

# TULITA SEPTEMBER NEWS

(Ikarehrah Sah)



Issue 6: September 18th, 2023

Most of the information on Holidays and such is taken from Wikipedia, and/or books mentioned in the titles.

Contents:

1. Events/Announcements
2. Funny Stories
3. Tulita Map
4. Information on Truth & Reconciliation Day.
5. NWT Timeline – Very long read for those who want to be informed on the brief history.

## NEW TO TULITA OR JUST BORED?

We have the news for you! This newsletter is out for the people of Tulita and its newcomers who just want to know what is going on in the community or need something to read to pass the time. Have vital information that you want in the next newsletter? Want a correction? Call us at the office at (867) 588-3734/3830 or email [tlfc.2018@hotmail.com](mailto:tlfc.2018@hotmail.com).

**The Tulita Newsletter is now coming out twice a month! The 1st and the 15th are the new dates it will be out.**


## Events and Announcements:

**September 30th:** National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Wear an **Orange Shirt** to show your support for all the kids that did not get a chance to come home to their families and rest.

**Radio this weekend! On September 23rd! Tune in at 1:00PM and win lots of prizes! Have your previous newsletters ready because questions are going to be from it!**

**Don't forget that every Thursday, School is let out early at 3:00PM.**

 **Birthday/Anniversary Messages** 

 Shauna and Zaida would like to wish **Erica MacCauley** a Happy Birthday, for her day, September 26th.



**PLEASE CALL ECC  
FOR BEAR SIGHTING  
OR FIRE: (867) 588-  
3441 or 374-0505.**

## COMMUNITY HOURS:

**Harriet Gladue Health Centre** (588-4251, or after hours, 374-0004): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**RCMP** (588-1111): Mon-Fri. 9am -12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Hamlet** (588-4471): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Arena:** Mon-Sat. 1pm-9pm.

**Northern Store** (588-4331): Mon-Sat. 10am-6pm.

**Two Rivers Hotel** (588-3320): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**St. Therese of Avila Church** (588-4241): Sunday at 11am.

**Tulita Housing** (588-4011): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Tulita Land Corp** (588-3734): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Mackay Range** (588-3051): Mon.-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Chief Albert Wright** (588-4361): Mon-Fri. 8am-12pm, 1pm-4pm. Closed for summer months.

**Preschool** (588-3501): Mon-Fri. 1pm-3:45pm. Closed for summer months.

**BJs Market & Take Out** (subject to change): Call 588-3504 for hours or check their Facebook.

**Wright's Convenience** (588-4927): Call for hours (7pm-11pm) or check their Facebook.

**Pentecostal Mission** (374-0451): Sun. at 11am at the Cultural Centre and Bible Studies will continue in the Fall 2023.

**Tulita Airport** (588-4555): Mon-Fri. 8:30am-10:30am, 4pm-5:30pm.

**ECC** (Environment and Climate Change) (588-3441): Mon.-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Parks Canada** (588-4884): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**SRRB** (374-4040): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**IPCA** (588-3053): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Fort Norman Metis Land Corp** (588-3201): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

**Gas Station** (588-3044): Mon-Fri. 11am-12pm, 2pm-4pm. Sat. 11am-12pm. 1pm-2pm.

**MYB** (588-3048): Mon-Sat. 8am-5pm.

**Tulita Dene Band:** (588-3341): Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

## RECREATIONAL TIMES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

**Fitness Hours:** Mon. to Sat. from 1pm to 9pm at the arena.

**Crib and card games:** Mon. and Wed. at 7pm at the Arena. In the summer, casual card games are at the arbor on clear weather days.

**Bingos** are usually Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday, depending on organization and funds needed. It would be posted at the Northern Store or on-line on Facebook's Tulita Buy, Sell, Trade.



## *Funny Little Stories*

### **Cat**

This guy's wife gets a cat and he hates it. So one day, while his wife is gone to work, the guy puts the cat in the back seat of the car, drives a few blocks, and lets the cat out. When he gets home, the cat's sitting there on the front porch. So the next day, the guy waits until his wife leaves for work again, then throws the cat in the car, drives a mile away from the house, and tosses the cat out. When he gets home, the cat's sitting there again on the front porch. Well, this guy's furious. So he waits until the next day, then throws the cat in the car, and drives as far and fast as he can, making all the turns and doubling back he can to throw off the cat. He dumps out the cat and heads home, but realises he can't figure out where he is. So that afternoon, his wife comes home and answers the ringing phone. It's her husband. He asks, "Is the cat there?" She says, "yes." The guy says, "I'm lost. Put the cat on the phone."

### **Nursing Home**

A family took their frail, elderly mother to a nursing home and left her, hoping she would be well cared for. The next morning, the nurses bathed her, fed her a tasty breakfast, and set her in a chair at the window overlooking a lovely flower garden. She seemed okay, but after a while she slowly started to tilt sideways in her chair. Two attentive nurses immediately rushed up to catch her and straighten her up. Again she seemed okay, but after a while, she slowly started to tilt over to her other side. The nurses rushed back and once more brought her back upright. This went on all morning. Later, the family arrived to see how the old woman was adjusting to her new home. "So, Ma, how is it here? Are they treating you all right?" "It's pretty nice," she replied. "Except they won't let me fart."

## **Surgery**

I had knee surgery as a teenager. The dr brought me a sharpie and told me to circle the correct knee and put a X on the other then he left the room. So I did exactly as instructed. Then I drew arrows to the circle and wrote “Operate here” and drew more Xs on the other leg and wrote “Do not touch.” I sat there bored for another 30 minutes writing random stuff all over my body like “You can’t have my appendix” and “Why are you looking here? Focus on the knee.” I even had my mom write on my back something like “If you can read this, wrong side. Flip me over.” Then I covered up with the sheet and the anesthesiologist showed up. I was told that I said some weird stuff while I was going under, but that is a different story. The surgery went fine, I had to stay in the hospital overnight. When the dr came into my room to check on me, he said that I had thrown off their schedule because when they uncovered me and saw all the notes that they laughed for 10 minutes. When they finally got their composure, they rolled me up on my side to get me onto the operating table and saw the note on my back and lost it again. He said that the surgery started about 30 minutes later than it was supposed to thanks to my drawings and notes.

## **Mothman**

I’m not a doctor but I was working as a paramedic at a music festival when we got called to a kid tripping on who knows what. The guy had climbed to the top of a portable generator stadium light. So he’s 20 feet in the air, on a light pole staring into this blazing midnight sun screaming, “I’M A MOTH GO INTO THE FLAME!” We had several cops, firefighters, and myself standing at the base for 30 minutes discussing how to get him down without killing him or us. The

entire time a crowd of people on drugs is surrounding us to see how it all plays out. Do we get a ladder truck and try to coax him down? What if he won’t go? Do we spay mace up there? What if he falls? All of a sudden, this greasy looking janitor walks up, turns off the power to the generator, turns on his flashlight and aims it at the mothman. Dude looks at the flashlight on the ground, scrambles down and follows it to the medical tent like a puppy about to get a snack. I’m embarrassed that none of us thought about it.

## **Dentist**

I got my wisdom teeth removed at 16. I grew up in a small, remote white Canadian town. We had to travel to a slightly larger, slightly less remote town to visit the hospital there for the procedure. The new anesthesiologist there was a very nice Chinese doctor whose family had just moved up from the city. Now, and this is important, I had JUST returned from year away – I spent a year of high school as an exchange student in Taiwan and had only gotten back a few weeks earlier. Procedure happens, nothing major goes wrong, and I come to in a hospital room in a fair bit of pain but mostly fine. My dad had driven me to the hospital and came in to see me and get me up to take me home. The minute he saw me, he burst in to a laughing fit and I could tell from his face that he’d been laughing about as hard as anyone could laugh. Once he finally found his composure, he explained to me what had happened. The anesthesiologist and a nurse came out in to the waiting room after I was put under and apparently were white as ghosts. My dad asked if anything was wrong, and eventually the anesthesiologist, still in a daze, explained to my dad that after he administered the anesthesia (but before I

was fully out of it) I began speaking to him in fluent Mandarin and that he thought maybe he needed to call someone to ask how it's possible that this redneck white teenager could suddenly gain the ability to speak Chinese under anesthesia. Needless to say, my dad thought this was hilarious and explained to the doctor's relief that the white kid did already know how to speak Mandarin and that he hadn't damaged my brain somehow.

### **Raise**

Employee: "Excuse me sir, may I talk to you?"

Boss: "Sure, come on in. What can I do for you?"

Employee: "Well sir, as you know, I have been an employee of this prestigious firm for over ten years."

Boss: "Yes."

Employee: "I won't beat around the bush. Sir, I would like a raise. I currently have four companies after me and so I decided to talk to you first."

Boss: "A raise? I would love to give you a raise, but this is just not the right time."

Employee: "I understand your position, and I know that the current economic downturn has had a negative impact on sales, but you must also take in consideration my hard work, pro-activeness and loyalty to this company for over a decade."

Boss: "Taking into account these factors, and considering I don't want to start a brain drain, I'm willing to offer you a ten percent raise and an extra five days of vacation time. How does that sound?"

Employee: "Great! It's a deal! Thank you, sir!"

Boss: "Before you go, just out of curiosity, what companies were after you?"

Employee: "Oh, the Electric Company, Gas Company, Water Company, and the Mortgage Company!"

### **Fort Norman 1988 by NWT PW&S**

Children:

Jason Ayah,

Ryan MacCauley,

Sylvia Clement,

Phillip Clement,

Jonathan Ayah.



# Tulita Map for New People



**There is many places to walk or visit to talk to people. You can walk along the Two Rivers Trail located past the Parks Canada Trailer Building. You can walk through the town, as well as towards Plane Lake Dr to the airport and from Water Intake to the Gas Station. You can walk along the shore, all the way to the bank where the boats load off and where the Barge stops.**





# National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

On September 30th, the Canadian Government had recognised officially the harm and cultural genocide that the Residential Schooling has caused for the Canadian Indigenous population. Minister of Indigenous Services Jane Philpott and Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett in 2017 encouraged people across Canada to participate in this commemorative and educational event. The following year, the Department of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism announced that it was considering tabling a bill in Parliament to establish a statutory holiday that recognized the legacy of residential schools; September 30th was one of the dates considered. The Heritage Committee chose Orange Shirt Day, and Georgina Jolibois submitted a private member's bill to the House of Commons, where it was passed on March 21, 2019. However, the bill was unable to make it through the Senate before parliament was dissolved ahead of election.

During the subsequent parliamentary session, Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault tabled a new bill on September 29th, 2020, proposing Orange Shirt Day become a national statutory holiday, similar to the previous proposal by Jolibois. The new holiday would be officially named the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. On May 28th, 2021, the day after it was reported that the remains of 215 bodies were discovered in an unmarked cemetery on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, all parties in the House of Commons agreed to fast-track the bill, which passed in the House by unanimous consent. The bill passed the Senate unanimously six days later and received royal assent on June 3rd, 2021.

The Orange Shirt Day was first established as an observance in 2013 and took over to promote awareness and education about the Canadian residential school system. The inspiration for Orange Shirt Day came from residential school survivor Phyllis Jack Webstad, who shared her story at a St. Joseph Mission Residential School Commemoration Project and Reunion even held in Williams Lake, BC. Phyllis recounted her first day of residential schooling at six years old, when she was stripped of her clothes, including the new orange shirt her grandmother bought her, which was never returned. The orange shirt now symbolizes how the residential school system took away the indigenous identities of its students. However, the association of the colour with the First Nations goes back to antiquity, the colour represents sunshine, truth-telling, health, regeneration, strength, and power.



# NWT TIMELINE THAT RELATES TO THE SAHTU

By: [NWTTIMELINE.CA](http://NWTTIMELINE.CA), if you want to learn more

## Dene Origin Stories

The Dene origin stories are set when Denendeh, the land of the Dene, was a dangerous and unpredictable world filled with giant animals who preyed upon people. Animals and humans could shift form, and people often lived in fear. During this time, a powerful man whose name translates in English as, *The One Who Travels* appeared in Denendeh, travelling through the territory helping the people. He destroyed the giant animals and separated people from animals, establishing a relationship based on mutual respect and understanding. He gave the people laws to enable them to live together in harmony. He is remembered throughout Denendeh as the great traveller and lawmaker.

Each Dene group has a different name for him; however, he is most widely known by his Sahtu name, Yamoria, because the author, George Blondin, used the name from his people when he published 'Yamoria The Law Maker' in 1997. While there are different versions of the Dene origin story, the story reminds Dene of where they come from and how they all connect.

## Yamória Marries a Beaver

Long ago, a special man named Yamória travelled through the land, putting everything in its rightful place. During his travels, Yamória met a young woman who lived by herself in the bush. She was cooking and offered Yamória some food. After Yamória ate, the woman suggested that they live together as a couple and Yamória agreed. She asked Yamória for one thing – to cut a willow and place it over running water before crossing it when he was out on the land. Yamória didn't understand why she wanted this but he agreed to her request. They lived together happily for a long time.

One day Yamória was out in the bush hunting. It was getting dark and he was in a hurry to get home. He came to a creek and decided not to place a willow across it.

When he arrived home, he found his wife was gone. Using his magical powers, he followed her and discovered that his wife was really a giant beaver. She was living with a family of giant beavers at a big lake near Whatì. Her beaver family had been killing and eating Dene who travelled in the area.

Yamória began to chase his beaver wife and her family. He chased them all the way through Great Slave Lake and down the Mackenzie River. He caught up with them at Great Bear Lake and chased them around the lake to Tulita. Yamória killed three giant beavers at Tulita, skinned them and stretched their hides on Great Bear Rock. You can still see the oval outline of the beaver pelts there today.



## **1783 - The North West Company vs. HBC**

The arrival of European ships into the waterways of Canada led to a race between Britain and France for control of the available natural resources. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) maintained control over the northern regions of land that drained into the large bay; the French traders moved across the southern Great Lakes systems. Fur became the commodity of exchange with one male beaver called Made Beaver, the standard. Canada was a valuable land for markets in London and Paris. The existence of people, cultures and languages different from British or French was irrelevant to the European explorer as North America was marked for European control in the name of a King.

For the 20 years following the 1763 surrender of French territory in North America, the fur trade was in turmoil. Montreal attracted Scottish businesspeople who used French labour to travel the old French trade routes. They used any method necessary to lure the fur trade away from the Hudson Bay, including making liquor and guns and easily transported small merchandise available for sale.

In 1770 many smaller traders merged to form the North West Company. The HBC response was to establish the first inland post at Fort Cumberland to try and draw trade back into the traditional Hudson Bay routes. The North West Company and other independent traders worked to bypass the HBC. They started to establish posts on the southern shore of the Great Slave Lake in 1783, eventually establishing Fort Providence (now Old Fort Providence) in 1789 near the mouth of Yellowknife Bay; Fort of the Forks (now Fort Simpson) at the junction of the Liard and Mackenzie rivers in 1804; Fort Liard in 1807 and Fort Norman (now Tulita) in 1810.

During the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these two companies often built neighbouring trading posts. The first HBC post in current-day NWT was called "Chiswick House" (1803) located in the Slave River Delta, where the HBC struggled against the more entrenched French traders and other rival traders like the XY Company. The competition for furs saw forts changing hands and occasional violence. The amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821 stabilized the fur business in the Athabasca and Mackenzie River systems.

## **1789 - Alexander Mackenzie**

In 1789, Alexander Mackenzie led an expedition down the great northern river, known by many different names to each of the Indigenous groups in the NWT.

Twenty-four-year-old Alexander Mackenzie became second in command at Peter Pond's Fort Athabasca River fur trading post, 65 kilometres south of Lake Athabasca in northeast Alberta. In the spring of 1788, when Pond left the North, Mackenzie took over this North West Company post.

Thanks to the knowledge of the Indigenous peoples who traded at the Athabasca River post, Peter Pond had prepared a map that showed the Athabasca and Peace River joining to form the Slave River, which then flowed north into a large lake (Great Slave Lake). Pond initially believed the great northern river flowed west and eventually north to the Arctic Ocean; however, before leaving the North, Pond changed details on the map to show the great northern river discharging west from Great Slave Lake to the Pacific Ocean. This change contradicted the knowledge shared by the Indigenous people of the area.

In 1788, a new trading post named Fort Chipewyan was established on Lake Athabasca, and it was from this post that, on June 3, 1789, Mackenzie led a group to explore the river he called “Grand River.” If it were true that it flowed west to the Pacific, the North West Company would have a quicker and less costly route to the rich fur territory of the Northwest. At this time, competition for Northwestern furs was fierce.

Mackenzie’s exploration party of French-Canadian voyageurs also included a Dëne Sų́łnė Chief named Awgeenah (also known as Nestabeck and English Chief) and various wives and helpers. The group travelled down the Slave River, crossed the still ice-choked Great Slave Lake, and down the “Grand River” (see map).

The downstream journey took only 14 days. It didn’t take long for Mackenzie to realize that Peter Pond’s map was wrong. The Grand River led to the Arctic Ocean, not the Pacific. The round trip of nearly 5,000 kilometres took a total of 102 days. Very few Dene were encountered on this expedition, perhaps because Dene fish at inland lakes at that time of year.

Sir John Franklin first used the name **Mackenzie River** in his journal, “*Journey to the Shore of the Polar Sea*” (London, 1823). In his 1828 journal, Franklin states, “In justice to the memory of Mackenzie, I hope the custom of calling this the Great River, which is in general use among the traders and voyagers, will be discontinued, and that the name of its eminent discoverer may be universally adopted.”

While the great river is known as the Mackenzie River in English, it also has official traditional Indigenous names:

- **Dehcho** means ‘big river’ in Dehcho Dene
- **Deho** means ‘great river’ in Sahtu Dene
- **Grande Rivière**, means ‘big river’ in Michif
- **Nagwichoonjik** means ‘big river’ in Gwich’in
- **Kuukpak**, means ‘big river’ in Inuvialuktun

The French name for Mackenzie River is **Fleuve Mackenzie**.

### **1825 - Hockey Night in Délıne**

In 1825, John Franklin was on his second expedition to the Arctic Ocean. Temperatures were dropping, and it was getting too cold to continue, so Franklin and his men stayed in what is now the community of Délıne (‘where the water flows’). Délıne had been a gathering place because of its rich supply of fish for at least 6,000 years at that point. Franklin built a fort on the ruins of a North West Company trading post and named it in his own honour.

While at the new fort, Franklin recorded a game of hockey in a letter he wrote in November of 1825; “till the snow fell, the game of hockey played on the ice was the morning’s sport.” Local Dene oral history recounts seeing people “flying around” on the ice and playing a game. Franklin’s letter is the earliest recorded mention of hockey in North America, leading to the claim that Délıne is “The Birthplace of Hockey.”

## **1920 - Northern Oil**

The Sahtu Dene had been aware of oil along the banks of the Mackenzie River for many generations. The Dene traditionally used the oil to waterproof their canoes and baskets. Adventurer and trader Alexander Mackenzie, in 1789, also noted that “pieces of petroleum which bears a resemblance to yellow wax” could be seen at various locations along the Dehcho.

In 1911, J.K. Cornwall of the Northern Trading Company saw an oil slick on the surface of the Mackenzie River near Fort Norman (now Tulita). He hired a local Dene trapper, Karkassee, to locate and take samples from the source of this slick, a small pool of oil on the riverbank downstream from Fort Norman. A Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, laboratory confirmed the high quality of the samples.

In 1919, Imperial Oil purchased J.K. Cornwall’s claim and sent their geologist, Ted Link, north to investigate. Leading a party of eight men, he transported a drilling rig and an ox from Edmonton to the area where these pools of oil had been seen. The men survived the extreme cold working through that first winter, but the ox became Christmas dinner!

The following summer, on August 27, 1920, the crew watched with delight as their drill struck oil, creating a 70-foot gusher when oil spewed out of the ground at high speeds. The location became known as Norman Wells because of its proximity to Fort Norman. The Norman Wells area became the site of an intense but short-lived oil staking rush during the summer of 1921, from which the Indigenous peoples hardly benefited.

Due to the difficulties transporting oil south, it was used primarily to supply the fuel for the developing mechanization of the North. It wasn’t until 1942, with the construction of the Canadian Oil-Canol pipeline, that some of this oil was pumped across the Mackenzie Mountains to the Yukon.

The discovery of oil brought the first significant rush of settlers to the NWT and the first land grab for resources. The government established district offices in Fort Smith in 1921, and the NWT Council managed it all from their offices in Ottawa.

A renewed interest in Treaty negotiations with the Dene people along the Mackenzie River, a rebuilding of transportation networks, including better portage systems around Fort Smith’s rapids, and the inaugural use of the airplane were unexpected consequences of Karkassee’s discovery.

## **1921 - Treaty 11**

The Canadian government was unenthusiastic about extending Treaty rights north of the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel beyond the Treaty 8 boundaries. The chief accountant noted that in 1910 there were no funds for any treaty negotiations or promises. It was noted that the Dene in the north country were looking for an agreement that would put them on equal footing with their Treaty 8 friends and relatives. They were not intending to give up their land but wanted access to the services of southern Canada included in a Treaty deal. The Canadian government did not see the point of extending those services to a widely separated group of people.

That all changed in 1920 when Imperial Oil produced a working well outside of Fort Norman. With a new interest in controlling the land, Treaty Commissioner Henry A. Conroy, supported by Bishop Breynat, was sent to get the required signatures on the Ottawa-prepared Treaty 11 in 1921. Conroy was instructed to stick to the original Treaty 11 draft. “You should be guided by the terms set forth therein and ...no outside promises should be made by you to the Indians” (Fumoleau, 2004).

Notice was sent out in advance that a treaty party would be travelling north in the summer of 1921. The stops in Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, Wrigley (Fort Wrigley), Tulita (Fort Norman), Fort Good Hope, Tsiigehtchic (Arctic Red River), Fort McPherson, and Behchokò (Fort Rae) produced a signed Treaty. However, the differing understandings of the government and the Indigenous people are still in dispute today. Continued land access for hunting and fishing were the principal issues for every Band negotiating with the Treaty Commission. Oral history tells of an agreement that would not change the Dene People’s relationship to the land.

When Henry A. Conroy died just a year later in 1922, he did not leave a record of any oral promises, but many of the people present remembered. The signatories at the Treaty 11 negotiations, including Bishop Breynat, fought to keep the federal government’s promises alive.

In an interview with CBC’s John Last for the 100-year celebrations of the signing of Treaty 11, Norman Yakeleya, the Dene National Chief, said: “They [had] agreed to ... a peace and friendship treaty,” but the government’s text of the treaty claimed that the Indigenous peoples surrendered their land and hunting rights to Canada. According to Tłı̨chʔ history, at the time of signing Chief Monfwi said, “as long as the sun rises, the river flows, and the land does not move, we will not be restricted from our way of life.”

Treaty 11 is a complicated issue. A critical look at the process has resulted in outrage from Indigenous peoples all over the Treaty 11 territory. Modern land claims, self-government negotiations, and agreements such as the Tłı̨chʔ comprehensive land claim agreement and Déłı̨nę self-government agreement, try to rectify the difficulties in the original document.

### **1940 - The Prophecy of Ayah**

Ayah was a prophet from the Sahtu who had powerful medicine. He was born in 1857 and lived according to the Dene way until his passing in 1940. George Blondin celebrated his wisdom in his book “When the World was New.” While Ayah was alive, people listened to his words and learned to work hard and share everything. Blondin noted, “as long as this great teacher lived, life was like that. But after he was gone,, things started to change – just as Ayah had foretold.”

Ayah saw that the Dene world would change and warned the people to be ready. He warned against gambling and alcohol, knowing that it would increase crime. People came from long distances to hear him speak, including George Blondin and his father Edward, who spent many hours with him in his last years. They buried him as he directed in a grave with a fence.

The school in Déłı̨nę is named after Ayah to show respect for his teachings.

## 1967 - Territorial Government Moves to the Northwest Territories

From 1905 to 1967, the seat of government for the Northwest Territories was located in Ottawa and consisted of a federally-appointed Commissioner and his staff. Northerners were rarely consulted before new laws affecting them were enacted. Communication between the leaders in Ottawa and the territory's people depended on the planes flying north and boats working their way up the Mackenzie waterways.

The Northwest Territories Council – created on April 20, 1921 – advised the Commissioner on how he should run the NWT. The four members of the Council were federal civil servants from Ottawa, and all were appointed. It wasn't until 1947 that the first northern member was appointed. In 1951 the first Council members were elected, and by 1966 elected members finally outnumbered appointed members.

In 1965 the Territorial Council passed a motion calling on the federal government to review the NWT's political situation. As a result, the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories was created. With Alfred Carrothers, Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Western Ontario as chairman, this commission became known as the Carrothers Commission. Members of the commission were Jean Beetz, a Montreal-based judge and John Parker, then Mayor of Yellowknife, who later became the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

During the summer of 1965 and the spring of 1966, Carrothers' Commission held public meetings in 51 communities in the Northwest Territories. They asked residents their opinions on what a future Government of the Northwest Territories should look like, whether the division of eastern and western Arctic regions was a good idea, and which community should be made capital.

It was clear from the Commission's public meetings that most northerners wanted: powers transferred from Ottawa to the north, a greater degree of self-governance, more control over natural resources, and to keep Northwest Territories whole. There were no surprises in these results except the one concerning division. Many northerners, particularly in the east, were vehemently opposed to the division of the Northwest Territories.

Public opinion on the issue of which community should become the new capital was, as expected, split. The recommendation of the Commission was eagerly awaited. As the administrative centre for territorial programs, Fort Smith was where most northern-based government positions were located, and many northerners assumed it would become the capital. Communities also running for capital were Yellowknife, Hay River, Pine Point, Fort Simpson, Iqaluit, and Rankin Inlet.

The Federal Government accepted the Commission's recommendations concerning the transfer of responsibility for education, small business, public works, social assistance, and local government. The Government also accepted the proposal that Yellowknife becomes the capital. On January 18, 1967, this decision was made public amid a flurry of controversy. The reasons given were that Yellowknife was closest to the demographic centre of the territories and accessible to the most significant number of residents, telephone services, telegraph, radio and airport. It also had better building conditions and educational institutions.

On September 18, 1967, the Government of the Northwest Territories officially came north when Commissioner Stuart Hodgson, and eighty-one employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories, arrived in Yellowknife onboard a chartered DC-7.

### **1969 - The Rise of Indigenous Political Organizations**

Economic and political events in 1969 spurred the beginnings of several influential Indigenous political organizations. Southern corporations were moving north in ever-increasing numbers to explore and exploit mineral, oil, and gas resources in the Mackenzie River Valley, Beaufort Sea, and the Arctic Islands, thus disrupting the traditional Indigenous harvest. Meanwhile, the Canadian Government proposed the controversial ‘White Paper’ intended to dissolve the Indian Act, dismantle its Department of Indian Affairs and end special legal protections for Indigenous people. The White Paper did not include consultation with Indigenous groups, which caused an uproar. In response, Indigenous people, including a new generation of young, savvy leaders across Canada, organized themselves to protect their homelands.

The creation of political groups was inspired by traditional Indigenous political structures that had been in place before the fur trade. This Indigenous revival included new organizations representing the Dene, Métis, and Inuvialuit people of the Northwest Territories. These organizations ranged from political to cultural and spiritual. In October 1969, Dene voices joined the first meetings of the NWT chapter of the Indian Brotherhood. Pierre Catholique, Chief of Łutselk’e, noted, “Never again will one chief sit down with many government people. From now on, if 21 government people show up, 21 Indian members will be there too.” The Inuit and Métis quickly saw the value of empowering their voices. The Committee of Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE) met in January 1970, gathering those who wanted to speak for all original people of the NWT. Agnes Semmler became a powerful advocate for the recognition of Indigenous rights.

The Indian Brotherhood and COPE brought issues to the territorial and federal governments, “We functioned as a group of activists with links to the eastern Arctic, the southern Mackenzie and the central Arctic. It was unusual in those days and disconcerting to the newly formed GNWT,” Nellie Cournoyea, an active COPE leader, remembered. She noted that the establishment of the Hamlet, Village, and Town governments by the GNWT was questioned by the COPE participants as the imposition of this governance structure changed the relationships of territorial settlements with their people.

The Indian Brotherhood of the NWT, COPE, and the Métis Nation (organized in 1972) actively raised concerns over treaty violations, land use issues, and human rights abuses. Although these groups often worked independently, they were all part of a growing response to advance the rights of Indigenous people in the NWT and Canada.

### **1969 - GNWT Takes Control of Education**

In September 1969, following recommendations of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, the GNWT established the Department of Education. It officially took over responsibility for schools and schooling in the north from the Government of Canada.



The territorial government's Department of Education continued the process begun in 1955 under the federal government to expand the day school system, expand the number of community schools, and add grade levels to existing schools in the Northwest Territories.

During the 1969-70 school year, there were 10,291 students and 549 teachers in the Northwest Territories (which included the present-day Nunavut Territory) and "it was assumed that ... the goal of having every school-aged pupil in a classroom had finally been achieved." The federal government's expansion of day schools in the 1960s meant more students could attend elementary grades in their home communities.

But for many students, continuing their education meant leaving their families and home communities. They had to attend junior high and high school classes in larger communities. Some students arranged home boarding, but many were required to live in hostels or 'residential halls' in Yellowknife, Inuvik, Fort Simpson, Fort McPherson, or Fort Smith.

The Government of the Northwest Territories continued to build new schools and add grade levels to existing community schools throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. There became less of a need for residences; some were closed, and others began to be maintained by local or regional school boards. The last two large GNWT – formerly Federal — residences closed in the 1990s, with Akaitcho Hall in Yellowknife closing in 1994 and Grollier Hall in Inuvik in 1996.

For many, life in these residences was difficult. Separation from family, friends, community, and culture, as well as other harms inflicted, created numerous problems that our modern society is only coming to grips with today. In 2008 Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to all survivors of the residential school system.

Residential school history and stories are now actively taught in schools, and GNWT efforts support reconciliation within NWT communities.

### **1969 - The Rise of Indigenous Women Leaders**

1969 was a watershed year for Indigenous women leaders in the NWT. Agnes Semmler, Nellie Cournoyea, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, and Georgina 'Gina' Blondin all demonstrated that women's leadership roles were changing in the north. Many other women deserve to be recognized; these four represent the power of many who came before and after working to amplify Indigenous voices in the Northwest Territories.

Agnes Semmler founded the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE) and helped establish an Inuvialuit land claim agreement for the Beaufort Delta. Her tireless work promoting Inuvialuit concerns prepared her to take on the role of the first president of COPE and begin the process of negotiations for the Inuvialuit land claims. Agnes was considered a pioneer. She was the first NWT female Justice of the Peace and Deputy commissioner and dedicated her life to Indigenous women's issues.

Nellie Cournoyea also contributed to COPE. Elected for a territorial seat in 1979, she became the first female NWT Premier in 1991. She served in the NWT Legislature until 1995 and then as Inuvialuit Regional Corporation chairperson for over 20 years. Nellie Cournoyea propelled her Inuvialuit people into the second comprehensive northern land claim. She was, in the words of her legislative colleague, former premier Dennis Patterson, “a pivotal influence on the surviving and thriving of the Inuvialuit as a minority within the NWT. Her dedication to the Inuvialuit and the Northwest Territories earned her the Order of Canada in 2016.

In 1969, Ethel Blondin-Andrew was still finishing high school. Blondin-Andrew was educated at Grandin College and received her Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta in 1974. She ran for the newly created federal riding of the Western Arctic in 1988. She would become the longest-serving Indigenous woman Member of Parliament in Canada, elected for 18 years and holding various federal ministerial appointments.

Gina Blondin served as an official NWT delegate to various national events and helped draw broader public interest in the cultural contributions of Indigenous people. Gina completed both a Bachelor of Education and a Master’s degree. She participated in commercial ventures, including working with Pat Carney (later federal minister and senator) and Gemini North creating two reports for the GNWT on the Mackenzie Pipeline Proposal. She was an executive assistant within the legislature and helped edit her father George Blondin’s book “When the World was New; the Stories of the Sahtu Dene.” She died in 1990 after battling cancer.

The changing roles of women, their participation in the emerging Indigenous governments and their inclusion in the councils and legislature presented the NWT with diverse and vital perspectives. Semmler, Blondin, Cournoyea and Blondin-Andrew exemplified the varied and capable women leading the Indigenous resurgence in the North.

### **1973 - The Birth of Indigenous Land Claims**

Treaty 8 (1899) and Treaty 11 (1921) are historic treaties between the Dene and the Crown on behalf of the Government of Canada that cover much of the land that is today’s Northwest Territories. Since the negotiating and signing of these treaties, the disagreements over the meaning and purpose of the agreements have led to acts of resistance by the NWT Dene towards the Government of Canada.

The treaties state that the Dene “do hereby cede, release, surrender and yield up to the government of the Dominion of Canada, for His Majesty the King and his Successors forever, all their rights, titles and privileges,” to the land and its resources. The Dene claimed the Chiefs, who could not read or write in English, were told at the time of signing that the treaties were simply expressions of friendship and peace, that they were not selling or giving away their land, and that their right to hunt and fish would remain, “as long as the sun shines and the river flows.”

To fight for Dene rights and regain control over lands they had inhabited for thousands of years, the Dene, in 1969, formed an organization called the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories. In later years this organization was to become known as the Dene Nation.

On March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1973, 16 Dene Chiefs, the core of the Indian Brotherhood, attempted to register a caveat at the GNWT Land Titles Office to gain a legal interest in Crown land of the NWT. They claimed this interest in the land by virtue of their Aboriginal rights against the title of more than a million square kilometres of Crown land, almost all modern-day Northwest Territories. Chief Francois Paulette, from Smiths Landing First Nation, put his name on the application for the caveat. The Registrar of Land Titles rejected the application because it would have frozen all land transfers and industrial development in the Northwest Territories. The question of the caveat's legal validity was then referred to the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories for a ruling.

Supreme Court Justice William G. Morrow began hearing the case on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1973. Justice Morrow took a unique approach to listening to testimonies. His court travelled to all communities in the claimed area and heard oral evidence directly from Dene Elders, some of whom were present at the signing of Treaty 11 and remembered the treaty-making negotiations.

The issue was whether the Chiefs who signed Treaties 8 and 11 (or the Dene they represented) knew they were giving up 'ownership' of the land. Most witnesses were resolute in saying that the issue of land ownership was not raised during treaty negotiations. Discussions primarily focused on hunting and fishing rights and how the land and resources would be shared peacefully.

On September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1973, Justice Morrow found that the Dene "are the prima facie owners of the lands covered by the caveat – that they have what is known as aboriginal rights." He also found that "notwithstanding the language of the two Treaties, there is sufficient doubt on the facts that aboriginal title was extinguished that such claim for the title should be permitted to be put forward by the caveators."

The 16 Chiefs and the Dene they represented won their case, but the victory was short-lived. Morrow's decision allowing the placing of a caveat on a million square kilometres of land in the Northwest Territories was overturned on appeal to a higher court. This higher court did not question the ruling that Dene had 'aboriginal rights' to the land.

This partial victory made it evident that Indigenous land rights in the Northwest Territories needed clarification. In 1976 the Government of Canada, the Dene Nation, and the Métis Association of the Northwest Territories agreed to negotiate a Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement.

From 1981 to 1988, seven years of meetings resulted in an Agreement in Principle (AIP) with one central sticking point. The Government of Canada insisted that the Dene/Métis Comprehensive Land Claim include

surrendering Aboriginal Title to the land. Delegates at the 1990 Dene/Métis Annual General Assembly rejected the terms of this agreement.

With the breakdown of a single land claim that would have covered all of the NWT, the claim process became regionalized. Land Claim agreements were signed with the Inuvialuit (1984), Gwich'in (1992), Sahtu Dene/Métis (1994), and the Tłı̨chǫ included Land Claims and self-government provisions (2002). Negotiations are currently underway with the Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nation, the Dehcho First Nations, and the Northwest Territories Métis Nation.

### **1974 - The Berger Inquiry**

The Paulette Caveat and the Morrow Decision established the legal Dene right to the land of the NWT. Within a year, the importance of this shift was recognized in most communities up and down the Dehcho. Resource development would no longer take place without consulting Indigenous stakeholders.

A push for gas and oil exploration meant the need for a pipeline to carry the commodity south down the Mackenzie Valley. The new Mackenzie Valley pipeline was the largest megaproject ever proposed for the North, exceeding the size of the Canol pipeline 30 years earlier.

The federal government, led by Pierre Trudeau, provided incentives for oil and gas exploration in the Beaufort Sea. Companies such as Dome Petroleum, Esso, Shell, and Petro Canada searched for energy reserves to extract. The application for permission to construct the pipeline showed the growing need for consultation with affected people. The strengthening voices of the Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE) and the Indian Brotherhood ensured the hearings included Indigenous voices. They showed that Indigenous people were actively organizing, advocating and protecting their rights against outside interests.

In 1974 Justice Thomas Berger came to the North to consider the social, environmental, and economic impact that the pipeline's construction would have on all the people of the Mackenzie valley – Dene, Métis, Inuvialuit, and non-Indigenous. Justice Berger went directly to the people who would be affected most by the construction of the pipeline. Berger went a step further than chairing the consultations; he insisted that the meetings be shared on local radio in Indigenous languages. His insistence created a core of bilingual interpreters who followed the hearings and shared information with their communities so that they could access it in their language.

Chief Frank T'Seleie spoke for the Dene people of Fort Good Hope. His message to the Inquiry and the oil consortium was clear: "We are only asking now, as we asked you then, to let us live our own lives in our own way, on our own land without forever being threatened by invasion and extinction, we do not want to have to fight and struggle forever just to survive as a people." He continued, "Mr. Berger, there will be no pipeline."

Judge Berger listened to Chief T'Seleie and the people from 35 northern communities. In Old Crow, a settlement of 250 people, 81 spoke. The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry ended in 1977 with the final publishing of *The Northern Frontier, the Northern Homeland: The report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry (MPVI)*, more commonly known as "The Berger Report." The final report was published with over 500 pages and over 40,000 pages of text and evidence comprising 283 volumes. The Report recommended a ten-year moratorium on constructing a pipeline. The moratorium was intended to allow time to settle land claims in the areas that would be affected by the construction and use of the pipeline. The Inquiry presented Dene, Inuvialuit and Cree as integral to the Canadian identity and validated their Indigenous right to be consulted on development projects that occur on their land. The new age of land claims and treaty negotiations began.

### **1981 - The Mooseskin Boat Project**

With the 19th century arrival of fur traders in the Mackenzie valley, the lives of the Shuhtaot'ine or Mountain Dene changed dramatically. The fur trading posts of Tulita (Fort Norman), Fort Good Hope, Fort Simpson, and Fort Liard became more central to their lives. From the late 19th century to the 1950s, the Mountain Dene would travel each year down from the Mackenzie Mountains to these trading posts in large mooseskin boats.

It has been suggested that the Shuhtaot'ine created this new boat technology by adapting the basic design of the fur traders' York boats to produce a craft that suited the conditions of mountain rivers. The mooseskin boats typically measured 14 metres (46 feet) and were created with materials from the land. They were constructed with a spruce wood frame, and a covering of raw moose hides sewn together with sinew.

These large boats were made early each summer, high in the mountains at the winter encampments. The boats would then transport people, dogs, meat, furs, and other goods down the fast-flowing mountain rivers to the Mackenzie and then to the trading posts.

Designed as temporary craft, the boats were dismantled after their journey. The moose hides used in the boats were then tanned and used for clothing and other items. By the 1950s, the mooseskin boat had virtually disappeared from the material culture of the Mountain Dene, and only a few Elders knew how to make them.

In 1981, Raymond Yakeleya of the Native Communications Society approached Gabe Etchinelle of Tulita with an idea to create a mooseskin boat and document the process on film. The GNWT Department of Information, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, and the National Film Board of Canada committed funds towards the project.

Elders from Tulita and Délı̄nę led by Gabe Etchinelle were commissioned to build a boat. Filmmakers Raymond Yakeleya and Bill Stewart documented the boat's construction, life activities in the bush camp, and

the boat's journey from the headwaters of the Keele River to Fort Norman, resulting in the 1981 NFB documentary "The Last Mooseskin Boat."

In return for its contributions to the project, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre received the finished boat for its permanent collection. After a year-long acclimatization and treatment, the boat was brought from its storage to an environmentally controlled gallery at the Heritage Centre, where it remains on display.

Despite the name of the 1981 documentary, traditional mooseskin boat-building projects have continued in the Dehcho and the Sahtu regions. In 2008 a boat was built in Tulita, and in 2018 a boat was launched on the Nahanni River as a reconciliation activity to connect, heal, and inspire all who participated.

### **1994 - Sahtu Land Claim**

In July of 1993, the 2400 Dene and Métis from the Northwest Territories communities of Tulita, Norman Wells, Fort Good Hope, Déljine and Colville Lake voted to accept the terms of a comprehensive land claim agreement. This agreement covered lands within the Sahtu Settlement Area adjacent to Great Bear Lake and along the Mackenzie River west of Great Bear Lake.

In September 1991, after the Dene/Métis Comprehensive Land Claim failed, the Sahtu Tribal Council began regional land claim negotiations with the Federal Government. An Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) was quickly reached based on the previous Dene/Métis negotiations.

For some Dene and Métis, terms of the AIP were unacceptable; they claimed Dene/Métis were giving up too much. During the final week of the ratification vote, Sahtu leaders launched an information campaign to convince voters that the deal was good. Chief Everett Kakfwi of Fort Good Hope is quoted as saying, "Some people are dreaming, saying that we can get a better deal. But let's wake up. We know we have to share lands with the rest of Canada."

The terms of the land claim agreement received a substantial 85% approval in the July 1993 ratification vote held in the Sahtu communities. A Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement was signed in September 1993, and final Parliamentary approval was given on June 23, 1994.

Through this land claim agreement, the Sahtu Dene and Métis received legal title to 39,624 square kilometres of land, an area comparable in size to Vancouver Island. The agreement also included title, plus subsurface rights, to an additional 1,813 square kilometres and financial compensation of \$75 million (in 1990 dollars) paid out over 15 years. The Sahtu Dene and Métis will also receive a share of royalties from resource development in the Mackenzie valley.



For many Sahtu Dene and Métis, affirmation of their Indigenous Right to hunt and fish was an essential part of the Sahtu Dene and Métis Land Claim Agreement. The Sahtu Dene and Métis were also “guaranteed participation in institutions of public government (IPGs) for renewable resource management, land use planning, and land and water use within the SSA [Sahtu Settlement Area], and environmental impact assessment and review within the Mackenzie Valley.”

### **2001 - National Indigenous Peoples Day**

June 21<sup>st</sup> is the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere. The NWT celebrates this day as National Indigenous Peoples Day to honour the traditions and heritage of all Indigenous people. In 1996 the Governor General announced it as National Aboriginal Day (changed to Indigenous Peoples Day in 2017). In 2001 The NWT legislative Assembly declared June 21 a statutory holiday. It remains one of the few jurisdictions within Canada to do so.

Across the territory, celebrations include cultural demonstrations, art, songs, dances and traditional food. In Behchokò traditional Hand Games are played, along with a parade, BBQ and drum dance. Fort Simpson celebrates with canoe races on the Deh Cho or Big River (Mackenzie River). K’atlo’deeche First Nations, near Hay River, also holds canoe races, axe throwing and a fish fry

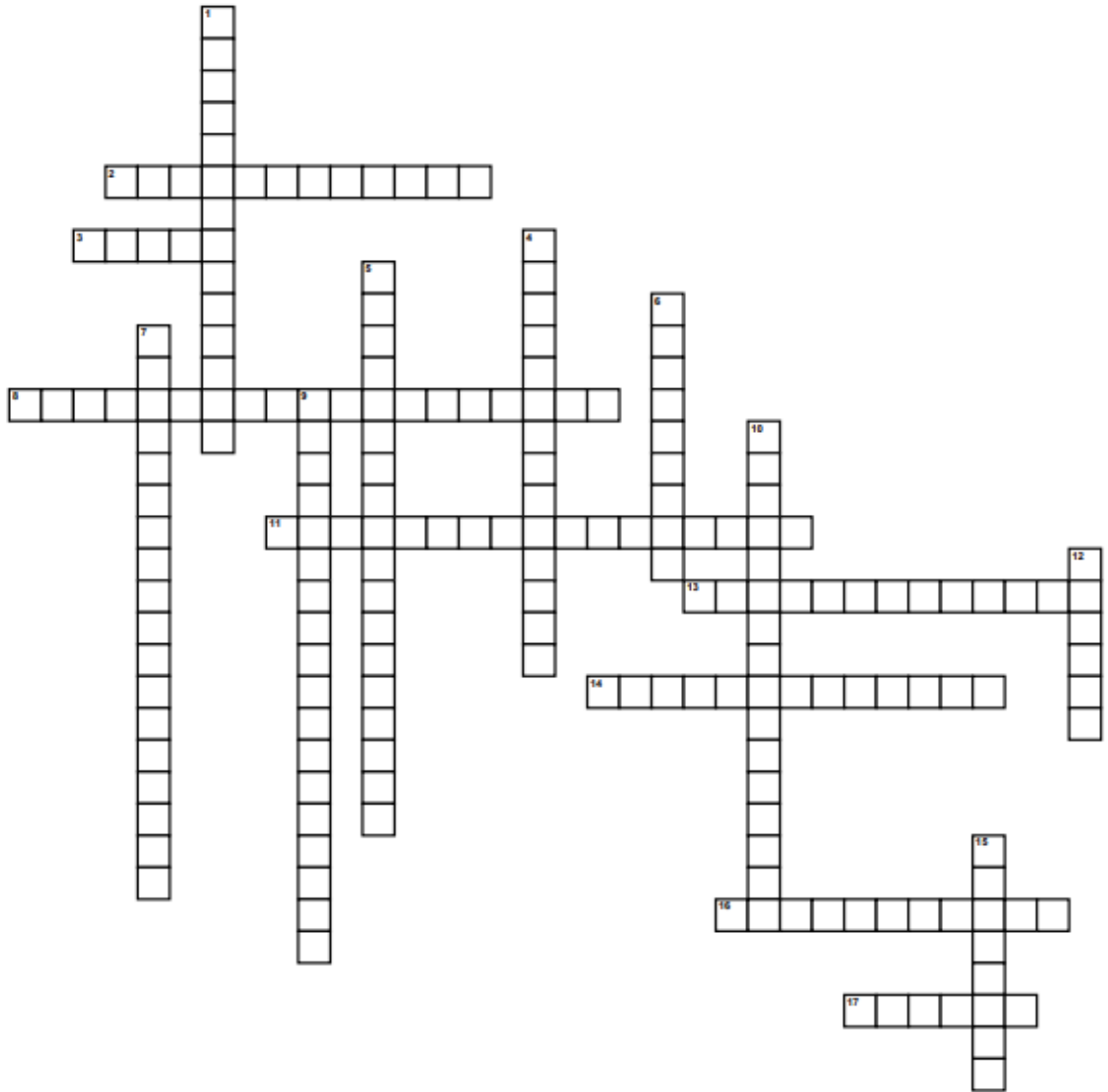
Délı̄nę searches for the best bannock, and Norman Wells has canoe races, jigging and fiddle music to showcase Indigenous talent. Above the Arctic Circle is the Inuvik blanket toss to see who can jump higher than all other competitors; this skill practices seeing long distances to spot caribou and muskox.

In Yellowknife, the North Slave Métis Alliance hosts a fish fry where free whitefish is prepared and served to anyone who shows up. Often, the attendance is upwards of 7,000 people, and over 3,000 fillets are served along with bannock pork, corn, beans, fruit, and refreshments. Although it is a great treat, the food isn’t the only part of the day. Indigenous artists come from all over the territory to perform at the event, and children have fun getting their faces painted and enjoy puppet shows.

National Indigenous Peoples Day is a wonderful celebration of Indigenous culture across the territory.

**[Want to learn more? Go to NWTTIMELINE.ca for all the information you want on the NWT Timeline that I have missed because it would make this newsletter into a book!](http://NWTTIMELINE.ca)**

# Tulita Crossword



## Across

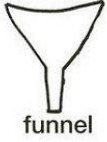
- [2] Where Bert and Ernie stay.
- [3] Where we hold events and handgames.
- [8] Members or Beneficiaries go to.
- [11] The Treaty 11 Chief or school.
- [13] Official name of health center.
- [14] Where you buy bebsi.
- [16] Where they look after national parks.
- [17] Mountain or Company.

## Down

- [1] Members or Beneficiaries go to.
- [4] Members or Beneficiaries go to.
- [5] Mountain near us.
- [6] Name of Hotel.
- [7] Church up town.
- [9] Jump on their planes for business, medical, or vacation.
- [10] Church down town.
- [12] Yamoria used their hides to put on Bear Rock.
- [15] Mountain near us.

# Playing hide-and-seeK?

Can you find these things in the big picture?



funnel



ice-cream cone



candle



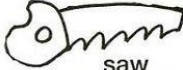
fork



baseball cap



teacup



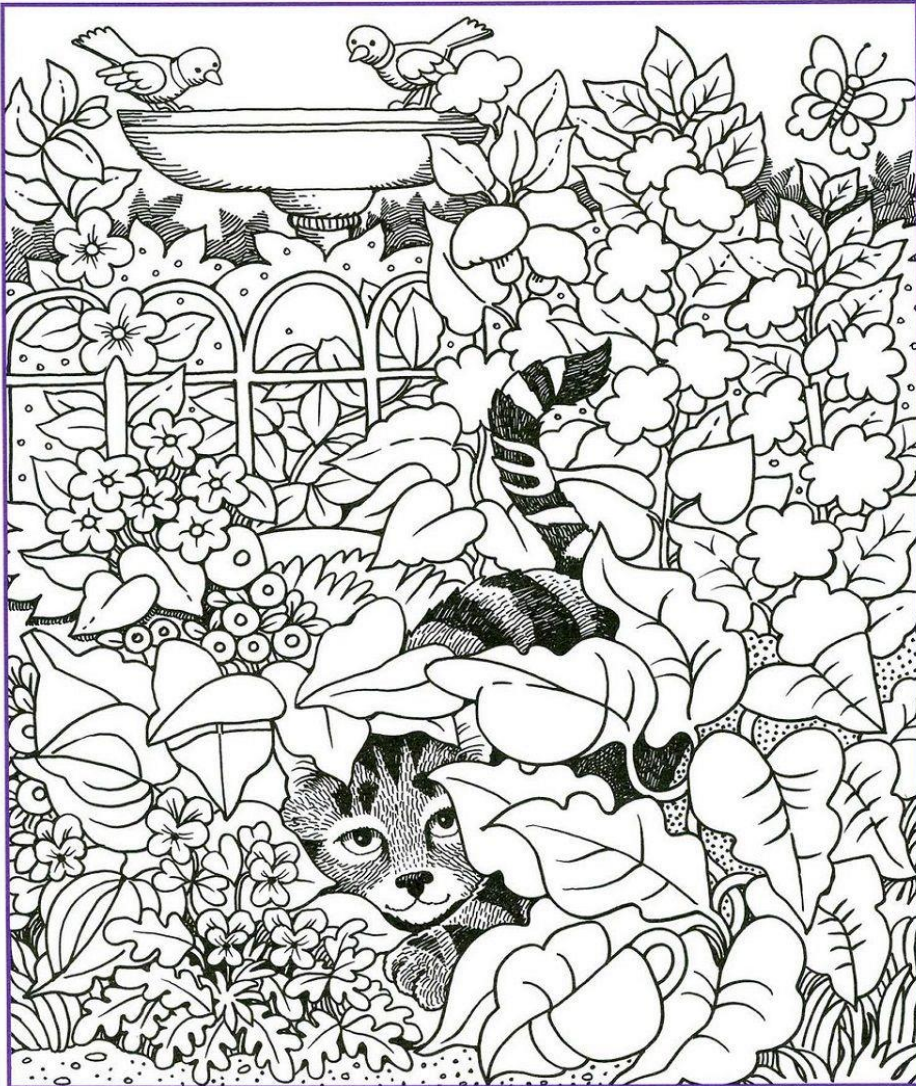
saw



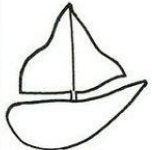
shoe



mushroom



banana



sailing boat



crescent moon



heart



cupcake

Thank you for reading!  
Tulita Land Corporation

Please call (867) 588 3734 or email Kerri at [tlfc.2018@hotmail.com](mailto:tlfc.2018@hotmail.com) for any corrections or additions to the next newsletter.