



# Vuntut Gwitchin Government



McKayla Kyikavichik, Jynestta Charlie Tizya, Allison Schafer, Ciara Frost and Madison Lord

Missing : Dean Kapuschak, Caleb Charlie



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Drin Gwiinzii Shilak Kut,

First of all, council would like to welcome back Donna Frost which means it's time for our VGG newsletter!

Much has transpired since our last addition and council would like to acknowledge both Brandy Tizya and Marvin Frost Jr as they have moved on from our team and although we regret to see their departure we wish them well in all future endeavors and know that they will continue on as leaders no matter where their paths lead them, it was an honor to have had them on our people's council. It is important to remember as "standing chairs" of portfolios such as Finance, Natural Resources, Education, etc. that we work with departments as political leads in which our technical staff can coordinate with councilors to levy greater change that progresses the government, community and program and service delivery.

### **Chief Dana Tizya-Tramm**

We are happy to report that in just over a year in office we are well on our way to implementing many of the campaign promises which consisted of greater organizational integrity, continuity and certainty. The following is some of our progress to date:

- VGG's Inter-Governmental, Rebecca Shrubbs is currently undertaking analysis and strategic implementation considerations for the addition of a policy team for our government. This will require expertise in the legal realm as some policy and/or legislation shall be an extension of our constitution while some policy simply requires crafting with less structuring as legislation is considered law while policy is 'flexible' or more of a 'guide'.



- VGG has employed Nathan Wright and Laila Adams, a strategic team to design our government's shift in management as well as crafting council's strategic plan, a communications plan and other considerations as we undergo many changes to better serve our employees and people. This will entail a new position, the Corporate Operations Director to be posted which will serve under the Executive Director as a "living embodiment" of all governmental strategies, policies, legislation, and best practices. In-short they will support Directors and serve the executive branch creating certainty between our Finance, Executive, and Director sectors to ensure coordination and implementation. Overall the strategic team hired will design the path for VGG to achieve what is called "organizational resiliency" which is basically what will make the organizational structure and function of our government stronger and better able to not only identify strategic paths, but to achieve them.
- Darien Thira was hired in November of last year and will be coming back to our community to assist VGG in how our employees see our workplace being a more constructive, positive environment as well as guiding our community through "decolonization" workshops and concepts such as "community is the medicine". This is important work and we would strongly recommend community participation in future workshops.
- The climate emergency declaration of May 19<sup>th</sup> of 2019 has quickly propelled VGFN as an international leader in important conversations now taking place across the world. This document cost the government 9 hours of time and 10 cents worth of computer paper but has led to changes across the country. We have driven the passing of climate emergencies internationally with the Indigenous People's Secretariat of the Arctic Council and nationally with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). It is the climate change issue which is quickly refocusing so many issues we face and can unlock all new partnerships and monies for cultural revitalization, mental health, youth leadership and on the land efforts to name a few
- After bringing stability from VGFN's side to the Gwich'in Council International board I will now be stepping down and council will be selecting two new applicants for the board's consideration. In my time on the board I learned much and the board has certainly grown as they've hired a new Executive Director and are proving to being a powerful voice and a driver of efforts at the Arctic Council international forum in which the arctic nations of the circumpolar north meet. It was truly an honor to serve our people with an incredible caliber of fellow Gwich'in that represent our nation, I learned much and thank GCI for more than can be said.
- The intergovernmental relationships are strong among our partners such as with the Lands Claim Agreement Coalition (LCAC), Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC), Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) and the Northern Chiefs (VGFN/THFN/NNDFN) as well as Yukon First Nation organizations to work with the Yukon Territorial and federal Governments. These relationships are important to collectively approach issues concerning First Nations.
- As the Fiscal Year End is now upon us our government looks forward to presenting our budget for the next fiscal year, influenced by not only some of our new directors, but by new directions in addressing the needs of our people. Please join us in our readings as we present our new budget as a major function of our institution.



**Deputy Chief Darius Elias**

Driin Gwiinzii Shuulak Naii'

I hope reading this newsletter finds you well. I would begin by thanking all our Education & Recreation staff and partners for their hard work and success. A shout out of support to all our students and youth I wish all the best in your journey to success.

Some things we have been working on:

- Negotiate & Achieve an Education memorandum of Agreement with YTG to fulfill the Education resolution 2019-04 of our VGFN GA.
- Achieving a government to government Intergovernmental Accord with YTG that includes a path forward for our Education mandate from Kindergarten to Grade 12.
- Implementation of Jordan's Principle for the Hot breakfast & Lunch Program, new playgrounds, new on the land school camp.
- Working on a strategic plan for Education.
- Addressing Bullying at the CZGS.
- Developing apprenticeship opportunities for our community members with the 25 million dollars of

capital projects scheduled to be built in Old Crow.

- Begin to chart a path forward to exercise our self-government agreement under section 13.2.8
- Hire a new Education & Recreation Manager!

We are hard at work for you and future generations. Please keep in mind that sometimes in leadership we have to make difficult choices & decisions that look wrong at the time but we are forced on the long run and the right decisions for the greater good of our First Nation.

With this in mind my office is always open and we are working hard for you.





**Councilor Cheryl J Charlie**

**Natural Resources & Heritage**

- Natural Resources Committee recently completed their Terms of Reference this month
- NRC continuing on diligently with their meetings twice per week in order to complete important tasks such as advancing the Lands and Resources Act; and continuing in our relationship with Chance Oil & Gas on their proposed project
- Conducted a Standing Committee meeting with senior Natural Resources staff and the Executive Director to plan for Council’s strategic planning

**Caribou Coordination**

- I continue to maintain close contact with Liz Staples – Caribou Coordinator on this important file.
- Productive meetings with 4 Canadian banks in Toronto in December 2019. Bank representatives were receptive to the information that we provided to them and I let them know that this is the beginning of an important dialogue. This trip to Toronto received a lot of media attention, which helps us amplify our message: for the

Canadian banks not to fund oil & gas activity with the 1002 lands of the Arctic Refuge. We talked to the Bank of Montreal via telephone this week to present our message & request because they weren’t available last month in person. I’m hopeful that the 5 major banks within Canada rule out financing for oil and gas exploration or development in the Arctic Refuge. This will demonstrate corporate leadership and support for the Gwitchin nation’s efforts in keeping the Arctic Refuge protected.

On Behalf of council, Mahsi’ cho,





**Closing thoughts**

Our overall vision is to coordinate the government neatly into departmental workplans that coordinate with budgets with quarterly reporting so that by the time the General Assembly convenes the community and people will have had several reports on government progress which should serve for not only better understanding, but empowerment of our General Assembly. It is necessary that our government continues to grow and we see the need to bolster the organization’s structure and function but there is more to be done.

It is also apparent that we have to focus on our youth and we are happy to announce the formation of the Youth Council which is now in operation. Where are the youth’s opportunities to learn from our lands and about the efforts of our elders and people in forging the very agreements that freed our first nation from the Indian Act? They face a whole new world that is quickly changing and we must be there to guide them, mentor and support them. This is why VGFN has declared this the “Year of the Youth” and we are planning all new efforts to provide them with leadership and land-based programs, but this is not the whole picture. Supporting parents is supporting youth and we will also look to their inclusion.

Finally, there have been significant efforts in addressing the drug issue which is not only getting worse across the Yukon, but is now in our community. We ask that people call RCMP with any information they may have and also give your name as it allows the RCMP more action opposed to not giving your name. You can also request that your name stay confidential which will make information more credible while allowing individuals to feel comfortable.

There is now a new Community Committee of Women which is not a part of the government although VGG will be supporting their efforts in issues as serious as this. The bottom line is that we know who the drug dealers in our community are, we do not want to blame or shame, we simply want our community back, to be safe, for our youth. Please make this a household conversation, with families and loved ones. Our community has dealt with tough issues before and it we will do so again, but we must come together in difficult times, not be separated by them. Each one of us is a part of the answer. It continues to be our honor to serve our people and our government continues to be a source of pride. Let us be the vision our elders and ancestors had when they thought of the future, let our community, government, people and our nation be one, let us determine our future as we always have as one of the oldest nations in the world, as Gwich’in.

On behalf of council, Mahsi’cho,







**Katherine Peter**

**Enrolment/Statistician Officer**

**Executive Office**

I started this position as Enrolment/Statistician Officer February 18, 2019 over the last year I have trained in and became familiar with the Advanced Data Systems Ltd. system we have here in the enrolment section of the government. I have brought the enrolment files up to date and processed thirty-one enrolment applications. I will be in the Whitehorse Office January 28-29, 2020 and look forward to having enrolment services to more citizens.

With the newly revised constitution being accepted at the General Assembly August 6-10, 2019 there are new procedures moving forward in the enrolment section. I was very grateful and honored to have attended the General Assembly this year as our community reviewed and approved the Constitution.

In the Statistics section of this position I had a meeting with the Director of Yukon Bureau of Statistics October 2019 at their Whitehorse Office. This was very informative and from that meeting we just entered into a Data Sharing Agreement which will give us access to their data and helps us have more relevant and update to date information.

1) 2016 Census tables online and a custom run: Membership in a First Nation or Indian Band (663), Residence on or off Reserve (3), Age (10B) and Sex (3) for the Population in Private Households of Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2016 Census - 25% Sample Data Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation member residing in:

410 - Canada

255 - Yukon

20 - Ontario

25 - Alberta

75 - British Columbia

30 - Northwest Territories

I wish you all the best in 2020 and look forward to serving our community.





**Human Resources**

**Karen Clark—Marlow**

**HR Director**

Hello Everyone,

I am very enthusiastic about being here as the VGG Human Resources Director and am looking forward to being a part of the exciting things that are going to be happening in the future.

As some of you know I lived and worked in Nunavut for a number of years. My most recent projects were with Nisga’a First Nation organizations in the beautiful NASS Valley in Northern British Columbia.

Over the next while we will be looking at our department structure, organization, how we can improve on our service delivery; and provide effective HR leadership. It will be chaotic for awhile so we ask that you be patient with us. Over the next several months I will be talking with various people about what we do well and what we could do better. Your feedback is appreciated.

**2019 Happenings**

The Department was pleased to hire Janelle Chitze-Able during the spring of 2019 to oversee a very successful summer student project. In September she became a full time HR Administrative Assistant. She has been working on setting up position files, the orientation process for new staff members and providing general administrative support to the HR unit. She will be coordinating a new process for the hiring of casuals, including developing an inventory of people who are available for on-call work.

Malinda Bruce continues to manage the VGFN recruitment process, providing advice respecting the HR policies and changes to employment legislation. She will also become more involved in Health and Safety initiatives.

Joan Graham left the VGG in mid-summer. Dena Zavier, HR Consultant, who was initially hired to deliver training and provide technical assistance, was appointed as Acting Human Resources Director until I was hired.

Randel Kendi continues to keep things organized as a positive and friendly face for all that come to VGFN. He has written his own contribution below.



**Randel Kendi**

**Receptionist**

Hello shah gwich'in Kat

My name is Randel Kendi. I am the receptionist for the VGFN Government. I have been working here as the receptionist for the past year and enjoy my job very well. I answer the phone, refer people to the appropriate person; provide fax service to the public, prepare coffee, post public notices and do a daily post office run.

I meet and greet people from all over the world and I love meeting new people. People from both inside and outside my community gave given me a lot of positive feedback on how well I am doing my job. My working hours are from 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. daily but you will find me here at 08:00 a.m. to prepare coffee and get organized before the day starts.

Thank you all for your positive comments about my customer service.

Mashi'Cho

Randel Kendi





## **Caribou Coordination**

### **Liz Staples**

As Caribou Coordinator for Vuntut Gwitchin Government I wanted to take this opportunity to provide an update on all of the work being done to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; to recognize the progress that has been made since my previous updates (see my [Introduction Newsletter](#) available on our website) and to highlight where we need to go from here.

### **Schedule to a potential Lease Sale of the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**

Throughout 2019, officials with the U.S. Department of Interior had made statements that a lease sale of the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would happen before the end of the year (2019). By the end of 2019, a lease sale had still not occurred and there are still a few things that need to happen before it can proceed.

### **Environmental Impact Statement**

The environmental impact statement process is still in progress and must be completed before a lease sale can proceed.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released in September, 2019. The Final EIS identified the most aggressive and destructive drilling alternative, which offered the opportunity to lease the entire Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, as the preferred alternative to proceed with. In doing so, it failed to address the comments and concerns that Vuntut Gwitchin Government and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens, as well as millions of others across Canada and the United States, raised through public comment periods and hearings.

While there was no official comment period on the Final EIS, Vuntut Gwitchin Government used this as an opportunity to provide feedback on the Final EIS and the process that was followed. See [our response](#) to the Final EIS on the PCMB's website.

The final step in the process is the release of a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD may be released any day now and will identify the leasing alternative that they will be proceeding with and the lease stipulations that will be attached to any leases granted.

U.S. officials has attributed the delay in a lease sale of the Coastal Plain to their want to “make sure that record of decision is a record that can be well defended”. Regardless of the few extra months being taken now, the ROD will be based on a what was an extremely rushed and inadequate environmental review process that did not address the issues raised and we believe that the work we have done to participate in that process will play an important role in the official record which demonstrates this.

### **Lease Sale**

Once the Record of Decision is released and the environmental impact statement process ‘complete’, we expect the official lease sale process to begin. The lease sale process will require a few steps to be followed before the lease sale date. This will include a public comment period on the specific areas of land to be offered up for lease.

Vuntut Gwitchin Government will use this as another opportunity to raise our voice that drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is not sustainable and threatens the human rights of the Gwich'in. We will be calling on our community, our allies and our friends to do the same and intend to post details on our website and social media channels when available.

Again, we are anticipating that this may proceed any day now and we are ready to respond.

### **Legislation**

Our champions in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate have progressed various pieces of legislation in favour of protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

In September, the US House of Representatives passed the [Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act](#) (H.R. 1146) that would repeal the provision in the 2017 tax bill that opened up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for drilling. The bill passed 225-193 with bipartisan support. You can see Vuntut Gwitchin Governments [response](#) to this vote on our website. A companion bill, the [Arctic Refuge Protection Act](#) (S. 2461) was also introduced in the US Senate, where it awaits a vote.



*Photo 1 In September Melissa Frost travelled to Washington D.C., on behalf of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and alongside other leaders of the Gwich'in Nation, to meet with congressional leaders to confirm their support on these pieces of legislation. Mahsi' choo Melissa!*

While we recognize that the passage of any legislation that restores protections of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge will be difficult given current opposition from the Senate and White House, we will not give up. The advocacy work we do in Washington D.C. continues to be critical as we secure champions that can

advocate with and for us, and prepare for any changes that may come with the upcoming election.

### **Corporate**

There has been a lot of work focused on targeting companies who may be interested in participating in a lease sale of the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and those who might finance these companies.

In 2019, [Goldman Sachs](#), [Barclays](#), [National Australia Bank](#), [UniCredit](#), [Royal Bank of Scotland](#) and the [Commonwealth Bank of Australia](#) updated their policies to rule out financing for oil and gas exploration or development in the Arctic and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Many of these updated their policies following meetings and correspondence with Gwich'in Steering Committee. You can see Vuntut Gwitchin Government and Gwich'in Tribal Council's [response](#) to Goldman Sachs updated policy on our website.

Vuntut Gwitchin Government is working to ensure that Canadian banks follow the lead of Goldman Sachs and these other global banks.

In December, we travelled to Toronto to meet with the five largest Canadian banks to urge them to withhold financing any and all oil and gas development related activities in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This work received a lot of powerful media attention across the country and Councilor Cheryl was [featured](#) on As It Happens, CBC's flagship evening radio program.

We will continue to progress these discussions and are hopeful that progress will be made as they see the positive publicity and support that they could receive and continue to hear from the public and shareholders that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge must be protected.



**Photo 2 In December, Councilor Cheryl J. Charlie travelled to Toronto alongside Gwich'in Tribal Council youth member Geraldine Blake, CPAWS Yukon staff and myself to meet with major Canadian banks.**

We are also continuing to monitor companies that we think are most likely to bid if a lease sale were to occur in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and participate in activities that show these companies that this is no place for drilling. Of note, earlier this year, British Petroleum announced that it was selling the entirety of its Alaska operations to Hilcorp.



**Education and Awareness**

There were several events that we participated in this summer and fall to educate on the Gwich'in way of life and advocate for the continuation of this way of life through the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. These included (but were not limited to) the Western Governors Association Policy Tour in Whitehorse and a side session at the Meeting on the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal. Chief Dana also had the opportunity to host a session centered around the Porcupine caribou at the UN Climate Change Conference in Madrid, Spain alongside Gwich'in Tribal Council Deputy Chief Jordan Peterson.



*Photo 3 Lorraine Netro and Councilor Cheryl J. Charlie present at the Western Governors Association Policy Tour in Whitehorse. This meeting included senior staff from the Governor's offices of the 19 Western States. Mahsi' choo Lorraine!!*

Vuntut Gwitchin Government has engaged a team of consultants to help develop a Public Engagement and Mobilization Plan centred around the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. **This Plan will identify different strategies aimed at increasing public awareness and action.** The team travelled to Whitehorse and Old Crow to conduct consultation with the community in November. We look forward to receiving the Plan for review and decision on next steps.

We have continued to use social media as a tool to start reaching a broader audience. We have more than doubled our number of Instagram and Twitter followers

since August and our Twitter interactions have remained stable. We encourage you all to follow developments on Twitter and Instagram: @ACaribouPeople.

There are several upcoming events already in the schedule for this year including an event at this year's Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival dedicated to "Protecting the Arctic Refuge" (Jeffrey Peter to speak) and the Conservation Alliance breakfast event focused on "A Refuge at Risk" (Lorraine Netro to speak). In addition we will be participating in upcoming meetings of the Porcupine Caribou Management Board and the International Porcupine Caribou Board.

**Outlook**

It will continue to be busy in the Caribou Coordination department and we will endeavour to keep the community informed of any major developments. This year we will continue our advocacy and participation in regulatory processes while increasing our number of allies and expanding our public reach. We will be carefully monitoring news and activities out of Alaska and Washington D.C. and identifying the most strategic actions we can take towards securing permanent protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

I would like to thank Councillor Cheryl for her leadership on this file. I look forward to continue to work with her, and everyone in the community.

Mahsi' choo

Liz Staples

[estaples@vgfn.net](mailto:estaples@vgfn.net)



## **Education Support Worker – Whitehorse -**

### **Glenna Tetlich**

The year end is fast approaching, and spring is around the corner with many exciting programs happening in the Whitehorse area.

We had lower number of VGFN students attending high school in Whitehorse this school year. There are a number of students accessing the afterschool tutoring program. Students that access extra support outside of school are doing very well, it helps to improve their marks and are more successful in their education.

There is an increase in enrollment in the Gwitchin language class at FHC. Annie Bernard is doing an exceptional job as the elder and language teacher. She is a great asset to the students and staff of FHC. VGFN students attending other high schools in Whitehorse were invited to cross-enroll if they were interested in participating in the Gwitchin language program in the first or second semester. Our goal is to have this program permanently established here, and hopefully the hours will increase and become a full- time language class.

I assist teachers and other ESW's with programs in the various high schools when I can, such as hot lunch programs, events, presentations in classrooms on FN inclusion, cultural programs and events. To example today our team hosted an annual FN culture day. The team prepared moose stew/bannock for the entire school and had cultural activities throughout the day that everyone enjoyed.

We have mental health workers doing weekly visits to the high schools. I can assist students with referrals for counselling services for those that are interested and in need of support in this area.

Some committees I participate in are: Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee, FN Graduation Committee, VGFN alternate rep on the First Nation Education Committee and most recently a committee member on the Biennial Gwitchin Gathering.

As a reminder, Arctic Winter Games and spring break is from March 13-30<sup>th</sup>.

Course selection for next school year has started. If students are planning to attend high school in Whitehorse next year, now is the time to contact me or the counsellor at the school for your course selection.

Graduations: This year we have 4 potential VGFN students graduating.

First Nation Graduation - May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

FHC Graduation - June 11th (cap n gown) and 12th (prom).

Porter Creek Secondary School Graduation - June 11th (cap n gown) and June 13<sup>th</sup> (prom).



**Health & Social Department**

We are all looking forward to a little joy, hope and optimism after the dark days of winter. Take to heart that people care, that kindnesses and innovation are happening at VGFN Health & Social department with program funding and grants.

Here is some exciting news to add the brightness of the days ahead. This is what is going on and why it matters.

2020/21 Jordan Principle via Indigenous Service Canada and funding server coordinator CYFN.

**Food and Nutrition Security** (not to be confused with Nutrition North Canada)

Continued funding to bring nutritious food into Old Crow, harvesting traditional food, pay cooks and upgrade kitchens. Presently this funding is supporting the 2 meals a day 5 days a week at the school. Planning is underway for additional events.

**Family Support Worker Program**

This funding is dedicated to helping efforts to improve outcomes for Yukon First Nations families specifically to reduce the number of YFN children in the welfare system. It will also increase the capacity of YFN to address community needs. This has allowed VGFN to create two additional Family support worker positions. Training is a collaboration with Camosun College that supports and focusses on YFN teachings, ways of being and the development of culturally relevant practice. The training program received 42 applications and expression of interest from family support workers or those interested in the field. Only 18 seats were available at this pilot program. Priority was given to participants who were YFN ancestry and who were currently employed in the family support field. Milissa Lord is presently attending the one week per month training that will take place for the next 10 months ending December 2020.

**Nutrition North Canada Harvester’s Grant**

This grant is to support local community food sharing, help to reduce the cost of harvesting. This is the first time VGFN has received this grant. There appears to be lots of flexibility in how this grant can be used. There has been a request by NNC to have Minister XXXX announce this significant amount of funding. Old Crow

is the only community in Yukon currently receiving funding by NNC

If you wish to learn more about Jordan’s Principle or Nutrition North Canada or have a chat about any of these programs please feel free to contact me.

**Natasha Frost**

**Drin Gwiinzii,**

The Health and Social Department is very busy getting back into focus and work after the holiday season. We have some turn over in staff this coming season and look forward to working with new additions to our staff. Our focus is towards holistic health and stability of the community. The departments tries the very best to meet the needs of the community. My focus this season is to bring positive health initiatives to the community through educations and awareness. I encourage all to bring forward ideas and concerns etc. to better help the health and social department aim in the desired direction of the community. Here are some positive events and initiatives that took place this quarter:

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>** – FASD awareness and Family Night out event with Rebecca Hansen and Teresa Frost. Health and Social held a Family fun Night with education and awareness around FASD. It was a great turnout with well over 60 people in attendance. Rebecca and Teresa held fun activities and great food and drinks to show people that we can have fun without substance use and to promote positive mental wellness while entering the darkness of winter. We had a lot of positive feedback from the community to do more positive fun events where people and enjoy themselves and have fun.

**October 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>** - Leonard and Amanda Cardinal from Thunderbird Inc. came to Old Crow and provide traditional land base teachings to enhance and empower community’s workshops and hands on learning. They focus on traditional and cultural teachings, and Personal growth; Intergenerational Trauma, grief and loss, suicide, discovering how beliefs limits our personal growth and development, Identifying trauma in relationships and friendships, why we abuse alcohol and drugs.



**November 24h-30<sup>th</sup> National Addictions Awareness Week:**

Health and social provided 6 and half days of community educations and awareness through a variety of addition topics through workshops and sessions.

Blood ties did 3 days of workshop on HIV, AIDS, Hep-C, Sexual Health, safe substance use and prevention, Harm reduction,

Old Crow Health Center provided an information for the community on what types of services the health center provides.

RCMP provided an information session on Driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs and preventative measures to ensure safety of the community.

Rebecca Hansen provided 3 days of workshops on topics such as: My recovery story on Food addiction, Discussing Addiction and different kinds of addiction, why people become addicted to reduce stigma, Physical health and Mental Health (boot camp- Making fitness fun- how it helps in healing ,Fitness/mental health Jeopardy game, Building New Pathways, Recovery, Healing is the new sexy

December 17<sup>th</sup> was Elder’s Christmas Party.

We are planning new and exciting events and initiatives this coming season, please watch for upcoming post in the community.

Thank you,

Natasha Frost  
Health and Social Manager  
Vuntut Gwitchin Government  
867-966-3261 ext. 239  
[spman@vgfn.net](mailto:spman@vgfn.net)

**Milissa Lord**

**Drin Gwiinzii,**

Since starting my new job as the Home and Community Care Coordinator on October,28, 2019, I spent the first few weeks learning how everything work around the office in the Health and Social Department and learning what my job duties entail. I now feel comfortable and I am getting the hang of what my tasks are each day. My first big task was planning the Elders Christmas Party on December, 17, 2019 that turned out great. It was quite an eye opener for me and a great learning experience for when I need to do it again in the future. I experienced a few mishaps here and there but that’s all apart of learning.

Since starting back after the holidays, I’ve gotten the hang of things a lot better. I’m starting to plans more and more events for the year ahead of us. I would like to start planning youth and elder engagement events. I have new events planned for elders and youth such as, Tea Parties, Merchandise Bingo, cooking, The Elders Valentines Dinner, etc. I am currently starting home visits with elders, and I looking forward to hearing and getting new ideas of activities they would like to see health and social provide.

It’s been great working with the Health and Social Department and I look forward to the following year.

Mahsi Cho’

Milissa Lord  
Home and Community Care Coordinator  
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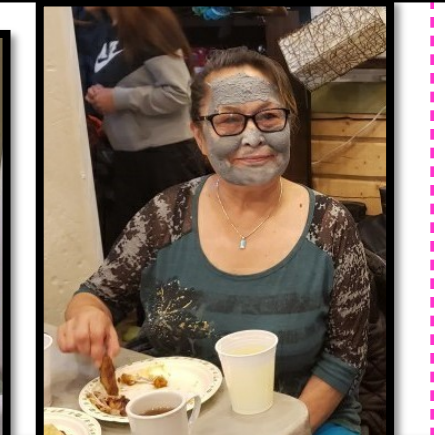
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NIGHT





**Kathie Nukon**

**Community Justice Coordinator/ Indigenous Court Worker**

I am pleased to present you with the third quarter report for Community Justice Coordinator and the indigenous Court Worker programs for October, November and December 2019.

**Community Justice**

Since October and beyond the community justice program has been inactive. At the recent staff meeting it was mentioned more programs must be offered to the adults in the community. With more support programs will be presented. The idea is to have dinners and a movie for adults. (Youth and children are welcomed to the dinners). This night would be an alternative to using, or practicing on a Saturday night. The movies will be around alcohol and drug abuse and recovery. We also would like to order comedies. Laughter is good medicine to release stress.

**Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings**

These meetings have been on-going at the John Tizya Center for many months on Sundays at 7:00 to 8:00 pm. The meetings are not well-attended; however, the idea is to keep the doors of AA open in case someone does come. On a few occasions someone did come and needed to talk. The doors will continue to stay open for an hour on Sunday nights. AA is one form of prevention to help you.

**Community Dinners**

The first community dinner is planned for Saturday, January 25, 2020. Brandy Tizya as the Standing Committee Chair for the Health and Social Programs Department will be in attendance to speak on a topic regarding justice. I will be there to answer questions you may have. Community members are welcomed to speak, as well. Monthly community dinners will be planned. Please call if you have ideas for the menu. The

work regarding community justice is continued in the office. Since we do not have a functioning justice committee you are welcomed to come in with your ideas and to talk about where you see justice going for our community.

**Outside Meetings**

On November 7 and 8 a Council of Yukon First Nation Justice Caucus was attended. The caucus was held for justice coordinators from all Yukon First Nations. Various topics are covered by many speakers from the law offices, Judges, Victim Services, Whitehorse Correctional Center, Whitehorse Community Wellness, Community Safety and more. We have had many, many speakers over the years, with important information. As justice coordinators, and court workers we have also have many questions for the speakers. These meetings, or conferences are very important to have representation from the communities.

**Teleconferences**

The community justice and indigenous court worker monthly teleconference continue to take place. The next call with Canada Justice is Jan. 20, 2020. I welcome elders to join the call. Your valuable input is appreciated. Yukon Community Justice also take part in the same teleconference. Regular teleconferences are also held regarding court work.

**Old Crow Court Circuit**

The Old Crow circuit will be held on January 28, 2020. The next circuit is March 24, 2020. The court worker continues to provide services to individuals who require assistance if they are on the docket. Anyone who need to do community service hours may pick up the form. If you need to report to your probation officers, or speak to your lawyer you are welcome to make your calls from the court worker's office. Any questions, or assistance you may require please bring them forward, as soon as possible.



### **Pre-Circuit Court**

This takes place one week before the court comes to Old Crow. I join the judge, and lawyers on a call and we discuss each case as to what is going to happen., whether a person will be sentenced or adjourned until next circuit. The purpose of this call is so that the court worker, judge, defense and crown know what is going to happen with each case. This speeds the process and court will go accordingly. The court worker is in attendance at every court so that if there are questions, or information that someone requires the court worker is able to assist.

### **Restorative Justice**

There have not been referrals made in recent months for anyone. Restorative justice is a form of diversion where someone may be referred by lawyers or the court worker. A client can also make inquiry about a process. This referral is made for those who are deemed suitable meaning they have not been involved in the justice system and the charge is not a serious one. The court work is trained to do restorative justice conferences. With assistance I look forward to more conferences for our people.

### **Other**

Aside the many duties of the community justice coordinator and the court worker I am involved with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government Administration of Justice negotiation along with others. The negotiator will update the leaders, and in turn the community will be updated.

Once the current community justice committee members have been contacted it is hoped that we be begin having its monthly meetings. The committee is of great assistance to the coordinator in delivering programs and services.

### **Upcoming**

The justice coordinator will be attending a roundtable to explore and develop two new workshops that could be delivered by the Northern Institute of Social Justice for the Yukon College in Whitehorse. The travel costs for two people from each community. These discussions will take place on February 13 and 14, 2020 at the KDFN Cultural Center.

Wishing you all happiness, good health and good fortune for the year 2020.





**Cathy Deacon**

**Social Worker**

I thought I would share some information about the work that I do that might be helpful to community members.

I wear 4 different hats as a social worker in this community:

1. Child protection and family support services
2. Probation officer for youth 12 to 17 years of age
3. Social assistance for non-status adults
4. Elder abuse: physical, emotional, sexual, financial

**Reporting suspected child maltreatment (abuse):**

- The Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) was enacted in 2008 in the Yukon Territory. One of the big changes was that there is now a requirement for community members to report to a social worker or a police officer, if they suspect a child is in need of protective intervention.
- A person has the right to report anonymously and it will be kept confidential. Try to give as much detail as you can. If the person who made the report wants a call back to make sure the child is alright we can do that. No action for damages may be brought against a person for reporting the information unless the person knowingly reports false information.

The **CFSA lists 10 different kinds of child abuse (maltreatment)** that might need **protective intervention**; a few examples would include, **“a child is, or is likely to be physically harmed by the child’s parent”**; **“is abandoned”**; **“is, or is likely to be, emotionally harmed by a person’s conduct and the child’s parent does not protect the child”**. One of the most common concerns that we get in the Yukon is adults drinking alcohol around children.

The process of reporting concerns is to call social services (anonymously) or if it is after 5pm or on the weekend, one can call on-call in Whitehorse (anonymously) at 867-667-3002. On-call will report the call to Social Services in Old Crow.

We do not want to take children away from their parents. If we need to look into a report of child maltreatment we will talk to the parents and possibly the children. We can interview children if we need to. The social worker shall make reasonable efforts to notify the child’s parents.

**Here is how it works:**

If I get a report of child maltreatment I gather information and talk to appropriate people. My options are:

- Close with no referral.
- Close as a brief involvement with a referral to the community
- Use the option called as Alternative Response and provide support services. An alternative response is not an investigation, it’s an alternative to a traditional child protective investigative response. It is a process that seeks safety through family involvement and collaborative partnerships. I would want to know what the child’s safety plan and some ideas on how to ensure that this doesn’t happen again. We want to deal with it and close it.
- Do an **investigation**.

**Agreements for Support Services to Families:**

If there is a reported concern and it appears that the family needs supports that would assist in keeping the child safe in the family home, we can explore providing these mutually agreed upon supports.



**Extended Family Care Agreements (EFCA):**

When a parent is unable to care for a child and that child requires a safe alternative living arrangement, the place of choice is with an extended family member or a person who is important to the child. We ask that the **extended family member complete a criminal records check and a child welfare check. We also go to your house and do a safety check.** We can provide long and short term agreements to assist the extended family. We don't exclude people if they have a criminal record but we will have to discuss the record and talk about drinking in the home. There is a monthly amount given to the extended family caregiver; the monthly amount was raised from what it was to be more in-line with what a foster parent would get. It wasn't fair that a foster parent got more than a grandparent trying to raise their grandchild

Any concerns or questions please contact

Cathy Deacon

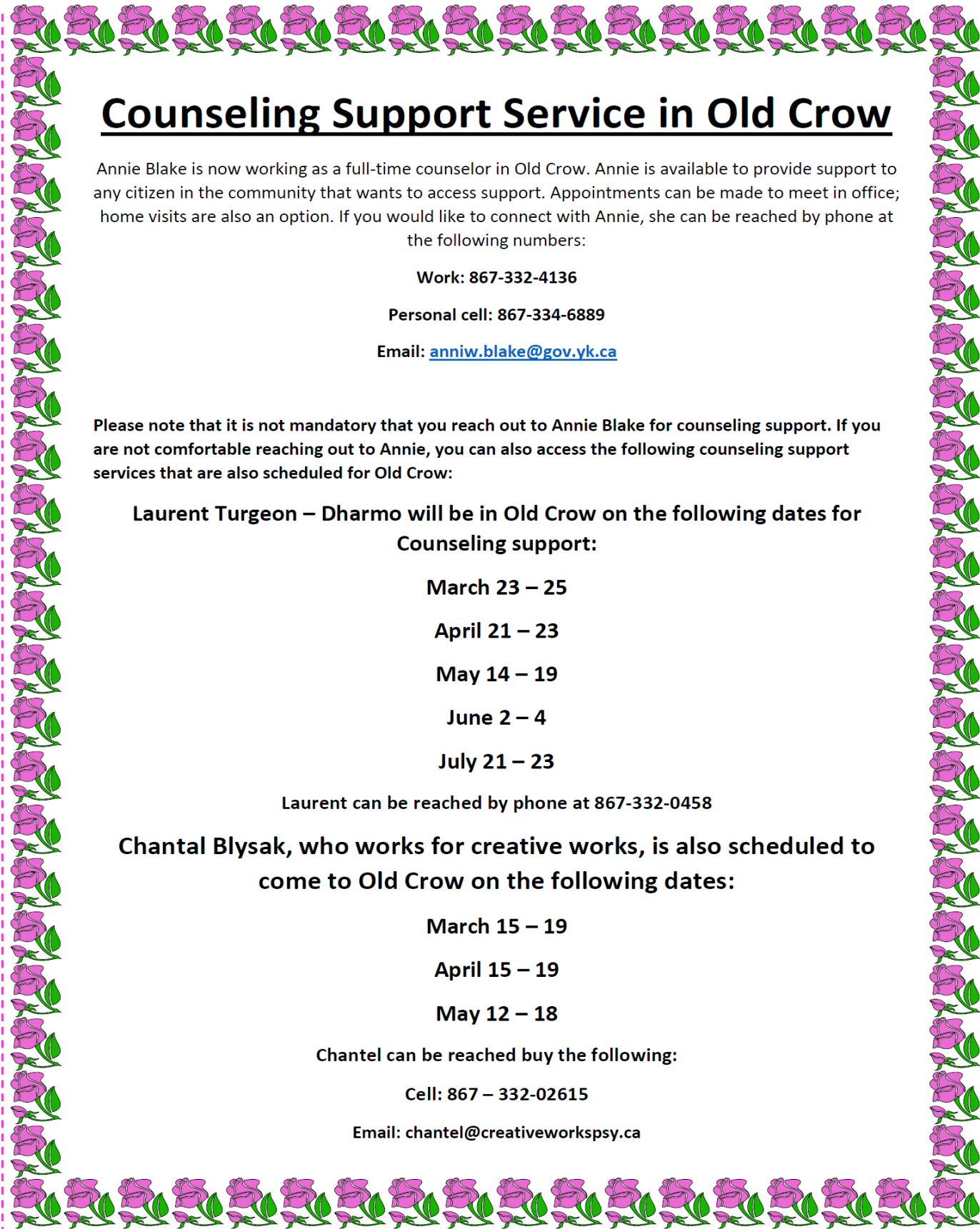
966-3124 or cell # 867-332-2356

**Chantel Blysak** is contracted by Indigenous Services Canada to provide counselling services to Old Crow community members every 4-6 weeks for 3-4 days each trip.

Her next scheduled visit to Old Crow is February 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>.

If you would like to schedule an appointment with her please text or call 867 332 2615.





## **Counseling Support Service in Old Crow**

Annie Blake is now working as a full-time counselor in Old Crow. Annie is available to provide support to any citizen in the community that wants to access support. Appointments can be made to meet in office; home visits are also an option. If you would like to connect with Annie, she can be reached by phone at the following numbers:

**Work: 867-332-4136**

**Personal cell: 867-334-6889**

**Email: [anniw.blake@gov.yk.ca](mailto:anniw.blake@gov.yk.ca)**

Please note that it is not mandatory that you reach out to Annie Blake for counseling support. If you are not comfortable reaching out to Annie, you can also access the following counseling support services that are also scheduled for Old Crow:

**Laurent Turgeon – Dharmo will be in Old Crow on the following dates for Counseling support:**

**March 23 – 25**

**April 21 – 23**

**May 14 – 19**

**June 2 – 4**

**July 21 – 23**

**Laurent can be reached by phone at 867-332-0458**

**Chantal Blysak, who works for creative works, is also scheduled to come to Old Crow on the following dates:**

**March 15 – 19**

**April 15 – 19**

**May 12 – 18**

**Chantel can be reached by the following:**

**Cell: 867 – 332-02615**

**Email: [chantel@creativeworkspsy.ca](mailto:chantel@creativeworkspsy.ca)**





**Heritage Newsletter Report**  
**January 2020**

**Van Tat Gwich'in Historical Lifeways Project**

This is our main central project focused on teaching youth by utilizing the oral history resources that have been collected over the years along with experiences out on the land. Youth who participate in this project conduct research about their ancestral lands, history and culture. Then they take part in the oral history interviews and visit locations in the traditional territory that are relevant to their family's history.

This is a four-year project and is directed by the Vuntut Gwitchin Heritage Committee. 2020-2021 will be a sabbatical year with a break from field work and focusing on completing products such as the Place Names Map and Atlas. We will continue to have cultural experiential projects for youth on the land and are in the planning process for this.

**Archives and Accessibility**

We have embarked on an accessibility journey with the Vuntut Gwitchin oral history collection. Over the past two years the non-digital DAT tapes and miniDV's have been shipped in batches to a digitizer in Nelson BC. At the same time audio cassette tapes were digitized in Old Crow. At this time all the audio and video tapes in the collection have been digitized. We are working with a company called TrailMark to develop an online system that will make this wealth of cultural information more accessible.

**CROW FM Transfer to Education**

Crow FM has transferred to Education and Recreation as this will be a better fit with opportunities for youth radio programming through the Youth Centre. Many thanks to previous station managers Lyle Charlie and Stanley Grafton Njootli for getting the radio station up and running and building the media library.

**Gwaandak Theatre**

This was an exciting year for Gwich'in stories in partnership with Gwaandak Theatre with the launch of four fully sound engineered radio plays and associated booklets in December 2019. Hearing the Gwich'in voices in both languages and bringing these stories alive is truly a major accomplishment and we are very grateful to Gwaandak Theatre for the huge amount of work that went into this production. Watch for more Gwich'in stories in the near future.

**Researchers & Media**

Research and Media applications for projects involving people or projects deemed sensitive to the community (ie. Human or caribou research) are reviewed by the Vuntut Gwitchin Heritage Committee. Research projects concerning the land and animals are reviewed by the Natural Resources Department staff. An agreement is signed by both the researcher and VGG with the objective of ensuring that the project will benefit the community and information will be available for community purposes.

Current projects include: Seismology, Soundscape ecology, Permafrost, H pylori, Boreal Monitoring, Vegetation, Muskrats, Caribou & Vegetation, BioMonitoring, Archaeology at Bluefish Caves and Palaeontology.

**Human Health Project – Contaminant BioMonitoring**

In February 2019 78 community members provided samples of hair, blood and urine in a clinic at the Community Hall. This project is a collaboration between Vuntut Gwitchin Government and University of Waterloo, funded by the Northern Contaminants Program. The results were presented to the community in January 2020 and individual letters were presented to the participants with an explanation of their contaminant levels. The community as a whole tested very positively and well under the risky contaminant levels. Traditional foods continue to be the healthiest source of food. There will be a follow up project with surveys to test people's knowledge of health information.



**Sophia Flather**

**Language Coordinator**

Drin gwiinzii,

It is an exciting time for our language program, as we are just heading into our first Gwich'in Language Intensive course. This course will run for 12 weeks and cover the first two beginner textbooks: Gwich'in 1 and Gwich'in Googwandak 1. It is a hefty time commitment but this way, our group of students can get through a lot of material in a short amount of time. Students are able to focus solely on learning language for three months. This amount of immersion Gwich'in instruction is unprecedented for me, and I think it is a huge step for us to take in creating proficient Gwich'in speakers. I am happy to say that we currently have around 13 applicants and I hope we can support these students through the whole program.

Before the course, we are going to hold another Teacher Training Workshop. Here, trainees learn how to teach using our curriculum and teaching methodology. People who are willing to take on the challenge of teaching are the reason this language intensive is possible. Our program will flourish with more people taking on teaching roles. With more teachers, we could offer more intensive programming, different options for class times, and offer different courses at the same time. It is a slow process developing curriculum, teaching classes, and supporting students to the point where they are comfortable teaching. But I feel very strongly that we are nearing that point where there is a lot of interest and people are making strong commitments to learn language and contribute to our program as well. After a few years of work, it's an incredibly exciting time to see things coming together!

In August 2019, we had the School of Spokane creators come up to Old Crow to do a workshop with us. These are the people who created the curriculum and teaching methodology that we follow. However, this was the first

time we met in person! It was so great to see them as a family, speaking comfortably in their language, knowing all the many years of hard work it took them to get there. And they paved the way for us, so we don't have to go through all the trials and tribulations they had in their language work. They helped us fine tune our teaching and curriculum, and since then we've made a few changes to the curriculum and lesson plans. It was a very inspiring workshop and they are a continual support for us.

It was a sad time this fall when we lost our valued and respected Elder, Joel Peter. He has contributed so much to our curriculum and language program. He worked very hard, and was dedicated to supporting us youth learn our language. He encouraged all those speaking, no matter how much of a beginner you were. He had so much knowledge of our language, and I miss hearing him speak and the love he had for our language. When I think back to when I started this job and how little Gwich'in I knew, I am so grateful to have spent 3 years working with Joel and learning so much through him. His passing was a reminder to keep moving forward, language revitalization is urgent and we need to be speaking to each other now. We will continue to work towards our goal: creating new Gwich'in speakers.

Mahsi' choo,





**Heritage Coordinator**

Drin gwiinzii tthak ts'o', gwiinzii t'ohch'uu gadiinjishizhit.

Good day, I'm hoping you are all well.

It is my hope that everyone has good health & much happiness for 2020.

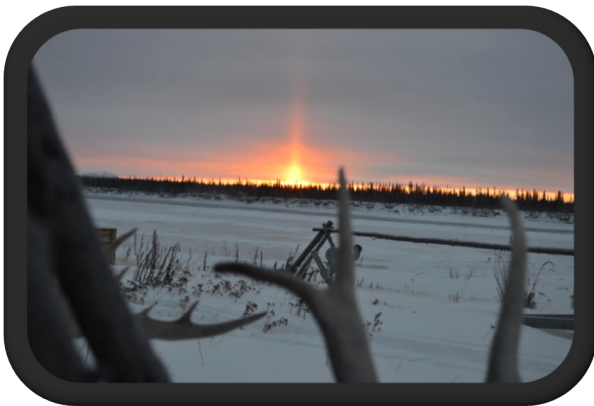
Mahsi' choo to all the people who take time out of their busy schedules to make that extra time to go to the land, to be on the land, as the land itself is a healer. I acknowledge all the harvesters for keeping up with the traditional & cultural activities. It's good & healthy to be interacting with the land, it's de-stressing of body & mind for one. It helps to have a positive mindset out there. A good healthy balanced lifestyle is KEY to community wellness. I continue to encourage community members to take time out on the land with your family, do what needs to be done. It's important for our young children to know their land, their identity, culture & heritage. They need the skill sets of the land & animals, learning/teaching starts at a young age.

The times are changing rapidly, climate changes are happening as we speak. We have to all take care of the land, always. In generations past, our ancestors took good care of the land & animals and today, it's our turn and it has to continually passes down through the generations, the teachings. The children of today have to be taught the important tools & skill sets, going forward.



VG Heritage office is always a busy place. Heritage in Motion – Heritage in Action! – Heritage producing positive outcomes for future generations, all the good work that the VG Heritage staff do is all for the future generations use. The youth, the people have that opportunity to look back in history about Vuntut Gwitchin, one resource is the book “The People of the Lakes” read about their people’s movements on the land, their stories of the land. The important data information gathering continues every year, thank you, Ha’aii, in part to our many partners, funders and community supporters, we have come a long ways since 1998 when the Heritage Branch was formed in the VG gov’t. Good work & keep going forward! ☺

Ha’aii, we still have clean land, we have healthy numbers in fish & wildlife, although some years we are not so fortunate to have caribou so close to our community all winter long, thank you that we have had caribou this past winter so community members can easily access food for their families. The land & animals take care of us therefore in return we show our deepest respect and share with others and offer thanks for what we do receive.





At this opportune time, I would like to say Ha'aai to the community members who have been involved in our projects over the many years, last summer 2019, was our 19th season of information gathering. Imagine that! Ongoing work done by almost the same people from the very beginning, at the helm. Fantastic! I acknowledge you all, young & old for taking that time to spend with us, sharing your time, your knowledge so that others can learn about the life of the Vuntut Gwitchin. It's just so good to have that continued support from community in all our heritage projects. Gwiinzii, Mahsi'

Thank you to all team players, Megan, Shirleen, Heritage Committee members, Elders, Youth, VG Heritage staff, community members, funders, supporters. We could not have done this without your help. ☺



On a final note, recently when I was transcribing from Gwich'in to English, elder Sarah Abel-Chitze, she spoke about Ha'aai which means thank you. I was spelling it as Hai' which is not the correct spelling nor the proper pronouncing of this high word in our language. There is also no Ha'aai choo, just Ha'aai. I'll put grandma Sarah's short quote in here so you can get the meaning of what I'm trying to say. "... through the camp they were all saying Ha'aai. [This was said after little pieces of meat was passed around in camp to the people] When they say Ha'aai, theyre saying Mahsi', thank you" [ Sarah Abel—Chitze, VG2003-03-04, Tape 2 of 2]

Ak'o', jii gwaar'ai', ak'o' tthak ts'o' gwiinzii adik'anootii. [Ok, this is all, everyone take good care of yourselves]

Mary Jane Moses



**The Education & Recreation Department** continues to be busy as we provide support to the school, high schools in Whitehorse and our post-secondary students; There are many initiatives that we are working on to help run the programs we offer effectively and efficiently. We are fortunate to have partners that we work with to help us by providing financial support for these programs.

**Recreation Manager**

**Debra-Leigh Reti**

Thank you for the great welcome home in November and I'm looking forward to 2020 with recreation in our little community! I feel I'm stepping into big shoes as Lindsay lived and breathed recreation, so there is a lot for me to learn from her!

A few highlights from my start:

Melanie Tate came up for a few days and taught some adults and schoolchildren "physical literacy" which focuses on teaching children movements in sport and play that is safe, fun, and pushes you to try new things. Young Aurora joined us in late November and stepped right in helping me out with after school and evening programming. Such a talented young artist and I'm looking forward to her return this summer!

In early December Sophie and Daniel chaperoned 5 of our young athletes to Arctic Winter Games tryouts for snowshoeing and archery. Thank you to Sophie and Daniel who took the youth out on the trails and worked on their running. Thank you to David Frost who did weekly ( 3 days a week) of physical conditioning of all 5 athletes at our Fitness Centre. Our snow shoe participants Dredyn Kassi and Jynestta Tizya put great effort into their races and came out smiling! Our three young archers, Aiden K., Logan Williams, and Madison Lord did not make the AWG training squad but they did make the NAIG 2020 (North American Indigenous Games) training squad for the Yukon!! The Aboriginal Sports Circle will continue to visit Old Crow over the next few months to teach and train youth and adults in archery and prep our athletes for NAIG!!

**Education Support Worker-Old Crow**

**Esau Schafer**

Esau has been busy supporting the classrooms daily and assisting with students in the school and fixing up the Outdoor Classroom at the tent across from the school. One big project that he is helping in leading is the construction of the new Culture Camp site. VGG Education is also providing support to the Junior Class Trip this month and the High School Class Trip in the Spring. Daniel Blake who works as our Homework Tutor provides support and will be working alongside Esau when needed and the teachers for school activities when needed as well. He will be traveling with the junior class as a chaperone on their trip out this month.

**Hot Lunch Program-**This year we are fortunate to have Jordan's Principle Funds to help support our Hot Lunch Program from September to June 2020; although we struggle to find cooks and cooks helpers to provide the service, we are still finding a way to make sure the students are provided with a breakfast, snacks and lunch. Healthy meals that help students to stay focused and make the best of their days while at school. Part of this initiative allowed for us to buy each student a hamper of groceries for the Christmas holiday, we hope you enjoyed and shared a blessed meal with your family during the holiday season. We are currently working with Jordan's Principle and CYFN to offer support to other program areas such as the Culture Camp, Elder in the School and possibly a van to help us deliver programming.

**Spring Culture Camp-**This year we received funds from the Yukon Government to relocate the existing Culture Camp back to Crow Flatt; we are in the process of selecting a site with Natural Resources, hiring individuals to build the new tent-frames at the new site and preparing materials to run the camp out at Crow Flat this year, exciting times going back to our traditional trapping and hunting grounds.



**Arena**-In the past we relied on Yukon Government staff to flood our arena so the hockey players can get out and skate, this year, we were able to order our own pumps and hoses so we can flood the arena ice directly from the river; we will be doing the flooding now and hopefully it can be done before February 1<sup>st</sup>. We have up to 4 teams that will be registering the Annual Native Hockey Tournament in March and this will help them to prepare before they travel out to play in March. If you are interested in providing support or volunteering to help our hockey players in anyway, please let Debra-Leigh know in recreation. On another note, we are also hoping to meet with Can-Nor to see if we can receive funding to put in cement so the arena facility can accommodate recreational activities such as hockey, basketball, and cultural events such as the Biennial Gwich'in Gathering.

**Post-Secondary Funding Policy**-The current Post-Secondary Funding Policy is currently under review; we have our policy worker reviewing other Yukon First Nations and other Territorial Governments policies to make sure that we are allocating our students consistent funding amounts for post-secondary.

**Yukon Government-MOA**-We are continuing our conversation with Yukon Government to look at how we can work together on education for our students; What is currently working and what areas do we need to discuss and work out so our student's needs are met. This process is being led by our Chief & Council Portfolio/ Standing Committee Member, Darius Elias.

**First Nations Education Commission (FNEC)**-We continue to gather with other Yukon First Nations, Territorial Government, and Federal Government to address educational issues for our students across the territory. There are many aspects of this file moving forward and we hope that the accomplishments along the way can be shared soon. A new office is being setup outside of CYFN and a location will be shared soon.





## **Government Services**

### **Brian Cameron**

#### **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

In mid 2019 VGG engaged the services of Dainius Zaldokas to act as the Capital Projects Manager for several constructions related projects. VGG also created a Capital Committee comprised of Dainius Zaldokas, Claudia Heath, Brian Cameron and William Josie to oversee the planning and management of new projects. These include, to name a few, renovations of an existing house, construction of several new utility sheds, planning for a new industrial subdivision, and planning for new house construction. Approximately one million dollars in funding was secured last year to help finance these projects. Other funding streams are also currently being explored.

#### **Marvin Frost House Renovations**

It was decided that the Frost house was a good candidate for renovation. The work included both an interior and exterior retrofit with a focus on upgrading the thermal value of the building. The thermal improvement should minimize heating costs and make for a better living environment. The Frost home is also getting a new washroom renovation.

By engaging Mike Rispin and his crew to execute the work, the employment benefits were kept within the community of Old Crow. Mike and his crew have done an outstanding job, and this is reflected in the quality of their workmanship.

#### **New Housing**

After making a Housing Demand Assessment and a Housing Condition Assessment, a Housing Action Plan was created to layout a new housing strategy for the next three years. It is an ambitious undertaking that is designed to significantly improve housing for Vuntut Gwitchin citizens.

Currently work is underway to design a one-bedroom house design that will be more energy efficient, less prone to freeze ups and provide for a healthy living environment. Discussions are underway with several design consultants to lay the groundwork for a new design. Designs for two- and three-bedroom houses will

follow. One of the key new design components will be to build the houses on pile foundations in order to eliminate movement from the effects of climate change on permafrost.

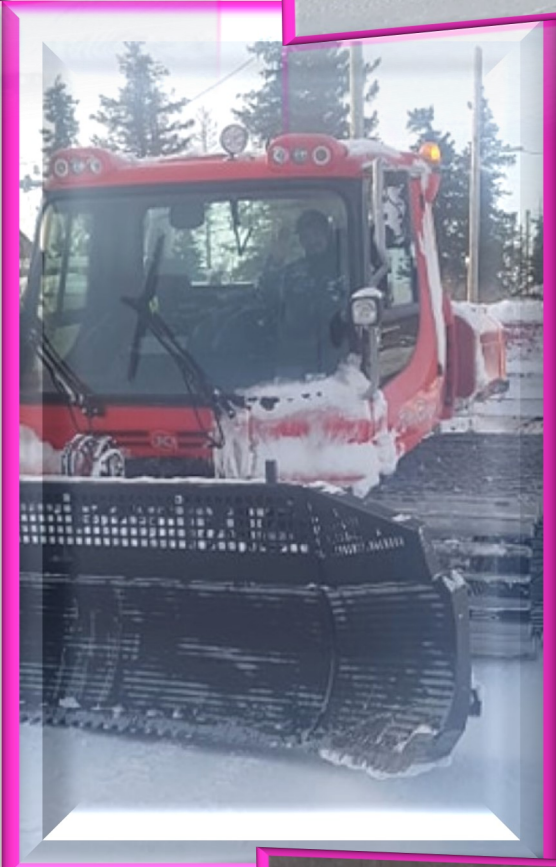
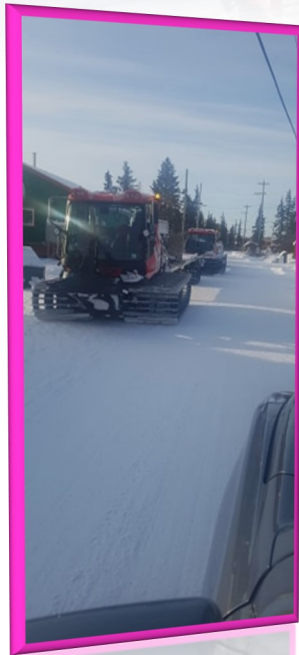
#### **Zoom Boom**

VGG has purchased a new Genie zoom boom for use in Old Crow. Initially it will be leased out to Johnson Builders for their construction of the new Community Centre. Afterwards it will be used by VGG for its own construction projects. Having a zoom boom in the community will facilitate the efficient movement of materials and improve inventory control. Greater material handling efficiency should also provide for better value for financial expenditures during construction.

#### **Industrial Subdivision**

Some years ago, VGG decided to build an industrial subdivision just north west of the airstrip. The purpose of this development is to move industrial facilities away from the waterfront and to expand storage facilities for construction materials. This project was on the back burner for a few years but has now been re-vitalized. The design and planning are 95% complete, and funding has been applied for. Construction is scheduled for 2021. Since some time has elapsed from its inception, new community consultation meetings will be held in the spring to review the project and to address any citizen concerns.

In summary, 2020 will be a very busy year for new capital projects administered through the Government Services Department





**Finance Department**

**Bev Cameron**

Our department continues to be very busy as we serve other departments and the community at large. We are currently preparing for the annual appropriation act with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> readings scheduled for March 2020. The dates are scheduled for our first audit fieldwork starting March 30<sup>th</sup> to April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020; Michael McKay and his crew will be onsite. The final fieldwork will be scheduled for late June or early July.

As we close the end of the calendar year, we are busy here in the office with preparation for year-end payroll. The 2019 T4s, T4As, T5007s will be available by end of February 2020.

An update on the Point of Sale system: we are now set up to receive credit card payments through the telephone. Customers/Vendors can telephone the finance office to arrange for payment of Accounts Receivable accounts or to purchase fuel. Thank you to our IS Department for their assistance in setting this up.

The government is currently in the process of strategic planning. Part of this process involves the development of an operational manual for finance department. Throughout the years there have been many procedures created for Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Payroll, General Ledger, Internal Process, Etc. and the creation of an operational manual will assemble all this information into one manual. We look forward to this process.

We are currently working on the transfer of certain responsibilities from Finance to the Human Resources department; specifically, Payroll Benefits (pension and insurance), Timesheets, Workers Compensation, Child Care Benefit, and Employee Leave Tracker.

The finance clerks are continuing the process of sending out over-due notices for Water/Sewer. The notices are based on 30/60-day notice and the last notice would be a disconnection notice. This letter will be sent out on the second week of the month and for the disconnection notice we give 10 days from the last notice which is mailed out. Customers are requested to please keep your Water/Sewer account current in order to avoid disconnection.

Finance staff hold regular departmental meetings. Such meetings provide an opportunity to share ideas, plan for staff training and team building.

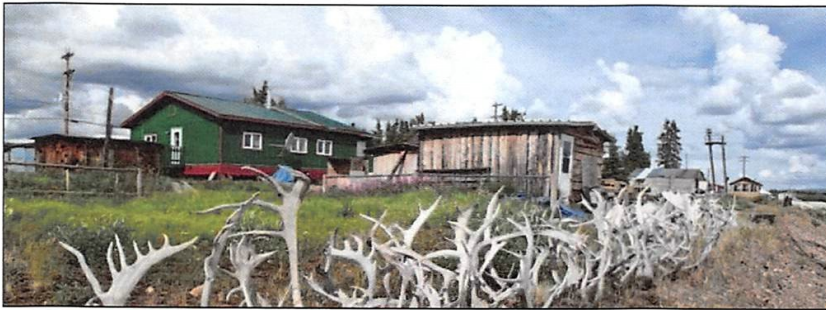
We take this opportunity to welcome Liannah Charlie-Tizya as Finance Clerk. Liannah is a pleasure to work with and is proving to be a valuable addition to our team.











# Old Crow Health Centre News

## April 2020

### COVID-19 UPDATES

There are currently no cases of COVID-19 in Yukon and the risk of infection from the virus in Yukon – and throughout Canada – remains low.

It is important to remember that you can protect yourself from COVID-19 in very much the same way as you protect yourself from getting the flu.

- ✓ wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- ✓ cough into a tissue or your elbow;
- ✓ avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands;
- ✓ clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched a lot;
- ✓ keep your distance from those who are ill; and
- ✓ stay home if you are sick.

### Symptoms of COVID-19 include



FEVER



COUGH



DIFFICULTY BREATHING

For most individuals, symptoms will be mild; however, those over 60 years of age or people with underlying medical conditions experience more severe illness including hospitalization.

If you are feeling sick, stay home and call 811 or your healthcare provider for guidance.

Information on COVID-19 is being updated regularly, for the most accurate information specific to Yukon please visit [Yukon.ca](http://Yukon.ca) or the [HSS Facebook](#) page.

If you need more information please talk to a nurse or call 811.

### HOURS OF OPERATION

**Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

FOR EMERGENCIES AFTER HOURS  
PLEASE CALL 966-4444 OR 911

### APPOINTMENTS

Appointments are available daily. Please call **966-4444**.

### WALK-IN CLINICS

**Mon-Fri 10-11:30 AM**

\*Walk-in visits will be assessed and seen in order of urgency. This may result in longer wait times. *We will stop taking patients ½ hour before lunch and ½ hour before the end of the day.*

### LAB HOURS

**Tuesday 1:15—3 pm**

**Wednesday 8:15 -9 am**

### ADMINISTRATION TIME

**Wed 1-3:30pm**

\*Open for emergencies 24/7

### DOCTOR SERVICES

**Dr Clinic April 14-17**

\* Please, bring ALL of your current medications with you when you come see the doctor.





## Counselling Services in Yukon

### Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services

Provides a range of mental wellness services to support individuals, families and communities.

#### SERVICES

Counselling services, withdrawal management services, intensive treatment programs, child, youth and family services, mental health nursing, psychiatric and outreach services and prevention and education.

**Whitehorse:** 456-3838  
Toll-free: 1-866-456-3838  
Fax: 667-8471

**Waston Lake, Teslin:** 536-3222

**Dawson City, Mayo, Old Crow, Ross River:** 993-4304

**Carmacks, Pelly, Faro:** 863-2413

**Haines Junction, Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing, Beaver Creek:** 634-7504

### Victim Services

Provides information and support to victims of any crime.

#### SERVICES

Crisis support and counselling, information and navigation of the justice system.

**Whitehorse:** 667-8500  
victim.services@gov.yk.ca  
Fax: 393-6240  
Toll Free: 1-800-661-0408, ex. 8500

**Dawson City:** 993-5831

**Watson Lake:** 536-2541

### Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Yukon

To promote and improve the mental health of all Yukoners through community education, awareness, advocacy and support non-substance-related addictions support services

#### SERVICES

Free counselling services for youth, adults and couples.  
Free wellness programs for youth and adults  
668-6429

### Child Development Centre

Psychologist and developmental therapists provide assessment and intervention to families with children from birth to school age in the area of social-emotional development.

#### SERVICES

Screening, assessment, consultation and intervention (e.g., individual sessions, play therapy, parenting groups). Services are available throughout the Yukon.

A multi-disciplinary diagnostic team offers FASD, ASD and Complex Behaviour assessments.

456-8182  
info@cdcyukon.ca  
Toll Free: 1-866-835-8386  
Fax: 393-6374

### Blood Ties Four Directions

To eliminate barriers and create opportunities for people to have equal access to health & wellness and to live in our community with dignity.

#### SERVICES

Counselling and other support services for individuals who are HIV or Hep-C positive, or at significant risk of becoming so.

Outreach Van - Whitehorse with counselling services from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., Monday to Saturday.

867-334-1647

### Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Crisis Line

A 24-hour national residential school crisis line to provide support for former residential school students.

Toll Free Crisis Line: 1-866-925-4419

### Hospice Yukon

Offers support to patients who are grieving the loss of a loved one, facing a life-threatening illness or palliative



2020  
JOHNNY CHARLIE  
MEMORIAL  
SKIDOO TRIP







Vuntut Gwitchin Government

PO Box 94

Old Crow YT

Y0B1N0

Ph: 867-966-3261

Fax: 867-966-3800

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

[www.vgfn.net](http://www.vgfn.net)



*If there are any suggestions, ideas, jokes, stories, poems, photos, announcements or concerns you would like to see in future newsletters please feel free to contact me r leave a message.*

*Mahsi*

*Donna Frost*

*Communications Officer*

*VGFN*

*867-966-3261 Ext:227*

*Email: [co@vgfn.net](mailto:co@vgfn.net)*

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