



# VGFN NEWS

NEWSLETTER  
of the  
VUNTUT GWITCHIN  
GOVERNMENT



*Ch. adaghoo Zriti*

*June  
"Birds Lay Eggs Month"*

Issue #04, Volume #05

June 2006

*June 23, 2006  
Water level down*



*June 24, 2006  
Water level raised*



*June 24, 2006  
Due to excessive rain*



*June 25, 2006  
The sky starts to clear up late at night*



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[www.oldcrow.ca](http://www.oldcrow.ca)

**VGFN  
NEWS**  
NEWSLETTER  
of the  
**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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**Glenna Tetlich**  
**Social Director**

The month of June has been another full and exciting month. We have been looking at ways to partner with other Governments and agencies to deliver programs in the community. The “Skills Exploration Program” is a pilot project and an example of how we are working together towards a common goal. Other staff members will give a more detailed report on the outcome of this project.

The other project is what use to be called the “Old Crow Youth Health & Fitness Project” which was coordinated by Dustin Davies this year. This project has been implemented in the school where each child in the school receives a half hour of physical fitness each day. This is very encouraging and I’m happy to report that Dustin will return to coordinate this project for another school year.

I will be working with other VGG Departments to coordinate a Family

Health & Wellness camp for two weeks in July; this was an idea and direction from some community members. Your suggestions and ideas are always appreciated and welcomed.

A posting will go out by the end of the month to give you more information about this “Family Wellness Camp”. If you are interested in participating please contact myself or Ted Howes at the Health Dept.

I wish you all a wonderful summer.

**Ted Howes**  
**Wellness Worker**

The month of June has been full of exciting experiences in my awareness of how easy and necessary Health and Wellness can be obtained in Old Crow. One such example is the pilot Skills Exploration Program which has daily successes! A number Community Member’s have dropped in and enjoyed a lunch of barbecued caribou and bannock on a stick, then repaid the group with a story and a message of the strengths they learned while living off the land.

Students have learned how to dry caribou meat as well as how to dry fish, even though one day the camp outside of town had a four legged visitor who very politely had a meal of the one piece of fish and maybe four pieces of drying

caribou meat. What tipped us off were the droppings, still very fresh I might add, that one Elder noticed while gathering specific pieces of wood to use for the drying meat. Then the group problem solved how to ensure the safety of all concerned, the bear included. Even though this required serious fast problem solving, these types of experiences are transferable to a wide range of careers.

The next week students learned how to make a knife from scratch taught from one of the experienced facilitator’s, Derrick Kapuschak. Of course no matter how great the knife is this tool requires a case for protection and for carrying so here again the students planned and used the necessary skills to make an original knife case. These experiences are all transferable to a variety of occupations.

The greatest complement I heard from one of the students on the program itself was there wish that the Skills Exploration Program was longer. This Project is just one example of the many teachings shared in Old Crow on a daily basis!

The Health and Wellness Department is offering one to one counseling, as well as facilitating various ongoing workshops. These workshops open compassionate communication between different groups to enhance team building to ensure the continuity of the family values are kept strong in Old Crow!

Mahsi’ Cho to the entire willing community member’s of Old Crow!

**Joe Tetlich**  
**Justice Coordinator**

It has been a relatively quite month as no Court was held in the community. However, we are looking at July 11<sup>th</sup>, 06 for the next Territorial Court date. In between Courts we do the necessary paper work and also liaise with the Crown and RCMP as to which clients are eligible for the Old Crow Diversion Program (OCDP). In order to be eligible there are certain criteria and responsibilities that must be met. I would like to stress the importance of checking in weekly if you are under the program. Taking responsibility and being accountable when you are in the program is essential.

This is not a program where I assist you in Court and that is the end, you also have an obligation to attend Court even though you are under the program. Please get in touch with me if you need more assistance.

As I mentioned in my last report we have submitted our work and budget plan for the 06-07 fiscal year. We are in a contribution agreement with the Federal and Territorial Government’s. This is the last year of our agreement. Every year there is a set funding agreement that is in place and use for only intended purposes. We do not know what will happen next year however there is a chance that the program will continue.

We are in need of more Justice

Committee members, please see me if you are interested.



Image by: James Wood

**Loretta Itsi**  
**Social Administrator**



Good day to all!

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006 the Skills Exploration Program kicked off with good interest. The program started with 11 participants. All participants are enjoying themselves so far as we are into the third week of the program.

The skills exploration program consists of traditional skills, knife making, stained glass, photography and life skills. Participants in the program have a tent set on the other side of the airport by the lake. They had chosen this spot and I think they have made a good choice. They have been working with caribou meat (cutting, drying & cooking) making bannock, doughnuts & duck soup. Just

to name a few of these activities! They also have been making knives, knife cases & awls, which they all did a wonderful job.

This week they will do stained glass. These projects are instructed by Derrick Kapuschak.

The program will end June 30<sup>th</sup>. In the mean time they will be doing more interesting activities. Anyone wanting to look at the pictures of the program can go to the Old Crow Website and click on the link Located on left menu.

On June 16<sup>th</sup>, I traveled to Whitehorse for a meeting on the reciprocal agreement.

This meeting is held every six months with other first nations in the Yukon. The reciprocal agreement was set up between first nations so we can work closely on

social assistance. For example; if someone is in another community the worker there will have to call me to verify status & give authorization. They will than invoice VGFN and we pay for the beneficiary that receives assistance outside of the community.

We have been making changes as we meet. Everyone at the meeting comes with good questions and concerns. The next meeting will be held in November 2006.

Here in the office we have been quite busy. I have been looking for jobs for clients & helping where I can with the skills exploration project.

Until next time please take care.



**Renee Charlie**  
**Home & community Care**  
**Coordinator**

**Elders' Home Care Program**

The month of May 2006; starting with "spring-cleaning" of Elders' homes. I'm in need of "Homecare Workers". I still have most of the Elders' homes' to get spring-cleaning completed. Please come and see me if you're interested and/or need to make extra money. Hopefully I get all spring-cleaning completed by end of June 2006.

**Mothers Day Brunch**

This was sponsored by my program. There was a good turnout of ladies. I hope each lady had a great enjoyable day. I like to thank all who donated door prizes: Northern store, Education Department, Recreation Society, and all the men that donated their time to cook

for the ladies, Barry, being the Head Cook. Mahsi cho.

**Elders Tea**

Each Friday our Elders' meet at the gathering place from 2:00 to 3:30pm. All Elders are welcome to attend to take time out of their busy scheduled to get together. Call me at work if you need a ride.

**Van**

The van is available to the Elders' to attend: meetings, feasts, medical appointments and when you need help when you go shopping and/or banking. Andrew Charlie is our driver and his home telephone # 966-3932, when you need his assistance.

**Wood Purchase**

We are in the process of purchasing home wood for Elders'. For more information see me at the office.

**Workers'**

A meeting was held with my homecare workers' earlier in the month. It was a very positive meeting; the workers will meet twice a month at the gathering place. Our goal this year is training.

**June**

I took my holidays June 12-16, 2006. During my absence from office, Glenna, my supervisor was in charge of all transactions.

At this time I like to thank my Homecare Workers for the great work their doing taking care of our Elders'. It is very important we make sure our Elders' are comfortable and feel safe at home.

Please, take some time to check in or visit an Elder this week.

With this, I hope all citizens have a great summer and be careful when your out on the river boating.

A special thanks to the Old Crow detachment of the RCMP for donating a beautiful bike which was awarded to Nathaniel. This "Most Improved" award and the bike he earned were a surprise to Nathaniel, which makes then even more special. Nathaniel worked hard to improve himself, not for the purpose of winning a bike. You should be very proud of yourself Nathaniel

a willingness to push himself. Nathaniel steadily improved his "personal bests" and always finished activities with sweat on his brow. Nathaniel is the student that best demonstrated that being healthy and trying your best is a choice that all of us can make, regardless of athletic talent, or previous levels of activity. Once again, congratulations Nathaniel on your accomplishment!

**Tammy Josie**  
**Computer Support Technician**

As most people may know by now, I will be leaving back to school this academic year to pursue an education in Law. I have been training Michael Peter as my replacement as Computer Support Technician, Photographer, and Government Newsletter Editor/Publisher.

Michael has been an exceptional trainee and I can only hope that people show him the respect and kindness that you have shown me over the years. He is doing very well and learning very fast. I'm proud of where Michael stands today in the IT world as in his own personal life. Please support Michael as he enters the world of administration and support.

**Newsletter**

I have been familiarizing Michael with the publishing program we use here at VGG. Showing him ways to create his own style using the different features Adobe PageMaker offers and projects. The April/May issue was done by Michael and was not his first. He displays his own texture to the Newsletter and that was what I was looking for. Mahsi'

**Photography**

Grad 2006 was a spectacular event with 99 Native Graduates' from the Yukon and beyond. nine of which were Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and their images can be viewed outside the Department of Education here at the Sarah Abel-Chitze Admin Building. Photos by: Tracy M. Rispin-Kassi, Myranda Tizya-Charlie and Myself.

Awards night June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006 was yet another fascinating event here in Old

Crow as we recognize our children and their accomplishments in School. Images for both can be viewed on the main page of [www.oldcrow.ca](http://www.oldcrow.ca).

I had also gone up to Driftwood, my camp, for the weekend of June 9-11, 2006 and saw some wildlife. 10 miles below Bell River my family and I saw a young female moose and a Grizzly bear digging roots.

**Support**

Requests for support show that employees are learning about their workstations. I cannot tell you how impressed I am to see such intellectual people working for us. Please be patient as we are learning as well.

With this, I would like to thank you for always taking the time to read our Government Newsletter which keeps us in touch with you.

Mahsi' Cho!

**Michael Peter**  
**Computer Support Technician**  
**Trainee**

**Work**

It's great to be back at work. I've been back since the end of April. I started work on May 4th. I've been learning the Visual Basic programming language, VB for short. VB can be used for programming Excel spreadsheets. I recently finished a

little project in excel for an Equipment Rental form for the staff to use in their departments.

**Newsletter**

This will be my second "professional" newsletter, with help and guidance from Tammy. I also helped Paul set up the new computers for the staff here at the building, which was fun.

I would like to put out a big congratulation to my "big" brother

Jeffrey Peter and his fiancé Karalyne Mackenzie, who are planning on getting married at Christmas or next summer, most likely summer, less confusion.



**Dorothy Frost**  
**Administrative Director**

Greetings to you all!

As requested by the community please find attached at end of Newsletter Chief Joe Linklater's summary of travel from January. This will give you an idea of business that needs to be addressed at the political level. These negotiations are valuable and allow us to better serve you. Chief Joe will also be in the community for the better part of July.

Our amended Constitution will come into effect July 11 and this will bring changes to the present Chief and Council's roles and responsibilities. The government will also see positive changes in regards to budgets and decisions made

on your behalf. We look forward to implementing these.

Our office is currently investigating a partnership with YTG to help train us in the area of setting up a central filing system including the software to track and manage our files. This will ensure better time management and accuracy of documenting our business.

During last years General Assembly the community decided to take another look at the Prohibition and thus a committee was struck. However, due to the lack of participation of community members, we have had to disband this until further notice. The upcoming General Assembly will have to decide where to go with this.

Our Projects Coordinator Kim Blake

had to suddenly leave to pursue another career in Whitehorse. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication. We will miss her greatly and best wishes are sent her way. Although a posting has gone out to fill this position, we have been fortunate to have been loaned the services of Francis Bruce from Natural and she is currently working in this position in the mornings

Up coming meetings/assemblies are as follows

- CYFN's Annual General Assembly is scheduled for July 25-27 and will be held in Mayo. We are now seeking participants to attend this, preferably one elder and a youth representative.

- The Bi-Annual Gwitchin Gathering is hosted this year in Inuvik June 28-Aug 2, which we are looking into flight arrangements for those who may wish to travel to this.

- VGG General Assembly is scheduled for August 10-12 at Tlo-Kut; we look forward to seeing you there.

We welcome back the post secondary and high school students and we look forward to another positive working

relationship with you this summer.

On another note, we wish Alisa Kelly all the best as she pursues a career in medical school. She will be leaving our office July 14 and then onto Hamilton, Ontario for three years. Hopefully she will come back and set up practice here in the community. Our very own Gwitchin Doctor, how lucky are we! Good luck Alisa! Thank you so much for coming back home and working with us, we truly

enjoyed the experience and value your contribution to this government.



**Tracy Bruce**  
**Housing Assistant**

Hello to you all,

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006 I started my position here in the VGFN office as the Housing assistant. As I have held this position in the past I accepted Human Resources offer to come back to GS.

I will be here until the end of August as I will be going back to school another year to do more upgrading. It is good to be back home again, I am enjoying every minute of it.

Since I have been working I have been learning the new Cheque Requisitions, filing paper work and catching up on the departments goals. I am enjoying my work and need no training as I have worked here before. That is all I have to report for this month.

See you all around!



**William Josie,**  
**Director, Natural Resources**

A good day to you all and I hope you all had a pleasant spring.

For the month of May, I was at John Charlie Lake with Randall Tetlich and his family. It was a month I enjoyed with lots of hard work; trapping, and just enjoying the outdoors.

From June 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> the Natural Resource Dept. hosted another successful "Porcupine River Salmon Gathering". Our intent at this gathering was to continue fostering communication between Alaska and the Yukon.

Chris Burn was here to set up some equipment to monitor permafrost. Robert Kaye and Erika Tramm-Tizya assisted Chris's team on this project.

As of July 11<sup>th</sup> I will step down from my council position, and moving full time into the NR Director's position. I am very proud of all accomplishments made at VGFN, during my time in council, I will miss it, and with that I wish you all well.

**Frances Bruce**  
**NR Administrator**

Hello!

I am enjoying the summer weather here in Old Crow. Hoping that everyone is enjoying it as well!

Just an update on where I am working here in the office. I started working in the mornings with Chief and Council, assisting Alisa Kelly and working in Natural Resources, with the NR crew in afternoons.

I really enjoy working in these two departments, I worked in these departments before as it is a very nice working environment and that is always important.

I will be returning back to school in Whitehorse, Yukon College starting this fall. I plan on moving in early or middle August. I am excited to be returning back, it's been nearly two years since I've been to school! So it will definitely be a good change for me.

Hope you all have a Good Day!

Image taken on June 25, 2006  
By Michael Peter



**Mary Jane Moses**  
**Heritage Researcher**

I attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gathering that was held in Old Crow on the June 2-4 weekend. It was an informative gathering with both sides of the border sharing issues and concerns and seeking ways and solutions to the problems that are encountered with the salmon issue. It was also good to see people from Alaska.

I'm helping Melissa with the transcription of the Old Crow Flats – SMA Gwitchin interviews. Transcribing from the Gwitchin language back into English is a tireless job for me. I enjoy coming out with 34 pages of written English which will later condense once its typed, with handwriting it takes up lots of pages. Anyhow, I transcribe word for word and I don't summarize what is being said as you lose the entire message when you do that. Having been transcribing since 1999, I do enjoy it and I get to hear what the story or conversation is about and I learn that way in this instance about the Old Crow Flats SMA project. I take great pride in my language and encourage others to "learn your

language"; it costs nothing but your time and energy and willingness to learn.

On June 12 the Heritage Committee had a Women Elders session at the Youth Center where a select group of Elders were tape recorded and video taped on their traditional knowledge about the long ago traditional rules. This happened the next day again for the Men's Elder session. We came away with a lot of valuable information which will be later used by the community in some format, either a booklet or something to that effect. If more information is needed, then more Elders will be interviewed.

I traveled to Whitehorse along with a member of the Heritage Committee. This was another informative session where new guidelines for proposal funding were outlined amongst other interesting information.

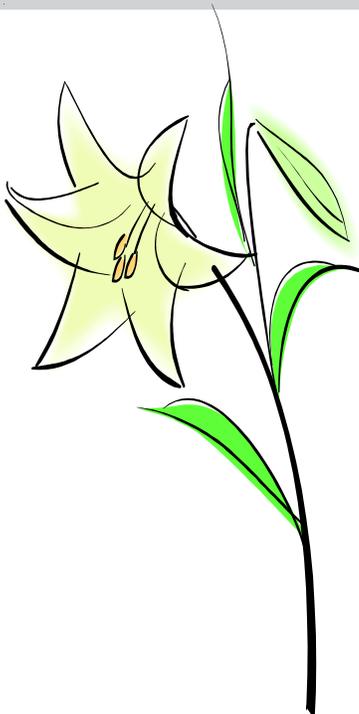
Planning preparations are nearing completion for upcoming summer projects.

I encourage everyone to get out on the land and practice your culture which is important to all of us, to pass down our skills and knowledge of land and animals to those who want to learn about it. Continue the legacy of our ancestors.

To all community members who continue to help us, the Heritage Branch, see projects through, Mahsi' Cho! I appreciate all of your time and knowledge that you give us. Mahsi' Cho to the Heritage Committee for all your help throughout the year, working as a team helped us make great strides in projects we undertook with expertise help from Elders, community members, VGFN Heritage Manager and Consultant, Shirleen Smith and anyone else I may have forgotten – mahsi'

Take care everyone and stay safe while traveling on the rivers this summer – wear your lifejackets every time you step into the boat – even if it's to go around the river bend. I'm certain it will be a good berry season with all the rain – so see you in the berry patch!

Image taken by: Mary Jane Moses



**Sonja Foss**  
**Lands Manager**

**May 2006**

May was a hectic and busy month with a lot of activity and meetings in the office.

The first week of May was spent with our consultant Angela Walkley who conducted interviews with Chief and Council, Directors and the Natural Resources Department staff. The interviews were conducted to help us identify where our strengths and weaknesses lie as a department. We thank everyone for participating.

We conducted interviews for the Fisheries positions for the Fisheries work being done this summer. Congratulations to the new employees, I'm sure that you will learn a lot!

The Old Crow Flats questionnaire/interview was started up by Melissa and translated when needed by Robert Bruce. In total, there were 14 interviews completed. The information received will be very beneficial for the planning of the Old Crow Flats Special Management Area.

Our two STEP students started their positions with a bang! Erika Tramm-Tizya and Cheryl Charlie are back in the VGFN office. Erika is working as the Game Guardian Assistant and has been heavily involved in field work such as the muskrat survey, harvest information collection, and permafrost monitoring. We hope she is benefiting from her position. Cheryl has been coordinating and carrying out the interviews for our capacity assessment with the community. I am sure that many of you know that she has been knocking at your door asking to spend time with you.

We had a very successful snack day near the end of the month at which many people from the community came and enjoyed some health, traditional and tasty treats.

The Fishing Branch Management Committee meeting was held in Old Crow. One application for Bear Viewing in the Special Management Area has been

reviewed and approved. William and/or Melissa can speak more on that.

I also worked on some draft documents for the Land Registry and am hoping to see their completion soon.

**June 2006**

I do not have much to report this month except a few items. I took nine full days off from work and flew south to spend time with friends and family. I went hiking, biking, playing golf and cruising down the Alaska Highway, up the Dempster Highway, and down the Klondike Highway. It was great to go hiking in Tombstone Park with a couple of the Park Rangers and see the kind of fish and wildlife assessments that they do.

**YESAA DB Forum**

I attended two days of meetings in Dawson. Lands Managers from eight other First Nations were present as well as Nicole Hulstein from INAC and Rob Walker from Yukon Government. We were discussing land use issues, permitting processes, YESAA process, legislation, land management needs and other interesting topics.

**Capacity Assessment**

Angela Walkley, our consultant, came up on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> and presented the results of our capacity assessment to us. We have heard from the community, Yukon Government, other First Nations, stakeholders, senior officials, Directors, Chief and Council, partners, and others about how they feel about our Department. All of the comments were summarized by Angela. We really appreciate the time and effort everyone took to provide their comments. It will help us grow stronger.

**YESAA/Gravel Work on the Dempster Highway**

The two projects that were reviewed in April have been approved to go ahead. The two Decision

Documents dictating the terms and conditions of moving gravel are attached here in the newsletter. If you have any questions, please let me know.

**Porcupine Enterprises**

The riverbank work started for the season. I have not yet had the chance to meet with Jason to discuss scheduling and monitoring expectations, but hopefully that will happen soon. There was a public meeting held on June 7<sup>th</sup> which I did not attend, but I heard that it was very successful.

Porcupine Enterprises is responsible for the Old Crow Airport Summer 2006 project. They will be resurfacing the existing runway and taxiway. They will be expanding the existing apron, upgrading the visual aids, replacing the airport beacon, removing and installing the Runway Designation signs, and installing new field electrical panels. Also, there is the possibility of constructing a drainage swale outside the runway strip along the entire south side of the runway. The construction will start on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and be finished by mid-August.

Also, my mom is in town. Her name is Beverley Porter. You may see her walking Fuzzy and picking wild-flowers. I'm sure she'd love to stop and chat if the bugs aren't too bad!



Image taken on June 25, 2006  
By Michael Peter