

# The Klondike Sun

February 14, 2007 Online Edition

Dawson City, Yukon



Shane  
Wilson  
Photo

## Klondike Torch Relay Covers 24 kilometres and six hours

By Dan Davidson

It's been a long haul since April 2006, and there were a few confusing bumps along the way, but the Canada Winter Games Torch Relay finally made it to the Klondike on Saturday, January 28, 2007.

Pam Boyde, Torch Relay Chair, said the six hour event was the most ambitious of those staged in any community, involving as it did just about every means of recreational locomotion that the Yukon can boast.

Beginning at Henderson's Corner at 10:30 in the morning the torch bearers covered the 24 kilometers to the

river side boat landing area near the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre on Front Street by a variety of methods.

There was musher and dog sled, skiers, snow mobilers, ski-jorrrers, runners and finally, walkers, who took over at the Trans-Canada Trail Head on the dyke at the south end of town.

They reached Rock Creek about 11:45, made it to Bear Creek by 1:15, eased past the Dredge Pond Sub-division at 2:10, and picked up more walkers at the Tr'ondëk Subdivision (often known as C-4, after its land claims designation) at 2:45.

The entourage was a little bit late arriving at the trailhead, but the walk along the dyke at -26°C made up some lost time and the torch party arrived at the river just about on time, to bask in the warmth of a roaring bonfire organized by the Dawson City Fire Department as well as hot chocolate and hotdogs in an unheated wall tent. (Anyone need forklift pallets in the next little while is out of luck. They were all burned)

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in elders carried the torch the final leg, down the access trail, around the tent, and up to the bonfire, followed by Yúka, the Yukon version of the Canada Games Mascot. Mayor John Steins spoke of his appreciation of the goals behind the games, and informed a slightly skeptical crowd that he had been something of a jock in his high school days. Pam Boyde braved the cold to deliver a longer speech about the goals and objectives of the games, while artist and carver Shane Wilson captured much of the event on video.

Wilson was also studying his beautifully crafted torch stand, carved from an antler, which was, at this point, held together by some transparent duct tape, giving it a real northern flare. He said he was pretty sure he could repair it.

There was to have been a talk at the Robert Service School by Olympic and World Cup Athlete Deidra Dionne, the champion Aerial Skier. Dionne won bronze at the 2002 Olympics and overcame a training accident in September 2005 that injured her neck and nearly paralyzed her. She recovered and was able to participate in the 2006 Olympics.

That kind of determination will take you far, but it won't take you to Dawson when you have a flat between Whitehorse and Carmacks and discover that the car rental

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agency has sent you out equipped with only a city approved “donut” style spare tire. Dionne and her entourage were unable to get to Dawson.

That mishap aside, one would have to say that the Klondike Torch Relay was a great success, and something that will be remembered for sometime to come.

## Dawson City Has Window Pains

Story & Photos by Dan Davidson

There’s an impressive new house under construction at the corner of 8th Avenue and Harper Street. A young couple has made a major investment in what will undoubtedly be a splendid looking home once siding covers the startling pink insulation currently on view.

It seems, however, that their choice of windows, which form a large triangular pattern in what will be the living room of the house, have provoked a lot of discussion.



Certainly these windows have been the subject of several Planning Board meetings since the board first reviewed the couple’s application on September 12, 2006, and were recently chewed over for a considerable length of time at the January 23, 2007 Town Council meeting.

Windows are a perennial problem in Dawson City. The Historic Bylaw code, modeled on guidelines from Parks Canada, favours wooden windows with vertical sliders and mutton insertions to make the windows look like a pattern of smaller panes. Older homes in the town are mainly constructed this way, but numerous newer structures have skirted these guidelines.

When the Masonic Lodge was being renovated, the first set of windows put in place had to be removed and more appropriate ones installed.

After numerous retrofits and renovations, most of the Yukon Housing Corporation stock in town no longer has wooden vertical sliders.

When he was on the Trustee’s Advisory Committee, Bill Bowie, owner of Arctic Inland Resources, complained regularly about the awning style windows that went into the KAC School of Visual Arts during its transformation from the condemned Old Liquor Store to its present glory.

Dawson City Arts Society president, Greg Hakonson,

maintains that the windows are within the spirit of the Historic Bylaw, and that their original shape has been so altered by the decorative frameworks that they don’t look out of place.

The problem, as Planning Board chair Stephen Johnson has said, is that the board lacks a clear set of boilerplate historic guidelines that set out exactly what the acceptable parameters for buildings are. Such a guide has been in the works now for nearly a decade, but it is expensive to produce and funding acquired through long negotiations with senior levels of government has been lost after unexpected elections, or frozen during the 26 month trusteeship. So the board is behind the game and doesn’t have the tool it needs.

In the absence of such a tool, the board tends to rely on precedent, as in the matter of the SOVA windows and, again, in the matter of the windows on the 8th Avenue home.

The Dewarles arrived at the board meeting where their building plan was reviewed with ample proof that the windows they wanted to use already existed in town, and they do, at the 3rd Avenue and York Street three story log structure known as the 40 Mile Gold Building, a combined residence and gift shop.

There are rakehead and triangular windows under the projecting roof which overhangs a third floor balcony. They are barely noticeable in the shadow of the balcony and roof.

Not so the windows of the 8th Avenue home, which are a prominent feature of the front facade.

Nevertheless, the Planning Board felt that the design met the guidelines plus precedent threshold, and approved the building permit. The couple agreed to a number of “subject to” clauses, one of which was to modify the look of the windows by adding a divider to make it appear that the triangular sections were sitting on top of more standard windows.

The complaints began when the frame made it clear what the windows were going to look like. Town councillors report receiving numerous complaints about the board’s “lax decision”. Planning board members have had some heated discussions as well, but Johnson maintains that the couple has acted properly and done all that was required of them by their building permit.

When council met with the board on January 17, these windows featured in the minutes as a major topic of discussion. Mayor John Steins had earlier expressed his own frustration on his Mayor’s Blog (December 11, 2006), writing “Taking into account that triangular chalet windows are now considered historically accurate in Dawson maybe it’s time to voice your support for the preservation of our heritage before it’s too late.”

Comments made then and since make it pretty clear that council members feel the planning board made a mistake in approving the building plan. Johnson maintains that a mistake was made, but that it was made in 1995 and, in the absence of firm documentation and rules backed by the power of a bylaw, the current board was left with no choice.

After the Jan. 23 council meeting, Development Officer Mark Wickham was instructed to meet with the couple and

ask them to consider making further changes to their front windows. The board supported this resolution, but maintained that the couple had "acted in good faith" in everything they had done. Council recognized that the couple were unlikely to make any changes at this point in the construction without a financial incentive, and the town had no money to sweeten the request.

It was reported at the Feb. 6 council meeting that the approach had been made, but that no alterations would be made.

Until the board has a good set of materials and clear guidelines both for itself and people wishing to build here, these frustrations will continue.

## **Uffish Thoughts: "On the Road Again" Helped make the Distances Closer**

by Dan Davidson

So they've gone and cancelled "On the Road Again". Got to admit, it wasn't a show I watched a lot - partly because CBC tended to bounce it all over the schedule and partly because we mostly watch programs that we've taped in advance.

But it was a program I appreciated, because it was a program that lived up to the songs it borrowed for its themes. The one they ended it with was "I've been Everywhere" sung by Rostad and accompanied by a rapid fire montage of the many places he had been over the years the show was on the air.

One of the things you had to like about the show if you were from the North was that it came here regularly. When I interviewed Rostad in 1998 he had already been to the Yukon and Dawson City four times, and filmed a dozen or more short segments while he was here.

At that point it had been 19 years since he had set his music career to one side to take on a program called "Country Canada" with no idea it would later morph into "On the Road Again", which finished a 20 year run of its own last Thursday evening.

There was was no announcement of its going. Mere weeks ago CBC was doing promos of the show as if it was intended to go on forever. Its season was generally 13 shows, like a lot of CBC's homegrown productions, and apparently the cast and crew was told the end was near last October, before the first show of the season was broadcast.

Notice that they took great care to hide this from the rest of the country. CBC goes at the cancellations of its shows ("DaVinci's Inquest" and "This is Wonderland" last year) with all the determination of the Diefenbaker Tories making sure that no trace of the Avro Arrow would ever survive.

They've learned lessons from the days when they cancelled the "Don Messer Show" or when Peter Gzowski presided over the final days of "Morningside". Give folks enough advance warning and there might be a popular uprising, a campaign large enough to be embarrassing, one that might prove that the demographic the corporation is trying so hard to abandon still has a voice.

Without programs like Rostad's the only news coming

out of the territory in the next while will be politics and residential schools. Oh, yes the Canada Winter Games will make us a two week wonder, but after that it will be all about municipal finances and how the spectre of Expo 67 (they finally paid that off just last year, y'know) lingers on and on when it comes to public spectacles.

Rostad, on the other hand, told the nation about Old Crow's Edith Josie, a calligrapher from Whitehorse, a Yukon birder, golfing in Pangnirtung and a soapstone carver from Iqaluit. Those items were all part of his last five shows. Nobody else pays that much attention to the North unless there's an oil spill or part of Elsemere Island falls into the Arctic Ocean.

From elsewhere there were stories about bowlers, soup kitchens, rocking chairs, soapbox cars made from old cedar logs, a newspaper written by homeless people, puppets, and the restoration of an old train station.

These things don't make the news, unless as quirky little items in a 30 second spot after all the serious stuff has been related and the advertisers have had their way with us.

Back in 1998 Rostad managed to time his show to take in the Dawson City Music Festival, catch Tom Byrne's much loved recitations of Robert Service's poetry, play a caribou antler duet with Bernie Phillips and sample the dubious joys of the Sourtoe Cocktail.

"I don't know that we've been here any more than we've been anywhere else," he told me over coffee in the common room of the Aurora Inn, "but the sense is that we have been. The north is so tight that if you're in Dawson you talk to Whitehorse in the same breath as if it were a community just five minutes away. Whereas in Ontario Toronto's over there, Ottawa's over here and the two are forever miles apart."

That was as good a way as any to describe "On the Road Again", a program that collapsed the miles at the same time as it gave you a sense of the distance.

We don't have enough programs that do that, and it's always a shame to lose another one.

Wayne Rostad clowns around on Fifth Avenue.

Photo by Dan Davidson



## Letter: Thanks from On the Road Again

Hi Dan,

I never met you, but your kind and thoughtful words brought tears to my eyes. I'd been with "On The Road Again" for all of its twenty years, and yes, I did get up North many times. I was lucky to get there - - privileged is maybe another word - - but it was a privilege we always wanted to share.

To let other Canadians know what it was that inspired us about the people we met and the places we visited. To let them know that the ingenuity and beauty and whatever-else-it-was about people in the North (and east and west) was something that might not make the evening news, as you say, but it was something still worth telling, and worth hearing about and seeing.

I'm not going to go on. You said it much better than I ever could. The only reason I'm saying anything at all is to let you know how much your note means to the four of us who were still around for the end.

All the best,  
Malcolm Hamilton  
ex-Exec. Prod/producer  
On The Road Again

## DCAS Members Showcase their Talent

By Dan Davidson

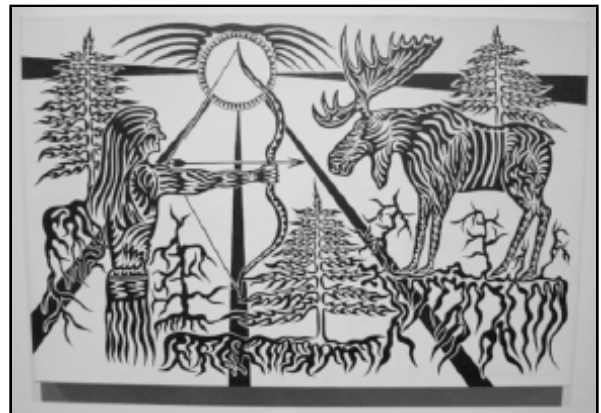
When Mike Yuhasz raised a glass of wine to toast the assemblage gathered for the 2007 Members' Exhibition at the ODD Gallery on February 1, he was toasting not only the even but most of the people who had contributed to it. For this annual exhibit is where the members of the Dawson City Arts Society (DCAS) take a little time out from welcoming Outside artists and spend a month showing off their own skills and patting themselves on the back just a little.

Not that the guest exhibit openings aren't well attended, but this one's just a bit special, showcasing as it does the range of talent available in the community, along with contributions from folk who have moved on but still maintain their DCAS memberships.

Or, as Yuhasz put it, "The artists' talent and the diversity of their practice is truly impressive, inspiring, and indicative of the cultural wealth of this exciting organization and community."

The range? There are painting in oils, acrylics, and water colours; photographs, both from film and from digital imagery; computer images; digital video; stained glass; mixed media in a variety of combinations; prints; textile art; polymer clay on board; woodblock prints; and fabric art.

In all, twenty-four members lent their talents to this exhibition, which will be on display through the Yukon Quest season and most of the trek Over the Top, closing on March 10.



## An Evening with the Bards named Robert

Story & Photos by Dan Davidson

January happens to contain the birthdays of two poets named Robert so in 1999 the Dawson Community Library Board decided that, for the sake of economy, there would be a joint celebration of the bards, henceforth to be known as the Double Bob Bash.

This year the event returned to the St. Mary's Catholic Church schoolroom where it began as about two dozen lovers of poetry and good food gathered on January 27 to commemorate the births of Robert Burns and Robert Service.

It's hard to say just what the main event of this evening

would be. There was a slightly Frenchified Haggis, prepared by Suzanne Saito and marched about the room by Jim Taggart and Stephen Johnson, led by fiddler Simon Crelli and followed by those assembled for the meal.

Johnson then uttered the address, the fearsome verses of "To a Haggis", which begins:

"Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,  
Great chieftain o the puddin'-race!  
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,  
Painch, tripe, or thairm:  
Weel are ye wordy of a grace  
As lang's my arm."

It goes on like that for anither - uhm - another seven verses, and makes a bit more sense if you cheat and read the translation:

"Fair is your honest happy face  
Great chieftain of the pudding race  
Above them all you take your place  
Stomach, tripe or guts  
Well are you worthy of a grace  
As long as my arm."

Aside from the main course, the rest of the meal was potluck and was, as a transplanted Brit noted, probably the only meal associated with Robbie Burns anywhere in Canada where scotch was not on the menu.

Celtic tunes made up the background music, some on CD and some provided by Crelli on fiddle and Aaron Bernie on guitar.

Then came the readings, at which Service won hands down. Barb Hanulik provided a rearranged version of "The Spell of the Yukon". Jack Fraser recited Burns' "My Heart's in the Highlands" and one of his own poems. Current Berton House writer-in-residence Lisa Pasold read "The Men that Don't Fit in". School Librarian Betty Davidson read "The Ballad of Blasphemous Bill" and "Bessie's Boil" by request. Simon Crelli read "Casey's Goat". Karen MaKay presented



"The Call of the Wild" while your humble reporter read "Comfort" and a couple of his own poems, written in a similar style. All said, it was a fine evening, with the cleaning up done by the many hands that make such work light.

## Un-Valentines Day

By Sarah Winton

Valentines day again eh? Humph. Big hearts and candy start appearing in store windows, people start making their plans for the big day. Bah-humbug, who needs it? The day that celebrates sweethearts, couples get to proclaim and celebrate their love for one another. How nice. What about those of us who fall into the dreaded 'single' category?

Well, let me tell you, there are many fantastic things about being single. Firstly, you can do whatever you want whenever you want. You can lie around on the couch in your underwear and eat the whole bag of potato chips, you can get together with friends without having to check with any one or drag any one along. You can let the house get as messy as you want, you can clean the house until it sparkles and know that no one else is going to mess it up. You can go to bed whenever you want and get up whenever you want. You can eat whenever and whatever you want. You can put off shaving whatever you normally shave. You can flirt as much as you want and you can check people out without making your partner feel insecure and needy. You can relax and have a quiet night at home whenever you feel the need. You live by your schedule and rules and don't have to accommodate any one else.

*Tips for getting through the day of sickly smiles and*

*“awww.... isn't that sweet”? Here are a few:*

1. Do something nice for yourself. Cook your favourite meal, do a favourite activity.
2. Get together with other single friends and have a night out or a night in.
3. Treat yourself. Flowers and chocolates are nice gifts for your single friends as well.
4. Make a list of all the things you love about being single.
5. Make a list of your ex-partners and remind yourself of all the things that bothered you about them.
6. Have a good session with friends and complain about the couples you know.
7. Make Valentines Day into “I’m single and fabulous Day.”
8. Ignore it completely.

Whatever you choose to do, just make sure you make this day into your own. So, happy Un-Valentines Day.

## **Dawson Novice Hockey Team Puts Up Good Fight at Yukon Tournament**

By Mark Ritchie, Haines Junction Minor Hockey Association

The Dawson City Arctic Inland Resources Novice Hockey team put up an excellent effort at the recent Yukon Spirit of 2010 Hockey Tournament and ended up in seventh place. Hosted by the Haines Junction Minor Hockey Association on February 2-4, this annual celebration of minor hockey in the Yukon saw eight teams vie for the coveted prize. For the second year in a row, a team of seven and eight year olds from Juneau, Alaska took home the Gold Medal. Co-sponsored by the Yukon Amateur Hockey Association and the Vancouver 2010 Olympics Organizing Committee, the tournament hosted over 110 players from all over the Yukon as well as Juneau. Besides the team from the Klondike, four teams came from Whitehorse, one from Juneau, one from the host community and a Southeast Yukon team consisting of players from Faro, Ross River, Teslin and Watson Lake.

The Novice tournament kicked off Friday afternoon with four round robin games, followed by eight round robin games on Saturday. Organizers didn't think that the kids should have all the fun over the weekend, so they offered a parents versus parents games on each day. The round robin portion of the tournament ended just before the banquet when the play-off standings were announced. In the A pool, Dawson placed fourth, then Southeast Yukon in third, Yukon Appliance in second and Klondike Motors in first. In the B pool, Haines Junction placed fourth, Pizza Hut third, Juneau second and Wal-Mart first. Coached by Mike Woods and Louise Blanchard, the team was looking forward to their playoff match up the next morning against the Haines Junction Huskies.

Sunday brought the teams together for the playoff round of the tournament, with each team guaranteed at least one playoff game. Dawson easily defeated the host community 6-2 with numerous Klondike players sharing in the goal

scoring and assists. In the end, Juneau took home the gold medal in an 8-0 victory over Walmart, who bravely accepted their silver medals after the final game. In an earlier close and exciting game for the bronze medal, Klondike Motors edged out rival Yukon Appliance 3-2. Pizza Hut ended the tournament in fifth place, Southeast Yukon in sixth, Dawson in seventh and the host community eighth. Thanks to all the generous sponsors, every player went home with a Spirit of 2010 souvenir puck, a certificate of participation, a medal and a prize.

This is the fifth annual “Spirit of 2010” Tournament presented by the Province of British Columbia, the Vancouver Canucks, 2010 Legacies Now and B.C. Amateur Hockey Association. Over 42,000 minor hockey players in 190 British Columbia and Yukon communities are expected to play in almost 150 Spirit of 2010 hockey tournaments this spring. Based on the smiles, sweat and scoring seen in Haines Junction this past weekend, everyone agrees that the spirit of hockey is alive and well in the North.

## **Tourism Scholarship Celebrates Dawson City Legend**

The Giovanni Castellarin Scholarship Fund (GCSF) has been awarded to two aspiring Yukon tourism advocates. The Tourism Industry Association of Yukon (TIA Yukon) and the Klondike Visitor's Association (KVA) are very pleased to award a \$1,000 scholarship each to:

Kelly Lynn Whitney-Squire, who is attending her second year in Tourism Management at Malaspina University College. Kelly Lynn is a resident of Whitehorse and is excited to return to the Yukon to work in the tourism industry and participate in increasing tourism development.

Nicolas Herdes, who is attending his first year in the Wilderness Leadership Certificate Program at Capilano College. Nicolas is a resident of Whitehorse and is looking forward to developing his chosen career and also working with local youths through one of Yukon's summer camps.

The Giovanni Castellarin Fund was first proposed in 2002 in memory of late Giovanni Castellarin, a successful hotel operator in Dawson City and a champion of tourism for the Klondike and the Yukon. In May 2005, the Klondike Visitor's Association (KVA) proposed to join TIA Yukon, matching the TIA Yukon Fund to total \$2,000 or two \$1,000 scholarships.

This funding is intended to assist Yukoners (youth and mature) who are entering into post-secondary education in the field of tourism or related studies. The eligibility criteria include being a Yukon resident, being enrolled in full-time tourism studies and submitting a 500 word essay on why the applicant feels they are the most suitable recipients of these funds.

The scholarship fund is included in the Yukon Government Department of Educations Scholarship Funds and Bursaries directory. We invite all Yukon residents who are enrolled in full-time studies related to the tourism field to submit their applications for next year.

## Smokers must Rise to the Occasion at Diamond Tooth Gerties

by Dan Davidson

From last week on, there will be two classes of patrons at Diamond Tooth Gerties: smokers and nonsmokers.

The nonsmokers now have the main floor of the building, where most of the action takes place, to themselves, while the smokers have been banished - er, invited - to mount the stairs to the balcony which surrounds the back half of the hall and indulge themselves up there, closer to the building's smoke eaters.

"It was the right thing to do," said casino manager Paul McDonough, who confirmed the news buzzing around the town in a brief interview on February 9.

The gambling hall has been the subject of some discussion on the City of Dawson.com forum over the last month. Some people have taken note of the fact that the hall is actually owned by the City of Dawson, which has had a nonsmoking policy in all its buildings for some time now.

The question then, became, why is there smoking allowed in Gerties?

The answer lay in the relationship between the town and the Klondike Visitors Association, which runs the casino, maintains the building, and also operates a bar there, as well as the floor show and the various gambling activities.

Since the town's more wide ranging smoking bylaw simply prohibits lighting up in places where minors might be permitted to enter, and since the liquor licence at Gerties takes care of that requirement, the casino has operated under different rules than other town owned properties.

That left aside the question of worker safety, which has been raised in many other jurisdictions as a reason to ban smoking in the workplace.

Since Dawson City passed its groundbreaking smoking bylaw in June 2002, that ground has been ploughed, seeded and cultivated by just about every other jurisdiction in the country. The town is now way behind the curve in terms of tolerating smoking in public places. Most major Canadian cities have severely limited the number of acceptable smoking venues, and Paris, France, made international headlines lately when it banned smoking in airports, railway stations, hospitals, schools, shops and offices. Restaurants and bars there will have to comply by this December.

Mayor John Steins has indicated that council here will be discussing amendments and extensions to the current bylaw, perhaps as early as this spring.

Taking all that into account, it is perhaps less surprising that the KVA has taken this step now, rather than waiting.



## Exams Interrupted by Power Outage

By Dan Davidson

Students writing computer based examinations in English 10 and Social Studies 11 at the Robert Service School had a rude shock when the power went down at 11:06 Monday morning.

Fortunately the examination website saved and stored the answers to each question as they were completed and the students moved to the next one, so only the answer they were working on was lost when they were able to log back in about 10 minutes later.

Yukon Energy spokesperson Janet Patterson said the problem originated in Mayo this time.

"The power went off to Dawson City at 11:06 this morning because of a problem with the governor in one of the Mayo hydro units. A governor controls the speed at which the generator runs.

"No one outside of Dawson was affected. Diesel kicked in about 10 minutes later."

Patterson added that a technician from Whitehorse had been dispatched to determine what the problem was with the governor and to repair it.

"Dawson will remain on diesel until then," Patterson said.

This was the fifth time the Mayo-Dawson transmission line has gone down since January 10.

## Yukon Economic Development Supports Great River Journey

WHITEHORSE (February 7, 2007) - Economic Development Minister Jim Kenyon today announced funding support for Great River Journey Inc., a new Yukon high-end destination tourism business.

“Great River Journey draws on Yukon’s breathtaking wilderness with a business model that works in partnership with Yukon First Nations,” Kenyon said. “This business builds on Yukon’s strategic advantages- its people, cultures and geography- and it is an excellent example of diversified economic development.”

The Department of Economic Development is providing \$500,000 funding support to Great River Journey under its Strategic Industries Development Fund. This fund helps identify and assist the development of industries and strategic projects in Yukon that have the potential to provide broad-based economic benefits.

Great River Journey Inc. will provide unique eight-day river trips on the Yukon River, from Whitehorse to Dawson City. Canadian and international guests will travel in small groups on a custom-made riverboat with accommodation in small, remotely situated lodge facilities along the river. The trip will offer first-class comforts within Yukon’s cultural and natural history context.

“Developing a business like Great River Journey requires substantial business planning and due diligence,” George Asquith, president of Great River Journey Inc. said. “I am grateful for the support of the Department of Economic Development to help develop a business that will provide significant benefits to Yukon’s economy.”

The new tourism business is expected to create more than 30 full-time and seasonal positions over five years, across Yukon, and more than \$5 million in benefits to First Nation communities.

Great River Journey Inc. is a jointly-owned partnership between private sector investors and FNIC Development Corporation. FNIC Development Corporation is a consortium of four Yukon First Nations: Ta’an Kwäch’än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in and Selkirk First Nation.

Implementation costs exceeding \$7.5 million have already been spent or are budgeted, in 2007, for development costs, facilities construction, marketing provisioning, staffing, training and familiarization tours. The four Yukon First Nations have invested \$2 million together through the FNIC Development Corporation. Private sector partners invested \$3.4 million through Great Northern Journeys Inc, while Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provided \$1 million to FNIC Development Corporation to assist the First Nations with their investment, and a further \$750,000 in direct project support to Great River Journey Inc.

The Department of Economic Development works with the Yukon business community, First Nations and other governments to support business development, trade and investment opportunities, and partnerships for the development of the Yukon economy.

For more information on Great River Journey Inc. go to: [www.greatriverjourney.com](http://www.greatriverjourney.com).

## SOVA continues to Build Towards its First Year Program

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

There may be unfinished business at the KIAC School of Visual Arts, but not as much as one might think from seeing the unfinished north wall of the building. There’s a political purpose behind that wall, as Greg Hakonson has explained a number of times. That wall is supposed to be shared with a proposed new campus for Yukon College, which it is hoped will share facilities and mechanical systems with the renovated territorial liquor store on Fifth Avenue.

Putting painted siding on that wall would mean that that plan was further off than Hakonson or any of the members of the Dawson City Arts Society (DCAS) are prepared to admit.

Aside from that, says Dawson Yukon Campus coordinator Eldo Enns, things are moving on at quite a pace.

One indication is the name itself, which had not been chosen last fall when the building opened. It piggybacks on the national and international success story that is DCAS and its program arm, the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture.

Arts for Employment, Student Art Enrichment, the Short Film Festival, the Artist’s Residency Program, the Yukon Riverside Arts Festival (YRAF) and a variety of shorter term programs in dance, music and photography, just to name a few things, have expanded the reputation of this program far beyond the Yukon.

SOVA will officially open for business during this coming August’s YRAF week and will begin the first session of its foundation year program with twenty students.

Enns says that applications are currently coming in from





around the Yukon and abroad, and the organizers are currently arranging things like potential student residency solutions with some of the hotels and B&B establishments around town.

Recruiting of staff is underway, with ads placed looking for two professors, one full time teaching and the other with part time teaching, administrative and development duties.

Sponsored by a consortium of KIAC, Yukon College and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in first nation, SOVA has already established articulation agreements with a number of fine arts colleges nationwide, and students who leave here with good standing after the foundation year will be able to transfer into programs with no loss of credits. Further down the road may come a two year diploma program.

The three founding organizations have been meeting to establish governance protocols for SOVA, which is an institution not quite like anything else out there at the moment and those promoting it intend to make the most of this allure as well as the spell of the Yukon to attract students and staff and build a national reputation.



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## My Strange Thermometer

by Dan Davidson

*Moisture dripping from my chimney  
forms a frozen crown;  
extrudes a sceptre to my roof  
to lean its head upon.*

*Looks so strange against the sky  
milky white on blue or grey,  
Looks so fragile in the wind  
you wonder it can stay.*

*Winter's chilly decoration sends a signal clear,  
forming when the days are short  
when air is sharp and light is dear.*

*And when the weather warms again  
of that it offers proof.  
It melts, lets go its hold and  
thumps upon the roof.*

February 9, 2007

