



Kwanlin Dän Ch'a

A Newsletter for and about the Kwanlin Dün people

Issue

Happy New Year!
from Chief and Council



On behalf of Chief and Council, we would like to wish everyone Happy New Year. We hope you enjoyed the holidays with your family and friends.

2009 was an exciting year for Kwanlin Dün as we continued to grow as a government and a people. We still face many challenges, but we are making progress and are hopeful for the future.

We rely on the support and participation of our citizens to help guide our decisions. I am pleased that we had a successful General Assembly, and we

are already taking action on some of the resolutions.

In 2010, we will have important decisions to make with regards to our housing and beneficiaries' policies. I urge all citizens to become informed and participate in meetings, assemblies and the referendum.

Thank you for your support and participation in all aspects of our government and community life. With your help, we can keep KDFN on the right path to a healthy, prosperous community.

Olympic Torch Comes to Kwanlin Dün

More than 200 people gathered at the Nakwataku Potlatch House to celebrate the arrival of the Olympic Torch. The flame was in Whitehorse as part of its journey across Canada for the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver.

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KDFN Strengthening its Economic Development Structure

KDFN has been focusing much energy over the past two years on generating long-term wealth for the community. That focus has led to a new structure that will become a powerful tool for economic development.

“Chief and council are committed to securing our long-term economic health,” Chief Mike Smith said. “This is an important step that will protect us as we move forward.”

The move was discussed at the October 2009 Annual General Meeting, where Chief and Council committed to ensuring that KDFN economic development activities do not unduly expose KDFN government.

Under the new structure, business activities will be moved arms-length from government, managed by an arms-length group of companies who operate independently under a trust but within a budget and mandate that come from the KDFN government. In many ways, it will be similar to a Crown Corporation.

“Moving our business activities arms-length from government will improve efficiency, protect us from liability, and enable us to pursue a full range of economic development opportunities,” Smith said.

Some staff will be moved from the KDFN government to staff the new corporation. In the coming months, there will be new job postings for work on KDFN projects

Name the Corporation and Win!



It's time to get creative! 42135 Yukon Inc. needs a name. This Kwanlin Dün owned construction company is responsible for the Cultural Centre project and will become part of the new group of companies for economic development.

Please e-mail your suggestions to Loretta Edzerza (ledzerza@kwanlindun.com) or drop them off at the KDFN administration building no later than February 26, 2010. If your name is chosen, you could win a prize. Everyone who enters will be eligible for extra prizes, so enter today!

Kendanan Ku House of Learning Education and Employment Training Program

WINTER 2010 WORKSHOPS - All courses are being offered at the Potlatch House

Workplace Hazardous Material Information System
February 3, 1-4:30pm

Food Safe I
February 4, 9am - 5pm **OR**
March 6, 9am - 5pm

Standard First Aid / CPR C
February 21 & 22, 9am - 5:30pm

Guiding Circles Career Planning Workshop
February 24&25, 1 - 4:30pm **AND**
March 3 & 4, 1 - 4:30pm

For more information, or to register for any of these workshops please contact:

Belinda Harrow
House of Learning
Ph: 633-8422 ext. 7888
Email: bharrow@kwanlindun.com

Olympic Torch Comes to Kwanlin Dün

More than 200 people gathered at the Nakwataku Potlatch House to celebrate the arrival of the Olympic Torch on November 4. Those who came were part of a once in a lifetime moment in the history of Kwanlin Dün.

There was a great deal of excitement leading up to the arrival of the flame. People began to gather hours ahead of time, enjoying food and entertainment during the afternoon.

The First Nations cultural club from Elijah Smith school was on hand to perform traditional drumming. The students had been practising all week for the performance, using drums they made themselves.

By the time Sean Smith came running down McIntyre Drive, everyone was outside gathered around the large fire. Drums were pounding, people were waving KDFN flags and everyone was eagerly awaiting the big moment.



People crowded around, young and old, to see the torch when it arrived.

Elder Norman Blanchard provided a First Nations blessing. Norman was asked to give blessing in recognition of his long involvement in KDFN sports.

Sean then passed the flame to Christopher Vance, who headed back down McIntyre Drive as the flame continued its journey.

The flame did not stay for long, but the memories will last a lifetime for the people of Kwanlin Dün.

In addition to Sean and Christopher, 12 members of the Kwanlin Coyotes ski team carried the torch as part of the torch relay. Many more KDFN members helped organize the events and participation of Kwanlin Dün.

The flame was in Whitehorse as part of its journey across Canada for the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver. The flame before moving on to Dawson City, Old Crow and then to the NWT and Nunavut.



Members of Parliament Visit Kwanlin Dün

A group of federal Members of Parliament (MPs) were given a tour of the Kwanlin Dün community on November 17.

They were fed traditional foods and took part in a prayer ceremony around the fire at the potlatch house.

The MPs were members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. The committee met with First Nation leadership in Whitehorse to get their input on how to grow the Northern economy.

The Yukon chiefs had one strong message for Ottawa: The federal government must uphold their commitments to implement final agreements, and not try to pass the buck to others.

For the most part, Canada has vacated the field in the North," Chief Mike Smith told the committee. "The door is closed."

The chiefs are hoping that their words will re-open those doors, ensuring that Yukon First Nations can fully implement their final agreements.

2009 General Assembly Successful

The 2009 General Assembly took place on October 24, 25 and 29. It was well-attended by citizens who raised a number of issues for discussion and resolution.

The General Assembly is an opportunity to review the progress of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and recommend changes to budget, laws and policies.

Chief and Council would like to thank all those who participated, and encourage everyone to attend General Assemblies.

The following is a short summary of resolutions that were passed:

- Improve community infrastructure
- Develop a recycling pick-up program
- Improve summer job opportunities for KDFN students with the KDFN government
- Put up signs to identify KDFN communities
- Direct resources to develop and implement KDFN heritage
- Begin planning a new education building

- Hold a special GA to deal with rental arrears and other housing issues
- Develop a cultural program at the D'uska Learning Centre
- Limit boards and committees to one immediate family member

The full text of all resolutions is posted online at www.kwanlindun.com or can be obtained from the KDFN administration building.



Referendum on Beneficiaries' Policies

Kwanlin Dün First Nation is working hard to carry out a referendum on the Beneficiaries' Policies this spring

The changes made to the investment policy at the Sept 28 meeting will help ensure that funds paid to KDFN under the final agreements are protected, invested and managed for the benefit of current beneficiaries and future generations.

The next step will be a referendum in spring 2010 to approve three new policies: Lands Policy, Consultation Policy and the Investment Policy.

Over the holidays, beneficiaries received information on the three policies and the referendum process. How and where to vote and the date of the referendum will be set once the Referendum Rules are enacted. Notices will be posted in news media

and public places.

Once the Beneficiaries' Policies are approved by Referendum, Chief & Council can then enact legislation consistent with those policies, in order to:

1. address settlement land;
2. create an Investment Governance Act, that would then enable developing a trust deed and appointing trustees to invest funds paid under the Final Agreement; and
3. establish procedures for consulting with beneficiaries concerning the approval of amendments to the Final Agreement.

More information will be coming on the referendum process. In the meantime, if you have questions please contact Manon Moreau, Director of Governance at 633-7876.

Special Housing General Assembly

A Special General Assembly will be called to try to resolve issues with Kwanlin Dün Housing. A date will be announced soon.

This meeting is in accordance with a resolution passed at the General Assembly in October.

The long-term sustainability of Kwanlin Dün housing is at risk. The current situation is becoming a crisis, as we are dealing with damages to homes, rental arrears and financial issues.

Chief and Council urge all KDFN members to attend the meeting. Housing affects the entire community, not just those who are living in KDFN homes.

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