

SPRING 2017 NEWSLETTER



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Vuntut Gwitchin Government

PO Box 94

Old Crow, Yukon Territory

Y0B 1N0

Tel: 867-966-3261

www.vgfn.ca

www.oldcrow.ca



Message from Chief Bruce Charlie

Happy spring to all citizens and community members of Old Crow; spring is a wonderful time of revitalization, new growth, and an abundant harvest. We've seen lots of change within our Government over the past few months, and we look forward to more positive change, growth and continuing to build on our programs and services.

Council is keeping busy with capital projects that will benefit our community. We know that a new Health Centre, a Multi-plex and a "Home for the Wise Ones" are priorities for this community and we continue to negotiate these capital projects with stakeholders and with YG.

At the political level it's been a busy 4 months. As the Chief, I continue to meet with leaders at the Federal and Territorial level to lobby for the full implementation of our modern treaty, for full recognition and consultation as a self-governing first nation, and for the protection of our land and resources.

All Modern Treaty and Self-Government Partners will be meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau on June 12. I will work with the Land Claims Agreements Coalition (LCAC) to make sure Vuntut Gwitchin priorities are reflected in the overall strategy.

The river has gone and spring is in full swing in Old Crow. Enjoy the beautiful weather and please remember to stay safe during this time.



Message from the Executive Director

Alex Nowak

Vahn Gwiinzii. I am honoured to serve as your Executive Director. My wife, of 29 years and son, age 24, is both Vuntut Gwitchin beneficiaries. For the past twenty-three years, I worked in Toronto, Vancouver, Denver and Calgary in the capacities of Branch Manager, General Manager, and General Manager overseeing five city branches in Western Canada. In management, my strengths are negotiating, strategic planning, project management, problem solving, developing and adhering to budgets and their deadlines, public relations, presentations, employee development, and corporate events. I am enjoying the opportunity to apply my business skills to this current role as Executive Director.

It's been an awesome learning curve to familiarize myself with all department goals and objectives, department staff, and challenges and opportunities. While staff turnover is one challenge, I am very impressed with the level of commitment and the work ethic of our VGG staff who continue to persevere in changing times.

In my two trips to Whitehorse, in the past week, I was instructed by Deputy Chief Esau Schafer to attend meetings regarding VGG Special Projects. We had met with Norman McIntyre (VGG Accountant), Timothy Cant (VGG Grant/Proposal writer), First Nations Bank, and Tony Zedda (Architect). Additional meetings were set with YG Assistant Deputy Ministers in Transportation, Health & Social, Aboriginal Affairs, Minister Frost, seven INAC representatives, and various managers in Health and Social. Talks were continued regarding the Multiplex, Health Centre, Elders Lodge, Solar Farm, Baseball and Soccer Field, Sewage Lagoon, Fuel Tank Farm (Phase II), Contaminated Soil Remediation, and 2018 Winter Road. While Esau debriefs Chief & Council on meeting plans, I look forward to sharing this information with our Directors to help guide their long term planning.

It has been a privilege to have the opportunity to see the "big picture" of how Vuntut Gwitchin Government operates. I look forward to continue supporting our Government in all capacities.

In this role as Executive Director, I have also had the great privilege to meet most Vuntut Gwitchin residents and beneficiaries. I appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns and solutions. I am committed to supporting all community members to continually provide increased services in healthcare, education, housing, recreation, and community infrastructure.

I am honored to share in our vision and commitment to serve our Vuntut Gwitchin community.

Rosa Brown Lands Manager

North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan

Parties to the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan (NYRLUP) meet on a quarterly basis to discuss progress on plan implementation priorities. The main priorities, each continuing from the previous year, include:

The Yukon Land Use Planning Council is working with the Vuntut Gwitchin and Yukon governments to determine the actual Surface and Linear Disturbance in the Eagle Plains area using satellite imagery and field work data. This information will inform managers about the amount of new disturbance that can occur before cautionary or critical disturbance levels described in the NYRLUP are met. The Vuntut Gwitchin and Yukon governments are working together to develop Caribou Guidelines / Best Management Practices for oil and gas development in the range of the Porcupine Caribou herd. The first stage of the project was completed this year,

and consisted of gathering and assessing documented information about how caribou respond to disturbance on the landscape. Erin Consiglio, PhD student with the University of Aberdeen, assisted the NR Dept. by conducting and documenting interviews with VGFN knowledge holders over the past year, and Shirleen Smith used these interviews and other Traditional Knowledge sources to prepare the report, *Vadzaih Van Tat Gwich'in Knowledge of Caribou*. Caribou biologists, Don Russell and Anne Gunn, completed a comprehensive review of existing western science and produced a report called *Assessing caribou vulnerability to oil and gas exploration and development in Eagle Plains, Yukon*. The next stage of the project will include information verification with Vuntut Gwitchin knowledge holders, and engagement with other groups.

The Vuntut and Yukon governments signed a memorandum of understanding (2017) to formally begin **Access Management Planning** for the Eagle Plains area. The objective of this collaborative, intergovernmental planning process is to address management needs in advance of development pressure. A working group consisting of VGG, Yukon Government and the Yukon Land Use Planning Council was established, and it currently meets on a weekly basis to advance this project.



Protected Areas

Check out the new website for Dàadzàii Vàn Territorial Park (www.daadzaiivanpark.ca) and newsletter to read the draft vision statement and guiding principles for the park planning process. The Vuntut Gwitchin and Yukon governments are looking for feedback, and welcome your comments and suggestions through the website, newsletter or by speaking to staff of the Natural Resources and Heritage Department directly.

The working group for Ch'ihilii Chik Habitat Protection Area is in the final stages in developing a management plan for this important wetland complex. Management recommendations of the draft plan were reviewed with the community at a public meeting in February, and public review of the draft management plan will take place in the coming months.

Old Crow Solar Project

VGG received money from CanNor, INAC and POLAR Canada to advance the Old Crow Solar Project through the final design and engineering stage of project development, including a grid impact study and the negotiation of a power purchase agreement with ATCO Electric Yukon. Construction is planned for the summer of 2018.

We are currently planning a solar panel test array for Old Crow this summer that will look at the efficiency and economic feasibility of various technologies (bi-facial solar panels and trackers).

If you haven't already seen the short film about the Old Crow Solar Project, you can find it on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnYkbulUknc>

Oil and Gas

The Yukon Government's Fall 2016 Oil and Gas Request for Postings resulted in a request for the disposition of oil and gas rights in fifteen parcels, most of which are within the Vuntut Gwitchin Traditional Territory, in both the Kandik and Eagle Plain basins. VGG is currently engaged in consultation with Yukon government, a process that precedes public consultation and will inform Yukon Government's decision on the areas that will go out for bid. The Natural Resources and Heritage Department will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, June 14th in Old Crow. The purpose of the meeting is to share information about the areas - we will verify the information we have about VGFN values in these areas, and will collect new information. All are welcome.

Megan Williams **Heritage Manager**

Historical Lifeways Project

The Historical Lifeways Project objectives are to involve youth with their culture through research and experiential learning. Current tasks include working on transcripts; video file transfers and GIS data processing. We have confirmed funding for the upcoming field season which will include experiential learning, seminars, site visits and a community presentation.

Navigation Systems

Community Development Funding was used for trail breaking trails from Old Crow to Kaachik (Johnson Creek Village) and LaPierre House to Ch’ihilii Chik (Whitefish Lake). Additional funding was received from Yukon Government, Heritage Trails to document the trail from Zheh Gwatsal to Daadzaii Van (LaPierre House to Summit Lake). The trail breakers did an amazing job navigating the traditional territory. Slideshows from the trips will be shown at a community presentation later in May.

Heritage Committee

The Vuntut Gwitchin Heritage Committee meets monthly and provides direction to the Heritage Branch programs and reviews research and media applications.

Language Coordination – Sophia Flather

Language classes are being developed and will be ready to start in the fall 2017 using the Direct Language Acquisition method. This method is an effective, safe, inclusive and fun way to learn language and includes audio recordings, games and worksheets. Two text books with associated materials are being prepared along with basic level story books based on early literacy booklets written by Patti Tetlich: “Tea With Grandma” and “Hunting With Dad” that were translated by Mary Jane Moses and Jane Montgomery.

Verb verification is taking place in tandem with developing language materials. Brenda Kaye did an amazing job documenting 300 Gwich’in verbs that are now being *edited by Elders before being recorded and included in language materials.*



Heritage Act

Vuntut Gwitchin Heritage Act was passed in October 2016. Three Yukon First Nations have passed Heritage acts over the past few months. This Act established Vuntut Gwitchin stewardship and responsibility for Vuntut Gwitchin heritage and culture.

Researchers and Media

The following list is of researchers who are planning research in the traditional territory in 2017. The majority will be in the Old Crow area and some will be based on the Dempster Highway.

Old Crow area:

Name	Affiliation	Project	Time period
Robert Busby/Molly Saats	Incorporated Research Institute for Seismology	USArray, earthquake sensor installation (Old Crow area)	Installations, Old Crow area 2017
Jonathan Goldner	University of Oxford, School of Archaeology	In The Spirit of Engagement: Assembling the Sensorium in Gwich'in Canoe Building	2017 summer
Karen Goodman Emily Walker	CAN Help, University of Alberta	-Investigating the Effect of Dietary Exposure to Mercury on the Severity of Chronic Inflammation and Gastric Neoplasia in Populations with an Elevated Risk of Gastric Cancer -Addressing Community Concerns about Risks from H pylori Infection in the Circumpolar North	2017
Mike Sutor	Yukon Government	Porcupine Caribou Late Winter Captures (radio collars)	March 2017 mid-March (5 dys flying)
Aiko Cappe	Laval University	The Wolf of the Yukon Arctic a multiple portrait	Jan – November 2017
Jonathan Goldner	University of Oxford, School of Archaeology	In the Spirit of Engagement: Assembling the Sensorium in Gwich'in Canoe Building	Summer 2017

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Peter Jaffe	Western University, Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children	Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative With Vulnerable Populations (CDHPVPP)	January 2017 - 2020
Ian Macdonald	Parks Canada, Western Arctic Field Unit	Aquatic and Permafrost Monitoring in Old Crow Flats, 2017	Mid June, late August Permafrost – July and August
Graham Strickert	Yukon College and University of Saskatchewan	Human Dimensions of Thawing Landscapes	May – December 2017
Kevin Turner	Brook University	Evaluating the Influence of Climate and Land Cover Changes on Water and Carbon Balance in Old Crow Flats, Yukon, Canada	June – September 2017
Kevin Rumsey	Transport Canada	Invitation to Participate in Dempster Highway User Consultation	Feb to April 2017
Courtenay Crane	First Nation and Indigenous Studies, University of British Columbia	Energy Efficient First Nation Housing	Feb 28, 2017 interviews March 2017 report
Murray Humphries Jeremy Brammer	McGill University	Muskrats Environmental Change and Traditional Use of the Old Crow Flats, northern Yukon	April- May June – August November - December
Justin Strauss	Dartmouth College, New Hampshire	The Kaltag-Porcupine Fault System of Northern Yukon: Evaluating large-scale terrain displacement in the Arctic and beyond	June 7 th – July 15 th , 2017 (report December 2017)
Elizabeth Larson Charles Miller	NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory	NASA's Arctic-Boreal Vulnerability Experiment Airborne Campaign	May – Oct 2017, reporting 2018
Mark Bertram	US Fish and Wildlife	Lesser Scaup and White-Winged Scoter Expansion	June 7-15, 2017

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	Services	Survey	
Emily Caddell	University of Waterloo	Inclusion of Yukon First Nation Peoples in Regional Planning Processes: Case Study of the Peel Watershed Planning Process	
Maciej Stetkiewicz	Yukon College, Northern Climate ExChange, Yukon Research Centre	Developing a Tool and Database for Assessing Flood Risk in Yukon Communities	

VGFN Traditional Territory area (ie. Dempster Highway):

Jan Matthias Peter	Geological Survey of Canada	Origin of Hyper Enriched Black Shale NiPGE Deposits Yukon	August 2017 completion March 2020
Eric Sperling	Stanford University	Palaeo-environmental conditions during the early and mid-paleozoic: geochemical evidence from Road River Group Strata, northern Yukon	July 15 th – August 3 rd , 2017
Susan Anthony	University of Western Ontario	Thermal Limits and Plasticity of Arctic Arachnides - <i>Pardosa moesta</i> (Wolf spiders)	August – Sept 2017 Oct 2017 – Jan 2018
Lucas Brehaut	Memorial University	Catalyst for Arctic Change: Role of Tundra Wildfires on Latitudinal Treeline Range Expansion	June – August 2017-2019

Archives

Dana Lord was hired as our short term Archival Assistant with Special Projects Capital Assistance Program funding and worked for three months to clear the backlog of materials that need to be entered in the data base and put away. This information is now accessible through the database and we thank Dana for the excellent work she did.

Gwaandak Theater

VGG Heritage partnered with Gwaandak Theater to write Vuntut Gwitchin Oral History stories into plays in the Gwich'in language. We also do story telling nights. Lots of fun. Thank you to the Elders who come out and share their stories. We hope to have a production in the language in the near future with professional support from Gwaandak Theatre.

Brandon Kyikavichik

Heritage Interpreter

Shoo'ii Joel and I do language programming where ever we can be useful. We listen to the tapes, I write it in Gwich'in, and he does the translations. We make a pretty good team. My goal is still to become fluent, and also to do whatever I can for true revitalization.



Chief Zheh Gittlit School

I go to the school whenever they need me to help out with Gwich'in class, or just tell stories. I also went to the culture camp to do a talk on the importance of shanaghan kat (elderly ladies).

Speeches and Presentation

My last speech was a ten page speech that I gave at the Yukon Conservation Society Caribou Celebration in April. I told the speech in story form with dialogue of different characters and different time periods. I still do regular presentations abroad. I've done a lecture on Skype to three different classes at the Yukon College as well.

Tours

My tours seem to be getting more and more popular, and I seem to be getting busier and busier. I've done a tour that seemed to be very well received by the Yukon Ministers as well.

Research

Ever since I started here I've been hard at my studies. I have traced most our genealogy back to the Caribou Fence villages. I know the names of the leaders of the Caribou Fence Villages, commonly referred to as the "owners" of the Fences. It took a lot of man hours but I think I have finally pieced it all together. All Gwich'in families were tied to a Caribou Fence Village in some form or another. I have traced the caribou fence genealogies from here to Macpherson. I took all the files I've collected on the subject and dissected them, so as to re-engineer them so to speak, and piece the data back together like a puzzle so I could make sense of it all. And I think I've finally done it. I compiled it all into 4 research papers totaling 23 pages. Much of this information has already been presented to the elders. Now that I am so close to figuring it all out, I plan to present to the elders one more time before I send it off to be further dissected by other studious Gwich'in scholars. Including Shirleen Smith, writer of the beautiful book "People of the Lakes." I am also in the process of acquiring more documents from the HBC, Yukon Archives and the Church Missionary Society.

Yukon Native Language Center

Joel and I also work with John Ritter and staff at the Yukon Native Language Center. I am learning the science of the language. With Joel and John helping me, it may be the best chance I have of saving the Van Tat dialect of what is commonly referred to as "high language."

Yukon Tourism Welcome Guide

I wrote some articles for the Welcome Guide for Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association. I gave them a story of the connection of family lineages to the caribou fences. I also did a piece on Gwich'in culture and what it means to be Gwich'in. The articles will be excerpted, which means they will only quote from the articles I wrote, they won't show the articles in full.

Hide Tanning

Mary Jane Moses partnered with experiential archaeologist Kim Pasche to hold a tanning workshop. The participants worked hard for two weeks straight (except for Sundays) to tan a number of hides. They experimented with different techniques including bark tanning using alder bark and mixing soap with caribou brains for soaking. Thanks to everyone who participated and came by the tanning set up to show their support. Tanning is hard work but so rewarding and it is great to see the beautiful final products.



Aboriginal Languages

- Languages are part of who we are as Aboriginal peoples.
- Language is part of our identity and culture, our whole being.
- Language is being proud of who you are, proud and vibrant and able to make a difference.
- Language is sharing our knowledge, as we are more powerful and connected, together in unity, moving forward towards a shared vision.
- Language is honoring our ancestors and our future generations. Language cannot be owned, just kept alive for the next generation. Pass it on!
- Language – everyone is involved, learning, challenging obstacles, sharing and growing together. Everyone a learner and a teacher, respecting differences, supporting, giving guidance and taking risks.
- Language is humor + fun = laughter
- Language is humility and honoring our word to build Trust and Respect.
- Languages are alive, flourishing and changing – how can we adapt and keep up?
- Languages are healing and spiritual. Be thankful in prayers.
- Language – it is our ancestral stories, teachings, traditional knowledge, cultural practices, carry them forward.

Grant Ladouceur ***Health & Social Programs***

I would like to thank each and every one of you who have taken of your time to welcome me to the community. I have been in the community since the end of November and settling into my duties as Mental Health and Social Programs Manager.

My duties involve Drug and Alcohol assessment, treatment planning, and referral for treatment as well as counselling services pre and post treatment. A continuing portion relates to groups like seeking safety which is open to anyone recovering from addiction. It not only serves to treat the addiction but also past trauma which is a known factor in Addictive behaviours. I co-facilitate this group with Jennifer Noonan from Yukon Drug and Alcohol services. The groups run once a month usually out of the safe house from 5pm to 7pm. Please check the information boards at the government office for the next group time.

When not doing the seeking safety group I also lend my time to hold a Men's Group from 5 to 7 Wednesdays also at the safe house. This group explores the ways things used to be done when it comes to culture, how we may be able to get back to those ways of helping elders and those in need in the community. You're welcome to come out and join in the group we would love to hear the way things used to be and how we can begin to get back to those helpful ways. I also have strong skills in crisis intervention, suicide intervention, and risk assessment.

Mental Health

My skills also afford me the ability to assess and counsel for people experiencing Mental Health problems, anxiety and depression, situational crisis, and day to day stressors that may bring you to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and not knowing where to turn to for help. It's always nice to have someone to speak with when there are troubles in our lives. Confidential and non-judgmental I seek only to help you navigate through that which troubles you.

Child Welfare

I also work closely with your Social worker to stabilize your home environment in providing support to you so that you can provide the best care possible for your children and family. This may involve helping you find legal help if need be, and working with that help to find services that make you a better parent. That's just some of what I do, I spend a lot of time in the management of the department and the supervision of the good staff here in the Health and Social Department. Drop in and see us we are here to help.

Justice

I also work closely with Kathy Nukon in the development of the Justice program and we are consistently working to develop a community justice committee for which we need your help. If you would like to sit on this committee and help in diversion cases set down from the court we would welcome your assistance. The development of this service is critical to your community.

That's just some of what I do, I spend a lot of time in the management of the department and the supervision of the good staff here in the Health and Social Department. Drop in and see us we are here to help.

Kathy Nukon
Justice/Aboriginal Court Worker

Training

Completed training with representatives from Yukon and Canada to use data reporting templates. The activity report is complete. A narrative for the same period is complete with the reports funding from Yukon, Canada and the Vuntut Gwitchin Government will continue for the justice and court worker programs.

Whitehorse Correctional Centre

On May 18, 2017; there will be an Information Fair at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The purpose of this Fair is to provide information for our citizens on services that are provided by the Health and Social Services Department. This information will help our citizens prior to exiting WCC and to reintegrate into the community.

Restorative Justice: Principles, Practices and Implementation Training

This three-day training is scheduled for June. This training is to help us to better understand restorative justice and practices. I have been asked to invite an elder to this training. If you are interested in assisting me after training, please call me.

Re-visioning Justice in the Yukon

This conference is being held at the KDFN Cultural Centre in Whitehorse on May 29 & 30. There will be keynote speakers at this conference. I would like to invite an elder to this conference, please call if you are interested.

Yukon Territorial Court

The circuit will sit in Old Crow on June 6, 2017. Court will be held at 10:00 AM at the Community Centre. The Honorable Judge Cozens will preside.

Pre-circuit courts

Pre-circuit conferences are held two weeks prior to court in Old Crow. Pre-circuits are held from a courtroom in Whitehorse with the Judge, Crown and Defense lawyers. The purpose of the conferences is to go over the docket.

Tour, John Tizya Centre

The John Tizya Centre interpreter will conduct a tour for court personnel. This is to educate and bring awareness to the Judge and his colleagues on the cultural and traditional ways of the Vuntut Gwitchin. This tour is planned for June 6th after court and will last around an hour and a half.

Re-integration

Since January I have been in conversation with the Reintegration Worker, CYFN, and a Federal Parole representative on how we, as a community can help citizens return to live in the community. The purpose of our discussions is to help us prepare for the community and citizens who have been incarcerated for long periods to come back to Old Crow.

Justice Committee

Since July 2016; this is the fifth call for citizens to come forward to form a justice committee. At the first meeting the Terms of Reference, Policies and Procedures, Mandate, Guidelines, and other matters will be discussed. Three to five citizens are encouraged, if you would like to sit as a committee member.

Administration of Justice

I receive updates from the negotiator along with Chief and Council. This is an on-going file that is taking some time to get to where our government shall enact laws which would enable us to administer community justice.

Kyla Ross
Family Support Worker

Hello Old Crow! This year kicked off with a full time Social Worker here in our community, and I am fortunate to be working with her. Cathy Deacon works out of the John Tizya Centre and delivers four different programs: adult protection, child protection, youth probation, and social assistance.

In January the Health and Social Department put on a community engagement for the public. During this community engagement we heard from Mary Jane Jim and Timothy Cant, Ian McDonald (regional supervisor child and family services) and Cathy Deacon (Old Crow Social Worker), and Annette King (Child and Youth Advocate). We finished off with community questions and concerns.

I attended the Health Canada Residential School Training in Whitehorse during the second week of February with all the staff from all three territories. At this training I learned about programs and services that can be offered in Old Crow upon request. This is where I began the planning of our Grief and Loss Workshop. The 16th Annual Gwich'in Cup was held this month and we were able to secure funding for two youth and a chaperone to go to Inuvik for the weekend and take part in a weekend of hockey fun. I also worked with Leona Corniere from the Child Development Centre to bring the Handle with Care Program to Old Crow. On February 28th, Charlene Bradford facilitated, and six community members were trained in the Handle with Care Program, which is a program to promote mental health in young children.

In March Joanne Henry and Vern Swan from CAIRS came to Old Crow to offer support services to the community. I also attended the First Nations Child and Family Engagement Workshop held in Whitehorse.

We were lucky to book Anne Firth-Jones and Ray Tuccaro for a week in April. They came and offered a week long Grief and Loss Workshop during the day, and offered one on one support during the evenings. Having them here was a great support to all those who utilized their services.

We have mens groups, womens groups, and seeking safety held monthly that all are welcome to. We also have Jennifer Nunan from Alcohol and Drug Services and Mary Anne Steyn from Integrity Counselling who come to Old Crow monthly and always taking appointments.

We are currently looking for Foster Parents and Extended Family. Please call or come see me or Cathy Deacon if you have any questions or would like to put your name forward.

The NIB Trust Fund Applications are out again and the deadline is June 2nd. I am here and willing to help all those interested in applying.

For questions, concerns, or a visit, feel free to stop by the office or call. Mahsi for your time!

Dorothy Frost

Advocate/Administrative Assistant – Whitehorse Office

The Whitehorse office continues to be a busy place. A wide range of citizen's access to services offered, including use of the computers and printers, bus tickets, socks, underwear and toiletries are provided as well as laundry and shower facilities.

As the Citizens Advocate, I am always available to assist citizens with their needs. For some people this means helping to find accommodation, a job or connecting that person with services offered by other agencies. Sometimes it is just a cup of tea; and a caring ear.

I provide support to VGFN citizens who live in Whitehorse, and those who are in Whitehorse on a temporary basis for medical, training, court etc. VGG staff travelling to Whitehorse for business is always welcome to use the facilities here to access email and printers. I welcome everyone to drop by and say hello.

Hunting permits are issued through this office as well to non-beneficiaries wanting to hunt along the Dempster highway in our traditional territory.

I've also been busy upgrading my skills by attending and partaking in the following workshops, and or classes.

Arctic Athapaskan Council: Arctic as a Food Producing Region

Identifying Priorities

- What are the major food security concerns in your community?
- What initiatives have been taken to date?
- Why were they successful? Or what are the lessons learned?
- Are there projects underway that would benefit from additional support?

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

This workshop was a two day (January 26 & 27, 2017) certified program which provides caregivers with practical "how to" information on how to prevent the immediate risk of suicide by applying a suicide intervention model. The workshop is an interactive program which includes teaching, video presentations and skill practice.

March 28-02 Mental Health First Aid

Why take an MHFA course?

Stigma: There is stigma associated with mental health problems. Evidence shows that taking an MHFA courses reduces social distance between the participant and someone experiencing a mental health problem. Awareness: One person in five will experience a mental health problem this year. Evidence shows that MHFA course participants increase their awareness of signs and symptoms of the most common mental health problems. Confidence: The most difficult part of intervening is knowing what to

say. Evidence shows that taking an MHFA course increases the confidence participants have in engaging someone experiencing a mental health problem or crisis.

I attend the Exham exhibit opening at 5:30-7:30 on Thursday September 8th at the Old Log Church. Opening remarks were as follows, "On behalf of Vuntut Gwitchin Government I would like to extend congratulations to the Old Log Church on this wonderful and educational exhibit. The Exhams were a well-loved part of our community in the time period they lived with us in Old Crow as can be seen by the beautiful photos and artwork. Mrs. Exham made a lasting impression on her students in the 1960s that lasts to this day. Mahsi' choo."

Strong Families: First Nation Child & Family Engagement Workshop, Whitehorse, March 21 - 22, 2017

The objectives were;

1. To provide input to the INAC national engagement process on reform and funding of the First Nation Child and Family Program (FNCFP).
2. To understand the recent decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in directing INAC to correct discrimination in the First Nation child welfare system including closing funding gaps, supporting reform and implementing Jordan's Principle.
3. To discuss Yukon First Nation strengths, problems, issues and priorities for moving forward in child welfare and child, youth and family well-being in general.
4. To review options available to Yukon First Nations with or without self-government agreements for working together to take on more responsibility, authority and/or jurisdiction in child and family services.
5. To explore the vision for a comprehensive culturally founded system for supporting families throughout life with elements of prevention, active support, intervention, repatriation and reconciliation.

Records & Information Management Symposium

Friday, April 29, 2016 8:00am – 5:00pm

The purpose of the symposium is to build records management capacity in First Nations communities in British Columbia and Yukon.

All the while following the Privacy act, the purpose of this Act is to extend the present laws of Canada that protect the privacy of individuals with respect to personal information about themselves held by a government institution and that provide individuals with a right of access to that information.

Thank you and have a great spring!

Miranda Chitze
Education Director

VGG Education Department has had an incredibly busy year. We celebrate numerous successes in education and recreation programs, increased inventory for programs, Youth Centre, Daycare, and Office redesigns and upgrades, community engagement, and access to funding. We congratulate all VGG beneficiaries who registered in education programs this year, and we are proud to publish student successes.

Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (CZGS)

VGG Education Department sponsors the following programs at CZGS:

Hot Lunch Program, tutor services, school bus services, funds to supplement Yukon Food For Learning Snack Program, and after school recreation services. Education Support Worker (ESW), Mr. Stanley Njootli, coordinates Vuntut Gwitchin cultural programs, including On Land Learning, Crow Flats Camp, Spring Culture Camp, Elder teachings, traditional stories, as well as provides fish and caribou for Hot Lunch program and Community Feasts. Stanley is also a long time member of the Yukon Salmon Committee, he participates in education training, and he attends education & culture

conferences. Stanley regularly shares his cultural expertise with students. Education Department is proud to sponsor, this school year, junior students to attend Arctic Sports in Whitehorse and sponsor senior class school transition trip to Whitehorse and Vancouver. Thank you to Cheryl Charlie and Stanley for their remarkable coordination and many successes at Spring Culture Camp.

High School Students in Whitehorse

VGG Education Department sponsors all VG high school students in Whitehorse and provides numerous supports for their educational successes.

Supports include Gadzoosdaa transitions, Bill Ferguson Bursary Award, tutor program, student snack program, winter clothing program, monthly student allowance, monthly hot lunch program, post-secondary tours to Alberta, graduation supports, and year end BBQ.

Education Support Worker (ESW), Glenna Tetlich, administers all of the above programs, chaperones students, liaises with parents, guardians, and community members, organizes community engagement, and this school year, she is helping to fundraise to send four VG students to Germany. Glenna participates in the

Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee, First Nation

Education Committee (FNEC), and FN Hiring teams, and she participates in education trainings and attends education conferences.

Post-Secondary, College, Trades, and Employment Training:

VGG Education sponsors post-secondary students in university, college, and trades programs. Our VG students attend schools in Alberta, BC, and Yukon (Yukon College & Alice Frost Campus). VGG students are registered in the following Degree, Diploma, and Certificate programs: Law, Bachelor of Social Work, Nursing, Aviation Management, First Nation Fine Arts, Upgrading,

Office Administration, Carpentry, Oil Burner, Welding, Airbrakes, , Meat Processing, First Aid, Mental Health First Aid, Wilderness First Aid, and Food Safe and more. We are pleased to share that Alice Frost Campus is celebrating their highest student registration.

Candace Blake, Education Training Officer (ETO), helps students register for all university, college, and trade programs. She processes living allowances, tuition, books, supplies, travel, work gear, and scholarships, so students and clients (in work programs) have every opportunity to succeed on their education and career paths. Many Yukon College programs are displayed in Education Office, and course catalogues and brochures are also available. We are pleased to announce our Client Work Station is now available. Residents are welcome to visit our office, create and print resumes (if requested, staff will make resumes for you), and research college programs and employment online. Clients can also login to our new Career Cruising online aptitude (talents/likes/dislikes) program, where clients answer questions and the program analyzes and presents (to you) your most suited career choices.

Our new Education/Recreation Bulletin Board will be posted in VGG Foyer. Employment opportunities, university, college, and trades programs, recreation and community engagement activities and Education Department events will be posted on this Bulletin Board. If you have any questions regarding education or employment, please see Miranda, Candace, or Heather in the Education Office. We are here to support you.

Community Engagement

- Education continues to support our Parent/Guardian/Community Engagement (PGCE) Night every Wednesday evening, from 6-8:00pm, at the Youth Centre. PGCE Coordinator, Chandelle Frost, organizes and provides all supplies and snacks for First Nation cultural projects. Any resident who wishes to instruct a class to share their cultural knowledge will be given an honorarium of \$150.00. All caregivers are welcome to join or drop in for a night of crafting and visiting. Miranda and Chandelle are available to answer all your education inquiries.
- During Spring Break, David Dugas, Joseph Tisiga, and Vuntut Gwitchin student Nicholas Netro-Hendrie hosted artist workshops at the Youth Centre and provided homestyle healthy meals.
- On April 4 & 5, artist Jeneen Njootli taught Ski-Dog Blanket Making Workshops
- From April 17-20, artist Gayle Davis taught acrylic painting on canvas and burning designs onto hide in Old Crow and in Whitehorse
- Gayle Davis burned the Ni'inlii Gwich'in Declaration onto hide. It is now displayed in the Youth Centre.
- Metis author David Bouchard shared personal stories, read from his books, and played his flutes for students at CZGS and at the Youth Centre. David has published 50 books.
- Derrick Kapuschak, Third Degree Black Belt, continues to teach Taekwondo twice a week at CZGS. Mondays and Wednesdays: Children 4:00-4:30pm and Adults 7:00-8:00pm. Free Drop in classes.

Baseball Diamond & Soccer Field

Mahsi Cho to CanNor Canada150 and CDE Funders for approving the grant proposals to build baseball diamond and soccer field in Old Crow. Thank you to Mr. Timothy Cant for writing & submitting grant proposals. Additional recognitions goes to Chief & Council, Executive Director, and Recreation Coordinator. Expected time of baseball diamond and soccer field completion is mid-September.

Recognition:

All educational successes would not be possible without our incredible education and recreation teams' ongoing commitment to community services:

ETO: Candace Blake
Clerk: Heather VanBibber
ESW: Glenna Tetlich
ESW: Stanley Njootli
Tutors: Samantha Frost, Paige Tizya & Tara Fallet
Bus Driver: Marvin Frost
Cook: Greg McWhirter
Recreation Coordinator & Staff: Lindsay Johnston
Samantha Frost & Tyrell Kassi
Parent Engagement: Chandelle Frost
Director of Education: Miranda Chitze

Vuntut Gwitchin Student Celebrations



High School Graduates

Daytona Kunnizzi-Njootli
Zaria Netro
Alex Coyne
William Frost-Connellan
Laurie Reti

High School Honor Students:

Izabella House
Alice Frost-Hanberg

University:

Jeneen Njootli - Master's Fine Art Degree

First Year Program Certificate:

Nicole Simard - Office Administration
Sage Nowak - FN Fine Arts

Carpentry

Tylor Lord – Level II
Theraz Tizya – Level I
Caleb Charlie – Level I

Welding

Yudii Mercredi – Level II

Meat Processing Certification

Alvie Josie



Post-Secondary Tour in Alberta

Serena Schafer
Willow Frost
Tyrone Kyikavichick
Percilla Charlie
Candace Tetlich
Jocelyn Benjamin
Alice Frost-Hanberg
Daytona Kunnizzi-Njootli
Zaria Netro
Elijah Wood-Charlie

VGG Athletes to North American Indigenous Games in Toronto

(July 16-21)

Alice Frost-Hanberg (Paddling)
Cole Robulack (Basketball)
Kiiwaatin Swan (Basketball)
Izabella House (Volleyball)
Shae Garrett-Charlie (Volleyball)
Zaria Netro (Volleyball)
Zakayla Netro
Serena Schafer (Paddling)
Teryn Kassi (Track & Field)

Students to Travel to Germany

(August 28-September 3)

Willow Frost
Zaria Netro
Nicholas Netro-Hendrie
Tianna Reti

Yukon First Nation Youth Leadership

Alice Frost-Hanberg
Alex Coyne
Nathaniel Schafer
Josh Tetlich

VGG Education wishes to acknowledge and thank Vuntut Gwitchin Government, VGLP, Canada Government, Yukon Government, Yukon Community Services Sport & Recreation Branch, Nutrition North, YLAP, CRAG, CanNor150, CDE, and YMTA for generous financial supports.





Tyrone Kyikavichik won Gold in the Jamboree division in this year's Yukon Indian Hockey Tournament (YIHT) which was held in Whitehorse, Yukon on March 17-19, 2017. Tyrone brought the trophy won by his team back to Old Crow; it is being displayed at the Vuntut Gwitchin Government display case! Way to go Tyrone!

Keep up the good work!



Karlos Foster retired this year after working for VGG for 28 years. There was a Retirement Party for Karlos held on March 22, 2017 at the Government Office! Mahsi Cho for your hard work Karlos & enjoy your retirement!

