



Kwanlin Dän Ch'a

A newsletter for and about the Kwanlin Dün people



ISSUE 3

LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

Summer is here! Our government and staff have continued to work hard in the months since this newsletter was last published. Yet we have also been looking forward to the warm summer months when we can relax with friends and family and get outside.

The summer months mean many possibilities. Longer days provide us with time to reflect on the past year, as well as to continue planning for our future. My vision for Kwanlin Dün continues to be focused on re-establishing our traditional governance: protecting the land and developing programs, and encouraging the mentorship of our leaders with youth in both traditional government and traditional land use.

As we continue to work towards this vision, I believe that we will strengthen our identity through our relationship with the land, the culture and the language of the KDFN people. This will, in turn, make life better for us and our children.

As you will see in this newsletter, our government is developing and working on a number of projects that will provide an opportunity for our people to share their vision for our community, and to participate by working with others.

Have a great summer and enjoy being on the land.

Sincerely, Chief Mike Smith



Kwanlin Dün Council

Finance/Administration/Social Assistance: **Edith Baker**
 Capital/Housing/Economic Development: **Bill Webber**
 Heritage/Language/Justice: **Ann Smith**
 Human Resources/Education: **Jessie Dawson**
 Health/Recreation/Youth: **Shirley Dawson**
 Land/Resources: **Allan Taylor**
 Secretariat: **Chief Mike Smith**

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COMMUNITY GARDEN

The community garden is beginning to thrive, thanks to the dedication of the eight families who have been tending their boxes. Not only are these families doing a terrific job with their own boxes, they are also tending the extra boxes that have been set aside to grow food as a donation to the Health Centre's Meals on Wheels program.

If you would like to see how green your thumb is, and are interested in helping to tend to the community garden, call Sally Tisiga at 668-7289.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Doctors Anke Rhein and Gunnar Tirschmann

Doctors join the Health Department

Kwanlin Dün First Nation recently hired two doctors, **Dr. Anke Rhein** and **Dr. Gunnar Tirschmann**, to work out of the Health Centre on a part-time basis, starting in August. They will provide much needed support for our community members, and will allow easier access to a physician for those KDFN members who do not already have a doctor. We are hoping that in the future, the new doctors will also be able to provide their expertise to both a women's and men's wellness clinic in the KDFN community.

Dr. Rhein and Dr. Tirschmann are a German couple who studied medicine in the United Kingdom. Since 2006, they have been working at the emergency department of the Whitehorse General Hospital and at the Klondyke Medical Clinic.

Previous to their move to the Yukon, the couple worked in Alice Springs, Australia. Since approximately 70% of the Alice Springs population is First Nation, they gained a lot of experience working within a First Nation cultural setting. The program in Alice Springs was designed and run by First Nations people. This gave Dr. Rhein and Dr. Tirschmann a thorough understanding of the varying health issues that affected the Alice Springs community.

Understanding cultural differences, as well as a history of First Nations people, has proven valuable for their work in the Yukon. Seeing a need to improve health care delivery for many First Nations people living in Whitehorse, they have decided to join the health care team at the Kwanlin Dün Health Centre. **Welcome!**

Also new to the department

Malcolm Dawson and **Emma Shorty** are working part-time out of the Health Centre as **Elder Support Workers**. Malcolm (Mondays and Thursdays) and Emma (Tuesdays and Wednesdays) have been hired as part of the wellness programming to ensure that the KDFN Health Department is able to offer our members holistic and culturally integral programming. The Elder Support Workers provide KDFN members with an opportunity to engage in dialogue with a community elder, to listen together and to share experiences. Stop by the Health Centre for a visit with them this summer!

In addition, another new program began in April of this year. The **Elders Circle** is open to all elders. The purpose of this group, which meets once a month in the afternoon, is to build stronger community relations. It is a chance for KDFN elders to reflect on what has changed over time, to think about opportunities for community growth, and to get together to help create a vision for our First Nation's future. Wellness staff attend the circle, and knowledge is shared between community members. While the elders get a chance to share their wisdom, the younger community members learn about the history and traditions of the KDFN people. The opinions of all elders are important as our community continues to work and grow together. For more information about the Elders Circle, call Sally Tisiga at 668-7289.

Beginning August 21, the **Residential School Support Group** will meet every Tuesday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Health Centre. For general information about the claims process, call 1-800-721-0066. For more detailed information, call Sandra Johnston at 667-3781. A residential school crisis line is available 24 hours a day at 1-866-925-4419.

Talk to your children while they are eating; what you say will stay even after you are gone.



RECREATION PROGRAMMING

This summer there are many activities, and a variety of programming initiatives, that are sure to interest members. Eight KDFN summer students are helping deliver some of the programs and activities for Kwanlin Dün members. This will give these youth leaders a chance to be involved and develop their leadership skills within the KDFN community.

Youth of all ages can keep busy, make new friends, and learn about nature, physical fitness, leadership and self-esteem. There will be a variety of activities offered to KDFN youth, including traditional medicine workshops, a hunting trip, self-esteem and self-care workshops, mountain biking, rock climbing, a canoe trip, horse back riding and much more!

July 9-13: Traditional games clinic and a bullying workshop with youth leaders, workers and participants.

July 16-20: Five-day, all-girls camp for ages 6 to 10, at Rosie's Fish camp, with the youth leaders, workers and participants.

July 16-20: Leaping Feats dance school for boys and girls ages 9 to 12, at the Potlatch house.

July 23-27: Five-day, all-boys camp for ages 6 to 10, at Rosie's Fish camp, with the youth leaders, workers and participants.

July 30-31: Two-day planning and organizing camp.

August 1-10: Ten-day/night, all-girls camp, ages 11 to 15, at Jackson Lake, with youth leaders, workers and participants.

August 13-22: Ten-day/night, all-boys camp, ages 11 to 15, at Jackson Lake, with youth leaders, workers and participants.

August 23-24: Camp clean-up with youth leaders, workers and all participants (boys and girls), followed by a wrap-up barbecue.

August 27-31: Inventory and reporting done with youth leaders in preparation for next year's programming.

If you would like to participate in any of these activities, or if you have any questions about the 2007 summer recreation programs, call Alicia Vance at 668-7289.

OTHER ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Women's Sharing Circle: Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., at the Health Centre.

Men's Support Group: Tuesdays, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Health Centre.

Pre-natal luncheon program: First Tuesday of every month, at the Health Centre.

Post-natal luncheon program: Second Tuesday of every month, at the Health Centre.

Ongoing diabetes luncheon: Third Wednesday of every month, at the Health Centre.

Ongoing walking program for elders and diabetics: Every Tuesday and Thursday morning (call the Health Centre at 668-7289 for more information).

Home and Community Care Outreach Group: Last Tuesday of every month.

Brown Bag Luncheon: Twice a month on Wednesdays, at the Health Centre.

Meals on Wheels: Mondays to Thursdays (call Maureen Crill at 668-7289 for more information).

Parents Voices Luncheon: Every other Tuesday at lunchtime. Come out and share parenting stories, anecdotes and laughter with other KDFN community members!

No matter what group you join, it helps to get together to share ideas about community issues. The groups listed here exist to support KDFN members in as many ways as possible. If you need support on your healing journey, if you feel isolated, or even if you just want to make some new friends, come on out and share in this wonderful community!

For more information on any of these groups or meetings, contact Marion Fayant or Nyla Klugie at 668-7289. And remember to watch for updates to upcoming events on the advertising board just outside the Health Centre, as well as in flyers delivered to your mailbox!

HOUSING DEPARTMENT

The Government of Canada has established the Northern Housing Trust Fund to address First Nations affordable housing needs. Kwanlin Dün will be eligible for \$2,456,304.50 worth of funding. Currently, the Housing Department is working on a plan to use this money to serve a variety of housing needs.

Upgrades, renovations, replacements and new construction projects that increase the supply of safe, adequate, affordable housing are eligible. The projects must address immediate needs, ongoing needs and health and safety issues such as air quality, mould problems, and suitability for persons with special needs.

Also included are initiatives to improve the capacity, effectiveness and efficiency in the supply of affordable housing

on a sustainable basis. This will allow KDFN to make changes to occupant responsibility and ownership, increase efficiency in the purchasing and delivery of building materials and services, increase awareness and adoption of housing technologies suitable for the north, strengthen the skill base within the KDFN community for managing housing programs and projects, and improve occupant knowledge for housing care and maintenance.

If you have any comments about the Northern Housing Trust Fund, contact Wes Marsh at 633-7847 or wmarsh@kdfn.yk.ca.

*A life without dreams is like
a garden without flowers.*



Issues to think about around self-government

CAPITAL DEPARTMENT

KDFN is now a self-governing First Nation. This means we must continue to expand and to build capacity within our community.

Part of expanding the community means the creation of more working space for KDFN employees so that they are



better able to serve our members. Thus, Kwanlin Dün is introducing a Modular Office Project to bring in a new modular office (next to the main administrative building), to house the growing number of KDFN employees. This

office space will allow KDFN to own and maintain property that could be sold at market value if the need or desire arose.

The Capital Department believes that this is a sound investment on behalf of KDFN members, and urges members to come by and check it out!

Also from the Capital Department, KDFN has recently completed the first phase of the 2007 FireSmart contract for the Whitehorse Copper Subdivision, which is the new Yukon government development project in the Mount Sima area. The first phase saw 12 KDFN members employed to clear 25 hectares of wood. In the second phase, to happen this fall, KDFN members will clear and burn 6.5 kilometres of brush from the trails in the new subdivision.



Woods in the KDFN Traditional Territory near Mount McIntyre.

Kwanlin Dün is developing a consulting policy statement as a direct result of KDFN's final agreement. The policy, being created in consultation with beneficiaries, will put in place a policy to acknowledge Kwanlin Dün's determination to protect the interests of beneficiaries, and to ensure that beneficiaries can participate in a consultation and approval process whenever their interests are affected by proposed amendments to the KDFN final agreement.

In addition, KDFN needs to develop an investment governance act and policy statement, also as a result of the final agreement. This act is intended to protect the funds paid under the final agreement from taxation and legal and political creditor actions. It will also be created to ensure that these funds are invested and managed at an acceptable risk level for the benefit of current beneficiaries and for future generations of beneficiaries.

FIRESMART *DID YOU KNOW?*

Many Yukoners live in or near the forest. With 60% of the Yukon covered by forest, many Yukon homes and properties are at risk from wildfire. The area where the forest meets properties or other development areas is called the wildland-urban interface.

In order to help homeowners protect their property, the FireSmart program was developed to provide tools and information about fire protection strategies and emergency planning. Eligible projects include fuel reduction (reducing forest combustibles), forest stand modification (thinning or species conversion), community wildfire abatement (multi-year plans), and emergency and fire access improvements.

GRADUATION House of Learning Adult Education Program

It takes perseverance and hard work to get to graduation day. We would like to acknowledge all KDFN members who have graduated this year, and who will now move on to a new phase in their lives, continuing their lifelong learning. We are so very proud of you and wish you all the best in the future!



House of Learning grads
(left to right) FRONT: MaryAnn Allison and Dennis Ellis.
BACK: Cecilia Taylor, Cynthia Taylor, Geri Lee Taylor and Carol Gage.
Missing is Kristine Smarch.

*In the midst of a land without silence, you have to
make a place for yourself. Those who have worn out
their shoes many times know where to step.*

*It is not their shoes you can wear;
only their footsteps you may follow
— if you let it happen.
(Chief Dan George)*



Dennis Ellis receiving his diploma.

Things to think about

What are your goals and dreams?

*Why is going back to school
important to you?*

*What support do you have to
reach your goals?*

**If you would like more information about
the House of Learning Adult Education
Program, here are the steps to take:**

- 1) Phone 633-7809 and ask to speak to Kathy Borsa.
- 2) Make an appointment to come and talk with the instructor. An interview will help to place you in the appropriate program.
- 3) Set a time and date to write the college entrance exam (CAT-2).

GRADUATION HeadStart

Friday, June 15 was a very special day: KDFN saw a number of youth graduate from the **HeadStart program**. The graduation was a real celebration, with the Takhini Drummers from Takhini Elementary School performing first for the Elders Council, and then as a kick-off for the HeadStart celebration. The Takhini drummers got together for the first time in November 2006 and practiced all year to be able to perform at this event.



Joyce huddles with Kwanlin Dun youngsters at this year's HeadStart graduation.



2006 HeadStart grad.



Takhini Drummers



2006 HeadStart grad.



KDFN celebrates as a community at the 2007 HeadStart grad.

2007 KDFN GRADUATES

FISH AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Fish and Wildlife committees

Dave Sembsmoen is the KDFN representative on the *Southern Lakes Caribou Steering Committee*. This committee allows KDFN to participate in the Caribou Recovery Program in the Southern Lakes region.

KDFN also has members on the *First Nation Heritage Working Group and Ice Patch Committee*.

For more information on either of these, contact Dave Sembsmoen at dsembsmoen@kdfn.yk.ca.

KDFN is also in the process of establishing two other committees. The *Southern Lakes Wildlife Coordinating Committee* will be a joint committee composed of First Nation,



Yukon government and federal government members. It will coordinate the management of caribou, moose, sheep and other wildlife populations and their habitat in the Southern Lakes area.

The *Freshwater Fish Waterbodies Steering Committee* will be a joint committee with the Yukon government. It will undertake a review of KDFN freshwater fish needs, as well as an assessment of freshwater fish and fish habitat. It will also develop a management plan, if necessary.

Current Fish and Wildlife projects

There are currently several projects underway in the Fish and Wildlife Department.

Juvenile Chinook Salmon Study

The Juvenile Chinook Salmon Study is a product of the Yukon River Restoration and Enhancement Fund. For this study, KDFN will partner with Whitehorse Fish Hatchery, Whitehorse Rapids Fish Ladder, Yukon Fish and Game Association, Yukon government Department of Environment, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Yukon College, and Can-nic-a-nick Environmental Sciences. The study will use the incubation and rearing facilities at McIntyre Creek. The intention is to raise a small group of juvenile Chinook salmon in a manner that more closely mimics the thermal profile of wild egg to fry development in Michie Creek. This initiative has the potential to develop into a multi-year project, depending on the results of the study.

Recent studies indicate hatchery juvenile Chinook are about twice the size of wild fish when planted into the upper Michie Creek in early June. Several years of minnow trapping during the summer suggest an atypical behavioural response amongst





McIntyre/Michie Creek Juvenile Chinook Salmon Stocking Project

This project is a continuation of a multi-year program of stewardship activities and related research on Chinook salmon that use habitat located in upper Michie Creek, a tributary of the M'Clintock River. The watershed, which lies within the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, is located in the southern Yukon. The continued maintenance of the Michie Creek Chinook salmon population is an important management objective for both the Kwanlin Dün people and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

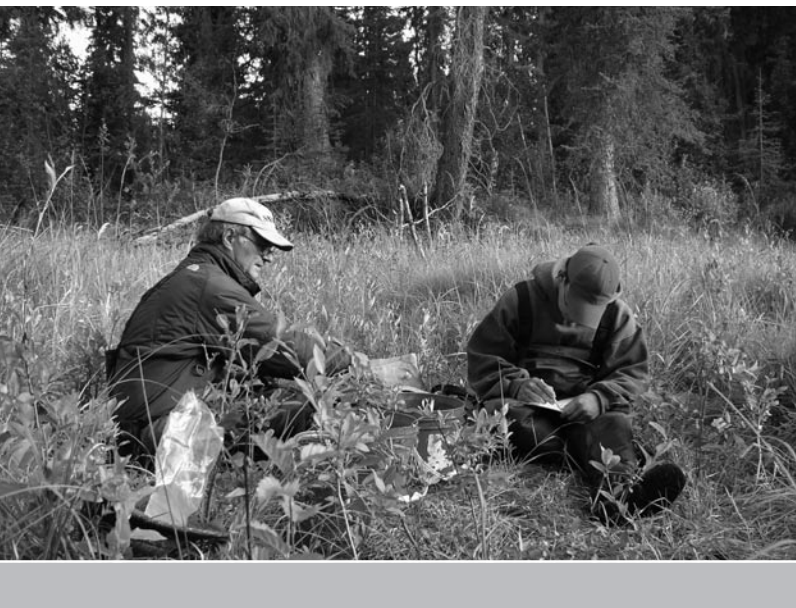
the majority of hatchery juveniles: downstream migration commences upon immediate release into the wild.

This project involves coordinating with Yukon College to install additional rearing capacity at the McIntyre Creek rearing facility. As well, staff will liaise with Whitehorse Fish Hatchery and Fisheries and Oceans personnel to obtain an optimal number of fertilized eggs from migrating Chinook at the Whitehorse fish ladder and transfer them to the McIntyre Creek rearing facility. They will also tag the fry in the spring of 2008 with coded wire tags and release them into upper Michie Creek.

KDFN is continuing studies to understand salmon resources in KDFN traditional territory, with the long-term goal of participating with management agencies to rebuild salmon populations to sustainable levels, and to protect salmon habitat from conflicting land uses. KDFN has also begun a watershed planning initiative for the M'Clintock drainage, which encourages participation of community members. This planning initiative will address various management issues and risks to salmon and their habitat in the watershed.

If you have any questions about this project or any other fisheries work, please contact Dave Sembsmoen at dsembsmoen@kdfn.yk.ca, or drop by his office in the main administration building.

Friendship between two people depends upon the patience of one.



DID YOU KNOW?

With the building of the Whitehorse Rapids dam and hydroelectric station in 1957, historic Chinook salmon migrations into the upper Yukon River had an uncertain future. However, by the spring of 1959, a fish ladder was constructed to allow passage of migrating fish past the dam.

Walk tall as the trees, live strong as the mountains, be gentle as the spring winds, keep the warmth of the summer sun in your heart, and the great spirit will always be with you.

LILY SEMBSMOEN: SUMMER STUDENT, WORKING MOM AND YUKON COLLEGE GRADUATE

If you happen to be at the KDFN offices this summer, you might notice some younger faces in the crowd. Several students have been hired to work for Kwanlin Dün to gain some experience before heading back to class in the fall.

Lily Sembsmoen is one of those students. Summer employment at the Kwanlin Dün Secretariat offers Lily the chance to apply the skills she has learned at Yukon College, and to exercise her voice as a KDFN beneficiary and member.

Working for the Secretariat as an Administrative Assistant and Coordinator for the second year in a row, Lily is gaining hands-on experience to compliment the two-year business administration

program she is taking at Yukon College. Having already received her business administration certificate, Lily will return to Yukon College full-time this fall to complete the business administration diploma program.

When asked what she has learned from working for KDFN, Lily replied, "I have learned a lot: how to communicate in

a business setting, and how to write letters and professional e-mails. This job has also taught me how to coordinate meetings, how to organize events, and how to connect with people and raise my voice in a professional way that gets me heard."

What is the most important thing that Lily has learned so far? "I would say that just learning how to work with people is a huge advantage. Learning how to interact with people in a positive way will help me succeed in the future."

As a result of her experience, Lily has gained a thorough understanding of her community. She claims that she will stay involved in KDFN government in the years to come. "There

are a lot of things that I'd like to see done in the future here in Kwanlin Dün. But, at the same time, I also see a lot of positive movement within this community in the last few years."

When asked for more detail, Lily gave the Youth Council as an example of recent growth in the KDFN community, and she elaborated on the implications of this group. "The Youth Council empowers the younger generation. It gives them a voice and proves that they are valued within the Kwanlin Dün community."

Lily makes sure to credit her boss, Deborah Dupont, for mentoring her and listening without judgment. "Deb has been

really great to work for. She is very patient. She isn't negative, and she compliments me on all the things that I do well. She genuinely wants to see me succeed. This has definitely motivated me to keep working and growing in my position."

Working with Chief and Council has enabled Lily to gain a more thorough understanding of the decision-making processes within the Kwanlin Dün government.

Lily maintains that

her courses at Yukon College have been both helpful and directly applicable to her work with KDFN. "I have used my communications textbook repeatedly here at work. It's really nice to know that what I'm learning is going to help me succeed in the workplace."

While Lily admits that she learns as much from her kids as she does in her working life (can you say "multi-tasking?"), she believes that it is important to learn the basic business administration skills as a backbone from which to build future work experiences.

Good luck, Lily, and thanks for sharing!



Why get involved and ask questions? Because “it takes a whole community to raise a child.”

COMING EVENTS

Note: There are also a number of other Health Centre programs listed on page 3.

Women’s Sharing Circle runs every Wednesday from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Health Centre. The purpose of this sharing circle is to give women a chance to come together to talk and laugh with other women in the community. Snacks and beverages are provided. For more information, contact Marion Fayant at 668-7289.

Several **Wellness Program Workshops** will be offered during the summer months. This is your chance to get together with other KDFN members to support each other and to learn by sharing ideas and experiences.

- ❁ **Self Discovery and Goal-Setting — Building your Confidence and Self-Esteem:** August 14, 15, 16, Kwanlin Dün Health Centre, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Registration deadline: August 9
- ❁ **Kwanlin Dün Traditional Parenting Workshop:** August 21, 22, 23, 24, Kwanlin Dün Health Centre, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Registration deadline: August 16
- ❁ **Fall Medicine Workshop and Berry Picking:** September 11, 12, 13, 14, Health Centre and on the land, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Registration deadline: September 6

If you are interested in participating in any of these events, contact Nyla Klugie or Marion Fayant at 668-7289. Come on out and see what it’s all about!

WHOLE CHILD PROGRAM DID YOU KNOW?

The **Whole Child Program** is an outreach program for Whitehorse families to assist them in helping their young students succeed in school and in the community. The program, a key ingredient in community building, links families, students and schools to integrated health and human services. This can be a need for advocacy or support when dealing with various agencies, such as housing, support in seeking employment, continuing education or family-focused recreation. If you have any questions or would like more information, contact Barbara Curtis, Community/Family Outreach Worker at 667-8676 or barbara.curtis@yesnet.yk.ca.



APRIL 2007 TRIP TO OLD CROW

Kwanlin Dün Coyote Skiers, as a result of their hard work and dedication, earned a trip to Old Crow this spring to visit with their friends in northern Yukon. The expedition was a cultural exchange that saw 14 KDFN youth, ages 7 to 14, fly to Old Crow for a four-day, three-night adventure.

The Coyotes who had the best attendance during the 2006-2007 cross-country ski season were invited to Old Crow to participate in the Loppet. The skiers also visited the Old Crow Flats, sat around a campfire, and learned about the caribou herds that have roamed the area for hundreds of years.

The Old Crow community was very welcoming to KDFN members. Elders were on hand to share their experiences and insights with the youth participants. A good time was had by all; we look forward to another successful cultural exchange in the new year.



OPEN HOUSE

On Friday, June 8, KDFN held an Open House at the Potlatch House. Dozens of booths were set up to share information with members of Kwanlin Dün about what is going on within the community — both during the summer, as well as ongoing initiatives. Thanks to all who came and checked it all out!

*We will be known forever
by the tracks we leave.*



The RCMP was on hand during the 2007 Open House looking to recruit new members.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Housing Department

77 McClennan Drive, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 6H7

After hours emergency, 24 hours a day: 633-7833

Director of Housing: Ray Santa, 633-7846

A/Housing Manager: Wesley Marsh, 633-7847

Tenant Relations Officer: Jean Hogan, 633-7828

Housing Office Clerk: Millie Gage, 633-7833

Maintenance Coordinator: Eddie Scurvey, 633-7833

Water Delivery: William Smith, 633-7833

Garbage Maintenance Worker: George Scurvey, 633-7833

Crisis line: 668-5733

Victim Link: 1-800-563-0808; call now if you need help and crisis support.

In addition, please call **Crime Stoppers** at 1-800-222-TIPS if you have any information on a crime.



Kwanlin Dün First Nation

35 McIntyre Drive, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada Y1A 5A5

phone 867-633-7800, fax 867-668-5057

www.kwanlindun.com

Kwanlin Dän Ch'a means Kwanlin people of Whitehorse, how are you?