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Kaska Dena News

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REGIONAL RECONCILIATION

– Steven Jakesta –

In 2009 the Kaska, Tahltan and Taku River Tlingit engaged in a unique collaboration on issues related to children and families, and signed a protocol agreement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) that focuses on community-driven support for our children and families.

Through the Stikine Working Group, the three Northern Nations have been working together within our individual communities, to build upon existing community strengths and

incorporate extended family, Elders, leadership, teachers, and front-line workers into their traditional support structures.

In the spirit of the Northern Nations' strengthening relationship and the recent protocol with MCFD, the Ministry then approached the three Nations with the possibility of negotiating a holistic regional Reconciliation Agreement among the three Nations and the Province of British Columbia, based on the "new" approach to negotiating and advancing true and meaningful reconciliation that focuses on meeting the needs of our people. From the beginning of the discussion with Government on Regional Reconciliation, each Nation expressed a desire to ensure that Nation-specific initiatives not be negatively impacted or slowed down by the more extensive vision of Regional Reconciliation. This was agreed to by each Nation.

The Northern Nations have a vision of strong, healthy and stable communities that are engaged in planning and decision-making with regard to our respective territories. Development on our territories has a multitude of impacts, ranging from environmental, economic and socio-cultural



Kwadacha Community Meeting

impacts – all of which profoundly affect our people. As all things are interconnected, a holistic approach is required if our vision is to be realized and reconciliation with the Province is to be achieved. Critically, a new approach would respond to the real needs of our Nations, keeping at the centre our children and families and the need to protect our unique cultures.

Leaders of the three Northern Nations met and agreed to seek their respective membership's input to determine and develop a mandate for the new approach. Steven Jakesta and Victor Kisoun, two Kaska

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Steven Jakesta

HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

– Rose Rowlands –

A Healing and Reconciliation Workshop was held in Whitehorse on May 4 & 5, 2011. The purpose was to bring together leaders, elders and youth of the Tahltan, Taku River Tlingit and Kaska Dena Nations to discuss reconciliation and healing and decide on the best process to follow and what types of ceremonies and healing events should take place in Lower Post to honour and commemorate residential school survivors.

From the beginning of the discussion with Government on Regional Reconciliation, the three Northern Nations agreed that a critical common issue in all communities was the significant inter-generational harm resulting from Residential Schools, and in particular the Lower Post residential school. It was agreed that any true reconciliation depended on healing and that a significant start to this could be establishing a reconciliation and healing process in communities together with a symbolic event connected to the old Lower Post residential school being removed.

The three Nations submitted a proposal to the National Truth and

Reconciliation Commission for dollars to initiate this process and hold a gathering in Lower Post for residential school survivors, their families and their communities.

The Healing and Reconciliation workshop, facilitated by Rosemary Rowlands, and Lesley du Toit, created a safe environment for people to talk about their perspectives on truth, reconciliation and healing, and share ideas about what they felt was needed to bring healing to residential school survivors, their families and communities.

An outcome of the workshop was the decision to create a Healing and Reconciliation Steering Committee, comprised of two individuals from each of the three Northern Nations. The purpose of this Steering Committee would be to talk with Residential School and inter-generational survivors about approaches to take to facilitate healing and forgiveness. A further decision from the workshop was to empower the Steering Committee to be involved in the planning of a healing ceremony in Lower Post; either through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission funding or through other funding sources.

Workshop Participants



L to R Top Row: Peter Stone, Bryan Jack, Lesley du Toit, Steven Jakesta, Victor Kisoun, Rick McLean, Peter Cunningham. Middle Row: John Ward, Loretta Dennis, Wayne Carlick, Carol Ann Johnny, Agnes Ball, Rose Rowlands, George Miller. Bottom Row: Richard Carlick, Ed Asp, Willie Poole, Mary Jean Poole

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ABORIGINAL DAY CELEBRATION - JUNE 21st

– Dease River Social Working Group –

Canada's National Aboriginal Day is annually held on June 21 to celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding achievements of the nation's Aboriginal peoples. This year, Dease River First Nation is hosting National Aboriginal Day at the Rapid River Site in Kaska Dena Traditional Territory.

The June 21st opening ceremonies will begin at 9:00 am with a Kaska prayer song, and welcome by Chief Carol Ann Johnny. There will be traditional drumming and dancing, story telling and children's activities. A highlight will be guest Aboriginal singer/song writer Laura Vinson and her dancers, and a traditional feast.

Leading up to the June 21st celebration, Dease River First Nation will be hosting Traditional Hand Games on June 19 & 20th with a \$10,000 Grand Prize, a fishing Derby on June 19 & 20th, and Evening Bingo on June 18 & 21st. There will also be a draw on June 21st for a 2010 Honda ATV. On the evening of June 18th there will be on-site registration for Traditional Hand Games. There is a \$600 entry fee per team.

The Rapid River Site is the perfect location for the Aboriginal Day

Celebration, with free camping, and a concession stand on site.

While we celebrate our culture daily, National Aboriginal Day is a day to join Aboriginal people across the Nation to recognize and celebrate our people, our culture and our traditions.

For more information on the Aboriginal Day Celebrations contact: Dease River Band Office: (250) 339-3000.



Continued from page 1

members that represented the Kaska reconciliation team, travelled in January from Whitehorse, down the Alaska Highway to Vancouver and then on to Terrace with many stops along the way to meet with Kaska members. For the most part meetings consisted of community dinners, membership meetings or by home visits where information was provided, and questions were answered about reconciliation and about the new relationship process. The overall attendance was excellent, and the response was positive.

The next steps will include completing the community meetings and for the Northern Nation Leaders to continue

dialogue and to continue meeting with Government. If you have any questions about the Regional Reconciliation Initiative contact Steven Jakesta at 250-779-3181.



A highlight will be guest Aboriginal singer/song writer Laura Vinson and her dancers!

**We're on the web!
Visit:
www.kaskadena.com**

KASKA YOUTH PROGRAMS

Muska Kechika Environmental Youth Camp

– Corrine Porter –

Muskwa Kechika Environmental Youth Camps have been rich and memorable experiences.

The 13th annual Muskwa Kechika Environmental Youth Camp will be co-hosted this year by the Kaska Dena Council and Treaty 8 Tribal Association with administrative support from Dena Kayeh Institute.

Since 1999, the Muskwa Kechika Management Board has funded a Muskwa Kechika Environmental Youth Camp, with the purpose of supporting First Nation and non-First Nations in learning traditional and contemporary land management skills. These camps

have been well attended by Kaska and Treaty 8 youth, and have been rich and memorable experiences. This year will be a special camp, however, as it is to be the last one funded by the MK Management Board.

This year's camp will take place at Moose Lake, BC from July 25 August 4, 2011. This year's invitees include: Dease River FN, Daylu Dena Council, Ross River Dena Council, Liard First Nation, Kwadacha, Fort Nelson FN, Prophet River FN, Doig River FN, Blueberry FN, Halfway



River FN, Saulteau FN, West Moberly FN, McLeod Lake FN, Town of Fort St. John, Watson Lake, Mackenzie and Fort Nelson.

The program will once again focus on integrating the traditional knowledge with modern resource management techniques, helping prepare our Youth for future leadership responsibilities.

Through a mix of guest speakers, Elders and members, youth camp participants will learn about cultural activities such as beading, preparing hides, drum making and traditional songs, and will participate in team building activities.

Space is limited to one participant per community and those interested are requested to write a paragraph as to why they would like to participate in this year's camp.

For more information please contact Corrine Porter at 250-779-3181 or denakayeh@gmail.com. To read about past MK Youth Camps and see photos go to:

<http://www.kaskadenacouncil.com/news/archives/document-repository>



Dechenla Environmental Youth Program

– Joshua Barichello –

Dechenla Lodge will once again be holding its wilderness Youth Program this summer. Framed by the MacKenzie and Selwyn mountains, and located about 400 km northeast of Whitehorse along the abandoned North Canol Road in the NWT, Dechenla Lodge is situated in the Traditional Territory of both the Sahtu and Kaska Dena Nations.

The incredible diversity of the area, the prevalence of unique landforms, and its pristine nature, makes this area a natural classroom and also provides the right ambience to promote self-awareness and healing.

The Dechenla youth program is designed to give approximately 14 youth (ages 16-19), the opportunity to learn more about the environment and their culture so they will aspire to learn more, and become good land stewards, by learning from elders and scientists, and experiencing the land first-hand. It is a

place to learn about ethics and ancient knowledge – the importance of learning from our elders about legends, traditional laws and their knowledge about the land. As well it is a place for science inspiring us to different ways of thinking about the environment.

Dechenla Lodge, co-owned by the Barichello family and the Kaska Dena, has been operated by Norman, Barb and their son, Joshua for 20 years. In the past, Kaska youth from Ross River, Kwadacha and Watson Lake have attended the Dechenla youth program, and have benefited from the rich learning experience. To register or to obtain more information about the Dechenla Cultural Awareness and Environmental Youth Program this summer, please contact: Joshua Barichello: Phone: 867-667-2639; Or email: j_barichello@hotmail.com or bgale@northwestel.net

The Dechenla Youth Program is a place to learn about ethics and ancient knowledge – the importance of learning from our elders about legends, traditional laws and the land.



Cole Abou – Tribute to a Kaska Youth

– Erika Abou-Tibbett –

Cole Abou is the great-grandson of the late Bella Abou and the late John Tibbett Sr. who was married to Norah Abou-Tibbett, Cole's grandmother. Cole was raised near the Dease River at Horse Ranch Mountain and also in Lower Post, BC. This is where he was taught how to hunt, fish and learn his culture and continues to learn every summer. Through his grandparents and family members he has learned how to respect the land as well as his elders.

When Cole was 7 years old he moved with his aunt to Prince George to go to school, where he started taking taekwondo classes at the age of 8 ½ years old. Since then he has trained and has been in over thirteen tournaments throughout B.C, Alberta and Saskatchewan. The last tournament he attended was the Nationals that took place in Richmond BC this past November. He brought home a gold and bronze metal and represented his taekwondo school very well.

Taekwondo is known for not only teaching martial arts but also Courtesy,



Integrity, Perseverance, Self-Control and Respect. Cole continues to use these traits not only in taekwondo but where ever he goes. Cole will be testing for his black belt this May and that will be his first step as he gets ready to train for the ITF World Championships in 2013 that will be taking place in Spain.

He is also a self-taught hip hop/break dancer and has been in a few talent shows and has proven to please the crowd every time. He greatly appreciates all the support he has received far from Kaska Dena Council, Daylu Dena and his family.

When asked about his accomplishments Cole responded "I would like to thank God for everything and of course my family and friends for the support I have gotten, I would also like to tell everyone who reads this is that you're never too young or old to make even your smallest or biggest dreams come true; just have faith and work hard to get what you want. Don't ever let anyone tell you that you can't do anything because when you put your mind and heart into it things will fall into place."



David Mah Photo courtesy of *The Prince George Citizen*

"Don't ever let anyone tell you that you can't do anything because when you put your mind and heart into it things will fall into place."

KASKA DENA COMMUNITY NEWS!

Kwadacha First Nation Report

– Chief Donny Van Somer –

Kwadacha Chief and Council are happy to report that the construction of the Kwadacha RCMP station has been completed. The grand opening of the new station is planned for sometime in June. Negotiations are currently underway with the Province, Canada and the Aboriginal Policing Directorate for the resources to get the station manned, with a meeting planned for later in May to further these negotiations.

This year has seen five new teachers graduate from the Kwadacha community. Congratulations to Faye Seymour, Cathy Seymour, Angela Hocken, Vickie Abou and James Nightingale who have all graduated from the Simon Fraser University home teaching program. As well as five new teachers, Kwadacha will have three more graduates from the Aatse Davie School this year.

The Kwadacha Cultural Camp will be

starting again in June. Operating out of Spinnel Lake, this year it will be an all women's camp. All those interested should contact Rob Derkson at the Aatse Davie School: (250) 471-2002.



Dease River First Nation Report

– Minnie Dennis, Social Working Group –

In February, Amos Dick and Gordon Peter from Ross River came to Good Hope Lake and spent two weeks teaching Drum and Snowshoe making. They started with choosing the right tree and carving the stick to form the snow shoe frame. They brought moose hide with them and taught how to cut the hide into babiche and how to weave the babiche into the snow shoe frame.

Amos took people out to get birch to make a drum. He showed people how to plane the wood to make it thin enough to shape into a drum, and how to attach the caribou hide on drum. Amos impressed people with his drumming and taught people how to drum and sing traditional songs.

Next year we hope to advertise this

workshop more broadly so that we can bring more people to have the chance to learn these skills from our elders, and we hope to attract people from outside of the Good Hope area to come to the workshop. We also hope to be able to teach these skills in our school.



We're on the web!

Visit:

www.kaskadena.council.com

Daylu Dena Council Report – Sonia P. Laukkanen, Health Director –

Lower Post residents are eagerly anticipating the opening of Lower Post's Health Center, which is expected to open towards the end of May.

The full dental care facility will be able to provide basic treatments such as extractions, fillings and dental hygiene. The dental practitioner will come once a year and will remain for approximately two weeks. The first visit from the dental practitioner is planned to coincide with the opening of the Health Center.

The Health Center will be able to provide laser treatment, useful in the treatment of



diabetic ulcers, reduction in inflammation of muscles or joints, smoke cessation and other therapeutic benefits.

The Health Center has an Elder care facility, where Elders can shower, receive foot care and also receive hydro-jet therapy. There are many therapeutic benefits of hydro-jet therapy including soothing of aches and pains, and stress reduction.

The Health Center will employ approximately eight staff, with Sonia P. Laukkanen as the Health Director. While services to Lower Post residents will be free of charge, the Health Center will be able to provide treatments to non residents on a cost for treatment basis.



KDC PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Congratulations to Crystal Carlick and Minnie Dennis, winners of the KDC photo contest which was held earlier this year and advertised on the KDC website. Crystal was awarded first place, for the photo of Aiyanna Carlick, holding her hand-made leaf and flower creation, taken in 2007 in Good Hope Lake. Minnie was awarded second place for the photograph of her father, John Thomas Carlick, baby brother, Raymond Steven Carlick and Grandma Bessie Carlick, taken in front of Good Hope Lake Church in the 70s.



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