

CanyonCurrent



A monthly newsletter from the Kitselas Treaty Office

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Help shape Kitselas' future now

The Kitselas Treaty Office is looking for at least two community members to be part of a new working group that will finalize the Kitselas constitution over the coming months.

If Kitselas members vote yes to treaty, the constitution this working group creates will become Kitselas' official constitution.

A first draft of the Kitselas constitution is already complete.

A nation's constitution is arguably its most important document as it establishes the rules and principles of a nation's government, and limits its powers.

The constitution outlines the rights of all citizens as well as the powers and responsibilities of the state.

Kitselas constitution working group is the first of many working groups the Kitselas Treaty Office will be forming in the next few months.

The working groups are part of preparations leading up to the treaty vote. Work completed by the groups will help Kitselas implement the final agreement.

Each working group will consist of at least one treaty office staff member, an expert, and two community members.

Lawyer George Nicholson will be the expert in Kitselas' constitution working group. Nicholson works with a firm called Aborigi-

WHAT IS A CONSTITUTION?

- The most basic law of a territory from which all the other laws and rules are hierarchically derived.
- A body of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or other organization is acknowledged to be governed.

nal Law and has been working alongside Kitselas during negotiations for the past 15 years.

In the coming months, the Kitselas Treaty Office will be looking for community members to participate in the working groups.

Call the Kitselas Treaty Office at 250.635.8882 if you're interested in being part of the constitution working group or for more information about the working groups in general.

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KitseLas entrepreneur making waves

By Holly Spencer

Long time dedicated hairdresser and stylist, Lesli Louie, a KitseLas member and resident of

Gitaus, recently opened a business, FabOriginal Hair Design by Lesli, in the Flying Fish building at the four-way stop near Terrace.

“I’ve wanted to go into busi-

ness for myself for a long time. I decided it was just time do it,” Louie said.

Louie has over decade of experience and is well known in the native community for her perming skills.

She started her business in March 2013 with the help of her friend Crystal McKay of Relectionz Hair Lounge.

As her mentor and friend, Crystal guided Louie through all the paperwork and necessary business details to get started.

For example, one of Louie’s first steps was to go to the BC Access Centre and register her business name and GST number.

In hindsight she realizes many more resources are available.

Aboriginal people can approach their local Tricorp office for help with funding for a new business. Also, budding entrepreneurs can talk to Community Futures 1/637 for help with starting a new business.

But Louie knew what she wanted and just went for it

To anyone thinking about starting their own business or a new career, she says, “Don’t be afraid to ask for help.”

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Lesli Louie is really excited about her new hair salon.



Lots of crafts, baked goodies and great gifts to buy for Christmas presents were on sale at the Kitselas Christmas Bazaar on November 24 at Kitselas Hall. Here Stella Wright shows off some of her cedar roses and hand knitted clothes.



With representatives from the City of Terrace and the Regional District of Kitimat and Stikine, Kitselas councillor Clarisa Spencer welcomed and witnessed the 'cutting of the ribbon' to initiate Westjet's first flight from Terrace to Vancouver on November 25.

Connecting with Cal

As part of educating people in the Terrace area about the significance of a Kitselas treaty, the Kitselas Treaty Office communications team gave a presentation to the Grade 12 First Nations of BC Class at Caledonia Sr. Secondary on November 6.

Julie Bradford, a Kitselas member and Caledonia's Aboriginal support worker, invited Treaty Office staff Clarisa Spencer and Joan Mason-Nyce to give an overview of the Kitselas treaty process, and what it means for community members.

"The class was very into it," said Keisha-Lee Erickson, one of the students who saw the presentation. "A lot of the class was talking about it after."

In addition to Kitselas members understanding the importance of treaty, the Kitselas Treaty Office staff believe it's important for people in the surrounding area to understand the effects treaty will have on their relationship and dealings with Kitselas.

"We especially need to help the younger generation understand how treaties work, why we need them and how they might affect them later on down the road," says Spencer.

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Louie's success and continued positive attitude for her venture couldn't have happened without lots of support too, she says.

"I've had so much support from my husband, family and friends and especially Crystal. I am so happy I made the choice to go into business for myself."

With the help of Sandy Watson, Kitselas' Employment Counsellor, Louie has also taken

courses in Prince George for eyelash tinting and eyelash extensions. She hopes to incorporate makeup artistry into the future of FabOriginal.

Since her grand opening in November, Louie has had well over 40 clients - some returning, some new.

And she's always looking for more. Call 250.642.9056 for an appointment.

Life is precious & fragile

By Sharlene Mohr

When I first heard about the Grief and Loss workshop happening in Kitselas last month, I wasn't interested in attending - other than the fact that my sister Corrina Miller was teaching it and I wanted to support her. Just the name, grief and loss, kind of makes you feel fear - fear of grief, fear of loss, and fear of putting yourself out there.

But this workshop was a huge breakthrough for me.

This past summer, on August 3, I was in a car accident that nearly cost me my life. It was my day off and I was driving to meet my spouse Wes Patterson for a late breakfast.

Instead I found myself doing 150 km an hour uncontrollably down the highway. Something had gone wrong with my truck and it accelerated by itself from Copper River Estates all the way

to the four way!

I thought, "My God. Is this it?"

It seemed unreal as I zoomed by the Thornhill Fire Hall where my spouse, Wes, was standing. We even made eye contact. You have no idea how scared I was.

Thankfully, I am alive and no one was seriously hurt. I did lose my two big dogs though.

I didn't even realize how much their loss had affected me. But at the Grief and Loss workshop, I realized I was feeling deep grief for their loss. I had been hurting so much since the accident that I didn't get close to any animals anymore.

Losing my dogs was like losing family and to this day I don't like to get attached to animals.

I carried that pain for a long time but through both discussions on what I had lost and what I will do to heal, this workshop helped me move forward and deal with my feelings.



SHARLENE MOHR

*Kitselas Treaty Office
Community Engagement
Coordinator*

I have always been thankful for everything in my life, but now, I have so much more appreciation for everything. I am very thankful to be alive, to be where I am and be working right here in our beautiful community of Kitselas.

The sad thing about this workshop is that only three people attended. From my experience and talking to others, I know there has been lots of suffering and loss in our community.

We have all lost someone or something at some point in our lives. I am sure you have managed to carry on but this workshop is a chance to look after yourself and move forward.

And maybe there's someone out there who could receive strength from you. This workshop could really help our community and I encourage you to attend the next one.

"I've heard from many community members over the years that workshops like these are so needed. In all the work I've done in mental health, coping with change of any kind is the most predominant reason people request service."

- Corrina Miller, Grief and Loss Workshop Facilitator

Starting to resolve territorial conflicts

By Holly Spencer

Territorial overlap between First Nations is a sensitive topic and can sometimes take years, even decades, to resolve.

But a positive step forward was taken at an overlap meeting between Kitselas, Kitsumkalum and Metlakatla last month.

In Prince Rupert, on November 26, all three First Nations decided that rather than utilize the typical three-sided approach, they would use a new bilateral meetings process. That means, at future meetings, two nations will now negotiate on a predetermined subject and one will observe.

This approach will make the meetings more efficient.



Gerald Wesley of the Tsimshian First Nations Treaty Society discusses the map that shows overlapping territory claims with Kitselas Chief Councillor Joe Bevan.

Lawyer and Kitselas treaty advisor Mark Stevenson also helped move negotiations forward by presenting a draft overlap agreement between the Kitselas and Metlakatla First Nations

Both nations agreed the document would be the basis of their actual agreement pending the approval of Kitselas' band council.

"As negotiators we can only recommend agreements to council and they can approve or reject it. The reason is, because they are the ones to implement it, not the Treaty Office," says Kitselas Chief

Negotiator Mel Bevan, who was part of the Nov. 26 meeting.

Territorial overlap meetings are critical as land conflicts between First Nations must be resolved as part of the treaty negotiations process.

The British Columbia Treaty Commission plays an important part in these meetings, providing assistance and chairing the meetings.

The next territorial overlap meeting between Kitselas, Kitsumkalum and Metlakatla is tentatively planned for Feb. 2014.

Sorry-
OFFICE
CLOSED

Make a note: All Kitselas offices will be closed for the holidays from noon on December 24, 2013 to January 2, 2014. Also, staff will be limited during the last two weeks of December.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Negotiations Update

What's happening at the treaty negotiations table?

By Clarisa Spencer

Kitselas Treaty negotiators have been engaged in monthly negotiations with the Government of British Columbia and the Government of Canada since Kitselas voted yes to the Agreement in Principle on February 20, 2013.

For one week every month, negotiators from Kitselas Treaty Office, Tsimshian First Nation Treaty Society, both governments, and the British Columbia Treaty Commission, get together to work on specific chapters of the Kitselas final agreement.

Kitselas representatives include Chief Negotiator Mel Be-

van, Director of Implementation Glenn Bennett and me.

Gerald Wesley represents the Tsimshian First Nation Treaty Society, of which Kitselas is part of, and is the only one who actually speaks at the chief negotiators table on behalf of Kitselas.

Any changes made to the Final Agreement documents are made in conjunction with Kitselas, BC and Canada. No party can make any changes to this document without proposing those changes to the other parties.

Final agreement chapters we worked on during November's negotiations include land title, culture and heritage, lands, sub-surface, and local government.



CLARISA SPENCER
*Kitselas Treaty Office
Documents Manager*

As part of negotiations, time is also set aside for each group to work on specific subjects related to the final agreement, which are then brought to the chief negotiators table for discussion.

Subjects we worked on in November were forestry and lands. To prepare for negotiations on these subjects, the Kitselas Treaty Office hired experts to produce maps and forestry databases related to our traditional territory.

The next negotiations session will be from Dec 17 - 19 in Vancouver and I'll provide you with an update in the January edition of the *Canyon Current* about what happens.

If you have questions about the Kitselas Agreement in Principle, Final Agreement or the treaty process in general, get in touch with me at 250.635.8882 Ext. 245 or cspencer@kitselas.com



A look at the chief negotiators table - from the inside.

Our stories in print

By Joan Mason-Nyce

Last month, as part of my work as receptionist at the Kitselas Treaty Office, I was asked to track down the book, *Prehistoric Cultural Change at Kitselas Canyon*, for Siomonn Pulla, an anthropologist doing research for us.

The book, written in 1985, is one of only seven books written about Kitselas.

The book is about Kitselas moving from a society where everyone is equal to one with ranks.

According to the back of the book, which was published by the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the book “made a marked contribution to archaeological theory” and includes “significant research on prehistoric culture

change in the evolution of Northwest Coast Societies.”

Through my research, I found out the book is no longer in print but I managed to track down its author, Gary Coupland, and he gave Kitselas permission to re-print the book.

Coupland was a PhD student in 1980, when the Kitselas Band and Parks Canada were considering declaring Kitselas Canyon a National Historic Site.

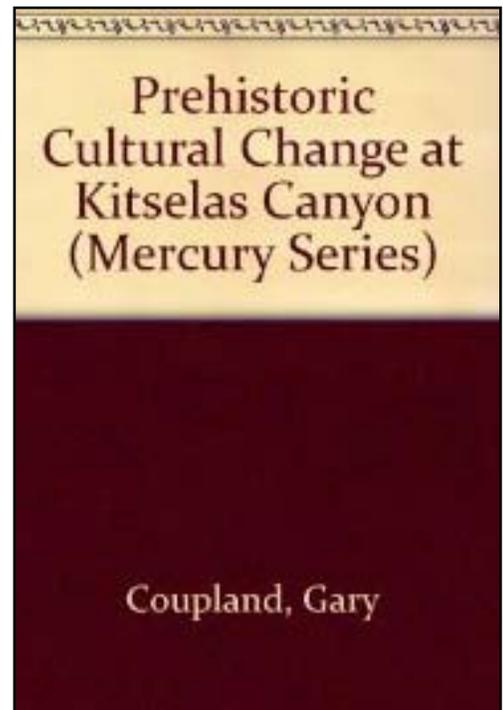
He returned to Kitselas over two summers and has fond memories of Kitselas as “a welcoming community.”

Coupland remembers the canyon, surrounding mountains and summer weather as beautiful.

During our conversation, Coupland remembered working with what he describes as eight “enthusiastic” Kitselas summer students, one being Kitselas Treaty Office Director of Implementation Glenn Bennett.

He also remembers getting help from Kitselas elders including the late Ralph Wright, Wilfred Bennett Sr. and most importantly for me, my Ye'eh (my maternal grandfather), the late Paul Mason Sr.

Some of you may know that one of the most important arche-



ological sites in the Kitselas Canyon is the Paul Mason site.

I'm proud to say that while assessing the archeological sites, my Ye'eh identified a site with 10 undiscovered longhouse impressions, dated about 5000 B.P. (before present).

The site, named after my grandfather, is the earliest level of human occupation ever found in the Canyon and one of the oldest in the entire Skeena Valley.

Talking to Gary Coupland was really inspiring for me. Researching this book and realizing it is one of just a few books about Kitselas also made me want to find out more about the other books on Kitselas. So stay tuned!

Over the next few newsletters I plan to tell you about them.

WANT A COPY OF THE BOOK?

- *Prehistoric Cultural change at Kitselas Canyon* is now out of print.
- Kitselas Treaty Office has a copy of the book people can see and borrow.
- Used copies are also available on amazon.ca but cost close to \$1,000!

Newsletter to get makeover

Throughout the next few months, the *Canyon Current*, Kitselas Treaty Office's monthly newsletter, will look and feel more modern, and include more and improved content.

The newsletter will continue to cover some community events and issues, but will focus mainly on Kitselas treaty negotiations and treaty content.

While continuing to respect and honour the history of the Kitselas people, the newsletter's design will also be updated to represent how Kitselas is developing and growing as a nation, and the community includes lots of youth and young families.

Sarah Artis, a local communications consultant, is helping with the makeover.

She will be working closely with Kitselas' Communication Director, Holly Spencer and Kitselas Treaty Office staff.

Until now, Spencer, alone, has been responsible for producing the *Canyon Current*.

Starting next year, however, all Kitselas Treaty Office staff members will contribute stories and photos, and help distribute the paper to community members and other local areas for a wider audience.

"I'm really excited to be working with the Kitselas Treaty Office. The work the staff are doing is incredible and very cutting edge. They are learning a lot as they go and so am I. Together, I hope we can really help the Kitselas community understand what treaty is all about and what opportunities it presents to the Kitselas people," says Artis.

"Through treaty negotiations, Kitselas essentially has the chance to redefine itself as a community and nation. They have the chance to shape their future and finally



be in control of their own lands and laws. What an incredible time to be part of the community. I feel really lucky to be a witness to this historical time."

In addition to helping update the *Canyon Current*, Artis is helping treaty office staff with their overall communications strategy leading up to voting on a final agreement.

"From what I understand, talking to community members and getting them involved is more important than ever," says Artis. "For example, it's really important members take part in the working groups now being formed."

Kitselas community members are encouraged to submit stories, story ideas, community events and photos to be included in the revamped newsletter.



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Got something to share?

Send us your suggestions, info about community events, story ideas, photos, etc.

Want the newsletter emailed to you?

Email hspencer@kitselas.com. Call 250.635.8882 Ext. 242