

Get in touch with Darius:
Yukon Government Building - Downstairs in the
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 1-800-661-0408 or 867-456-6710
My door is always open!

Community Complex

The long term investment of a Community/Recreation facility is a commitment to Old Crow that is long overdue, and needed to provide our entire community with a foundation to continue a healthy and productive lifestyle for all citizens for a long time to come. The volunteer committee continues to meet and work towards a commitment to build the facility. I will be working towards this community goal throughout my term in office.

Caribou

There are too many unknowns with regard to the herd, especially the lack of a recent population count and the need to complete a comprehensive harvest management plan. Because there is much science we don't know about the health of the herd right now, there is much uncertainty. Our traditional knowledge and land based observations are telling us that climate change and harvesting are affecting the herd. I believe everyone who has an interest in the herd must come together soon to discuss all the threats to the herd and find short and long term solutions for them. In the mean time, I also believe we all should be erring on the side of conservation simply because there is a lot we don't know and may not for some time to come. I will always speak to protect the caribou against everything that threatens them.

In The News:

Comments made by Darius Elias in the Yukon Legislative Assembly Monday, December 6th, 2006

"I for one don't want to have to explain to my constituents 40 years from now that I had a chance to do something about climate change and didn't, especially when they are living and coping with the effects of climate change as we speak. Yukoners want to believe the Premier feels the same way, but this government has to demonstrate it with their actions. The budget that we are discussing this fall has no funding for any new climate change initiatives. This is not a good start. When is the minister going to demonstrate to Yukoners that this government is serious about combating climate change?"

Drin Tsal zhìt shòh ohlii

Constituent Achievements

Peter Josie • Congratulations on receiving your award from the Crime Prevention Yukon for long standing service to our community. Peter is a shining example of a volunteer and a person always willing to help people.

Nathaniel Schafer • Congratulations on winning the Northwestel holiday greeting card art contest. He won a Northwestel back pack and \$100.00 plus \$500 worth of art supplies for the Chief Zzeh Gittlit School. Good Job!

Kyle Benjamin and Hal Frost • On Friday November 17th, 2006 Kyle and Hal received a Sport Yukon Award for their Gold Medal results in shooting at the North American Indigenous Games. Way to go boys! "No muskrat is safe now!"

From left to right: Darius Elias, Kelly Hrudey (Former NHL goalie) and Edward Kaye (Special Olympian)



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MLA Darius Elias

• Box 2703 • Whitehorse, Y.T. • Y1A 2C6

Winter 2007

Vuntut Gwitchin RIDING UPDATE

Dear Friends & Neighbours:

"Shikaiik'it zhat gooveenjit gikhiikyaa geenjit gwiintl'oo shoh ihlii"

Firstly, I wish to express my gratitude to all the residents of Old Crow for the extra time and attention you afforded me during the territorial election campaign. I accept the confidence you have handed to me with great pride and honour and I am looking forward to being your representative in the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Secondly, this is the time of year when most of us reflect on the events of last year and make resolutions for the year to come. As your MLA I will be doing the same. Our children and families are the crux or reason why we act and make the decisions we do. Our children are our most valuable resource and we all must strive to provide the best opportunities for them especially in Old Crow. The youth will be our future leaders and I feel we must nurture all aspects of their development. The commitment I made before the election was to work towards achieving comparable opportunities, programs and services in Old Crow that are at the least, similar in nature and appearance to those in the capital city and other southern communities.

The year 2006 saw numerous successes in North Yukon but was also filled with many critical challenges.

The signing of the Old Crow Flats Special Management Area Plan (Van Tat K'atr'anahtii") was definitely a highlight and significant in so many ways and everyone involved deserves recognition. The attention to youth continues to be a priority and I will continue to raise the issues facing our youth and solutions like continuing the Health & Fitness program, which has been very successful and has begun to bear fruit, so I will advocate for the territorial government to stay the course and continue the funding for the program.

Lastly, we still have more work to do. The task of receiving a commitment to build a Community Recreation Complex is a high priority and it is important to recognize that our community does not have access to municipal sports and recreation funding, so I will be asking the territorial government to even out the playing field so that our community can also benefit even if we don't have a municipality. A full time Social Services worker based in Old Crow continues to be a struggle and is required to meet the diverse needs of our community. The issue of an Elders facility in Old Crow or training community members so elders can stay at home longer must be worked on. Most importantly, we must continue our efforts to strengthening our culture, language and way of life as Gwitchin so that they always remain secure.

If we are truly to accomplish our goals of strengthening our community and enjoying our prosperous potential, we must resolve to tackle and eliminate these issues together.

This newsletter will be a tool for me to share some of my experiences over the years and I hope, a way of enlisting your help as a constituent. As always, we will move forward together and from my family to yours have a happy, safe and dance filled holiday season!

Mussi Cho Shulukut,
Darius Elias
MLA Vuntut Gwitchin

Liberal CAUCUS

Protecting Our Most Cherished Possessions

There has been a great deal of interest and discussion around childcare and daycares in the Yukon. The obvious issue that gets media attention is fee increases to parents. Putting a few dollars more in the budget is only a partial solution to addressing the issue of caring for our children. These children are at the most impressionable, vulnerable, and susceptible stage of their lives. So do we need to increase funding? Absolutely. Does this address all the needs of childcare in the Yukon? Absolutely not.

We not only want childcare, we want quality childcare. We in the official opposition believe there are three main issues surrounding this topic. First and foremost is the safety of our children that we entrust to others. Secondly there is the issue of quality programs and trained staff at daycare centres and day-homes and finally there is the financial-funding component. We must ensure that child care workers are paid properly for the important work that they do. To this end, government can and must play a key and leading role. Daycare workers and parents both realize the need for the government to address the issues at hand. We remain committed to pursuing this important issue in the Assembly.

We must ensure that no child is denied quality daycare because his/her parents could not afford it.

We have an opportunity here to make our Yukon a national leader in early childcare. We look forward to being part of the solution.

The Liberal caucus now has five members. Darius Elias is the newly elected member from Vuntut Gwitchin and represents the second generation of his family to serve in the legislative assembly. His mother, Norma Kassi, served as MLA from 1985 to 1993. Darius served as a member of the Vuntut Gwitchin Trust, the Fishing Branch local planning team, the Vuntut National Park management planning team, the North Yukon Planning Commission, and the North Yukon Fish and Wildlife management team. While serving as a member of the Canadian Youth Roundtable on the Environment, he attended a United Nations summit in New York City as Canada's youth representative. He is a volunteer member of the Old Crow Community & Recreation Complex Feasibility Committee.

He was a Vuntut National Park warden for nine years and at the time of his election to the Yukon Legislative Assembly Darius was an assessment officer with the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board. Darius is the Liberal caucus critic for the Department of Environment, the Department of Tourism and Culture and the Women's Directorate. He is also the Liberal caucus chair. He and his wife Tina have four children.

Also new to the legislature is Don Inverarity representing Porter Creek South. He has been a businessman for over 25 years and co-owner of enterprises such as Radio Shack and Klondike Gold Internet Services. Don has served as a director for both the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and for the Tourism Industry Association. He also served as the Employer Representative for the Workers Compensation Board's Appeal Tribunal. Don's volunteer experience includes Past President of the Whitehorse Jaycees, Past President of the Yukon Hostelling Association and more recently as Co-Chair of Yukon's Rural Team (Agriculture Canada). He is also a HAM! (Amateur Radio Operator) and a member

*Liberal
MLAs were
sworn in as
the official
opposition on
October 21,
2006.*

of YARA. Don has just completed his 19th year as Chief Statistician of the Klondike International Road Relay. Mr. Inverarity is the Liberal caucus critic for the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Justice and the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. Don and his wife Mary have two children. Joseph is in the Canadian Navy and recently was deployed to the Persian Gulf on board the HMCS Ottawa. Catherine is studying at NAIT in Edmonton, Alberta.

Returning to the caucus is Kluane MLA Gary McRobb. Gary is the Liberal caucus critic for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Department of Highways

Yukon Legislative Assembly in the general election of September 30, 1996. He's been re-elected three times and has more than ten years experience including serving as Minister of the Environment and Yukon Housing in his first term. Eric is the Liberal caucus critic for the Department of Community Services, the Department of Education, the Public Service Commission, the Yukon Liquor Commission and the Yukon Housing Corporation. He shares critic responsibilities for the Department of Health and Social Services with Arthur Mitchell. Mr. Fairclough is also the Liberal caucus whip.

Arthur Mitchell became Leader of the Yukon Liberal

Party in June, 2005.

He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in a by-election held November 21, 2005 and re-elected in the general election of October 10, 2006. In addition to being party leader, Mr. Mitchell is also caucus critic for the Executive Council Office and the Department of Finance. He shares critic responsibilities for the Department of Health and Social Services with Eric Fairclough.

He owned and operated the Atlin General Store for 26 years and has worked as the Executive Director of the Yukon

From left to right: Don Inverarity, Darius Elias, Arthur Mitchell, Gary McRobb and Eric Fairclough



and Public Works, the Yukon Development Corporation, and the Yukon Energy Corporation. He is also the Official Opposition House Leader. Gary brings more than ten years of experience to caucus. He served as head of the Energy Commission during his first term. Before becoming MLA for Kluane, he served as a public advocate for electrical consumers and the environment, and operated a small wilderness tourism business.

Eric Fairclough also returns to the Liberal caucus representing Mayo-Tatchun. He was first elected to the

Chamber of Commerce, and as a realtor and property developer. He is a former Alternate Chair of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health & Safety Board and has also served as a board member and Finance Committee member of the Yukon Arts Centre Board. Mr. Mitchell served for several years at the City of Whitehorse's Parks and Recreation Committee, including a year as chair. Arthur lives in the Copperbelt riding with his wife Nancy. They have two adult children, Rachel and Josh.