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How LAWS Evolved...

The Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS) was established and registered in the Yukon as a non-profit society in 1998. We began as a small circle of women from the Kaska Nation concerned with community fund raising for social and recreational purposes. In a short time, our circle and our concern for community grew. We evolved from organizing fund raising and small cultural events, to developing and offering a comprehensive community healing program.

The Society is served by a six member Board of Directors, an Executive Director, an Administrative Assistant, and a Therapist. Offices of the Society are located in Watson Lake.

Our project is administered from Watson Lake, and also provides services in Ross River, Good Hope Lake and Lower Post. Many of the programs and program activities serve specific needs in both aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations.

We are in our tenth year of operation, with the goal of addressing the legacy of sexual and physical abuse in residential schools through a series of specific programs relevant to one or more of six specific residential school survivor and intergenerational impacts.



Laws Executive Director: Anne Maje Raider

Administrative Assistant : Joanne Bailey

Board of Directors

Fannie Vance

Bernice Ball

Lorna Reid

Mary Maje

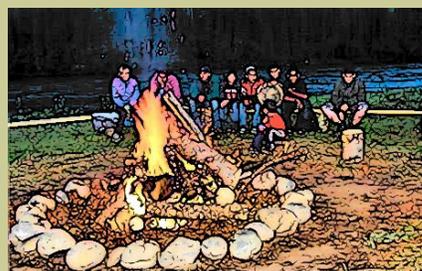
Billie Maje

Violet Greenway

We are grateful to our Board and to the Elders who make being a part of this organization such a rewarding experience.

Our Healing Journey

The traditional healing portion of our program was very successful this summer. Members who accompanied us on a healing journey to central BC reported being deeply moved and encouraged while attending the ceremony there.

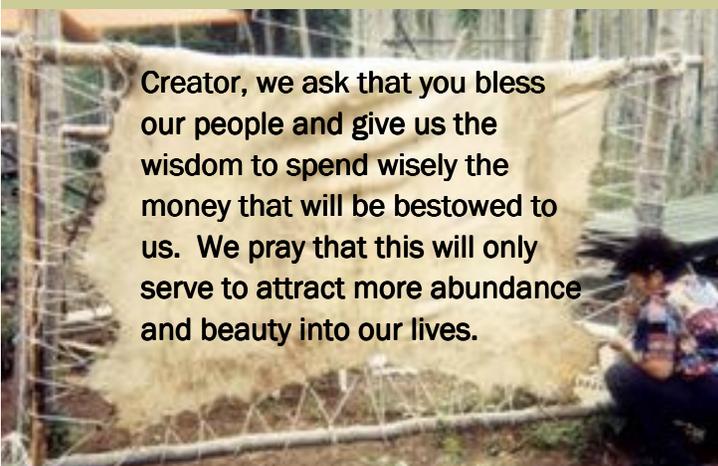


We also brought Bruce Williams, a healer from Vancouver, into the community in late September to offer sweats to both men and women healing from the abuses

suffered in residential schools. Ceremonies were also held to bless sacred places. These services were offered on the land, on special grounds that the men in the community have prepared.

We are pleased with the increased level of participation in the ceremonies and give thanks to our Creator for providing us with the resources to help in this small way.

The journey has been slow but steady in this area due to the many fears taught by the residential school, however, we are very pleased with the distance we have come.



Creator, we ask that you bless our people and give us the wisdom to spend wisely the money that will be bestowed to us. We pray that this will only serve to attract more abundance and beauty into our lives.



We are very pleased to announce that we have hired a new Therapist.

Mike Healey will be joining us in late November from his current position in Boston. Mike is from Newfoundland and is very excited about his move to the Yukon.



Refreshing times at Francis Lake!

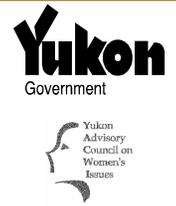


Dr. Catherine Richardson will be returning to Ross River this winter to provide **one on one counseling services** to anyone interested. Catherine is also available to link with resource persons and to facilitate workshops if desired. To make an appointment with Catherine please contact Minnie at the Margaret Thompson Center in Ross River.

Our congratulations are extended to Catherine on her new position at the University of Victoria.

Drop by the L.A.W.S Office...

LAWS is offering to assist members with filling out residential school claim papers. We have access to the forms online and urge members to call the LAWS office at (867) 536-2097 to set up a time for assistance. You're invited to drop by the office for a tea or coffee and chat or support at any time. We also have a **day-light** available for those who are affected by seasonal affective disorder. Just give us a call to arrange a time for you to come use it at our office.



Join other Aboriginal women in furthering Aboriginal women's equality in the Yukon by attending one or both upcoming

Aboriginal Women's Summits:

Watson Lake

Watson Lake Community Hall
November 16-17, 2007

Whitehorse

Yukon Inn
November 22-24, 2007

Aboriginal women will discuss and prioritize issues under three themes:

- Education
- Leadership Development
- Wellness

Beverly Jacobs, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada will join us as a guest speaker

Contact the Women's Directorate for more information & registration forms:
(867) 667-3030 or 1-800-661-0408 ext 3030

www.womensdirectorate.gov.yk.ca

Some travel subsidies are available





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GUKEYEH GUK'EH GU'SANI: Kaska Dena National Constitution 2007

Over the past few years, representatives of each Kaska nation, women and men, elders and youth, have contributed in meetings of the **Kaska Dena Constitutional Working Group** to develop a modern-day constitution that asserts the Kaska Dena aboriginal title to its unsundered lands, and Kaska Dena's inherent right to govern. Tasks of the Working Group included:

- ◆ conducting community consultations
- ◆ administering two surveys to Kaska citizens about constitutional issues
- ◆ and working with legal drafters and professionals to prepare Kaska laws.

The 2007 draft of **GUKEYEH GUK'EH GU'SANI** now represents a document which is near completion. It reflects the views of Kaska Dena expressed at community meetings, assemblies, and in surveys. The Working Group plans to provide 60 days public notice of a Special National Assembly in Watson Lake early in 2008.



The Kaska Dena Constitution Working Group has listened to many Kaska citizens, and their ideas have formed the basis of a draft constitution. A final look at the draft will take place in the new year.



The Kaska Dena People and Government

The pride and honour of the Kaska Dena nation lives in the people of the Tsyone Dena and Mesga Dena clans, who share a common language, history, culture and traditional laws. The Kaska Dena Kayeh homeland is approximately 97,000 square miles of unsundered lands.

Kaska Dena have a spiritual connection to the land, and protect, preserve and sustain the air, lands, waters, plants and animals of Kaska Dena Kayeh for the health of the nation and in order to share its wealth for all future generations.

The Kaska National Government acts on behalf of Kaska First Nations to advance shared interests, subject to delegation by individual Kaska First Nation governments. The National Government coordinates political direction and facilitates communication with government and industry as mandated by Kaska nations.

Kaska nation local governments are the safe-keeper of aboriginal title, steward of lands and resources, and retain local responsibilities for programs and services.



THE GOVERNING INSTITUTIONS OF THE KASKA DENA NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

- ◆ National Assembly
- ◆ National Council
- ◆ Gu'des'stand'gha—National Chief
- ◆ National Executive
- ◆ National Elders' Council — Mesga Dena, Tsyone Dena
- ◆ National Youth Council—Mesga Dena, Tsyone Dena
- ◆ National Judicial Council (*not yet developed by the Constitutional working Group*)



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Annual gathering of citizens and leadership of all Kaska nations, open to everyone to attend, to give direction, approve policies, make recommendations, or amend the Constitution.

STRUCTURE AND MANDATE OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The **Gu'des'stand'gha (National Chief)**, 2 Men's Representatives (1 Tsyone Dena & 1 Mesga Dena), and 2 Women's Representatives. (1 Tsyone Dena & 1 Mesga Dena) are elected in a Kaska national election according to the provisions of the draft 2007-07-17 Election Code. Copies will be available at the Assembly.

The National Elders' Council and National Youth Council select 2 representatives, one from each clan, to serve on the National Council. The Chiefs and Councils of each Kaska First Nation are elected regularly according to their own constitutions and laws.

The National Council carries out mandates and directions set by the National Assembly or the Elders' Council, oversees financial management of the national government, approves

NATIONAL COUNCIL 31 Participants:

- ◆ Gu'des'stand'gha [National Chief]
- ◆ Chiefs & Councilors of each Kaska First Nation
- ◆ 2 Elders' Council Reps. (Tsyone Dena & Mesga Dena)
- ◆ 2 Youth Council Reps (Tsyone Dena & Mesga Dena)
- ◆ 2 Men's Reps. (Tsyone Dena & Mesga Dena)
- ◆ 2 Women's Representatives. (Tsyone Dena & Mesga Dena)

budgets, oversees programs, services and agreements and adopts and administers national laws. It also conducts an annual review of Gu'des'stand'gha - National Chief. The National Council is accountable to the people through its members who report to communities, and through written and verbal reports to Nations and assemblies, financial audits, news releases and a web site. It meets at least 3 times per year.

Gu'des'stand'gha - NATIONAL CHIEF

The National Chief is the spokesperson for the Kaska Dena Nation, who liaises with other governments, leaders and officials, oversees administration and financial management, spends within approved budgets, and chairs the National Council and the National Executive.

The National Chief is elected for a four-year term in a national election. Copies of the draft Election Code are available at the Assembly. The National Council must ordinarily reside in Kaska Dena Kayeh.



THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

There are 12 members

- ◆ Gu'des'stand'gha - National Chief,
- ◆ Chief of each Kaska First Nation,
- ◆ (2) National Elders' Council Representatives,
- ◆ (1) National Men's Representative,
- ◆ (1) National Women's Representative, and
- ◆ (1) National Youth Council Representative.

The National Executive meets at least 4 times per year. It performs duties assigned by the National Council or National Assembly, and tasks delegated by national laws, such as the Government Finance Act.



NATIONAL ELDERS' COUNCIL

There are 2 Elders from each Kaska First Nation, up to 12 Elders, on the National Elders Council. Elders will be selected from the 50-64 age group, and from the over 65 age group. The Elders Council will have equal representation from the Mesga Dena and Tsyone Dena Clans, and is selected for a 4-year term by the Elders in each First Nation. The National Elders Council mentors the National Youth Council, and provides advice to the National Council on issues that may include constitutional amendments, language and culture, lands and resources, citizenship, relationships between governments, and Kaska Dena Code of Conduct. The National Elders Council selects 2 representatives to sit on the National Council and the National Executive.



Workshops and surveys conducted in Kaska communities were a critical part of the development of the new constitution. Councils have been formed that represent a thorough cross-section of the Kaska community.



NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL (Mesga Dena, Tsyone Dena)

The youth in each Kaska community will select 2 youth between the ages of 16 - 27 to sit on the Youth Council for a 4-year term, with equal representation from the Mesga Dena and Tsyone Dena clans. Members of the Youth Council, who must ordinarily reside in Kaska Dena Kayeh, will promote youth issues and concerns in their own communities and at the National Council and the National Executive. The National Youth Council will appoint two representatives who will sit on the National Executive; one of those two will serve on the National Executive.



Serving the People *A preferred Leadership Style*

Servant leadership differs from other leadership approaches by avoiding the common top-down hierarchical style, and instead emphasizing collaboration, trust, empathy, and the ethical use of power. At the core, the individual leader is a servant first who is driven to lead because of a desire to serve better, not because of a need for increased power. One goal is to support the growth of individuals in the organization and increase teamwork and personal involvement. The servant-leader first takes care to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served.



Servant Leadership Qualities

- ◆ **Listens to others for good communication and decision-making**
- ◆ **Strives to understand and empathize with others**
- ◆ **Supports healing of oneself and others**
- ◆ **Recognizes others for their special and unique spirits**
- ◆ **Has calm self-awareness that will aid in understanding issues involving ethics & values**
- ◆ **Uses persuasion rather than coercion - builds consensus**
- ◆ **Nurtures Board and staff abilities to “dream great dreams”**
- ◆ **Can look at a problem and think beyond day-to-day realities**
- ◆ **Has foresight and ability to likely outcome of a situation using past lessons, present realities**
- ◆ **Commits to personal, professional and spiritual growth of people through \$ for personal and professional development - taking a personal interest in employee's ideas and suggestions and encouraging worker's involvement in decision-making**
- ◆ **Walks the path of Dena Au'Nezen and ensures that personal issues with members are not taken into the Council Chambers**
- ◆ **Strives to build healthier communities and create wealth for all members of the community to share**

In summary, servant-leaders:

- ◆ **Emphasize service to others**
- ◆ **Use a holistic approach to work**
- ◆ **Promote a sense of community**
- ◆ **Share power in decision-making**
- ◆ **Increase the benefits for those least privileged**
- ◆ **Develop relationships in which those being served grow as persons by becoming healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous and more likely to become servant-leaders themselves**

