TAHLTAN
Central Council

NOVEMBER | Men ten cho 2013
'big lakes freeze month'

In this edition:

- TCC President's Message
- SCWG Premier's Award
- Klappan Strategic Initiative
- Galore Creek Macbook Pro donation to Language program
- Reg Dennis, award winner
- Trick or Treating for Terrace Homeless
- Telegraph Creek Sweat Lodge
- Dr. Darrien Rattray
- RCMP Retiree, Vernon Creyke
- TNDC Update
- Seabridge Gold Update

SCWG wins Premier's Award

The Tahltan Socio-Cultural Working Group was honoured last month at the Premier's annual Innovation and Excellence Award Ceremony held in Victoria B.C., on October 17th, 2013. The Working Group was recognized for its innovative relationship with the Province. The award is one of the highest recognitions in public service and the event was attended by MLAs, cabinet members, and dignitaries.

The awards provide the opportunity for Premier Christy Clark to acknowledge public service employees who have made new contributions to seven award categories including; partnership, legacy, cross-government integration, organizational excellence, leadership, innovation, and emerging leader.

The Working Group, consisting of Ramona Quock, Feddie Louie, Rob McPhee, and Ryan Franke, was presented with the Partnership award for successfully working with the Province on economic development while balancing this with social development and cultural preservation.

"The Tahltan Socio-Cultural Working Group shows what's possible when government and First Nations work together. By growing the economy and investing in social development, together, we lift communities up," said Premier Christy Clark.

Continued on Page 3

President's Message

Annita McPhee, President of Tahltan Central Council

I am pleased to share the November edition of the Tahltan Central Council newsletter. This month we have experienced many triumphs. As we continue with our monthly newsletters, we will be able to share these stories with the nation sooner, so all of our people can stay informed of the work we are doing on behalf of the Tahltan.

In October, I was honoured to speak in front of the United Nations Indigenous Rapporteur on behalf of the Tahltan to explain how our lives are being impacted and could be impacted if all mining projects proceed in our territory. I was proud to present to the world on our people's behalf. I spoke about how we as Indigenous people will not survive if all our land is developed, and how exploration tenures granted by the government do not consider drinking water, animals and fish.

I want our nation to know I stand in solidarity with the good people of Elsipogtog who were peacefully protesting against shale gas fracking in their territory before the police violently intervened. Indigenous people have the right to protect our lands from unwanted resource development. If we are being peaceful, guns should not be drawn.

The Socio-Cultural Working Group was honoured with a Premier's Award last month for Innovation and Excellence. The award is one of the highest recognitions of public service, and the SCWG was given a Partnership award for our innovative relationship with the provincial government.

I am happy to see the hard work of the SCWG acknowledged at the provincial level for successfully balancing economic development with social development and cultural preservation.

Personally, this year has been challenging for me. My mother is in the late stages of Alzheimer's, a truly heartbreaking disease that has affected many families in our Tahltan nation. I pray for a cure.

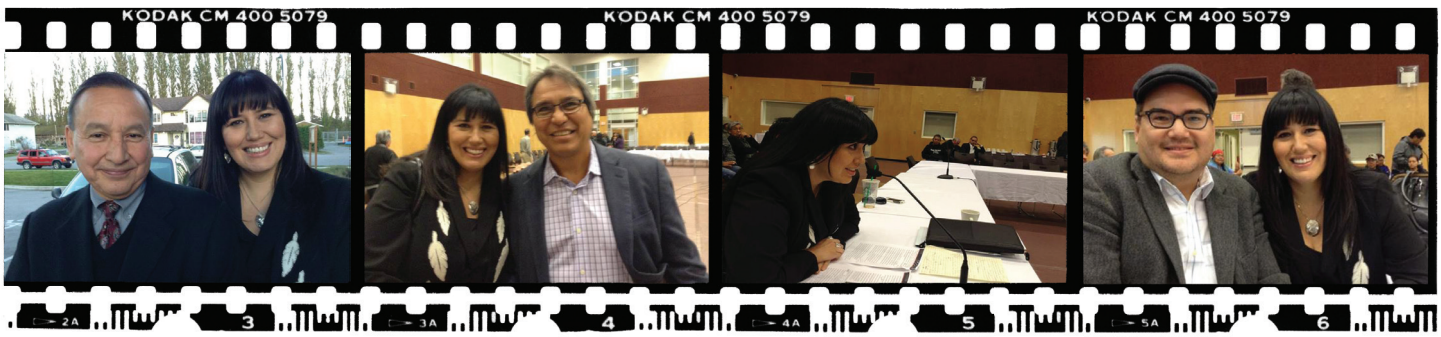
Much of our culture was taken away from us when residential schools came, but we are working hard to bring culture back to our communities through healing. I'm grateful to our friends from the Yukon that came to Telegraph Creek to teach our people to make drums and helped us build our sweat lodge. Every day we are building this nation, and healing and restoring our culture are a big part of that.

I'm proud that our people speak from their hearts and share what's on their minds. Our Tahltan nation is unifying in many ways.

Love you all.

Meduh!

Annita McPhee



SCWG Honoured with Prestigious Premier's Award

Continued from Page 1

The Working Group's partnership with the Province began after the Tahltan Business Council, BC Hydro, and the Province signed the Northwest Transmission Line Negotiation Framework Agreement in 2011.

Tahltans wanted to be involved in economic development, but were concerned about preserving our culture.

The Working Group formed to make sure that Tahltan participated in the economic development of B.C.'s northwest economy while improving our community's economic, social, and physical welfare.

The Working Group's plans to improve healthcare; employment and training; and language and culture were developed in consultation with elders, workers, and community members.

They are a key part of the Tahltan development plan led by Tahltan Central Council President Annita McPhee, Chief Rick McLean, and Chief Marie Quock.

In the future, the Working Group plans to address community and family development, education, and infrastructure.

It will continue to work with the Province to ensure the well-being of Tahltan citizens.

Honouring Our Heroes

On Veteran's Day, we remembered all of our heroes who left home to fight for our country. Among them was Tahltan Elder **Bill McPhee**, who went from Telegraph Creek to Wyoming for work and from there, was drafted for the Vietnam war. He spent a year training in the USA and then he boarded a ship in San Francisco to go to Vietnam where he spent another year fighting in the war.

TCC and Province Take Steps to Protect the Klappan for Good

The Tahltan Central Council and provincial representatives recently signed an agreement that is as a critical step toward protecting the Klappan.

On September 11, TCC leaders met with senior representatives of the Ministries of Aboriginal Relations, Energy and Mines and Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations to put the Klappan Strategic Initiative into action.

As part of this initiative, a new joint Tahltan-Provincial working group has been put together to develop recommendations for land management and protection in the Klappan and Sacred Headwaters. The working group will make recommendations to the TCC and Provincial Ministers by early 2014.

TCC President Annita McPhee has been working to protect this important area in the highest levels of government.

"This is a key step towards protecting an area which is vital for all Tahltan people and all British Columbians," said Annita.

The provincial government voiced support for developing a protection and land management plan for the Klappan. Mary Polak, the minister of the environment, commented that the agreement "is a major step forward in the long-term planning of the Klappan."

She stated that the Province "is committed to continue working with the Tahltan on this process, finding solutions that recognize and honour the places that are important to First Nations, respect the interests of third parties, and provide economic benefits to all British Columbians within a sound environmental framework".

The next steps are to use the Strategic Initiative to develop a plan and vision for long-term management of the Klappan that protects Tahltan land use, culture and the environment.

"Tahltan have been at the forefront of Northwest B.C.'s economic boom but for years we have opposed developments in the Klappan, including Fortune Mineral's coal mine on Mount Klappan," said Annita.

"The area is simply too important: it has been vital for hunting for thousands of years, supports three salmon-bearing rivers and is essential to Tahltan culture. This agreement starts to put in place the plans that protect our land and culture for good".

Galore Creek Mining Donates Macbook Pro for Language Revitalization

The Tahltan Language Revitalization team recently received support for its efforts from the Galore Creek Mining Corporation (GCMC). The company will donate a Macbook Pro with components for video editing, Microsoft Office software, and an Apple TV in order to support the language revitalization team in its work.

GCMC is donating this technology in recognition of Tahltan Day. "Celebrating and honouring Tahltan culture and language has and will continue to be integral to how we do business" stated Ann Ball, the senior coordinator of communications for the GCMC. "We have been very impressed by what the Tahltan Language Revitalization Team has accomplished so far and we are proud to be able to support your ongoing work in a small way".

The Tahltan Nation has made language revitalization a priority. It is a critical part of Tahltan culture and identity.

Language revitalization is especially important as the Nation navigates new developments and outside influences. There are currently only 30 fluent speakers of the language.

Tahltan leadership and the TCC hope to change this by investing more resources into language. Seven language teachers have been hired. Three Tahltan language revitalization offices have also been set up in Telegraph Creek, Dease Lake and Iskut. Five language research assistants work at these offices.

The team has already made an important discovery--patterns in the language that make it easier to learn Tahltan.

GCMC's donation of technology will add to the resources available to the team and strengthen Tahltan language revitalization efforts.

Reginald Dennis Recognized for Work in Language Revitalization

Congratulations to Reginald Dennis, who was honoured with a prestigious award in July 2013. The award recognizes an individual 18 to 30 years of age who is learning their language and inspiring others.

Reginald was one of four B.C. First Nations Language Champions recognized at the First Nations Languages Conference in Vancouver for outstanding achievement in First Nations language revitalization in the areas of youth, community education, school education, and lifetime achievement.

He was introduced at the conference by language teacher and fluent Tahltan speaker Angela Dennis. The conference is held every two years and was co-hosted by the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Peoples' Cultural Council.

Reginald has been learning the Tahltan language for the past ten years with his brother Ryan. During their childhood, they started learning the language from their grandparents, Loveman and Sarah Nole.

Reginald has been working as a member of the Tahltan Language Revitalization team documenting the Tahltan language and in the creation of a Tahltan grammar guide.

He has created a Facebook page dedicated to language and culture in order to ignite a spark and promote the language documentation work that he has been carrying out with Oscar Dennis and Ryan Dennis.

At one point, most of the 400 Facebook page fans were adults, so he began searching for different mediums to attract the youth. He found the app "Talking Tom," which portrays a cat that mimics voices when spoken to; he used this to speak Tahltan to both younger and older audiences with humorous stories and helpful comments, calling it "Tahltan Thomas".

Reginald, Oscar, and Ryan also discovered important patterns in the Tahltan language. They figured out the ways that syllables are added to words to make new phrases. Understanding these patterns will make it easier for them to teach the language to others.

Reginald's goals include being able to speak his language fluently and to have his parents' generation speaking fluently as well. However, he mainly wants our children to be able to converse fluently in our language while playing or just speaking to each other and our Elders. He hopes to see a time when both Tahltan and non-Tahltan people are able to speak our language.

Tahltan Central Council Facebook Page

If you are not yet a fan of TCC's Facebook Page, please head to www.facebook.com/tahltancentralcouncil to stay up-to-date with nation news and events, job postings, member birthdays, anniversaries, and other accomplishments.

We are nearing 1,000 'Likes' but know there are many more Tahltans out there!

Like us on Facebook

‘Treats’ for Terrace Homeless

Arianna Wilson and her mom Maxine Tashoots deliver treat bags to homeless people in Terrace on Halloween

This past Halloween, instead of planning a costume and spending the night trick or treating, 13 year old Arianna Wilson and her mother Maxine Tashoots spent Halloween handing out care packages to homeless people in Terrace.

As the weather started to get chillier, Arianna started to get concerned about the homeless people living in Terrace. Two weeks before Halloween, Arianna mentioned to her mom that she wanted to get care packages for people. She thought about how everyone was getting ready for trick or treating, but how homeless people never got any treats.

Arianna decided to use all of her saved allowance money to go toward building care packages. Arianna and her mom made a list of things that would work well in the care bag, including; wool socks, hats, scarves, gloves, cups of soup, coffee, crackers, juice and foot warmers. Maxine was so inspired by her daughter’s kindness and caring heart to come up with such loving ideas on her own, Maxine contributed some funds to go toward purchasing items as well.

As Terrace is a small town, Maxine and Arianna had an idea of where to head on Halloween night to distribute the packages. They wanted to be sure the packages went to Elders and people that had no other options than to live outside.

Many of the people that received the packages were shocked at Arianna’s big heart. Some people weren’t sure if they were just supposed to take one or two items, and when Maxine and Arianna said the whole bag was for them, they were so grateful and the loving thoughtfulness that went into each bag.

Arianna touched many hearts with her generosity. She is an inspiration to us all.

Telegraph Creek Sweat Lodge

Bringing Traditional Healing back to our nation

Our nation continues to move along in its healing journey. This past summer we held a ceremony to honour residential school survivors from our communities and to welcome them back home, as many had not returned home after residential school and were disengaged from our communities, their families, and our culture.

It was an incredible four-day healing ceremony. Firekeepers from up north attended the ceremony and watched over the sacred fire for the duration of the ceremony. One of the firekeepers is also a sweat lodge master with a background in land-based treatment and healing, so after some follow up with Christine Ball, director of health programs for Tahltan Health and Social Services Authority, he was welcomed back to our community to help us continue to put healing at the forefront for our nation by helping us build a sweat lodge.

Christine's late partner John Etzerza was also a sweat lodge master who initially helped introduce our nation to the healing aspects of sweat ceremonies. John helped people understand the role a sweat lodge ceremony can play in an individual's healing journey.

Sweat lodge ceremonies haven't been done in our communities for the past 50 or 60 years, but some of our Elders remember taking part in them when they were young. Ernest Marion, 93 years old, remembers a sweat lodge at 9-mile in Telegraph Creek. Telegraph Creek's new sweat lodge was built at the sacred area of fish camp from October 7 - 11, with the help of many community members. As fish camp is a learning place, the sweat lodge was built in addition to the camp.

The sweat lodge master will be returning to our community in January. Anyone interested in participating in a sweat lodge ceremony or learning more about other activities that will be planned for when he arrives, should watch for information and notices in the next couple of months.

Sweat lodge ceremonies are used for traditional purification, and cleaning and healing of the mind, body, emotions and spirit. These ceremonies help repair damage done to the spirit, mind and body. The lodge is a place of spiritual refuge and is a mental and physical healing place. It is also a place to seek answers or guidance from the Creator and Mother Earth when one seeks wisdom and strength.

As awareness and knowledge of traditions and culture increases, so does respect and honour. All of which are central to most First Nations cultures and way of life. Respect, sincerity, humility and the ability to listen are all key to positive outcomes from the ceremony.

The lodge is a sacred place to meditate, learn and heal. People can come together as one to cleanse, release anger, guilt, and shame. Inside a lodge, all differences are set aside to focus on purification of the spirit, and to bring healing from physical, emotional, and spiritual disease to allow for spiritual and emotional grown and healing.

Every form of spirituality goes through change. Evolution reflects the changing needs of communities and the environment. This sweat lodge allows us to turn toward each other, ceremony together, heal, laugh, live and love.

Dr. Darrien Rattray:

Combining Tahltan Wisdom with Western Medicine

Dr. Darrien Rattray grew up in Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake until he was 15 years old when his family moved to Fort St. John. Once Darrien finished high school, he moved to Alberta to complete his undergrad degree in physiology and then went on to medical school at the University of Alberta. Throughout medical school he was involved in the Aboriginal Health Care Careers program. The program helps Aboriginal students pursue native health care issues.

"I believe that being Tahltan makes me a little more aware of some of the cultural differences that are unique to the Native patient/doctor interaction," Darrien said.

Darrien remembers growing up in Telegraph Creek and not having any physicians available, meaning people would have to be uprooted from their homes and flown to larger centres to receive medical attention. This, combined with his mother's background as a nurse, was a big factor in Darrien's decision to become a doctor.

"Traditional medicine and western medicine can complement one another very nicely in the treatment of a patient. Personally, I have used caribou weed numerous times to sooth a sore throat. I believe very strongly in the effectiveness of some traditional medicines and think that if used in combination with western medicines, the best of both worlds can be utilized," Darrien said.

During school, Darrien met and married his wife Shauna, who is now a general pediatrician. The couple moved to Halifax where Darrien trained for 5 years in his speciality as an OB/GYN. Darrien did his fellowship in Regina and fell in love with Saskatchewan, so when it was time to move, Darrien and Shauna decided to move back to Regina.

Darrien is now in the second year of his practice. The couple has a 15 month old son named Owen.

Darrien encourages all Tahltan youth interested in pursuing a career in medicine to take advantage of the resources available to them. First Nations students have access to financial awards and bursaries to help them through undergrad and medical school. There are also seats in certain medical programs reserved for people with First Nations backgrounds.

Darrien said the road to a medical career can be tough, competitive and daunting, but there are ways that make it easier. Any nation member interested in learning more about starting a career in medicine can connect with Darrien at darrien.rattray@gmail.com or 306.591.2537.

Left: Darrien, his wife Shauna, and their son Owen last Christmas.

Top Right: Darrien's parents with their precious grandchild Owen. Owen is snuggled up in the beautiful papoose Darrien's mother made him.

Bottom Right: Owen bundled up in his papoose.

RCMP Retiree Vernon Creyke

Vernon Creyke retired from the RCMP this past June after nearly 30 years of service on the police force.

Before Vernon decided to pursue a career in police work, he worked as a contract roofer in his community. In 1984, he had a friend that attended the same church who encouraged him to join the force. He decided to write the exam, and two weeks later he was selling everything he owned to move to Regina to begin his training.

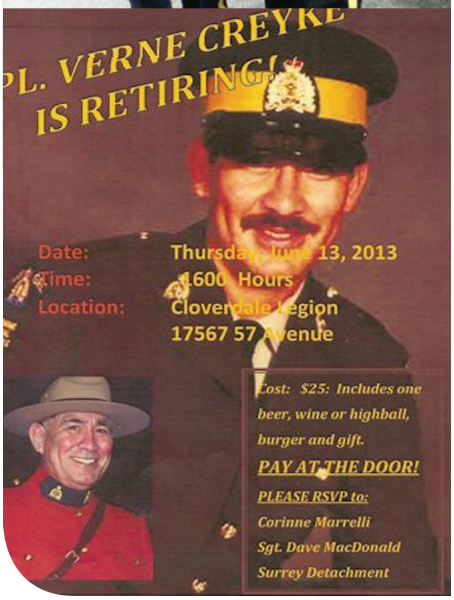
Once Vernon graduated, he was assigned to Cochrane, Alberta, where he spent three years. During his time there he met great people and got to know the community on the Morley reserve. When he was transferred, the community had a huge dinner for Vernon and his wife and presented them with gifts.

Vernon was transferred to Ucluelet where he worked for three years before being transferred to Coquitlam where he worked for 17 years. Vernon was transferred to Maple Ridge where he worked for six years before transferring to Surrey, where he worked until he decided to retire.

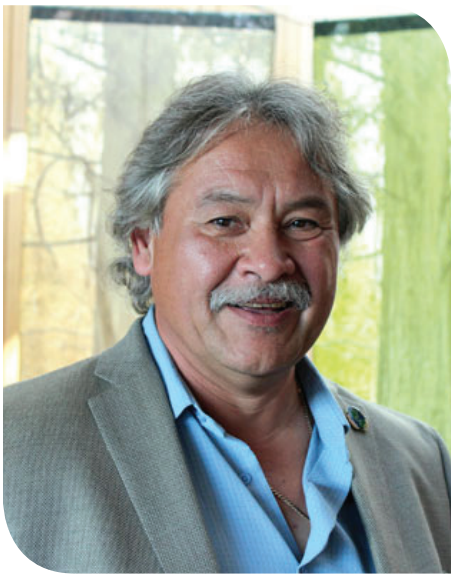
Vernon was well liked everywhere he went. His transfers were mostly due to recommendations from past colleagues or supervisors. When he retired in June, his coworkers held a retirement party for him and had a special cake made in the style of the iconic red uniforms.

Vernon has many good memories throughout the course of his career. He enjoyed working for the RCMP, as everyone was great and hard working. He said it felt like a family.

On November 25, Vernon and his wife will be celebrating their 35 year wedding anniversary.



Tahltan Nation Development Corporation



The Tahltan Nation Development Corporation has had a very busy year, employing over 400 people during 2013. The biggest change for TNDC has been Bill Adsit retiring from his role as CEO. The TNDC is grateful to Bill for all his hard work and dedication during his time with the organization and are happy to have Bill's continued assistance with organizational transitions.

Calvin Carlick has also been appointed chair of the board, Ryan Franke has been appointed vice-chair of the board and Garry Merkel, former board chair, has been appointed into the position of the Chief Executive Officer/President.

"I am honoured to be appointed to this position," said CEO/President Garry. "TNDC is a great organization with great people and we are hoping to make it even better."

Garry has formal training as a Registered Professional Forester, with three decades of experience in various aspects of community development including business development, operations management and corporate governance.

Both Calvin Carlick's and Ryan Franke's formal training and experience is in the area of economic development and both currently work directly with and in the local Tahltan communities of Iskut and Telegraph Creek respectively.

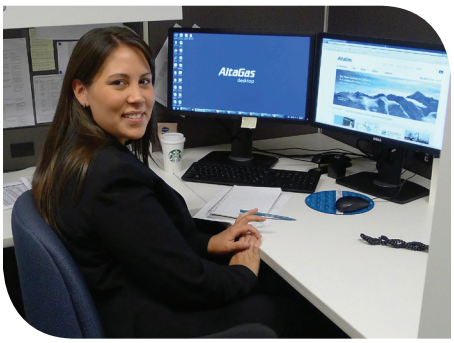
Board Chair Calvin said, "TNDC is at the cusp of another evolution in the organization. With these changes we are well positioned to evolve into a much more significant corporation that can realize the significant opportunities expected to arise in our region and provide our community with stable long-term benefits and employment."

TNDC is moving into shutdown for the winter due to the nature of the construction industry. However, the organization is exploring other options for creating work for workers with multiple skills to minimize layoff impacts.

This year, the TNDC also created a strategic plan that covers the next three to five years. A working copy of the strategic plan was presented at the Tahltan Annual Assembly this year. While there was no formal feedback process, comments at the assembly were positive. This was the first strategic plan developed by TNDC.

TNDC's growth has been heavily tied to the regional resource economy and has grown and shrunk according to local demand. However, TNDC has experienced sustained growth recently and has began planning upgrades to the existing building. The project is in the design stage right now, and will begin in earnest in the spring.

Alta Gas Graduate Opportunity



Alta Gas is offering the opportunity for one Tahltan graduate to participate in its intensive Graduate Development program, which starts in June of 2014. The company offers full-time positions to graduates who complete the program in Calgary.

The two-year program will help the graduate to gain valuable work skills and to prepare for future employment with the company.

It pairs graduates with a mentor to help guide them through the program and share knowledge about career planning, the energy industry, and the company.

In 2010, Alta Gas committed to a 10-year program to offer this opportunity to one Tahltan graduate. Since then, Tahltan graduates who have participated in the program have found successful careers with the Company.

"I think the program stands to offer a lot of social opportunity for the Tahltan people," said Riley Merkel, a commercial analyst with Alta Gas and a Tahltan member . "I really encourage others to take advantage of it and help play a role in the formation of their future and improve the quality of their community".

The company is currently looking for a business analyst or a junior operations engineer to be placed in the program. More information on the qualifications for the program and how to apply can be found on the TCC website.

Seabridge Gold:

Working Together with Local Communities

Seabridge and the KSM Project team look forward to continuing to work together with the Tahltan Nation to build strong, healthy and prosperous Tahltan communities.

Seabridge Gold is proposing to build and operate the KSM Project, a gold, copper, silver and molybdenum mine approximately 65 kilometres northwest of Stewart, BC. The project is currently undergoing a joint federal/provincial environmental review.

Seabridge believes in being a good neighbour and a positive contributor to the communities in which it operates. So, when designing the KSM Project, Seabridge reached out to the Tahltan Nation, other local Aboriginal groups and nearby communities to hear comments and address concerns.

Seabridge has also established capacity funding agreements with the Tahltan to facilitate their participation in the environmental assessment process.

Recently, as part of the environmental assessment, Seabridge representatives travelled throughout Northern B.C. to share information about the KSM Project. Meeting locations included Iskut, Telegraph Creek, Terrace, Smithers and Stewart.

The KSM Project team was pleased to meet many community members and thanks everyone who attended for participating in the process.

One of the most significant benefits of the KSM Project is the number of jobs it will create. If it's approved, Seabridge estimates the KSM Project will employ approximately 1,800 onsite each year during the five-year construction period and 1,040 people onsite during operations.

There will be a wide range of jobs during construction and operation, including accountants, cooks, electricians, engineers, supervisors, heavy equipment operators, mechanics, plumbers and welders.

Seabridge plans to hire many qualified Tahltan members throughout the life of the proposed KSM Project. In addition, Seabridge already has existing contracts with Tahltan businesses that have provided camp and catering services, baseline field studies and core cutting.

Seabridge welcomes questions or comments about the KSM Project. Please email ksm_community@seabridgegold.net, call 250.847.4704 or visit the project team in the Smithers office at 1235 Main Street.

Additionally, before the end of the year, Seabridge expects to open a KSM Project office in Dease Lake to allow Tahltan people a place to ask questions and to learn more about the project. More information will be available soon.

Have a story idea, event, or announcement for the next TCC Newsletter?

Contact us at:

Tahltan Central Council
PO Box 69 | Dease Lake, BC | V0C1L0
info@tahltan.org | toll-free: 855.TAHLTAN (824.5826) | tel: 250.771.3274 | fax: 250.771.3020

www.tahltan.org

Tahltan Birth Announcements

Congratulations to these families and a very warm welcome to our newest members!

Megan Dennis, Brad Jubb, and Big Sister Alyssa are excited to present

Cadence Tatum Jubb

Born: 1:37 am, September 26 2013, in Prince George, BC.

Weight: 9lbs 5oz, Height: 21.25 inches
Wolf Clan

Crystal Inkster Hawkins, Robyn Donio, and Big Sister Niyaa are proud to introduce:

Houston Wassegijig Donio

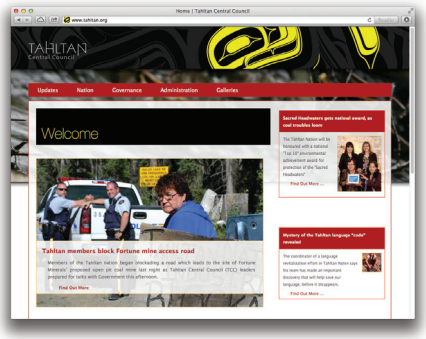
Born: 3:55 am, October 8 2013, in Terrace BC.

Weight: 7lbs 13oz, Height: 23 inches
Wolf Clan

Congratulations are also in order for Rebecca Nole on the birth of her baby.

Upcoming Events

Please watch for notices for upcoming events and meetings. Notices will be posted on our website (www.tahltan.org), as well as on Facebook.



Tahltan Students Win Bursary Awards

Congratulations to the Tahltan students who have won GCMC/ Tahltan Bursary Awards for post-secondary education!

Each year the Galore Creek Mining Company (GCMC), a mining development corporation in northwestern B.C., offers bursary awards to Tahltan members who are going to universities and colleges and also members who are improving their skills.

Ten bursary awards have been given this year- two valued at $2,500 each, two valued at $2,000, and six valued at $1,000.

This year's winners for academic education are Calvin Carlick (1st place); Gayleen Day (2nd place); Jamie Davignon (3rd place); Kiana Ball (4th place); Tanya Ball (5th place); Nathan Skubovius (6th place); Reginald McGinty (7th place).

This year's winners for non-academic education are Phil Fraser (1st place); Leigh Lindstrom (2nd place); Alysha Johnny-Hawkins (3rd place).

Amy Ball, from GCMC senior coordination/community relations department said that the applicants were excellent this year and that offer a bright future for the Tahltan people "as future leaders, business people, entrepreneur's, trades people and so on within the Tahltan Nation".

There were 32 applicants for the awards this year, and the excellent quality of the applications made it difficult for the scoring team to choose the award winners. The announcement of the winners was sent out to all applicants by e-mail.

Ball wanted to let those who have not been chosen that they should not feel that they have lost anything: "First, by making the choice to continue your education and second by choosing to make a difference in your Tahltan Nation; always remember, education comes in many forms and continues on long after you leave college/university" she said.