 season, review the 2005 R&E projects, and discuss our 2006 R&E projects.

In April 2006 we will host our annual pre-season public meeting and look at the outlook for the 2006 fishing season.

On Jan 18 and 19 the NR Dept's hosted a 'Monitoring Meeting' at Old Crow. We invited Parks Canada, YTG, and five NSERC Chairs to discuss current monitoring and research in our tra-

ditional territory, and how we can build

on that. I will have a better update next month. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to contact myself at the office; 966-3261 EXT. 237.

And on a sad note, I just returned from a funeral of a dear Friend the late Charlie Blake. It was sad, but good to visit with old friends.

With that, please take care until next time! Mahsi.

Dustin Davis
Physical Education Instructor

Vuntut Youth on the Run!

Good news from the gym! Students have been getting lots of exercise at the school during these cold days of January. After a slow start to the new year, with so many youth getting the flu, we are once again burning up the gym with activity. The **running club** is racing along with several students having ran more than 400 laps of the gym. This means they have traveled a total distance of more than 23km during their warm-up laps! Keep up the hard work! The students keep getting faster and faster with some students now running 3/4 of a mile during their warm up run. Wow!

Arctic Winter Games

Congratulations go out to Rhiana Kyikavichik, Chelsea Charlie, Brandy Tizya, Yudi Mercredi and Bradley Keaton who were chosen for the Arctic Winter Games snowshoe team. Congratulations also go out to Crystal Frost, Amanda Frost, Kecia Kassi, Samantha Rispin and Clifton Nukon, who all qualified for the Arctic Winter Games team for Dene Games. And finally, congratulations also go out to Miranda Charlie and Lindsey Keaton for making the Arctic Winter

Games hockey team. Way to go Vuntut Youth!

Community Ski Events with Potluck Supper!

Every other Sunday, in conjunction with the *Old Crow Health and Fitness Pilot Project*, there will be a community event at the ski lodge. Please come out and make use of the trails and ski equipment from 2:00 pm until 4:30 pm. If you are staying for the Potluck that starts at 5:00 pm, please bring a healthy food item and your own plate and utensils. If skiing is not your cup of tea, then bring a pair of snowshoes from home and hit the bush trails on those, and of course, come to the potluck afterwards. The goal of these events is to get outside and be physically active. Children should be supervised by an adult family member or friend. Keep an eye out for posters advertising these events.

Fitness Project

The *Old Crow Health and Fitness Project* has twenty youth enrolled with an average attendance of around fifteen students. We have three training sessions per week and I can really see improvement in students ability to push themselves physically and mentally. Students who attend both the Fitness Project and Tae Kwan Do are engaged in 6.5 hours of

intense physical activity per week, outside of their regular gym time. This is a wonderful opportunity for Old Crow youth to develop physical and mental stamina. Please continue to do everything in your power to support these meaningful programs.

Community Meetings for the Old Crow Health and Fitness Pilot Project

There will be monthly open meetings for the *Old Crow Health and Fitness Pilot Project*. This fitness project is growing and adapting to meet the needs of Old Crow youth. Guardians of students in the project and interested community members are urged to come out and share with the instructor your ideas for the project. This is an opportunity for parents to express concerns, share insights into their children and for the community to strengthen its commitment to the health of its youth. The end goal of this project is to foster healthy youth with physical and mental focus. Furthermore, the project seeks to build the capacity for Old Crow citizens to deliver their own fitness programs. Coming out to these community meetings and helping me to better understand Old Crow's local human resource is a good step in that direction.

Thank you!

Tammy Josie
Computer Support Technician

It's been awhile since my last Newsletter, and submission. I'm pleased to say that I'm back, to the office, to home and to myself. I'm finding it great to get back into the swing of office life again.

May 1st-3rd, 2005 I went out for a School Council Meeting and was in Whitehorse when Renita and Douglas was blessed with Ciara Chassity on May 2, 2005.

May 6-7th, 2005 the community campus held the spring Board of Governors (BOG) Conference in Old Crow. Our very own Sonja Foss was in attendance those few days and that's when all the caribou were crossing down the river. What a glorious moment to have witnessed.

June 3-5th, 2005 BOG Chairs Meeting

in Whitehorse. I was invited to Yukon College Graduation ceremony, where many of my college buddies had received their Certificates, Diploma and so on.

Canada Day celebrations, went very well. I sent out pictures of that day to the "Northern" Calendar submissions and two of my photos were placed in this years calendar. Please see Northern Store if they have anymore 2006 calendars to give away! My photos appear on the month of July.

On July 13th, I was chosen to do an interview with my grandmother at Whitestone Village - Chuu T'it. I remember spending my summer's there. It's not exactly what I remember but it felt good going there again. The water was so low and just like creek.

A presentation of those interviews were held at the community hall on the

21st of July, Heritage should have those tapes in their collection of interviews.

Michelle's Potluck dinner was held August 18th and she left on the 19th, 2005. Anyone wishing to write letters to Michelle can see Tracy for her address.

September 13th, Hans-Peter Strand moved to Old Crow.

I went on holidays from September 16th-30th, 2005.

Left to Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society on October 10th for 6 weeks rehabilitation and returned to office November 29th, 2005. Enjoyed my time there and met new peoples, we are still in contact with each other.

Happy New Year, the office opened on January 3rd, 2006. This is my update from my last Newsletter submission, I apologize for the wait.

Mahsi Cho!

Kim Blake
Projects Coordinator

Happy New Years Everyone, I hope that this year brings you all good health, happiness and a prosperous year.

Before leaving for the holidays, around December 15th, Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) Threatened Defense Spending Bill Over Arctic Drilling! Unable to pass his Arctic National Wildlife Refuge drilling plan in any other way, Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) said that he will hold the Defense spending bill hostage in order to force his controversial drilling legislation through Congress.

On Wednesday December 21, 2005 the US Senate, led by Senator Maria Cantwell from Washington State, voted to block a vote on a measure that would've allowed plans for oil drilling to move forward in America's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Three Republicans, Senators Mike DeWine (OH), Lincoln Chafee (RI) and

Bill Frist (TN) voted with independent James Jeffords (VT) and forty Democrats to block the bill. Effectively killing it for the time, and probably for the rest of the year.

Asked whether Stevens would agree to the procedural steps necessary to strip the [Arctic drilling] provision and let the broader Defense appropriations legislation proceed, Senator Trent Lott (R-MS), said: "He's going to have to. There's no alternative here." Lott added: "He had his shot, and I was with him. But now we have to go on." Energy and Natural Resources Chairman Pete Domenici (R-NM), a strong backer of opening [the Arctic Refuge] said he will try again in next year's budget resolution.

We have worked very hard in the past and present to preserve the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, home to the porcupine caribou herd. It was very good news to hear that we have won another

vote to save this great land. I would like to send out a huge thank you to all who has ever helped in any way on this issue. – Mahsi.

On other news – our Christmas events coordinated by Randall Kendi and Stan Njootli Jr. turned out very well. I would like to thank Randall Kendi and Stan Jr. for taking the time out of their Christmas holidays to coordinate these events for the children. Without us even asking Myranda Charlie helped out a lot during the holidays. Also, Kyle Benjamin and Mylinda Bruce were the student helpers this year. A huge thank you to Douglas Charlie for his awesome fiddle playing, and the guitar players who took turns and joined in with him. It is always good to see people contributing to our community and making things turn out for the best.

That is all that I have for this month's submission, and I hope you enjoyed it. Enjoy your February everyone.

Jennifer Smith
Community Steward

Brrrr.... Greetings! What a cold place I have moved to; thankfully the community has plenty of warmth in its smiling faces which helps to take the chill off.

This is my first submission to the newsletter and I would like to start off by letting you know what I do in my job.

What do I do?

Community Stewardship - I am employed by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board (YFWMB); however my position is made possible through a unique partnership between the VGFN, the Yukon River Panel (R&E), Ducks Unlimited Canada, NYRRC, Vuntut Development Corp, North Yukon Planning Commission, Canadian Wildlife Service, and YFWMB.

As a steward, my role is to involve the community in projects which achieve the conservation of fish, wildlife, and habitat. It is my job is to be a resource for the community in achieving your visions for conservation.

Community Stewardship defined:

"Community" means- *work-*

ing with the people who make the land their home to develop ways to look after the land that work for the community. "Stewardship" means - Looking after something which is entrusted to you. It means caring for the land, air and water all of which support life.

This stewardship program is Yukon wide, as has stewards in Mayo, Haines Junction, and Dawson.

As much as I enjoy my job, it was a challenge to come back to work after the holidays due to a bluding belly and sore feet from much feasting and dancing over the Christmas session- Mahsi ...but I got back into the swing of things and the days have been filled with the following:

Much of this month has been occupied with

visits to the school and work on **Climate Change Projects** coordinated by Melissa Valja, Darcie Matthiessen and I.

Highlights to watch for:

- a large mural painted by the school kids and a local artist
- an English/Gwitchin pamphlet created by Old Crow in collaboration with the school
- Energy Efficient products coming to your home (to be installed by a community members)



- Mark the 2nd annual Old Crow Climate Change workshop on your calendar on February 28th - March 1st.

Old Crow Monitoring Meeting

On January 18th and 19th a host of researchers from across the country, with backgrounds in permafrost, hydrology (water levels), wildlife biology, geological records, and contaminants in wildlife, arrived in Old Crow to attend a meeting about monitoring. The goal of this meeting was to bring together parties currently monitoring and parties who have an interest in monitoring.

Discussion with local Yukon and Old Crow experts helped to guide the national researchers in the direction the community would like to see; as a result a collaborative proposal was produced among researchers, VGFN, YG, Parks Canada and others. The proposal will go to the "International Polar Year" (IPY) a group that coordinates researchers efforts on an international scale. The hopeful result of this work will be a large-scale research project in Old Crow Flats to track changes in the environment over time.

The VHTA has a few announcements to make. The association has been active and is holding monthly meetings. Meetings are held the first Thursday of every month in the evenings (look for the posters). We encourage you to come and get a sense of what the trappers are up to. The next scheduled meeting is on February 9th (the second Thursday of the month as something else was scheduled on the 2nd). Hope to see you there.

The VHTA is looking for a coordinator. This will be a part-time position, if you are interested in this opportunity please drop a letter of interest with any relevant training or experience to the RRC office by February 15th.

Recycling

Old Crow is like a roller coaster; sometimes the momentum is really high and other times it is low. One thing that I am working towards is the development of a more stable recycling program for the community.

Where are we at? We have made a lot of progress to date:

- The Old Crow Recycling Depot has

been incorporated as a society.

- We have a building. It is the log building located directly behind the Yukon College and is called the "Old Crow Recycling Depot". We have cleaned, painted, built bins and installed electricity and heat into this building. (There will be a grand opening of this building in the summer).

- There is a contract out to build more recycling bins for the community.

- There is a contract out to hire a recycling coordinator to run this program.

We are currently in transition, we will still be doing a few recycling pickups, but we are switching to a new system which will work as follows:

1. Each household will bring its recycling to a designated bin (which will be placed throughout the community).

2. Recycling will be picked up from those locations, just as the garbage is picked up.

3. An employee will be hired to sort and package the recycling.

4. The Recycling Depot will be open on weekends for people to bring in items which money can be received from i.e. pop cans.

5. Old Crow will be a recycling com-

munity! Good job.

By recycling, we are:

- reducing the amount of waste that goes to the dump

- reducing our effect on climate change

- taking care of the land.

Even during the low times in the recycling rollercoaster, I encourage community members to keep their recycling. See Melissa Valja's column for ways to recycle when there is no pick up. Bear with us until the program is on its feet! Mahsi.

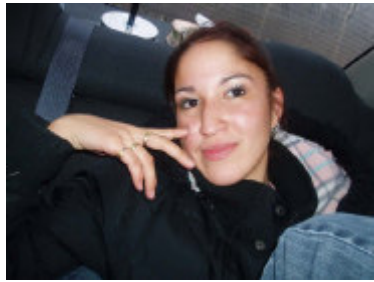
Gray-Headed Chickadee

Old Crow is unique as it sits on the border of the range on the Gray-headed chickadee. The Canadian Wildlife Service is interested in knowing if these birds are found here. This may be the only spot in the Yukon where they are found. I will be distributing some bird feeders in the community to have a look for this bird. If you are interested in birds and want to know more information, come and see me at the office.

I have just reported on a few things here, but there is always lots going on, if anyone has any questions about projects-past, present or future please come in and talk to me about them. Stay warm.



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Life is a journey. The Elders have said that everything that happens to us in this life, good or bad, happens for a purpose and that we take from these experiences and learn from them as we continue our journey in this life. Everybody has a dream and dreams can become a reality. In order for one to make them a reality, one must make sacrifices to attain their dreams. Life is what you make of it. Stand tall and remain proud. In spirit!

