

Kwanlin Dän Ch'a



Kwanlin People of Whitehorse, How are you?



CELEBRATION OF THE LAND

Last November, roughly 200 people attended the **Celebration of the Land Community Dinner** at the Nàkwät'à Kù Potlatch House. The gathering helped raise awareness and participation in the development of the Traditional Territory Land Vision.

LEFT: Elder Charlie Burns dancing with the Kwanlin Daghalhaan k'e dance group, November 26, 2015

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*Minister of
Indigenous and
Northern Affairs
meets with
KDFN Council,
January 2016*



Message from Chief Doris Bill

Kwanlin Dün is starting 2016 with a sense of optimism and hope. We accomplished a lot in 2015 and we continue to move forward on making our community a safer, happier and better place to live, play and work.

You'll see in this newsletter that we have done a lot work on KDFN's community safety initiative; this is a longer term project and we have much planned over the coming months. Our TIPS Line is now operational (456-TIPS), we will be hiring security staff soon and our **Let's Keep Talking** meetings will continue in February. I wish to thank all citizens who are actively involved in keeping our

community safe. It is our community and it is up to us to shape it into how we want to see it. Together we can make this a great place to live.

We had a fortunate opportunity to meet with the new Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Carolyn Bennett, while she was in Whitehorse. Minister Bennett chose to visit our community on January 10 to learn about our community safety initiative and the Jackson Lake Healing Camp.

I'm pleased to say that the report from the Vulnerable People at Risk initiative will soon be available on our website and at the main KDFN government reception. I'm even more pleased to say that we have Government of Yukon support to develop a comprehensive action plan to end homelessness in Whitehorse and the Yukon.

You'll see that upgrading the Potlatch House is underway. Thank you, Government of Yukon, Community Development Fund, for contributing to the addition the addition to the Nàkwät'à Kù Potlatch House. KDFN will also receive funding in 2016 from the Canada 150 fund to make important cultural improvements to the building, including constructing a sacred fire pit and installing wolf and crow emblems for all citizens, other First Nations and Yukoners to enjoy.

*Councillors Calbery
and MacIntosh
receive funding from
Government of Yukon
Minster of Economic
Development Stacey
Hassard for the
Nàkwät'à Kù Potlatch
House extension*



To Serve You Better - New Staff at the Government of Kwanlin Dün

Cynthia James

I am the Community Education Liaison Coordinator at Elijah Smith School for Kwanlin Dün First Nation. My role is to support and assist students and families of Kwanlin Dün to have a positive and successful elementary school experience.

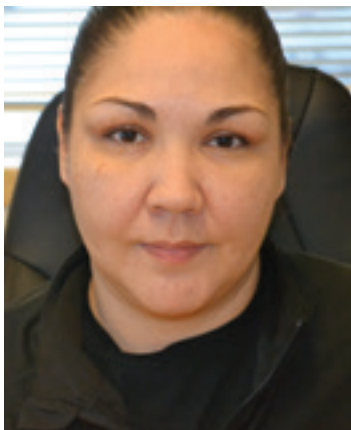


An objective of mine, is to build lasting relationships with the students and families of Kwanlin Dün and Elijah Smith School.

I am inland Tlingit and Tagish Daklaweidi from Carcross and have lived in the Yukon all my life. My father is a citizen of Kwanlin Dün so I have family from this community. I have three children, one of which attends Elijah Smith School. I look forward to getting to know the community and am grateful for this opportunity to work with the families of Kwanlin Dün.

Amanda Calbery

I am the Citizenship Registrar. My role is to help citizens and beneficiaries to complete their citizenship applications for review by the Citizenship Committee and I support the committee with its responsibilities.



One goal for me is to keep the citizenship list current so I can provide KDFN departments with the accurate information they need to deliver services to citizens. So please, make sure that I have your current address and, parents of small children 10 and under come see me for enrollment applications if you haven't already done so.

I am a citizen of Kwanlin Dün First Nation. I LOVE stick-gambling and I think everyone should give it a shot at least once in their lifetime because it is good for the soul.

Nikki-Lee Patchett

I am an Early Childhood Educator at Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre. I was once a casual staff person at Dusk'a and I am thrilled to now be here full-time. I am currently enrolled in the Early Learning and Child Care program at Yukon College and I expect to complete my studies in 2017.



I love working with children; they always challenge my view of the world. I learn a lot from them and I hope they learn a lot from me too. My goal at Dusk'a is to help the children develop their full potential. I love watching children grow, discover the world around them and flourish with a strong understanding of First Nation culture.

I am a member of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and I enjoy spending time with my family, reading and learning.

Michele Taylor

I am the Executive Council Office (ECO) Administration Assistant. I provide support to the ECO staff and to the Kwanlin Dün First Nation's Boards and Committees with their work.



I am a Southern Slavey Dene from Ft. Providence, NWT and my Slavey name is Dene Éhtsu which means 'Indian Grandma'. I have lived in the Yukon for most of my life. I enjoy working with and learning from Yukon First Nations people. I have two daughters and I enjoy sewing, especially beading. I look forward to meeting and getting to know more Kwanlin Dün citizens. Shāw nítän, mähsi for this opportunity!



A Plan for the Land: Celebrating a Vision for our Traditional Territory

To get involved or for more information, contact KDFN Lands & Resources (867)-633-7800 john.meikle@kdfn.net www.kwanlindun.com/lands_resources

This November, roughly 200 people attended the Celebration of the Land Community Dinner at the Nàkwät'à Kù Potlatch House. Organized by Kwanlin Dün Lands & Resources and KDFN volunteers, the gathering helped raise awareness and participation in the development of the Traditional Territory Land Vision.

“A land vision is essential to ensuring that the values of the Kwanlin Dün community are reflected in all future planning and management.”

“This is one of the first land celebrations in many years to honour the land. We once celebrated land in every season,” says Irma Scarff.

It's hard to know how Kwanlin Dün's traditional territory will be used in the future when settlement lands make up only 6 percent of the total. KDFN Lands & Resources Department is developing a community-based Traditional Territorial

Land Vision for both settlement and non-settlement lands.

“A land vision is essential to ensuring that the values of the Kwanlin Dün community are reflected in all future planning and management,” says John Meikle, Senior Lands & Resources Planner.

Last winter, Lands staff held workshops to identify lands that would be best set aside for wildlife, heritage, community development and economic development. “Kwanlin Dün community wants a large portion of their traditional territory reserved for wildlife and traditional pursuits,” says Meikle. “And currently only a small percentage is actually represented as reserved for these ideas.”

Last summer, KDFN staff and members travelled to Rose Lake, M'Clintock Lake and Fish Lake for Land Vision field trips. They discussed land issues and documented Kwanlin Dün traditional land use. Many participants recalled strong family connections to these places.

Once the Land Vision is formally adopted by KDFN Council, it will provide guidance for the long-term planning of all KDFN settlement and non-settlement lands.



Developing our Lands - for KDFN Prosperity and the Benefit of the Community

Lot C-56 is a large parcel of land across from the Whitehorse Airport and the Beringia Interpretive Centre. It is approximately, 1/3 the size of downtown Whitehorse.

This parcel of settlement land was selected specifically for its economic potential. The Government of Kwanlin Dün will soon be engaging with citizens on the vision and values component for the future development

of this significant area. Dates and times for citizen and larger-community engagement are being finalized and a market analysis will begin the end of January.

In 2020, this land will be subject to taxation, which means it must be generating revenue. KDFN foresees that the area will support opportunities for entrepreneurs, employment and investment.

For more information contact eileen.duchesne@kdfn.net or (867) 633-7826



C-56 parcel, Whitehorse International Airport, downtown Whitehorse and other parcels of KDFN settlement land (highlighted)

Cache Your Story: Waterfront Heritage Project

Elders Judy Gingell,
Adeline Webber,
Barb Fred and
Rose Charlie at the
November 2015
Open House



**To participate and
Cache Your Story, or
for more information
contact Rae
Mombourquette
867-633-7822
rae.mombourquette
@kdfn.net**

Sometimes they would get into mischief, but Kwanlin Dün Elder Albert Webber has great childhood memories exploring the Whitehorse waterfront with friends. One of his favourites: sneaking out onto the long arm of the freight crane, swinging out over the water and dropping down with a splash. "We were young," he exclaims. "We didn't know what fear was."

Stories like these made waves at the Kwanlin Dün Whitehorse Waterfront Heritage Project Open House on November 17 at the Nàkwät'à Kù Potlatch House. On display were maps, genealogy charts, Kwanlin Dün family photo collections, and a video compilation of Kwanlin Dün Elders talking about their waterfront experiences.

The project is also collecting memories from Marsh Lake to Lake Laberge. "We are not just talking about life on the Whitehorse waterfront," explains KDFN member Rae Mombourquette, and the Project Assistant & Researcher. "We know that people were on the land, using trails,



harvesting in the mountains and running traplines. Our project is a place to cache those stories too.”

The Waterfront Project meets a provision of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement, Heritage Chapter 13, to create a written and pictorial history of Kwanlin Dün on the Whitehorse waterfront. They’re in the community consultation phase of a multi-year project. The end result will be a book, an interpretive manual and a range of interpretive panels and other media.

This fall, contractor Linda Johnson, filmmaker Dennis Allen and KDFN member Jason Shorty video-interviewed Elders along the waterfront. These video sessions will start up again in March. There will be a screening of some interviews at the next Waterfront Project community meeting on March 3.

Have a story to tell? The Waterfront Project is actively seeking local voices to add to the project. They are still seeking



Dianne Smith and her granddaughter at the November 2015 Open House

additional family photos, songs and tales. Mombourquette says it’s important to “Cache Your Story.” She says, “It’s about telling our story in our own words.”

Upcoming Community Dinners:

Thurs, March 3, 2016 from 5-9 at KDCC; and Wed, April 20, 2016 from 5-9 at KDCC. For transportation, call Tammy @ 633-7866

StrategyNorth Donates to “From Our Hearts” Society



THANK YOU

StrategyNorth for your donation to “From Our Hearts” Society. The KDFN Elders’ Council established “From Our Hearts” to give back to the community through the Elders Emergency Fund and to promote cultural awareness.

Left to right: Elder Councillor Judy Gingell, Travis Armour, StrategyNorth and Chief Doris Bill.

Kwanlin Dün's Constitution is Under Review

The deadline for hearing from citizens is February 12, 2016.

There are 3 ways to make your voice heard:

- *Attend the community meeting*
- *Email*
- *Contact field worker or facilitator*

The KDFN Constitution is our Nation's supreme law; it is the foundation for all legislation Council enacts.

The Constitution has been in place for 10 years and Council has requested that it be reviewed and amended before the appointment of the next Kwanlin Dün Election Committee in late 2016.

This is a tight timeline because the Constitutional Review Committee needs to hear from you first, then make recommendations to Council and finally citizens must vote on all proposed amendments through a referendum.

The Chair of the Constitutional Review Committee, Councillor Sean Smith, mailed all citizens a letter and a summary document with points for discussion. (The document is also available at www.kwanlindun.com.)

Key objectives for the review are;

- **Coherence:** ensuring all sections are logical and consistent
- **Simplicity:** pursuing simple and plain language in the drafting
- **Enabling:** creating a Constitution that provides context while allowing other legislation to carry the details

The proposed constitutional amendments will accompany a resolution from Council on August 10. The referendum date is set for October 12, 2016; this is when all citizens will vote on the changes to the Constitution.



We want to hear from you!

The deadline for hearing from citizens is February 12, 2016. So far, we have heard from many citizens and there are still many ways to have your voice heard and your thoughts recorded on this important matter.

- There will be a community meeting on Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at the Nàkwät'à Kù Potlatch House from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
- Send an email to ConstitutionalReview@kdfn.net
- Contact the KDFN field workers or facilitator directly to capture your thoughts at your convenience;

Field worker, Lisa Smith
(867) 335-4775

Field worker, Dianne Smith
(867) 334-3997

Facilitator, Kirk Cameron
(867) 667-7315

Wanted: History Buffs

Are you a Kwanlin Dün citizen interested in learning more about KDFN history? KDFN Education is looking for four interested citizens to participate in a project with Yukon Archives in February. Participants will spend two days (February 2nd and

3rd) at the Archives learning to use archival Yukon documents, photographs and voice recordings. Participants will explore a topic of their choice and will be paired with an Elder to gain more in-depth knowledge.

Interested participants should contact Faith at the House of Learning 334-2444

Land Registry System Information Available

The land registry system is one part of the KDFN land management system. It is a widely-used, trusted system that confirms ownership, leases and mortgages.

KDFN's land registry system will give people and lenders confidence to lease land and

lend money for mortgages, while maintaining KDFN Aboriginal rights and title to the land.

Visit www.kwanlindun.com / **lands and resources department** to read the Land Registry Information Sheet or call (867) 633-7866.



Gary Bailie Receives Commissioner's Award

Gary Bailie receives the Commissioner's Award January 1, 2016 for his years of passionate work with the Kwanlin Koyotes Cross Country Ski program. Nigha shäw

níthän Gary for your dedication to the youth of Kwanlin Dün.

Thank you and congratulations Gary.



Left-Right: Stephanie Dawson, Krista Dawson, Cassandra Charlie, Tina Baillie, Bev Tsandaya, Anita Ellis, Kory Sawrenko, Kathleen Dawson and Justin Smith

Courses at the House of Learning

For more information call the KDFN House of Learning (867) 633-8422.

This November, nine KDFN citizens participated in a week-long course called Construction Carpentry for Beginners at Yukon College. The course was funded through an agreement with Yukon Advanced Education with the goal to promote skill development and improve employability. Participants constructed insulated dog houses with instructor Albert Rodgers. Five participants went on to design and construct other projects like wood boxes, shelves and toolboxes.

Students who had never handled a drill before were seen days into the course creating multiple projects with enthusiasm. On their evaluation, one participant wrote: "Doing something I'd never thought I could and doing it well."

All week long, the atmosphere in the shop was one of pure dedication. A lot of fun was had, too! All of the participants gained useful carpentry skills and three participants are looking into continuing education in the trades at Yukon College. Seven of the participants will continue on with the Basic Home Plumbing and Basic Home Wiring courses offered in 2016.



Upcoming courses at the House of Learning:

Employment Ready Boot Camp

Coming Early Spring 2016. Get employment safety tickets in a 8 courses. Sign up for individual courses as needed, space is limited.

Courses offered: Chainsaw Safety, Standard 1st Aid, Food Safe level 1, WHMIS, H2S Alive, Fall Protection, Confined Space, TDG-Transportation of Dangerous Goods

Accepting Registrations soon!

Driver's Education: Tutorial Sessions

For Class 7 (Learner's) License, February 8-12 (1:00 – 3:00 pm) at the House of Learning (full, accepting waitlist)

Basic Home Wiring

March 8-10 (full, accepting waitlist)

Also:

Tutoring for Adults – available with appointment

Case Management for Education or Employment – available with appointment

A Job Coach is available to help you set up online resume & employment profiles.

Watch for an upcoming Yukon & Federal governments **hiring information sessions** at the HoL.

Life Throws Challenges but Nothing is Impossible - Jason Charlie

Post-Secondary education has been a long haul for Jason Charlie; he is almost finished though, set to graduate this year with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Thompson Rivers University. Jason hopes his story can be an example – helping others see that whatever life throws at you, anything is possible.

“Keep life simple,” he says, eyes twinkling. “Explore and take risks. Don’t just survive, truly live because nothing is impossible!”

Jason wasn’t a fan of school; it wasn’t a fun place to learn. In grade 8, at the age of fifteen, he dropped out; he never graduated. Jason questioned where his life was going and made a choice. He states, “Once you make a conscious choice, things fall into place.” He got a job, finished a treatment program, and enrolled at Yukon College.

He remembers reading an old issue of the Yukon Indian News, where an elder stated, “Old time words, just like school.” As he got older, he immersed himself in culture –wanting to know what it is to be Indigenous; he read stories, listened to elders and the people around him.

Identity is important; Jason encourages young people to know their ancestral history; it will give them direction, guidance, wisdom, and a deep reverence for life.

But life kept throwing challenges at him. In adolescence, early adulthood, alcohol got in the way of his upgrading. During his first year of university, he took time off when his brother died. Life happens. This is something Jason wants future students to know: “Challenges will arise. Life – everything is a process; it takes time, patience. Don’t give up. Believe in yourself. Keep moving forward, one assignment at a time.”

One key to Jason’s success was the



support he received from Thompson Rivers University, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, friends and family. “After they saw I was serious about my education, they helped, supported me, especially, the education department, and my family.”

After graduation, Jason would like to work for the people, to use his education and help others use knowledge to bring about change within themselves. “Everything in the world reflects your inner world –how you see things,” he says. Education is a pathway to change. “After studying for a while, you notice the changes in yourself – the way you talk, the way you think, the way you question.” Jason recites a quote by former KDFN Director of Education, Art Stevenson, “Teachings without experiences are just words, experiences without teachings is a life of chaos and turmoil. Teachings and experiences cupped together makes for wisdom.”

Congratulations Jason! Thank you for your insights and inspiration. Good luck in your future endeavours.

For more information call the KDFN House of Learning (867) 633-8422.



Yackety, Yackety - YACA

For more information on Yukon Asset Construction Agreements contact the KDFN Economic Development Department at (867) 633-7800.

So what is a Yukon Asset Construction Agreement or YACA? It is an agreement negotiated as part of KDFN's Final Agreement, under chapter 22 – Economic Development Measures. Its aim is to ensure First Nation participation in large-scale Yukon government projects. A YACA is designed to provide benefits to Kwanlin Dün that are comparable with the nature, scale, duration and cost of the construction, but not place an excessive burden on the Government of Yukon.

Benefits may include employment & training, sole-source contract opportunities, new business or investments. A YACA is triggered when the Yukon government proposes a large construction project within KDFN's traditional territory that has a cost of over \$3million.

Over the last 10 years, KDFN has received many benefits from YACAs such as the Whitehorse Airport expansion, the correctional centre, subdivision development, the building of affordable and senior housing, the building of the new FH Collins Secondary School, and more.

There have been approximately 20 agreements negotiated, which have provided many sole-source contracting opportunities and employment and training positions with the Yukon government. As a result of direct contributions from YACAs, KDFN has funded the expansion of the House of Learning and substantial upgrades to the Jackson Lake Healing Camp.

Records are Crucial to Government Operations

After the best delivery of government programs and services, there is nothing more important to the Government of Kwanlin Dün than the proper management of its records. Governments receive thousands of records every day. The security of these records are important to the Government's past, current and future activities.

For citizens it is important that the Government of Kwanlin Dün ensures the integrity and security of your records and that all KDFN Government records are well managed and protected.

KDFN is integrating a Records Management Classification System. It is a big job. Currently, KDFN's two-person team (Melissa O'Brien and Carolyn Harris) is working with the Lands and Resources Department and will soon be initiating the system for all departments.



Melissa O'Brien and Carolyn Harris sorting through boxes in storage containers.

Intergovernmental Agreement Signed



Intergovernmental agreement signed with the Government of Yukon. Expected results from this agreement will include an Education Memorandum of Understanding, exploring options

to increase land-based programming at Jackson Lake Healing Camp, a multi-purpose building and Emergency Response Training, as well as other areas of mutual interest.

Chief Doris Bill & Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski sign Intergovernmental Agreement, November 30, 2015.

Making Our Community Safer TIPS Line is Operational **456-TIPS (8477)**

Remember, the TIPS Line is not an emergency number. If you need ambulance, fire or police call 911.

“Council is committed to making our community safe and secure for our Elders to live, our children to play and our citizens to work,” Councillor Sean Smith said as he announced the new KDFN TIPS Line on December 14, 2015.

Kwanlin Dün has partnered with Northwestel, through a cost-sharing arrangement, to provide the service and access to the line.

The TIPS Line is a pro-active measure to give citizens a way to anonymously give information on potential crime concerns and other safety and security matters. This is a way for citizens and others to say what they saw or know about an incident (alleged drug trafficking, bootlegging, child-protection matters and/or motor vehicle violations) without the need to testify in court.

Your information may be very useful towards solving on-going or unresolved investigations. Your information may help build a case and possibly lead to charges. Investigations do take time - your information is important, and at times patience is required.

Remember, the TIPS Line is not an emergency number. If you need ambulance, fire or police call 911.



The Bigger Picture

The TIPS Line is part of a broader KDFN community safety initiative that focusses on crime prevention through environmental design and towards making physical safety improvements in the community.

With your help and our other partners in the City, we have improved street lighting, lowered speed limits, cleared brush on trails to improve visibility, removed abandoned vehicles, dismantled bush-party sites, removed hazardous waste material around homes and started roadside vehicle stop checks.

Relationships with other agencies are improving through an interagency working group that includes officials from KDFN Justice, City of Whitehorse By-Law, Correctional Service Canada, Government

*Halloween 2015
Vehicle Roadside
Stop-check in
McIntyre*





of Yukon Public Safety Branch and the RCMP. The group meets monthly to talk about issues of mutual concern and ways to remedy these issues. A Justice Service Coordinator has been hired and other security initiatives are underway.

Hearing from you is important through our community *Let's Keep Talking* meetings and we encourage your continued participation.

What's Next?

On the environmental design or physical side of safety, you can expect more roadside vehicle stop checks in the community. We are looking at installing speed-humps to slow down traffic and cameras to assist towards community and individual safety.

We will move into the next phase of our community clean-up in the summer of 2016.

KDFN is committed to hearing from you and we will continue to host regular *Let's Keep Talking* meetings – the next one will be in February, please watch for a flyer, Facebook post or visit www.kwanlindun.com

The interagency monthly meetings will continue.

We are hiring a community-based Security Coordinator who will be responsible

for hiring and supervising community security guards. Our community Security Coordinator will be starting in early February 2016.

Together we will make our community safer, stronger and a good place to live, work and raise a family.

To stay informed, 'like' us on Facebook and visit www.kwanlindun.com

Bylaw Reminder

All citizens are reminded that municipal (bylaws), territorial and federal laws apply on settlement land within KDFN traditional territory. Until KDFN Council establishes its own laws, the laws of "general application" continue to apply.

In practical terms, for example, this means that all motorized vehicles, including snowmobiles and ATVs must be registered and insured when operating within KDFN community. For your safety and safety of others it is mandatory to wear helmets while operating a recreational vehicle.

This also means that the bylaws on dogs, abandoned vehicles and other safety issues will continue to be enforced.

Welcome RCMP Constables Kerry Jury and Jordan Booth!

Both officers have been newly assigned to KDFN and will be working with our community to prevent crime, improve community safety and community wellness. A satellite office is set-up in the main administration building and you can expect to see Kerry and Jordan at community events.

There's always lots going on at the Health Centre

The Department of Health welcomes the staff from the Social Assistance unit under its umbrella. Jennifer Edzerza, Helen Charlie and Clara Shorty continue to work out of the House of Learning on O'Brien Place and citizens will continue receive social assistance support there. The change is administrative only.

Currently, a review of the KDFN social assistance is underway. The review will continue

throughout the winter and citizens can expect community consultations in the spring.

Programming at the Health Centre – the KDFN Health Centre welcomes KDFN citizens, Yukon First Nations and Yukon residents.

Over the next few months the following activities and services are available at the Health Centre.

Call Health Reception (867) 668-7289 to make an appointment where required.

Programming at the KDFN Health Centre welcomes KDFN citizens, Yukon First Nations and Yukon residents.

Monthly Scheduled Wednesday Luncheons:

Lunch and Learn: Health Promotion: 1st Wednesday of the month from 12-1

Healthy Babies, Healthy Generations Luncheon: (prenatal to 18months) 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 12-1

Chronic Conditions Luncheon: 3rd Wednesday of the month 12-1

Regularly Scheduled Programming:

Walk-in Nurse Clinic and adult immunizations: Monday-Friday 9-4pm (no appointment necessary)

Children's immunizations and pre and postnatal care: (by appointment)

Doctors Clinic: (by appointment) Tuesdays Dr. Starks, Wednesdays Dr. Zhang, Thursdays Dr. Macdonald

Counselling Services: (by appointment – drop-ins may be accommodated)

Elder and Home & Community care, including footcare services: Mon-Fri 8:30-4:30 (call Health Reception for service)

Special Programming:

Dr. Togola - Chinese Medicine Doctor/Acupuncturist: (by appointment) January 11 & 12, February 11 & 12, March 23 & 24

Arts and Crafts group: February 8-10

Vest Making Workshop: March 7-11





Photo credit: F. Mueller

Living the Southern Tutchone Culture

Dancing ...

The Kwanlin Daghalthaan k'e dance group is welcoming new members who want to learn and practice traditional First Nation dances. The group practices on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. at the Nàkwät'à Kù Potlatch House in the McIntyre subdivision. All ages and nations are welcome to join.

Language ...

We are practicing the Southern Tutchone language on Fridays from Noon to 1:00

p.m. at Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre ... bring your lunch and come learn with special guests. Everyone is welcome.

Once a month on a Sunday, we have started hosting Southern Tutchone Language potlucks at the Dusk'a centre. Everyone is welcome to bring a dish to share and practice our language. The first one was held January 17, please watch KDFN's facebook, website and twitter pages for dates. Nigha Shäw nithän!

Contact Dusk'a at (867) 633-7816 for more information.

Bilingual Stop Signs

From the direction of our Elders, bilingual Southern Tutchone stop signs are throughout the community. A result KDFN's 2014 Forum with the City of Whitehorse.





Children learning about dog safety and rabbit skinning

Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre

Drum making workshops are held for all families new to the centre. Each family makes a drum for their child to use while they are at Dusk'a; the drum is gifted to them upon pre-school graduation. The drums are a favourite with the children.

Erin Pauls, manager of Dusk'a teaches singing, drumming and dancing. She passes down traditional songs and dances from Elders who have given their permission to teach this wonderful history.

Dusk'a is dedicated to our traditional language. Southern Tutchone is taught and spoken throughout the centre. Elders, Vera Brown and Lorraine Allen are our role models. Language lessons are combined with traditional activities like skinning rabbits and making rabbit stew.

In December we held a rattle-making workshop. A traditional rattle was made for each student at Dusk'a.

We enjoy monthly visits from the KDFN Health Centre Nurses. We learn a lot! Topics have included dog safety, balance, Elder visits, getting needles and immunization.

Monthly family luncheons give our students the opportunity to learn and practice potlatch protocols.

Nutrition is one of the components of our Head Start Program. All classes learn about nutrition and traditional foods.

Drums are the favourite with the children. Each family makes a drum for their child to use while they are at Dusk'a; the drum is gifted to them upon pre-school graduation.



Elders Vera Brown and Lorraine Allen are our traditional language role models.



Fill Your Bucket: Parents and tots learn how to spread love at the Handle With Care program

Raising kids is one of the hardest things many adults may face in their lives. We all try to do our best — and hope to raise kids that are healthy and happy.

The Handle With Care program helps people achieve this. Over four evenings this fall, between October 14 and November 4, parents and caregivers learned tools to promote mental health in their children — and themselves.

At the core of the program is the idea that we need to recognize and celebrate our job as parents and caregivers. Every parent, caregiver and child has value. Once we start seeing the world through this lens, we find strength within ourselves.

A total of 13 parents took part in the weekly program. One participant talked about how grateful she was for the support offered. “I like the way it is set up with childcare and everything so that I can make it,” she said. “I’m a single mom and I find it helps me get out.”

Facilitated by the Dusk’a Family Learning Centre, with staff from the Child Development Centre, the sessions included group activities, discussion and then dinner. Held in an open-circle format, participants often worked on crafts while sharing stories. “I felt comfortable,” wrote one participant in their evaluation. “I loved how we got to keep our hands busy while sharing and discussing.”

A key topic was the importance of forming attachments with our children. During one session, parents worked on an “attachment mobile” out of sticks and beads while discussing all the ways parents can connect with their kids.

Participants also discussed the idea of how to fill up other people’s buckets. They asked themselves: “Are you a bucket filler or a bucket dipper?” They wrote down all the ways family members could fill each other’s buckets and took these ideas home

to share. “I loved the bucket analogy,” wrote one participant. “I’m going to fill people’s buckets,” wrote another.

“I like the way it is set up with childcare and everything so that I can make it. I’m a single mom and I find it helps me get out.”

At the last evening, Erin Pauls, manager at Dusk’a, set up a sacred space and sang the song Sua Nigha Shadli which means “little bird, what you say is good.” As she sang and drummed, participants thought of dreams for their relationship with their children — and made a tobacco offering. These were later burned in Dusk’a’s weekly sacred fire so that the dreams could enter the universe.

Parents came away from the course renewed and recharged. Everyone was thankful for what they learned and many said they plan to take it again in the future.



Another 4-week Handle With Care program is being planned for 2016.

For more information contact the Dusk’a Head Start Family Learning Centre at (867) 393-3775

Traditional rattles made with the children at Dusk’a in December 2015



Kwanlin Dän Ch'a

January 2016

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