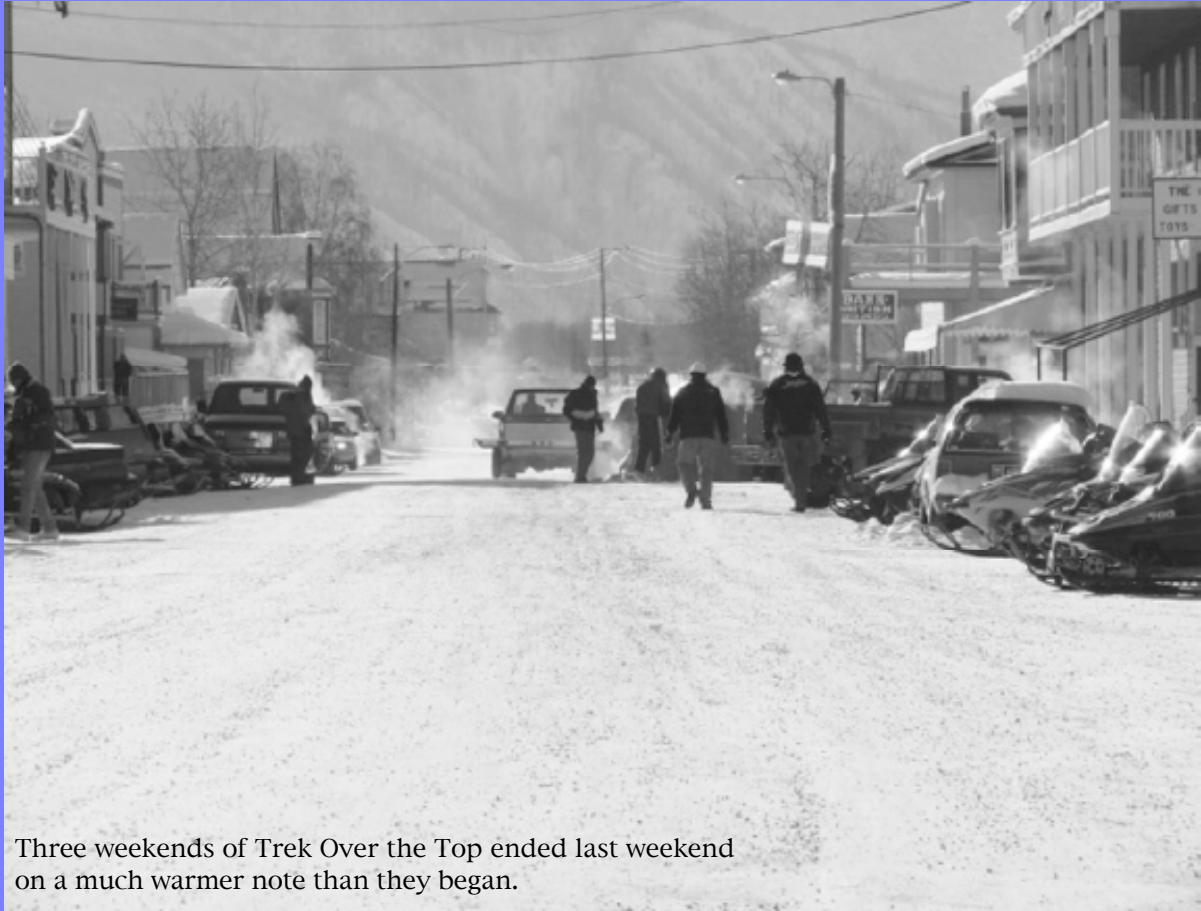


The Klondike Sun

March 14, 2007 Online Edition

Dawson City, Yukon



Three weekends of Trek Over the Top ended last weekend on a much warmer note than they began.

Smoking Resolution For AYC Delayed Yet Again

by Dan Davidson

Mayor John Steins was visibly frustrated on March 6 as his attempts to prepare an anti-smoking resolution for the Association of Yukon Communities once again foundered on the rocks of a minimal town council quorum.

For the second time in a month, council was down to three of five members at the table. This is a quorum, and the business of the town needs only that to be carried out, but a bare majority was not enough to persuade councillors Diana Andrew and Adam Morrison to vote in favor of Steins' proposed resolution.

The same thing happened during the last meeting in February, with councillors Ashley Doiron and Morrison

voting to postpone the resolution until March.

Steins explained that the purpose of the resolution was not to immediately change the rules for smoking in Dawson, but to encourage the Yukon government to come up with territory-wide smoking policy. Steins told the council he has been encouraged in this initiative by Mayor Bev Buckway of Whitehorse.

If and when the Dawson resolution is passed by town council, it will be taken to the annual general meeting of the Association of Yukon Communities, which will be held here in May. It may or may not be adopted by that group, since most communities other than Whitehorse and Dawson do not currently have bylaws restricting where people can and cannot smoke.

In its present form the resolution has a number of "whereas" clauses describing the harmful effects of second hand smoke, and sums them all up with the statement that "it is desirable for the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of Yukon to prohibit and regulate smoking, or both."

If adopted by AYC, the resolution would appeal to the Yukon Territorial Government "to adopt legislation to promote a smoke-free Yukon."

Andrew said she felt this was an issue that people were very passionate about and that the entire council should be present for a vote on the resolution.

Steins countered that there was a quorum at the meeting and that other business had been carried out that night already.

Morrison indicated that he would have to support Andrew's motion to postpone consideration of the matter for another meeting.

There was considerable debate on the issue, but the result of the vote was clear. The problem that raises is that next council meeting will be the last one at which the resolution could be passed in order to be on the AYC agenda.

Some members of the gallery indicated their support for the motion during the question period. Shelly Brown wanted to know what would become of the initiative and felt that a vote should have been taken and that all councillors should have been present.

Steins defended the attendance record of his council, indicating that, barring vacations and work related commitments, most of them have been to most of the public meetings, not to mention the many other meetings that the public doesn't see.

On the other hand he repeated his feeling that quorum was quorum and it ought to have been enough to pass the resolution. That said, he supported the process of debate and the outcome of the vote that was taken that evening.

"Although I'm disappointed in the outcome I do have to defend the right of councillors to exercise their conscience. That's the way it is. That's how it works."

Community Justice Closes its Doors in Dawson

By Dan Davidson

In the absence of any financial assurances from either the territorial or federal governments the Dawson City Community Group Conferencing Society has reached the conclusion that it must wind up its affairs in the town and cease to exist at the end of this month.

The society, which has been working to promote alternative justice solutions for youth and adults in Dawson since 1998, has spent all of that time scraping by on grants from various agencies at both levels of government. It is no exaggeration to say that the society usually had to spend money it did not have in order to access grant funds, and had to rely on the understanding of its creditors during periodic cash flow crises.

In January of this year the society issued a warning that it

would probably have to dissolve. The trigger for this was the federal government's ambivalence about continuing the funding for the Aboriginal Justice Strategy, which was a key source of money for alternative justice initiatives across the country.

The history of these organizations is that their efforts have been much lauded nationwide and encouraged by both senior levels of government. Yet, while they were included as one of the approved means of dealing with youth criminal justice in the most recent revision of the the federal statute, there has yet to be devised any stable means of fusing their activities.

In late February the DCCGCS board met with Leslie Carberry, an official of the territorial Dept. of Justice. While the territorial government had earlier issued a statement indicating that it would find some funds for organizations in the Yukon, there was nothing to report at that meeting.

"Carberry was unable to give us any assurances that there would be any upcoming financial support from the territorial government," said DCCGCS coordinator Corrine Gaudet.

The board was told that one option was to become a totally volunteer service.

It had begun that way in 1998, Gaudet explained as "a non-profit organization committed to using alternatives solutions for dispute resolution."

"Youth and adults, charged with a crime, who were willing to accept responsibility for their actions, were often referred to this organization for Conferencing, in which victim and offenders participated along with their supporters to work out reconciliation and restitution for the offence. Victims were given a voice that was not always possible through the regular court system and offenders saw first hand the effect their offense had had on other people."

Within a year or two it was clear someone was needed part time to promote and coordinate conferences, organize training and deal with the business of the organization.

"The services of the ... Society were also used for dispute resolution between members of community." Gaudet said.

"In the past year, our society has provided conflict resolution between students at Robert Service School and has provided educational sessions for entire classes within the school, in areas of bullying, self esteem and assertiveness training."

In a climate where such NGOs have been encouraged to take on more and more responsibilities and have actually been identified as a part of the justice process, stepping back to total volunteer status seemed a poor strategy. It was only a year ago that the territorial government was encouraging the board to expand its mandate and become a Community Justice Society. Once again, there was no funding attached to this request.

During the meeting with Carberry, the society was informed that the members of another board in the territory had taken out a bank loan to cover their immediate cash flow needs.

Neither of these alternatives were palatable to the

Dawson board.

"We regret the necessity to withdraw our services from Dawson City at a time when so much was being accomplished," said society president Betty Davidson.

"So many new initiatives were beginning in Dawson City. More referrals were coming from the Crown, the RCMP, and the school.

"The institution of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, which recommended that alternative justice programs be used to deal with youth activities, was beginning to change the climate of our justice system from punishment to reconciliation and restitution that allowed all members of society a chance to grow and change."

Gaudet said, "We are proud that during our time of operations, many young people and adults were given a second chance and have gone on to become strong members of our community."

"We are not taking on any new cases and current cases will be returned to the RCMP and the Crown as of March 31st, 2007."

The Chamber of Commerce needs your help

We have hired independent consultants to take us through the strategic planning process.

As an important first step, they will be conducting two surveys directed at Dawson City Business License holders, one for Chamber members and the other for non-members.

We hope to interview, in-person, all current Chamber members as well as 25% of non-members. Interviews should take approximately 20-30 minutes. The remaining 75% of non-members will be receiving their survey via mail and will be asked to return their completed surveys in a postage paid envelope, which will be enclosed with their survey, as soon as possible.

We ask for your cooperation in participating in the survey. Your feedback is essential if we are to strengthen and renew the collective voice of the Chamber of Commerce in Dawson City.

We have hired Lori Crozier to manage this project. She is responsible for creating the surveys, for supervising the Research Assistant who will conduct the in-person surveys, for conducting two focus groups and for analyzing all of the findings and writing the Preliminary Research Report and the Final Research Report and Evaluation Report.

We have hired Deborah McIntosh as the project Research Assistant. Deborah will be contacting everyone in the near future to set up appointments regarding the in-person surveys and will be responsible for conducting the surveys. Deborah has recently relocated from Vancouver and we would like you to join with us in welcoming her to Dawson.

Once the surveys have all been completed and the findings analyzed, a Preliminary Research Report will be written which will provide the basis for the next stage, the actual strategic planning process. Lee and Susan Titterington have been hired to work closely with our Board of Directors to carry out this process.

We look forward to receiving your all-important

feedback. Only the Primary Researcher and the Research Assistant will be privy to individual responses. Individual respondents and their responses will in no way be identified in the presentation of the results and are, therefore, confidential.

The entire project is intended to wrap up by the end of June. The results of this work will be presented at a General Membership Meeting following completion of the project.

This project has been made possible through the generous support of the Yukon Government, Community Development Fund.

Fires destroy two Dawson homes

By Matthew Grant

Whitehorse Star, Feb. 26, 2007

Two homes were destroyed in separate fires in Dawson City over the weekend of February 24-25. One of the home owners does not have fire insurance.

Dawson City fire chief Jim Regimbal said in an interview this morning firefighters were called out on Friday to respond to a downtown fire. They were summoned again on Sunday to assist Klondike Valley volunteer firefighters with a blaze in the Henderson subdivision.

The downtown fire, Regimbal said, was on Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation property and could not be saved.

"It was on Sixth Avenue on Friday at about 9:30 in the evening," he said.



"(The cause) was a plug-in for a block heater. I determined that on Saturday."

The second fire in the Henderson subdivision started before noon Sunday and left firefighters battling the blaze in searing cold for several hours.

No one was injured, he said.

"We got a call at around 11:30 a.m. Sunday to assist the Klondike crews," he said

"We spent about five hours fighting the blaze. The fire appears to have started in the rafters area and in the attic."

"That house will definitely be a write-off, that's for sure. With that one, there was definitely no insurance," Regimbal said.

He said he was still trying to determine the cause of the Henderson fire.

Regimbal said it's important for people to remember to check things like plugs and to make sure their fire detectors are in proper working order.

The fires were the latest in a spate of blazes around the territory.

A home on Birch Street in Whitehorse was damaged after fire broke out in its attic last Thursday (Feb. 22) morning.

Also last Thursday morning, fire destroyed the post office, TD-Canada Trust bank and a tire shop in Pelly Crossing. A 15-year-old male has been charged with arson in connection with that fire.

Uffish Thoughts: Life at the End of the Road

By Dan Davidson

As I pondered the sign on the Post Office door, which announced that, once again, there was no mail service due to the cold weather, I realized that this is the time of the year where we are at the end of a very long road, and that a lot of the things we take for granted depend on other people being able to travel that road - or to bridge the gap by some other means.

The subject came up at the annual general meeting of the Klondike Visitors Association, and has been a regular topic at the chamber of commerce as well.

It's just not as easy to get to Dawson City as it used to be.

Once upon a time we were part of a scheduled bus route, but that died and was replaced by a home grown alternative, Dawson City Courier. In turn, that fell victim to loss of the mail hauling contract, which underpinned the rest of the operation so that it could survive rising gasoline prices and the high overhead involved in hauling passengers.

The Courier disappeared a day at a time and finally vanished altogether about a year ago.

A similar fate seems to be overtaking Air North, which used to fly in and out of here six days a week. Then the weekend vanished, and now we're down to Monday - Wednesday - Friday service. Part of the problem was the elimination of the Fairbanks portion of the route. There was a press release about that, but it seems Tuesday and Thursday disappeared without much fanfare.

The air access cutbacks are not a good thing, but it seems that the land access is more critical. There is a general feeling that one of the reasons for the shortage of summer workers here last summer was the lack of any means to get here short of hitchhiking.

It's probably true that the demise of Tent City - the low rent summer tenting ground in West Dawson - may have been a factor in this worker shortage, which began the year the tenting area was closed and got worse the next year, when the word of mouth negative advertising got around.

But it's also true that a lot of the tenter/workers came and went on the bus, were not among the affluent lucky ones who had their own wheels.

It's not just Dawson that's affected by the lack of a bus service any way. The Courier and the old Greyline service used to stop at Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Stewart Crossing as well, providing some sort of regular access to points north of Whitehorse. Now there's nothing.

Governments have been willing to subsidize all manner of projects for providing power and highway access to mining prospects along the Klondike Highway, but no thought seems to have been given to subsidizing scheduled highway transportation on that same route.

In the winter there's really no alternative at all. The CityofDawson.com forum has a subsection called Dawson Rides, which encourages people to share rides. I had passengers both ways on my last expedition to the city, but it's hardly a secure and scheduled means of transport. Hitchhiking in the winter, at the temperatures we've been enjoying lately, could result in a whole new series of roadside exhibits - at least until spring thaw.

The greatest amount of travel is in the summer any way and, while it may be a lot safer, it's no less inconvenient. It's just too bad when it's come to a situation where the easiest way for anyone without their own wheels to get to Dawson City in the summer is to start by building a raft in Whitehorse.

Memories of Grandmother and Visions of Vegas Highlight Pasold's Reading

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

Lisa Pasold's grandmother died when she was 16, so she didn't live to see her granddaughter turn her life into a book of poems. Weave (Frontenac House Ltd., 2004) was the main item on the menu at Pasold's public reading in the Dawson Community Library on a recent frigid (-40) Tuesday evening.

"I based it on stories I heard when I was a child," the current Berton House writer in residence told her small but appreciative audience.

"These things were told to me. It was a lot of fun writing in her voice."

Pasold's grandmother was from what is now the Czech Republic, the part called Bohemia.

"She was consistently irritated that people thought bohemia was a state of mind. No - it's a place."

In her grandmother's voice, Pasold wrote of a life which did not go according to the book (which book?), which left her in Toronto with an accent some found strange and dreams of the Old Country, which became even more difficult as the name of her homeland kept changing.

Grandmother trimmed herself to her new land, cutting six of her given first names ("just an invitation to schizophrenia to give a girl seven first names"), leaving one.

What she kept were memories of places and people, many of whom disappeared, some because of the Russians, some who vanished earlier - memories of a favorite candy store which burned and is now a parking lot.

One special poem, "Paper Trails" dealt imaginatively

with how the family smuggled money out of the country hidden inside wrapped spools of yarn. The yarn also becomes the story that is told to those receiving the spools, so that they know where to look for the paper currency.

“My grandfather gave this a copy of this poem to my great uncle, and my great uncle actually phoned my mother and said ‘How did she find out about that story?’ and my mother said, ‘Well. I don’t know.’ and my great uncle said, ‘Because it’s true.’

“It pleased me that I had actually gotten my sources right.”

In a multilingual pun, it turns out that the paper tubes used to avoid the police searches are called cops in Czech.

Her second reading of the evening was a short extract from a novel, *Rats of Las Vegas*, which she completed last fall out in the French countryside and which “in theory, my agent is placing for me somewhere.”

The story concerns a card dealer in Las Vegas who is visited by a former lover and bets him (just to get rid of him, we think) that she can teach his newly acquired monkey to



play Blackjack in 21 days.

The basic idea for the novel was inspired by a trip to Vegas some years back, when she was stage managing a show of Bremner Duthie’s (her husband), during one of their summers on the Fringe theatre circuit.

For a taste of what that was like and a sample of Pasold’s reporting see “Road show heads for Fringe” in the September 8, 2005 edition of the *Georgia Strait* (<http://www.straight.com/node/9412>).

The evening ended with some lively discussion about local writers and Pasold’s impressions of living at Berton House, where she has been since early January.

Neither Snow, nor Rain, nor Heat - but perhaps Cold Weather

By Dan Davidson

After a week in the -40 to -45 range, even the hearty mail

service feels inclined to pack it in for a bit - or at least until it gets a little warmer. This sign was displayed on the Canada Post office in Dawson City on Saturday afternoon.

Legend has it that the motto of the American postal service, “Neither

snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds”, is based on an original from Herodotus (484?-425? BCE) in which the Greek “Father of History” gave this account of a courier service then in existence in Persia (present day Iran).

“It is said that as many days as there are in the whole journey, so many are the men and horses that stand along the road, each horse and man at the interval of a day’s journey; and these are stayed neither by snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness from accomplishing their appointed course with all speed.” (Bartleby’s Quotations - Bartleby.com)

Clearly those ancient messengers did not have to face the coldest part of a Yukon winter.

Yukon Energy Trips Dawson by Accident

By Dan Davidson

Power went out in Dawson City once again on Tuesday, February 27, but this time it wasn’t the wind or the cold (-39° C at the time) that tripped the relay. It was simple human error, the result of a system check.

The generating station is being automated so that it can be monitored and controlled from Whitehorse on a 7 day, 24 hour basis, according to Guy Morgan, Lead Hand of the System Control Centre for Yukon Energy.

There’s been a lot of new wiring and control systems being installed at the Fifth Avenue plant.

“Through the automation project what we’ve got to do is test every point.”

Every part of the project has to be run through the system control and data acquisition (or SCADA) system in Whitehorse.

“During the work they were doing yesterday, they tripped ... feeder 2 off.”

This was at 5:22 in the early evening. Power was restored



at 5:36 by a combination of diesel and hydro. Morgan said on Wednesday.

Morgan referred to the incident as being the result of a “false protection trip”, meaning that the actions at this end of the line caused a circuit to react as if something had actually gone wrong along the line when, in fact, it had not.

The intention of the project is not to replace staff in Dawson, but to give Yukon Energy more precise control over what happens here and a better way of diagnosing what may have gone wrong when something does.

“What we’ve had ... is that when you guys had an outage we had to wait until the crew showed up, got into the plant to tell us what was going on before we could act on restoration.”

The SCADA grid allows for a quicker response.

Although there is no direct physical connection as yet between the Mayo-Dawson transmission line and the rest of the Whitehorse-Aishik-Faro grid, the central office will be able to monitor things here via YTG’s territory wide government internet system.

Meantime, the corporation’s track record for service was greatly improved in February, with only one outage during the month as compared to five in January.

Mini Canada Winter Games

R.S.S. students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 participated in a mini version of the Canada Winter Games during the week Feb.19-22. The games were organized and sponsored by the City of Dawson, Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, RPAY and Robert Service School. Thank you to Cathie Findlay-Brook, Sara Hooyenga, Chris Clarke, Sue Dragoman and Jessica Dewar for organizing the event! Huge thank you also to Ryan Hooyenga who created the Torch Relay video which was played at the Opening Ceremonies, to our fabulous volunteers Akio Saito, Laurie McCrory, Michael Mason and Charles Eschelman who led the activities, and to Clair Dragoman and Axel Nordling who put together the DVD slide show for the Closing Ceremonies! All the student participants received a ribbon generously donated by Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, and a certificate and tattoo courtesy of the Canada Winter Games.

The students were divided into multi-age teams representing provinces and territories from across Canada.



The final awards were given as follows:

Quebec – Most Joyful, Saskatchewan – Team Spirit, B.C. – Best Effort, Manitoba – Positive Attitude, Alberta – Energetic, Territories – Adventurous, Ontario – Good Sportsmanship

Thank you everyone for making our Mini Canada Winter Games a great success!!

Set Goals, Speed Skater Bédard tells RSS students

Story & Photo by Dan Davidson

Dawson City hasn’t had a great deal of involvement with the Canada Winter Games beyond the Torch Relay in January, but students at the Robert Service School were treated to a visit from four time short track speed skating Olympic medal winner Éric Bédard.

Bédard retired from active competition last summer after having participated in three winter Olympics during his career and coming away with four medals: gold (5000 metre relay) and bronze (1000 metres) at Nagano in 1998; gold (5000 m relay) in Salt Lake City in 2002; and silver (5000 m relay) in Turin in 2006.

Other career highlights for this 31 year old include:

He is currently the coach of the Quebec speed skating team, many of whom are from his Montreal club.

Bédard told the students he was happy to be visiting a place like Saint-Thecle, the town of about 2000 people where he grew up near the city of Trois Rivieres. Being from a small town doesn’t have to limit your horizons, Bédard told the students.

“I reached some goals. I had some objectives while I grew up, and now I can say, after I’ve retired, that I found a pretty good road to go to the Olympics.”

Bédard didn’t start right out as a speed skater. He began skating at the age of five, trying out short track, but also playing hockey (at AA level) in the winter, as well as basketball and volleyball, and baseball in the summer.

“There were many sports and I was lucky to have the opportunity ... to do that.”

At the age of 12 he began to focus his training outside of school sports on short track. He had a chance at a Canadian championship competition in Vancouver and he wanted to be ready for it.

From there he began to set his sights on being an Olympic level athlete, and his record clearly shows that he succeeded. One of the things he had to do was to move at age 15 from his home to Riviere de Loup, 300 kilometres away, where there was a larger skating club and he could train more intensively. By 1997 he was a silver medalist at the World Championships, and was well on his way to Nagano.

His record is impressive:

- silver medal (5,000 relay) at the 1997 world championships
- gold medal (5,000 relay), a silver (500) and seventh overall at the 1998 world championships
- gold medal (5,000 relay); bronze (1,000) and tenth in the 500m at the 1998 Nagano Olympics

- bronze medal (5,000 relay) and finished sixth overall at the 1999 world championships
 - gold medal (500), silver (1,500) and finished second overall at the 2000 world championships
 - ranked fifth in the 500 and sixth overall in the 2000-01 season
 - silver medal (5,000 relay) at the 2001 world championships
 - bronze medal (1,000) and finished sixth overall at the 2002 world championships
 - gold medal (5,000 relay) at the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics
 - silver medal (5,000 relay) at the 2003 world championships
 - gold medal (5,000 relay) at the 2005 world championships
 - silver medal (5,000 relay) at the 2006 Turin Olympics
- “What is important is to pick some objective, some goals,” Bédard told the students. “I am 15 years old when I’m going to Riviere de Loup. I had short objectives, middle objectives and long objectives.”



The long objective was to get to the Olympics, but to do that he had to train hard and stay in the top five in Quebec and across the country. The middle objectives included competing in the Canada Games, and in world championships.

Having won medals at Nagano, Bédard refocused himself for the next contest at Salt Lake City, where the pressure was on the team to hold onto its title, and again at Torino, where they did drop to silver, but still did well.

At the end of that contest, after 17 years of striving to become a champion and succeeding, Bédard felt his time was past and that it was time to step aside and give the younger skaters a chance to move up. Now, he feels that coaching is allowing him to return to the sport the enjoyment, the

travel and the glory that he got from it. He hopes to be a coach at the 2010 Games in Vancouver.

RSS students were thrilled to see and handle one of Bédard’s gold medals at the end of his 45 minute talk. That in itself was an Olympic feat for the skater, for whom English is a second language

The Delivery of Health Care in Dawson City

The role of Community Health Centers throughout the Yukon is to offer primary Health Care to all community members.

Primary Health Care is defined by the World Health Organization as “integrated, universally accessible health care which is provided by a health care team, to address a large majority of personal health care needs and develop a sustained partnership with patients while practicing in the context of family and community”

In Dawson City, this means health care is provided by resident physicians, community nurse practitioners and community health nurses who work collaboratively to provide the highest level of health care possible.

While most people are familiar with the role of the physician, most are not familiar with the role and scope of practice of the community nurse practitioner

Community nurse practitioners are advanced practice nurses who are regulated by the Yukon Registered Nurses association and practice within a very specific scope of practice. They work as part of a health care team that includes consultation with a physician when required.

Under these guidelines Community Nurse Practitioners can;

- Prescribe and renew common medications (e.g., antibiotics, creams and ointments)
 - Diagnose common conditions (e.g., viral or bacterial infections, skin conditions, etc.)
 - Promote health through counseling and education
 - Order diagnostic testing (e.g. Pregnancy, blood work, x-rays e.t.c.)
 - Provide emergency care both during the day and after hours.
 - Identify health risk factors and monitor health status.
 - Perform routine health exams for all age groups (e.g., Well women, well man, prenatal and well child and travel immunizations)
 - Monitor chronic health condition (e.g. High blood pressure, diabetes, etc.)
 - (e.g. Prenatal, weight loss, etc.)
- Provide primary health care to the community,
CLOSE TO HOME

Peter Ledwidge in the Yukon Quest

photos by Jay Armitage



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