

# TOURISM TIMES

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## *Chair's Message – Rod Taylor*

In the last Tourism Times I spoke of the need to increase the scale and quality of the tourism product offered in the Territory. Since then initiatives to support this effort have begun. The first is the fact that the Senior Marketing Committee has formally included product development as a strategic priority for the industry and the Department of Tourism. As simple as this sounds it is a paradigm shift of potentially significant consequence.

Secondly, in response to the Committee's request, the Department has embarked on a comprehensive inventory initiative, which for the first time will provide both industry and government with an accurate tally of exactly how many operators in all sectors exist in the Yukon and the basic metrics of each of these businesses. Again, this appears to be a simple enough proposal but it is a crucial step that we have never taken.

In the past our marketing efforts have at times appeared to be the cart before the horse as we spent marketing funds without knowing precisely what products would be offered to the visitors we attracted nor the capacity that each operator/sector currently had. It has been suggested that we operate within the context of the chicken and the egg. That we need more product to attract more visitors but we need more visitors to support the creation of more product. This is a fallacy. In the long term product will always drive visitation. And it will always be the entrepreneurial spirit and commitment of our operators that drives the creation of this product. Nothing ventured nothing gained.

All the best to our members for the coming holidays and best wishes for a successful winter season.



## *On behalf of the Yukon Government, I would like*

*to wish everyone a Wonderful Holiday Season.*

2010 is sure to be an exciting time for those committed to growing Yukon's tourism industry. We have much to look forward to, with events such as the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games that give us an unprecedented opportunity to showcase our beautiful territory and talented people.

The excitement is building for our performers, artists and Arctic and Dene games athletes who will soon be on the ground at a number of greater Vancouver venues, entertaining the crowds and showcasing the breadth of Yukon culture.

Olympic legacies will bring benefits back to Yukon in the form of growth opportunities in arts, culture, heritage, tourism, economic development and First Nation experiences.

As 2010 approaches, and we begin planning for next year's exciting activities, the Department of Tourism and Culture is proud to continue its work with industry.

The tourism marketing initiatives and partnerships which keep Yukon a much sought after destination-of-choice are the foundation that helps to keep tourism a strong economic generator for the territory.  
Happy Holidays!

Elaine Taylor  
Minister of Tourism and Culture



**Message  
from the Executive  
Director,  
Sandy Hachey**

2009 was a year of challenge and change for Yukon's tourism industry. The year saw us encounter an unprecedented economic downturn, continued challenges in the labour market, lobby efforts for the protection of tourism assets and continued growth with our tourism partners and stakeholders.

Recently, TIA Yukon conducted a barometer survey with the membership to measure business growth and/or decline. We are happy to report that the majority of businesses who answered the survey reported no change or slight increases in business over the 2008 summer season.

We hosted a very successful annual Fall Round Up on October 29th, where we discussed the issue of product development; recognizing that we need to expand our product offerings to remain competitive in today's market.

We've worked with tourism partners and project stakeholders to bring issues to light such as the impact the mv Yukon Queen II has on Yukon's economy and the importance of protection of the Three Rivers area of the Peel River Watershed. We've also worked collaboratively with the Yukon Chamber of Mines and Klondike Placer Miners Association on the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between our two industries; allowing us to understand the importance of both industries in our Territory.

In 2010, TIA Yukon will continue our efforts focusing on product development and value-added opportunities for our membership. We look forward to a new year of working closely with our industry partners and stakeholders to develop new initiatives and opportunities for the tourism industry as a whole.

To all of our operators, alliances, stakeholders and partners, we wish you a very safe and happy holiday season and continued growth and success in 2010!



**Yukon Quest and Great River Journey were finalists in the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's National Awards for Tourism Excellence. The Yukon delegation at the Canada's Tourism Leadership Summit in Saint John, New Brunswick included (from left to right): Sandy Hachey, Pierre Germaine, Dee Enright, Judy Gingell, George Asquith, Wendy Morrison and Brian Alexander.**

**Senior Marketing Committee/  
Yukon Tourism Marketing Partnership**



The Senior Marketing Committee is comprised of appointed industry representatives with tourism marketing experience and skills related to tourism. On behalf of industry, the committee makes recommendations to the Department of Tourism & Culture on tourism marketing strategies, plans, performance, product development and research and annual budget allocations.

Recently SMC recommendations were to:

- ✓ support overseas marketing to retention markets (Germany and Switzerland), to growth markets (UK and Australia) and to acquisition markets (Japan, Netherlands, South Korea, France and New Zealand)
- ✓ make available to industry the department's media buying schedule to maximize leveraging opportunities for Yukon operators
- ✓ invite non-governmental organizations – WTAY, YCB and Yukon Quest International – to key SMC meetings to share their program goals and objectives with the intent of increasing cooperation and integration of marketing messages with the department.

**Report from the Klondike Visitors Association**



Good news. Against the backdrop of a worldwide economic recession and in spite of an overall downturn of approximately 10% in Yukon visitation, many of Dawson's individual tourism businesses reported a very successful 2009 season. That said, the tourism economy also experienced some stark reminders and setbacks this year.

We can hope the downside is a one-time blip that will improve as the economy improves and take solace in the view that: "It was ok because it could have been worse". We also know from experience there will always be external forces that directly affect local tourism but are mostly beyond local control. Even at worst, these are all relatively short-term and circumstantial. Successful businesses can and do develop contingency mechanisms in response.

However - not that anyone would underestimate the dire potential consequences of a global financial system meltdown or any other disaster scenario - beyond external forces, speaking for Dawson in particular, 2009 also reinforces longer-term internal challenges and negative trends in our industry that must be acknowledged and addressed if the Klondike is to remain a thriving focal point of Yukon tourism.

In that context, in 2007 TIA Yukon initiated a multiphase, Yukon-wide tourism industry, business planning exercise. Early on, Product Development and Destination Area Development were established as strategic priorities and the Klondike region was identified as a key destination node with existing but diminishing and underdeveloped potential. During the winter and spring of 2009, TIAY and KVA worked with a consulting team to complete a Dawson specific "gap analysis": What does Dawson have and what does Dawson need to grow and flourish as a hub that attracts and supports tourism enterprise. The resulting final report, presented in May 2009, serves as an objective and informed third party analysis with recommendations.

Not surprisingly, the report concludes that Dawson's strength and potential as a nodal tourism destination is tied to products, services and attractions based on Klondike Gold Rush history, ancestral heritage, northern authenticity and nearness to spectacular scenery and wildlife. The report also confirms that visitation and yields have been declining over the past decade and it identifies gaps that are barriers to sustainability and growth. Some of these are: absence of core attractions, 2 nights stay threshold, over concentration of low-mid range/low yield services, extreme seasonality, underdeveloped ancestral product offerings, insufficient resources for differentiated marketing plus limited packaging and no easy access to central point of sales.

In its role as a regional destination organization, representing corporate members and industry stakeholders, KVA is actively responding as advocate and catalyst to implementation of several of the recommendations. Current initiatives include an outcome-oriented feasibility and business planning project to attract a branded show to the Palace Grand theatre and, development of a pilot project for a central online point of sales. We are also continuing to re-assess our own attractions and special events, notably Diamond Tooth Gerties Gambling Hall and Jack London Museum, to ensure they are the best they can be.

We are looking forward to looking forward. Getting there may be daunting but the destination is simple: There's no place better than Yukon and you haven't seen Yukon if you haven't been to Dawson City. See you.

**The Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon was chartered to serve wilderness tourism businesses in the Yukon.**

The WTAY actively watches over the business and regulatory environment affecting member businesses and engages as required to help businesses achieve the best return on investment in a sustainable environment.

WTAY also manages Yukon Wild, the cooperative marketing initiative that is a partnership between WTAY and Yukon Tourism.

Lately the WTAY has been active in dealing with Transport Canada regulations related to rafting, ongoing land access issues, sustainability issues related to the Peel watershed, updating the Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act and a number of simmering issues.

The office is ably managed by Janice Sibbeston who keeps daily hours. Feel free to contact her for more information about the WTAY at (867) 668-3369 or wtay@klondiker.com See www.wtay.com



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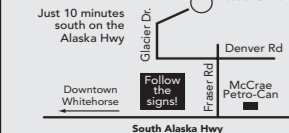


Located high on the banks of the Yukon River just south of Whitehorse, the Copper Moon Gallery boasts 2000sq. ft of northern fine art and traditional gifts from across the North.

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have a little fun!



**TIA Yukon's  
Holiday Open House**

Join the TIA Yukon Staff for some Holiday Cheer!  
Wednesday, December 16th from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.  
at the TIA Yukon Office in the White Pass Building.

**YTFE Yukon Tourism  
Training Fund**

**Did you know that you could receive funding for up to 75% of eligible costs associated with tourism training to a maximum of \$3,000. If you are seeking entry level skill development, seasonal/wilderness training, or professional skills development for a career in tourism you could be eligible. Businesses, non-profits, and organizations wishing to provide training to the tourism industry may receive up to 75% off the cost of implementation to a maximum of \$5,000.**

Remember that you must apply to the fund before training begins and application approvals will only occur 4 times a year. The next application deadline is Monday, February 15, 2010.

Call 668-3331 or visit www.ytfe.ca for information and applications.



**Giovanni Castellarin  
Scholarship Fund (GCSF)**



In memory of Giovanni Castellarin, owner of the Triple J Hotel in Dawson City and tourism champion for Yukon, this scholarship is intended to assist Yukoners entering or currently enrolled in a post-secondary tourism related program.

The scholarship application deadline has been extended to **December 14, 2009.**

Application forms are available on the TIA Yukon website www.tiayukon.com. For more information and details, please contact our office at tiayukon@klondiker.com





**Yukon Historical & Museums Association (YHMA) advocates on behalf of heritage, Museums and Cultural centers in the Yukon. We promote, protect and preserve heritage. Yukon Museums hold a vast amount of information; did you know that there are currently 18 museums and Cultural Centres here in Yukon?**

In October we held Governing Under the Midnight Sun conference. Over 100 people attended; including people from Alaska to Ontario. The conference ran from October 22-26, 2009. We celebrated the 100th anniversary of the elected Yukon Legislative Assembly, the 50th anniversary of Alaska Statehood, and developments in Aboriginal governments in the region. A variety of people spoke on the issues of governance in the north, which included talks on Federal, Territorial, Statehood and First Nation governments and how small events changed the way governing is done today in Alaska and the Yukon. Panelist papers, voice clips and photographs will be on our website soon.

YHMA attended a meeting with the Canada Science and Technology museum held at the Gold Rush Inn. CSTM is looking for support from Canadians to move to a new location that is more central and easier to access. They are currently collecting information on northern innovation.

YHMA attended the Northern Economic Development meeting. The Federal Government is looking for input from the North; a few issues and solutions YHMA brought to the table was funding cuts, training and retaining professionals, National Museum policies, gas prices, passports and Commercial Heritage Investment Program. We will have this session link to our website when it is available from the House of Commons.

The Heritage after Hours is a wonderful way to network with the people in heritage and enjoy a short talk on topics from funding to heritage sites. January 13th Heritage after Hours guest speaker is Brian Groves who will discuss Special Project Grant Applications.

The Heritage Training Fund (HTF) is funded by the Department of Education, Advanced Education and is administered by the Yukon Historical & Museums Association. Applications are reviewed by a committee of up to five members representing heritage sectors and are assessed based on eligibility, merit and an ability to meet fund criteria. The Heritage Training Fund is to fund short-term training which will advance and enhance Yukon independent heritage workers, groups, and collectives of workers' capacity to obtain or create employment and provide prospective employers with a better trained heritage labour force.

The Heritage Training Trust Fund next in take is February 17, 2010.

For more information visit our web site at [www.heritageyukon.ca](http://www.heritageyukon.ca)

*Thank You!*

Thanks to all the sponsors and members who donated items for the 2009 Fall Round Up. We are grateful for your support in making this event a success!

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TIA Yukon staff: L-R Sandy, Tiffany and Amanda

*Season's Greetings*

**from the staff and board of directors of TIA Yukon**

Please note the TIA Yukon office is closed for the holiday season December 24, 2009 - January 1, 2010. The office will reopen on Monday, January 4, 2010. We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season - see you all in the New Year!

