

The Klondike Sun

February 27, 2008 Online Edition

Dawson City, Yukon

Trek Over the Top Needs Promotional Support

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

Dick Van Nostrand is concerned that some folks in Dawson, and most of YTG's Tourism Department, don't take the Trek Over the Top, now in its 15th year, as a serious addition to Dawson's tourism year. The Downtown Hotel owner was speaking at the February meeting of the chamber of Commerce.

The local hotels that are open in the winter are heavily involved in promoting the Trek, but Van Nostrand says it's a mistake to think that they are the only ones who benefit from it.

"This year's Trek likely won't make 300 people," Van Nostrand said, noting that there has been a problem with passports, not enough to stop the event, but enough to cut down the numbers.

"But the big thing that everyone has got to get some understanding of is that when you have 300 people, it's still the largest single event annually ... that attracts that many

people out of one of our supposedly target market areas, which is Alaska."

Van Nostrand said that YTG's Tourism Department does nothing to help promote the Trek because it's seen as a private business.

"They seem to be finding ways to get involved with other private businesses and promote them because they bring in people from outside of Canada and outside of the Yukon to the territory."

He was also concerned about local support.

"I know that there are people who feel that there are only two or three businesses that benefit from the Trek, but the reality is that it's huge."

"Just ask Karen," he said, nodding at the Eldorado Hotel's



Karen Jenkins across the table. "It's a huge influx of money for several businesses that deal directly with them, but it allows those businesses to purchase stuff at the hardware store, the clothing stores, extra food at the grocery stores and building or industrial supplies."

He said it also provides businesses with some of the discretionary money they use to sponsor events and volunteer organizations in the community.

He described the Trek as providing a "very serious financial punch at a very critical time of the year." It is, he said,

This edition of the online Sun was prepared for posting on April 16/08.

something that people ought not to take for granted.

Van Nostrand indicated that the first trek looked to have 100 participants. The second weekend looked to be the lowest, with just 76, while the third was expected to have 110. This is not the best outcome for an event which has the potential of handling 250 riders per weekend.

Van Nostrand is also involved with the Dawson Snowtrails Association, which owns the grooming machine with which the trail between Tok and Dawson is prepared. This group pays its way by charging \$10 per machine over the Trek weekends. This year, with numbers down, the group won't make back the money it has spent preparing the trails.

"The Trek needs some help," Van Nostrand told the group.

"Any time you get the opportunity to raise your voice to the tourism department or anybody else about getting this thing back up again - it's really important."

Dawson Council Eyes Quartz Claims inside Town Boundary

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

"No bona fide hardrock company would stake claims within a municipality," said Councillor Ed Kormendy on February 12. Kormendy works for the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's Land Claims Office and has some experience in these matters. Yet it remains that seven claims were staked in 2006 within



Dawson's boundaries under the regulations governing quartz mining.

A map provided to council at that meeting indicated that these claims, if developed, could have an impact on three residential properties and cemeteries along the Mary McLeod Road, a couple along Pierre Berton Drive, and the site of YTG's proposed location for an aerated sewage treatment lagoon at the junction of the Dome Road and the Klondike Highway.

Placer staking within the town's boundaries is already ruled out, except for grandfathered claims, under the Placer Mining Act, but this prohibition does not cover hardrock claims.

A memo to council from community development officer Mark Wickham indicated that the town's administration contacted YTG's Mineral Development Branch during 2007 to inquire about the possibility of withdrawing some areas from quartz staking.

The response from YTG was discouraging: "At this time, with other priorities surrounding legislative amendments, we don't feel that we are in a position to fully engage with the City on this issue."

This memo seems to be in sharp contrast to the territorial response earlier in 2008 when areas around cross country ski trails in Whitehorse were staked for quartz claims. At that time the Assistant Deputy Minister was quick to state that the City of Whitehorse had had an open invitation to deal with this matter since 2005 and that the offer was still open.

This left councillors in Dawson to wonder why their concerns had been set aside in 2007.

"It appears," said Wickham, "that Dawson is not a priority despite the pending claims staked upon Dawson infrastructure."

"Potential mining in this area is a concern," said city manager Paul Moore, "but it's also what it does to any development, just all the unknowns. When you have mineral claims on land it raises all kinds of questions and makes it much more complicated."

The discussion focussed on Kormendy's thesis, that those who had staked these claims were less interested in mining than they were in land speculation - the potential to have their claims bought out if either Dawson or YTG wanted to develop the areas where the claims are.

"It appears," said Councillor Diana Andrew, "that Whitehorse got a chance to discuss this kind of situation and we didn't, so I don't think there's any harm in pursuing the discussion with YG."

After some discussion, the resolution passed as follows:

"Council supports opening discussions with (the Yukon Government) with regards to quartz staking within the municipality

and directs the Mayor to write to Archie Lang, Minister of Energy, Minerals and Resources to this effect."

The Klondike Sun is produced in a newsstand edition biweekly by The Literary Society of the Klondike, a non-profit organization. The online edition is posted after the next newsstand edition appears.

Published by the Literary Society of the Klondike- President: Palma Berger, Vice-President: Dan Davidson, Board of Directors: Judith Blackburn-Johnson, Jen Nunan & Ren Causer.

Letters to the editor, submissions and reports may be edited for brevity, clarity, good taste (as defined by community standards), racism, sexism, and legal considerations. We welcome submissions from our readership; however, it should be understood that the opinions expressed herein may not always reflect those of the publishers and producers of the Klondike Sun. Submissions should be directed to The Editor, Bag 6040, Dawson City, YT, Y0B 1G0, e-mailed to uffish20@hotmail.com, directly to the paper at klondikesun@northwestel.net

Revised Sewage Lagoon Memorandum of Agreement Remains in Limbo

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

On February 28 the City of Dawson and YTG's Dept. of Community Services will once again appear before a territorial court judge to account for progress on the Aerated Sewage Lagoon Project the town and the territorial government are planning as a response to a court order requiring the town to have a secondary sewage treatment facility in operation.

It is no secret that neither the present town council nor the trustee's advisory committee which preceded it have been happy with the memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the territory and the town which was signed by the government appointed trustee during the 2004-2006 suspension of rule by elected council here.

That MOA placed all the control of the project in the hands of the territorial government, but left all the liability to the town in the event that something should misfire, or that the project should not meet a standard acceptable to the court. Renegotiating that MOA has been one of the council's primary concerns since it came into being in June 2004. The latest draft of a revised document was brought to council by city manager Paul Moore on February 12, and council once again declared itself dissatisfied, but also puzzled as to what it ought to do next and how to express that concern, Councillor Ed Kormendy raised the issue of the March 6 referendum question which, if passed by the voters, will actually forbid council from participating any further in the construction of a lagoon at the junction of the Klondike Highway and the Dome Road.

"I would suggest that we postpone signing this until after the referendum," he said. His reasoning was that the MOA obligated council to assist the government in the project but that the way to this ends would not be clear unless the referendum question was defeated.

Coun. Ashley Doiron noted that there was an existing MOA in place and that the council was already bound by an agreement.

When asked, city manager Moore indicated that he felt there were substantial improvements in the revised MOA, especially with regard to warranty on the project. "This is a better agreement," Moore said, adding that the original MOA would still be in place until this one replaced it.

"The citizens wanted a referendum," said Coun. Diana Andrew. She said she hoped that a rejection of the proposition would be, in effect, a vote of confidence to proceed with the project.

"We're not rejecting the MOA if we don't pass it tonight we're just postponing it."

Mayor John Steins worried about how the government would react to a further delay in accepting the revised MOA, which was drafted in late November 2007.

"I think they are keen to see this signed as soon as possible," Moore responded, "but that they would accept a delay as Dawson's position if the town needed more time to



study it. What's really important is that you're comfortable with signing this."

Council has had only two meetings in the interim, and has been preoccupied with arranging a by-election and passing bylaws to deal with the referendum during that time.

Coun Andrew brought up her concerns over the liability issues that remain in the MOA. Section 6.4, for instance, clearly states that YTG is not responsible for any reduction in the scope of the project if it exceeds the budget of \$14.7 million and is changed for that reason.

"What I read in this is that if (becomes) a \$23 million project, and they need to cut \$9 million out of it, that their decision would be what we'd have to live with," said Andrew, "and it wouldn't be the Cadillac, earthquake-proof, bombproof lagoon that was proposed."

After some further debate council made a list of items it wanted Moore to pursue further and voted to delay acceptance of the revised MOA until he has had the time to do that.

Given the speed at which the last revisions were accomplished, this would push the date well past the March 6 referendum.

Council finds itself between a rock and hard place on this issue, or, perhaps more aptly, between the water table and a lagoon.

First Trekkers Arrived on Thursday

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

There was no truth to the rumour circulating in Dawson that the first group of Trek Over the Top snowmobilers had to cancel their trip to Dawson because they had not obtained



passports to enable them to go home afterwards.

Trek organizer Laurie McCrory was surprised by the rumour.

"They don't need passports this year anyway, but it's not true," she said on Wednesday afternoon.

Thursday saw the arrival of about 100 intrepid travellers for the fifteenth year of the popular three weekend event, which began in 1993 as a single run and has since grown to three weekends, providing an extension to the winter tourism season which begins here during the Yukon Quest layover.

Two snowmobile organizations, the Alaska Trailblazers and the Dawson Sled Dawgs, are involved with organizer McCrory and her husband, Eric Zalitas, in setting up the trek and organizing things to do in Dawson for the Trekkers, who come from all over the United States for this event.

Highlights here include trips to the Midnight Dome, gambling at Diamond Tooth Gerties, a steak BBQ, a Poker Run in the Goldfields and a Hawaiian Night at Gerties.

The first run departed Tok on Thursday February 21, 2008, arrived sometime in the early evening, and returned to Tok on Sunday February 24.

McCrory says they used to arrive in the afternoon, but they seem to take a bit longer to make the trip each year. She speculates they must be having fun along the way.

The second run will arrive in Dawson on February 28, 2008 and return to Tok on March 2.

The third run will be held from March 6 to March 9.

Charges stayed against former Dawson City manager

Last Updated: Wednesday, February 20, 2008 | 1:48 PM CT
CBC News, with additional material by Dan Davidson

The former town manager for Dawson City, Yukon, is a free man after the Crown entered a stay of proceedings Tuesday on all charges against him.

Scott Coulson had been facing three counts of theft over \$5,000, as well as one fraud charge and one count of breach of trust by a public official. All the charges stemmed from offences that allegedly took place between 2001 and 2004, when he was Dawson City's town administrator.

While mainly silent on the matter, saying that he lacked details of exactly what it was he was being accused of doing, Coulson has maintained over the last three years that he was innocent of any wrongdoing.

Whitehorse RCMP charged Coulson last summer, along with former mayor Glen Everitt, after auditors found \$200,000 in discrepancies in the town's accounts.

The auditor leveled criticisms at the former mayor, city manager, treasurer and the town's regular auditing firm in a report commissioned by the territorial government, which was so uncertain about its contents that it released it only as a legislative document to preclude the possibility of a lawsuit by any of those named in it.

In those sections of the forensic audit which dealt with Dawson's administration, the auditor was careful to note in all three cases that there were possible alternate

explanations for the discrepancies. Only the mayor and town manager were charged after a lengthy RCMP investigation.

Appearing in Dawson City on Tuesday, February 19, Crown attorneys entered a stay of proceedings for all of the charges pending against Coulson.

A new court date for Everitt was set for April 15.

THE RED SHOES

A little girl, so poor that she can't afford any shoes, is trying to piece one together. By recuperating and improving her ways she ends up having a pretty decent pair of red shoes. They are not the best but she sewed them together by herself and she is proud of them. A rich lady walking by sees the dirty little girl and offers her to take care of her. Quite happy about that proposal the girl goes with the old lady. The girl is given a bath and a pair of shiny black shoes. Things are going well for the girl. After a while though she comes to miss her red shoes and she asks for them.



"I burnt them," says the old lady.

Time goes by but the little girl cannot get over the loss of her red shoes. Seeing the girl so unhappy the old lady buys her another pair of red shoes. The girl's face lights up when she sees those beautiful shiny red shoes. She puts them on right away and does a few dancing steps; she is so happy that she dances all day and all night.

When the next day she is tired and thirsty and wants to stop dancing, she realizes she can't stop; she can't stop dancing.

Days go by... after a week of this she comes across a lumberjack. She yells for help. She is completely exhausted. The lumberjack catches her and tries to remove the shoes but they are stuck on her feet. In her despair she screams "Cut the feet off!!!" The lumberjack grabs his big axe and he does.

We can't stop anymore, can we?

We can't stop smoking

We can't stop shopping

We can't stop running

We can't stop driving

We can't stop watching TV

hoopla

Uffish Thoughts: It really was cold out there

Story & photo by Dan Davidson



In one of my favorite books, Robert Heinlein's *The Door into Summer*, there's a cat named Pete (after whom we once named a cat) who is a determined optimist. Faced with rain at the front door of the house he's living in with his companion, Dan Davis (see why I like the book?), Pete insists on trying every other door, apparently out of the conviction that one of them must lead to summer.

I felt a bit like that during our cold snap. We have thermometers on the east, west and north sides of the house and I've kept checking them out, hoping for better news. The front door would say it as -48.1 C, the back door would say it's -50 C, while the one outside my study window would read -52C. If it was just -40 you could take your pick of F or C, but it was usually worse than that.

For some reason it's usually colder in the back lane than it is on 7th Avenue. I've never figured that out.

We had to deliver a batch of church notices to the various bulletin boards around town one day, as well as get groceries, so we had to fire up the Explorer and let it run for a bit before we coaxed it out of the driveway.

The Explorer didn't know how cold it really was because its on-board thermometer won't go below -40. When it rose to -37 on Front Street I didn't know if that was real or if the instrument was just in shock.

At the Post Office we learned that there wouldn't be any mail delivery for few days unless it warmed up. Cold as it is here there are spots along the Klondike Highway where it's ten degrees or so colder, and the contractor wasn't taking the risk. This happened several times during our frigid fortnight.

Looking down 3rd Avenue, where the ice fog obscured any hope of seeing along the entire block, I thought of how edgy that drive to Whitehorse and back can be when the fog is reflecting your headlights back at you and every bump reminds you how taxed your shocks and tires are when it gets below -30.

At both grocery stores the clerks were bundled in heavy sweaters and had to take off their gloves to operate the cash registers (I am NOT making this up) because the drafts from the doors opening and closing were defeating the buildings' heating systems.

It was cold enough that dark steam is rising like smoke off the places where there was still open water on the Yukon River, and seeping through the porous tailings piles along the Klondike.

We blamed the cold snap on the Double Bob (see last issue) which was held on Jan. 26. Every year the library board hosts a dinner and poetry reading to celebrate the January birthdays of Robert Service and Robert Burns. Every year, no matter how mild the weather in the weeks before, the temperature plunges on the day of the event, and folks arrive for the evening breathing frost and trying to keep their potluck contributions from freezing.

That Sunday we walked to St. Paul's at -47, nicely bundled up against the weather: boots, parkas, snow pants, heavy gloves, scarves across our faces and glasses in our pockets (since they're useless anyway once they frost up). I was fine for the 15 minute walk except for my eyes, which began to water in the breeze and then freeze shut as my eyelashes iced up. I hadn't needed my parka hood up for warmth, but I did need to put it on to let me keep my eyes open. The fur trim cut the breeze nicely and it was a nice walk in spite of the chill.

Mackey Leads the Pack into Dawson - Again

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

"There's a team coming!"

It's just past 12:30 on Thursday morning and most of the people in the Visitor Information Centre have been waiting for those words for close to two hours, their expectation shaped by the knowledge that Lance Mackey left Fortymile at 4:46 that morning and that the trip to Dawson is generally about 6 hours from that point on the Yukon Quest trail.

The VIC isn't packed, but the tables are taken up by government and media folk and their laptops. CBC has been broadcasting from the northeast corner of the big room. Lots of people are sipping coffee and nibbling goodies from the concession in the audiovisual room at the rear of the building, but it's been only about -11 degrees since 7 a.m. and so lots of people have also been standing outside, viewing the river from the deck at the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre, walking down to the ice bridge and pacing along the dike.

There's expectation in the air.

Mid-morning, the Air North flight actually takes a swoop around the town's perimeter and over the finish line before heading out to the airport. Small planes have been cruising down river and back for hours.

There hasn't been a lot of information from the Quest crew at Fortymile, but someone explains that this is because they have limited battery power down there so they're only sending messages when they have something new to report.

Once Mackey had passed them, followed by Ken



after their team's departures.

It doesn't look like they're having a lot of luck. The handlers have been thorough, and the sites are lined with green garbage bags full of straw, refuse and doggie detritus, which will be hauled away as the day rolls on.

First, there are two last mushers - locals, both - to be seen off by well wishers.

Two others have already taken off earlier this morning: Kyla Boivin at 8:37 and Bill Cotter an hour or so later.

Cotter, we are told, is pretty peeved. He came back to Dawson to spend the night after

Anderson about half an hour later, there was nothing more to report. The next mushers in the pack were four hours behind those two.

Now, however, Mackey's team can be seen, a caterpillar along the shoreline coming from the direction of Moosehide.

Someone in the press has a budget for sure. A chopper blazes by the watchers on the dike and sets down where its passenger can get a good shot from across the river. Minutes later, it's lifted again and can be seen against the snow covered hill beside the Moosehide Slide, shadowing Mackey as the team gets closer to town and seems to pick up speed.

Photographers, reasoning that the 52 legs on the team can beat their two to the finish line, dash back to set up for the approach and crossing shots.

At 1:01 p.m. the team crosses the finish line and is mobbed by excited well wishers and the press. Mackey pays them no mind as he looks first to his team.

They look in great shape and aren't even breathing hard. One has lost the booties on its front paws and is busily chewing the snow from between its toes. It looks around, decides there's nothing urgent going on, and gets back to work. The rest look like they're just waiting for the next set of instructions; much better behaved than the people, who have to be told several times to move back when it's time to turn the team around and head them over to the YTG Campground in West Dawson for the layover.

Thirty-three minutes later Ken Anderson pulls in. The crowd's not quite so big by this time, but he still gets a hearty welcome. His eleven dogs seem to be well, one taking a moment to roll on its back and scratch that troublesome itch that has been bothering it on the trail.

By two o'clock the crowds, both inside and out, have thinned. There won't be any action here for several more hours at least and then the excitement will begin again.

Quest Fever Winds Down in West Dawson

Story & Photos by Dan Davidson

The ravens are circling in the trees at the YTG Campground in West Dawson, where dog handlers and dogteams have been sequestered since last Thursday. The birds are checking out the campsites, hoping for scraps or anything the handlers might have missed as they cleaned up

heading out on Sunday only to find that a number of trail markers were missing and he was badly off course. Someone



had removed them.

At Cor Guimond's campsite his team of helpers and well wishers are checking out the dogs, which look comfortable on the straw inside their tarpaulin covered kennel area. The sled is ready and packed; the traces are laid out and ready for the dogs to be harnessed. Inside the white wall tent a stove is sending a cheery plume of smoke into the brisk morning air.

We have walked across town, over the ice bridge, and down the river to where a skidoo had made an easy track to get up the bank into the campground. At -15°C it was a pleasant walk downstream, but by the time Anne Ledwidge and her family arrive at the starting line for the trek to Whitehorse an increasingly sharp breeze has begun to blow down the river.

Anne is first off this morning, slated to go at 10:04. Peter straightens the dogs in their harnesses and lines them up with the gap in the bushes that leads to the river. Young Emilie and Marc roam up and down the line giving the dogs a hug and a pat.

Anne is warmly decked out in her new Skookum brand winter wear, produced by local tailor Megan Waterman, who



is on hand to record the departure as Anne speaks to each of her dogs and checks their tethers.

The countdown begins - one minute ... thirty seconds ... 15 ... 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 ... - and they're off down the slope, hard right turn, and heading up the river, running into a wind that waters the eyes even when one is standing still.

A minute later it's Cor Guimond's turn and his team repeats the excitement of a launch into the race. Just over an hour later Cor will scratch for reasons which haven't been revealed at this writing, but there seemed to be lots of energy when his team took off.

The excitement was over for the time being, but February 21st and the first run of this year's Trek Over the Top were coming fast. Dawson traded dogteams for skidoos later in the week as the winter tourism season continued.

Council Candidate: Stephen Johnson

My name is Stephen Johnson and I am a candidate in the upcoming by-election for the position of town councillor.

I have been a member of this community since January 1999 when I came here to take over the position of Production Superintendent at the Brewery Creek (formerly Loki) gold mining operation some 70 kilometres from town. Later promoted to Site Manager, I directed part of the

reclamation phase of the operation, for which I take a great deal of pride. This mine serves as a model for how reclamation should be carried out.

One of my first responsibilities was to construct 80,000 square metres (8.0 hectares) of double lined extension to our leach pad. In comparison, the sewage treatment facility will be in the order of one-third of that area. Our original budget was \$4,700,000 and final cost was approximately 4% under budget. The construction included an extension to the dyke as well as pipe works and valve house. It was also constructed on time, taking some 4 months to complete. In addition, I was responsible for constructing lined ponds used for detoxifying the spent ore on the leach pad. Therefore I am very familiar with the type of construction and materials that will be used in the sewage treatment lagoon.

I hold a Bachelor's and Master's degree in engineering (mining) from Queen's University, and I am a registered professional engineer with some 34 years open pit experience in the mining industry. A mining engineer is a generalist and, as such, I have an understanding of "engineering things". I practice and fully support environmentally responsible and safe mining.

Prior to these Dawson years, I lived in many parts of Canada, England, Germany and the United States.

Following three years service with the Dawson City Planning Board, I accepted reappointment to the Yukon Water Board, which deals with licensing any project in the Yukon that has to do with the use of water and the effects on receiving waterways. At present, I volunteer as an Auxiliary Constable in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

When the wind is right, I take to the sky in my paraglider and rejoice.

I am fully committed to the historic preservation of our town.

I am pleased to support the efforts of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in who develop and stage programs and events for our young people and the entire community. Our arts ventures strengthen and grow with each year, bringing the world to Dawson and Dawson to the world and I support them all.

Council Candidate: Rick Riemer

For those of you who know me, yes I have decided to run for the position of City Councillor and for those who don't know me, hopefully this candidate's profile will help you get to know me better.

I was born and raised on a farm in northern Saskatchewan. After graduating from high school, I immediately became employed in the oil patch, for several years. When things slowed down in the oil patch, I switched to construction work. I worked on several large hydro and irrigation projects, bridges, skating rinks, potash mines, and ski hill construction. While a lot of these projects were in the northern-parts of the provinces, I knew

I wanted to go farther north. This is where Dawson City and placer mining came into my life, and I knew that Dawson and the Yukon was the place where I wanted to be. That was back in 1989. In 1998, my wife, Connie, and I purchased a house in Dawson, where we still live today. We have two children, Hayley and Axel, who attend Robert Service School.

Over the years I have been involved with School Council, the Renewable Resource Council, the Curling Club, skating rink and hockey. It was during the construction of the new Dawson arena and curling rink, that I became aware of city politics. With that being said, one of the main reasons I am running for council, is to be a part of the upcoming projects. I feel I can bring a common sense approach to council when needed for decisions. I believe council has to be diverse. I believe council also has to get along and be professional with all other levels of government. I also believe mayor and council have to be open and honest to the people of Dawson. We have a good foundation with the present mayor and council and I would like to be a part of it. I realize there are a lot of other issues that council has to deal with besides the upcoming projects, and I will do my best to be brought up to speed with these issues.

Well folks, I hope this gives you a bit of information to help you decide on March 6. Please feel free to phone me at home or better yet stop me up town if you have any questions. I would like to thank the Klondike Sun for publishing my profile. I would also like to thank Stephen Johnson for also putting his name forward for council. Now it is up to you to vote on March 6.

Pinata Bashing Anyone?

story by Betty Davidson
photos by Betty Davidson & Elizabeth Connellan

To celebrate Valentine's Day, Ms. Bell's and Ms. Johnson's Grade 3 Class at Robert Service School decided to do something a bit different.

The idea was the brainchild of Elizabeth Connellan and her son, Will. The class made a pinata and sold tickets costing \$1.00 each, for a chance to break the Pinata. They hoped to raise money for a Spanish language school in



Antigua. The teachers at this school are single mothers who have decided to build a school that will work with children who have autism.

In addition to the tickets, jars were placed at the office and at the Yukon Quest Checkpoint for donations.

On Monday, February 18, the money was counted and the winning ticket was drawn by Dr Philip Cull, Principal at Robert Service School, in front of the excited Grade 3 students.

Philippe Bartholomeus was the lucky winner who came quickly to the school and soon demolished the pinata. A total of \$331.45 was raised for their cause, \$249.00 from the ticket sales. Way to Go, Grade 3!

The class would like to thank everyone who bought tickets or donated towards this worthy cause, and especially Ms. Connellan who worked hard to make this project a success.

Yukon Friends Forever

By Sylvia Sands Johnson

Louise Rice, formerly Louise Simms, and I have known each other for about 47 years. We first met in Granville Y. T., around the mid-to-late 1950's. She had a year and a half old daughter and was 8 months pregnant. I had three very young children, the last one still a baby.



Both our husbands worked on the gold dredges; although she has since remarried, and my former husband now deceased. But the really amazing coincidence, is that after all these years, we are still living in a relatively small village, called Rosswood, north of Terrace, and still visit

back and forth. We are Yukon friends forever. How did this happen?

Louise was born in Ketchikan, Alaska, in 1940, and mostly raised by her grandmother. She is definitely an old-fashioned, pioneer type. I was born in West Vancouver in 1936, but mainly raised in Penticton B. C., in the sunny Okanagan--and definitely a bush type by choice.

In the Yukon, 50 miles from Dawson City, we both lived in log cabins -- but now in the small village of Rosswood, Louise is living in a loghouse and I am living in a rustic cedar-sided abode. In 47 years, our lifestyle really hasn't changed that much.

What Louise said recently, is this: "I really like this kind of lifestyle and wouldn't be happy living in town. Stan and I love the wilderness, birds and wildlife. It's much less stressful."

Exactly my sentiments. Also, we both love gardening and exchange plants. We still have coffee together and discuss the old days, sharing any local news, as we did in the far north.

There were a few years when we somehow lost touch. Then I heard that Garth and Louise were living in Rupert. So Don and I drove to Pr. Rupert to visit them. Her youngest son, Erin, was still a baby. We had a very pleasant time and Louise promised to make a return visit. By the time we saw each other again, she had changed her marriage status, and was with Stan Rice.

She couldn't have picked a grimmer night to visit. Terrace was having its worst snowstorm in years, worse than anything we had ever seen in the Yukon. The snow was actually up to our chests as we bravely waded our way toward my house on McDeek. She had met me at the bar where I worked late, and by the time I got off work, there were no cars on the streets at all. So we had to hike to my house. Louise took it all like it happened every day.

It seems that Louise and Stan had their eye on a piece of property they wanted in the nearby ghost town, called Doreen, east of Terrace -- only accessible by train or boat. And they waited a long time for this property to come up for sale. Stan was working for the CPR at the time. Louise still wanted to get back to the pioneer life.

By that time, I was divorced and had bought 10 acres, 35 miles north of Terrace in a one-General-Store-village. My new partner and I were busy helping a succession of carpenters build a house. We helped with framing, insulation, and the whole works.

The next time I saw Louise she said that the piece of land she and Stan had wanted so badly, had come up for bids and they lost it to a higher bidder. I felt badly about this knowing how much they had wanted it. So I asked Louise, "Why don't you and Stan come to Rosswood and check out the available properties there?"

More time passed, and finally Stan spotted a sign that advertised, "Loghouse for sale in Rosswood with 28 acres." Well, that did it. They bought it and Louise placed a sign across the front that said, "Sanctuary." That sign is still there. But the best was yet to come.

Fifteen years later, Louise and Stan held a mortgage-

burning party and I was invited, along with my two Yukon-born, but now adult children,-- Stephanie and Paul. Also, Louise's son, Troy, was there with his wife. Troy was also born in Dawson City. So there were the five of us, having our photo taken -- all sourdoughs. It was a proud moment I'll never forget. Louise and Stan are very happy living as Rosswooders and I am so happy to have a friend who knows what the old gold dredge days were like, back in Granville Y. T., in the late 1950's. Louise and I are still sharing the same lifestyle after 47 years. How lucky can I get to have such wonderful friends after so many years?

Pancakes for Polio

by Betty Davidson

photo by Dan Davidson

On the very cold night of February 5, 2008, members of the congregation of St. Paul's Anglican Church and interested Dawsonites, met in the Richard Martin Chapel to commemorate Shrove Tuesday and the beginning of Lent with a sourdough pancake supper. Aldene Snider made excellent sourdough pancakes, using starter that came over the Chilkoot in 1898, carried by a family called Ballantine, relatives of Ione Christensen. A good time was had by all, in spite of the cold.



Shrove Tuesday heralds the beginning of fasting in Lent. On this day (so the historians say) there were feasts of pancakes to use up the supplies of fat, butter and eggs - foods that were once forbidden during austere Lent.

Each year, St Paul's raises money for a worthy cause. This year, \$162.30 was raised to support efforts by Ramesh Ferris and the Rotary Club in Whitehorse to raise public awareness and support research to eradicate polio in the world through his Cycle to Walk program. On April 12, 2008, Ramesh, a survivor of polio in his early years, will begin his trek across Canada, cycling from Victoria, BC to Cape Spear, NL using a hand propelled cycle. 75% of funds raised will go to Polio eradication, 5% to polio awareness of the need to immunize, and 25% to support for polio survivors with surgery and mobility aids. Those wishing to donate to this cause can make donations to * Ramesh Ferris Cycle to Walk Society

* C/O Mail Boxes Etc.
* #312-108 Elliot Street
* Whitehorse, Yukon
* Y1A 6C4

Gallupe pleases the Dawson Crowd

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

Brooke Gallupe announced that he was feeling like a real Canadian at last at his concert in the Oddfellows Hall on February 15.

"I've been curling and my eyelashes have frozen," he joked, having just come through Dawson's -50 fortnight.

Gallupe, guitarist, vocalist and songwriter for the Victoria based indie-rock band Immaculate Machine (which will be playing the Dawson City Music Festival this coming July) is in town for a stint as the Dawson City Music Festival's (DCMF) 2008 Songwriter in Residence. This program runs out of McCauley House as a collaboration between DCMF and the Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture's Artist in Residence Program.



He has been playing guitar and writing songs since he was 12 years old and first worked with band mates Kathryn Calder and Luke Kozlowski in a rhythm & blues style band in high school.

A lot of Gallupe's lyrics are about life in the band and travel.

"One of the perks of being in a band is ... the travel," he told his audience.

"Well, I'm here, right?"

Doubtless there will be songs about Dawson in the future, just as his set for the evening included a song written after a trip to Ireland, and another inspired by the band's habit of lugging an extra mattress into their hotel rooms to cut down on costs.

Additionally, there were a couple of songs about life in

his apartment over the Red Jacket nightclub in Victoria.

For now, there were a few songs that had been written since his arrival in Dawson, and tunes that were written both for Immaculate Machine and his second band, Rugged Uncle.

Gallupe studied French at university and this resulted in the band issuing French versions of some of their songs, but they have also experimented with German, for their European tour and with bit of Mandarin Chinese. The latter, he noted, provided them with the unusual sensation of singing a song they knew, but not knowing just exactly what the lyrics meant in any given line.

With clear vocals and often amusing lyrics, Gallupe was a crowd pleaser for sure and even managed a bit of a sing-a-long during his encore.

Gallupe will be in Dawson until March 3.

TR'ONDĚK HWĚCH'IN URGE RETHINK ON DAWSON LAGOON PROPOSAL

DAWSON CITY (February 21, 2008)– The Tr'onděk Hwěch'in Chief and Council are urging Dawson residents and the Yukon Territorial Government to consider the South Bench as a location for the Dawson City sewage lagoon.

"The community has been told that if the lagoon doesn't go at the entrance of town, Dawson will be saddled with an SBR plant that will be too expensive to operate," said Taylor. "We want people to know that the South Bench is an affordable solution that will work for everyone. Voting "yes" in the March 6 referendum will give elected officials their marching orders to take that location seriously."

The current proposed site, one-kilometre upstream from the town's drinking water supply, doesn't make the best use of the area given Dawson's land constraints and doesn't take into account future lagoon expansion, added Taylor.

A recent report drafted by an independent engineer with over 30-years experience in geotechnical and geo-environmental engineering states the current lagoon design is based on inadequate data, underestimates lagoon leakage, and has a faulty monitoring plan.

The Tr'onděk Hwěch'in commissioned the third-party report as part of their submission to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board.

"The project also doesn't meet setback standards required in other jurisdictions," said Taylor. "Instead of trying to sell a substandard project to the people of Dawson, YTG and the City of Dawson should withdraw the current proposal and resubmit one that is acceptable. The South Bench location could be part of that proposal and would make the approval process proceed more smoothly."

"We've been accused of self-interest and of worrying only about odour," added Taylor. "But this is an important piece of Dawson infrastructure. We want to make sure it goes in the right place."

Uffish Thoughts: The Battle of the Broadsheets

by Dan Davidson

It appears that this week's edition of the Klondike Sun will be the arena for a battle of the broadsheets as the City of the Dawson and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in square off in the advertising pages in support of their respective positions on the Sewage Lagoon issue. Our paper is not usually so controversial in its advertising content, but it looks like this issue will be the exception to that rule.

The question is not whether to build a secondary sewage treatment facility. That's been decided and ordered by the court. In fact, as I write these words, the City of Dawson is preparing to go before the court to account for its progress over the last six months.

Its partner in the project, the government of the Yukon, will be explaining in more detail why the project cannot be completed by the court assigned date of 2009.

Locally, the political opponents in this battle seem to be the City of Dawson and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH) council.

Town council feels it has little choice but to obey the court order and follow the lead of the territorial government, which has actual control of the project's planning and construction. In addition, council needs a plan that will end up with the town having sustainable O&M costs years down the road, otherwise the town could face another bankruptcy in a few short years and, with it, another removal of rule by council.

The last council, the one which was removed, had already developed a plan for a mechanical treatment plan (Sequencing Batch Reactor type) to the point where it was clear that such a plant would cost far too much to construct and far too much to operate.

When Dawson already faces sewer and water utility bills several times higher than any other town in the Yukon, largely because of the nature of the "experimental" system which was installed here by YTG back in the 1980s, council feels it has to accept the arguments and projections made by the economists and engineers employed by the Yukon government.

In making its plans YTG has relied heavily on an existing facility of the same type in North Pole, Alaska, which has been running successfully for over two decades.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in council argues that the proposed location presents potential difficulties in terms of groundwater quality, air quality (odour), land development, town planning issues, possibilities for expansion of the facility, property values on land owned by TH and others, the tourism industry, and the actual science behind the functioning of the bacteria in the lagoon under severe cold temperatures.

The local issue to be addressed by the referendum is whether or not town council ought to have passed a resolution allowing a change in the zoning of the area proposed for the facility.

The referendum is the result of two attempts at collecting signatures for a plebiscite and, while plebiscite organizers

have said that they merely want Dawsonites to have a choice in the project rather than having it imposed on them by YTG, it seems clear that the intent of the referendum is to stop the construction of the lagoon on lots 1058 and 1059.

That is what a yes vote would mean, as it would instruct council to withdraw permission and not to approve any such development permits for that particular site. Council will have to abide by the results of the referendum, even though there already exists a signed memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the town and the territory, a document signed when the town was under the administration of a government appointed trustee for two years.

What would happen if council were forced to reject the MOA is a great unknown. Could the court order the project to proceed anyway? Could the territory simply expropriate the land and carry on? Would the federal departments who brought charges against the town in the first place insist that the previously planned SBR plant be built?

Since it actually appears that a SBR plant would not work well here (not enough effluent) would the government then be forced by the situation to look at other lagoon alternatives, one of which would be a site above Tr'ochek which has been advanced by TH as a solution to the problem?

All of this is complicated by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's January 9/08 directive, in which YTG is instructed to provide more detailed responses to the issues of odour from education trucks; odour from the lagoon at various seasons; the applicability of the North Pole, Alaska, facility history to the Dawson situation; the potential for liner leakage; water levels in the Klondike River; groundwater monitoring; and lagoon expansion possibilities.

YESAB suggests it might take up to two years to answer these questions, so it could be that any lagoon is even further off than the court might like.

Former Social Worker, MLA and Barmaid reads at the Library

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

Eleanor Millard's first experience with an airplane was the Canadian Pacific Airlines' DC6 that flew her to Whitehorse on the first leg of a trip to Dawson that would mark the beginning of her 18 years in the community. This was in 1965 and seven weeks later that same plane dropped out of the sky just south of Prince George, brought down by what was thought to be a bomb in the washroom.

Eleanor had spent part of her pre-flight time trying to decide if she should buy flight insurance. One of the speculative explanations for the explosion was that someone else did and made sure their beneficiaries could collect - though this was never proven.

Nevertheless, the experience left Eleanor with a permanent dread of air travel, in spite of which she seems to have done a lot of it. Most of the stories she read to her small audience in the Dawson Community Library on Feb.



Cuba while visiting her father in Jamaica, and when she returned from Castro's kingdom she discovered that she didn't have the right documentation to land in Jamaica. The necessary plane ticket was in her father's house and the airport authorities almost sent her back to Cuba because of that.

Eleanor was in Dawson to promote her latest book, a memoir called *Journeys Outside and In*. Since many of these journeys, by air or by car, began in Dawson, it was appropriate to have a reading at the library which, coincidentally, sits just about where the building which contained her office used to be when she was a social worker here in the early 1970s.

Eleanor wisely chose the more amusing aspects of her memoir for her reading, and kept her audience in stitches for much of the hour.



20 had to do with flying.

Eleanor had to fly a lot because, although she started in Dawson as a barmaid, she ended up being the regional social worker for a number of years, and her beat included Old Crow. Small wonder then, that two of her stories involved flights to Old Crow aboard the venerable DC3 that now spins as a weather vane outside the Whitehorse Airport.

In one, she discovered the perils of dropping a cigarette into the unreachable space between the seat and the outer wall of the plane when everything liquid in the plane was frozen solid. This didn't cause her to quit smoking and she used to measure the length of the trip from Dawson to Old Crow in terms of cigarettes smoked on the way.

On another trip she experienced the mysteries of Northern IFR flying. IFR normally stands for Instrument Flight Rules, but in the Yukon it often stands for I Follow River.

On the same occasion a winter detour to Inuvik left her so exhausted that she couldn't tell day from night and she tried to get breakfast at 8:30 in the evening, much to the amusement of the desk clerk.

Eleanor didn't seem to have much better luck travelling when she was farther south. At one point she took a trip to

