

Tourism Times

Sustainable Seasons Greetings!



Chair's Message
Neil Hartling

Last week I received the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Sustainable Tourism Award. It was a great honour and, in truth, the credit goes to my entire team and partners outside our business as well.

The award is sponsored by Parks Canada and the point is to encourage businesses to seek ways to operate more sustainably. The good news is that many sustainable initiatives also lead to cost savings in the long term and enhance the value of a company. But most importantly, increasing sustainability is good for our grandchildren and future generations.

We will not be remembered 50 years from now for the return on investment

we achieved in the 4th quarter. In 2060, we will be remembered (in ways we would like to be) for our actions that served to keep the planet inhabitable.

In the river guiding business we say: "look downstream." I would add to that: "look far."

We will know we have made a difference when there is no longer a need for a sustainability award. Eventually, we will see the day when sustainability is implicit with every business award. That will be a good day!

My season's wish to you: have a green Christmas – but with lots of snow!

Neil



Executive Director's Message

Krista Prochazka

2011 was an unprecedented year – in Yukon and around the world. Economically, the world seemed to have suffered tremendous lows, while all around us, we're told Yukon was at an all time high.

As an industry, we can find some comfort in stability. Despite the economic chaos surrounding us, Yukon remained a destination of choice and our visitor numbers, unlike so many other jurisdictions, remain relatively unchanged.

But the world is changing all around us, and we cannot rest on our laurels. Our visitors are changing, and so are their expectations. Our Yukon is changing too, and we have seen some real challenges in running a tourism business with no staff, no hotel rooms and a very busy backcountry. This unprecedented growth will be great for some members, and will be incredibly difficult for others, but as an industry – and an industry association – we can, and will, adapt.

I would like to welcome our new TIA Yukon Board, Senior Marketing Committee and Yukon Tourism Training Fund committee members, and to thank those committed volunteers who retired this year.



Thank you to Minister Elaine Taylor for your long-time support; you will be missed. And welcome to our new Minister, Mike Nixon, and all members of the Caucus; we look forward to working with you in the New Year.

To all of our operators, stakeholders and partners, thank you for your contributions to tourism in Yukon. We wish you a very safe and happy holiday season and continued growth and success in 2012!

Yukon businesses honoured at 2011 Canadian Tourism Awards



Congratulations to Nahanni River Adventures and Canadian River Expeditions, winner of the Parks Canada Sustainable Tourism Award, one of fourteen 2011 Canadian Tourism Awards presented by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC). Nahanni River Adventures and Canadian River Expeditions' owner and operator Neil Hartling, shown above with Parks Canada CEO Alan Latourelle, accepted the award on November 24 in Ottawa. Also recognized during the awards gala was Yukon business Fritz Mueller Photography, one of three national finalists for the Corporate Partner of the Year Award.



Update from the Klondike Visitors Association (KVA)

... *There's gold, and it's haunting and haunting: It's luring me on as of old; Yet it isn't the gold that I'm wanting so much as just finding the gold.* Robert Service's *The Spell of the Yukon* is a triumph of metaphor and language. It speaks to the costs and harsh necessities of resource extraction but it also captures the essence and eternal values of experiential travel. It endures as one of the best ever Yukon promotions – for mining and tourism – then, now and always.

Literally speaking, 2011 was certainly a year when many came who *wanted the gold*. Record high gold prices arising from uncertain global economies attracted a record numbers of exploration companies. Local and regional businesses that provide related services and supplies benefited from an "exploration rush". For example, airlines, expeditors and many hotels had a very busy summer based on mining exploration traffic – but history reminds us a "boom" is often followed by a "bust," so it remains to be seen how sustainable that will be.

Meanwhile, the tourism economy keeps making its significant and important contribution, and the Klondike Visitors Association (KVA) continues to be fully engaged as a voice for Klondike tourism. We regularly meet with senior representatives of the Yukon Government, Department of Tourism. We sit on the board of TIA Yukon and on TIA Yukon's Senior Marketing Committee, and we work closely with our membership and community stakeholders to market and promote our destination.

We also present and support special events throughout the year, and operate seasonal attractions that contribute to the Yukon tourism economy and enhance the quality of life in our community. KVA is a self-sustaining, not-for-profit association. All revenues from all of our operations are reinvested in the community. A few of KVA's many ongoing attractions and activities are: **Diamond Tooth Gerties Gambling Hall**,

Jack London Cabin and Museum, KVA Free Claim, Yukon Gold Panning Championships, Great Klondike International Outhouse Race and Authors on 8th Writing Competition.

KVA has also had long-time involvement in the annual **Trek Over the Top** international snowmobiling event. During each of 2 weekends in early March, approximately 150 sledders travel across the Top of the World Highway from Tok, Alaska to Dawson City. In 2011, KVA took on full Canadian-side ownership and responsibility for marketing and planning. For almost 20 years **Trek Over the Top** has been a premier Yukon winter tourism event, providing a huge boost to Dawson's winter economy. We expect it will continue to succeed and grow. For more information check out www.trekoverthetop.com.

Another recent KVA initiative is the **Central Reservations** online booking system accessible on KVA's website www.dawsoncity.ca. With financial support from CanNor, we launched a pilot project in May that enables online research, booking and payment for accommodations, attractions and tours as one-offs or as part of a package. It's a localized version of Expedia or Travelocity. Currently, approximately 20 businesses have signed on and more than 150 transactions have been processed. It's early days yet and KVA has been subsidizing costs during the pilot project, but the intention is for the system to expand and pay for itself.

And, we're still working on **UNESCO World Heritage Site Designation** plus a lot of other things. Suffice to say – as we happily tell anyone who will listen: You haven't seen the Yukon if you haven't been to the Klondike! It may or may not be larger than life but, for sure: *There's a land – oh, it beckons and beckons.*

Happy Holidays everyone.



Senior Marketing Committee Update

It's been another busy year with the Senior Marketing Committee (SMC). SMC is the industry's voice for tourism marketing in the Yukon and we encourage you to stay involved in our resolutions. SMC meets quarterly and resolutions are forwarded to the TIA board for approval before being sent to Tourism Yukon for action. Priorities for 2012 include visitor research, digital marketing strategy, and media relations strategy.

Thanks to the industry members who put their names forward for consideration to participate in SMC in 2011-12. Thanks also to outgoing SMC Chair Rich Thompson and Vice Chair Patricia Cuning, as well as our government partners, for your support and professionalism.

– Robin Anderson, SMC Chair

Here is your 2011-12 SMC Committee:

Industry

Robin Anderson (Chair) - Ruby Range Adventure
Marsha Cameron - Boréale Mountain Biking
Patricia Cuning - MacBride Museum
Torsten Eder - Northern Tales Travel Services Inc.
Mary Ann Ferguson - Westmark Hotels, Yukon
Bill Fletcher - Holland America Line
Neil Hartling - Canadian River Expeditions; Nahanni River Adventures
Bernie Lehmann - Fraserway RV
Jorn Meier - Klondike Visitors Association
Debra Ryan - Air North, Yukon's Airline
Sarah Stuecker - Tagish Wilderness Lodge

Industry continued

Rod Taylor - Uncombin Journeys
Rich Thompson - Northern Vision Development
Mary-Jane Warshawski - The Taku Sports Group

Yukon Government

Pierre Germain - Tourism & Culture
Denny Kobayashi - Tourism & Culture
Rick Lemaire - Tourism & Culture (ex-officio)
Barb Dunlop - Economic Development (ex-officio)

TIA Yukon

Krista Prochazka - Executive Director, TIA Yukon

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Yukon
Convention Bureau

Update from the Yukon Convention Bureau (YCB)

The Yukon Convention Bureau (YCB) saw a number of positive changes throughout 2011. Most notably were the changes to our sales and marketing plan for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. In our constantly evolving MC&IT market, the past years have seen an increase in Destination Marketing Companies (DMCs) and certified and professional meeting/events planners (CMP's). As these services are available locally, YCB reallocated its Group Servicing resources to our sales and marketing efforts. This shift has allowed YCB to increase our sales activities with sales events and trade-shows.

Travelling in market to Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto and Ottawa an estimated 9 times annually allows our tourism industry partners a number of opportunities to join YCB in these endeavors. The costs and travel times vary greatly, allowing both large and small tourism business an opportunity to see a worthy ROI for these activities. YCB continues to encourage our members to partner for these events, as when the number of participants grow, the lower the overall cost is for everyone. Compared to our other Canadian destination marketing counterparts, Yukon is a

large player on a small budget. Our biggest opportunity is to partner together, ensuring Yukon continues to be recognized as an attractive and affordable destination.

2011 also found YCB in a new home. June 27th we moved to our new office location in the White Pass building, which allows us to be in direct communication with TIA Yukon, the tourism business sector and its current events. YCB also made changes to our staffing roles and found a new face for our Sales Manager, Mike Collins, increasing YCB's professional experience and industry awareness.

On behalf of YCB's board and staff, we wish all of our members, sponsors and industry partners a wonderful holiday season and much success in 2012.

Alida Munro, Manager
Yukon Convention Bureau



Update from the Wilderness Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon (WTAY)

What has Wilderness Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon been up to this year?

Our Board of Directors has been working hard to advance the Wilderness Tourism Industry, through advocacy, lobbying, education, stewardship, and marketing.

This year, WTAY continued to be a persistent advocate for the protection of unspoiled lands and the development of a Commercial Wilderness Lands Policy. As well, WTAY represents the interests of our members by providing written submission or attending public meetings on issues that may have an impact on our industry. Furthermore, WTAY, with funding support from the Yukon Government, has spent the last year offering professional development and training opportunities for those in the wilderness tourism sector. Such workshops included: Crisis

Communication, Leave No Trace, Natural History Interpretation and Small Vessel Operator Proficiency.

WTAY's membership is comprised mostly of small, family owned and operated businesses, who have agreed to follow a responsible Code of Conduct. Our members consider the environment and employ the highest of industry standards when designing their unique and valuable tourism experiences. In providing a voice for these members, WTAY seeks to ensure that the Yukon's wilderness tourism industry has a long, successful and sustainable future!

On behalf of our staff and board members, at the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon, we wish you and yours the happiest of holidays!



Yukon Historical & Museums Association

Update from the Yukon Historical & Museums Association (YHMA)

The Yukon Historical & Museums Association (YHMA) has been busy this year. Our heritage walking tours, offered between June and August, hosted 720 people and an additional 600 people participated in other programs and events.

We have also seen an increase in the use of our Heritage Training Fund. This year we received 26 applications for a total of 56 participants compared to last year when we received 28 applications and 47 participants. YHMA partners with the University of Victoria's Cultural Management program and this year offered a six-day Financial Management course and a two-day Fundraising workshop for cultural organizations.

YHMA, Yukon Arts Centre and Yukon Artists at Work partnered to host Culture Days and Doors Open – this was an amazing event that included live entertainment, a behind-the-scenes look at studios, and a mystery tour in downtown Whitehorse. Over 300 people participated, and next year we would like to bring this event into the communities.

YHMA has developed downloadable walking tours in Whitehorse for fall and winter visitors. These tours can be found at www.heritageyukon.ca and include a heritage walk, a memory walk and an art walk. From this project came the development of an Art Walk brochure that will be

available this summer. This brochure features 25 pieces of art found in downtown Whitehorse.

Yukon students in grades 4-9 are preparing for this year's Heritage Fair on May 3, 2012 at the Yukon Transportation Museum and the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre. This event showcases the students' research on Canadian history. Each year we see 60-80 wonderful student projects presented to judges and the public.

YHMA is working to bring the Canadian Museums Association National Annual Conference (CMA) to Yukon in 2013. The CMA conference was one of the first conferences to come to Yukon in 1998, a time when we had only eight museums. Today we have 20 museums, cultural and interpretive centres and we have formed partnerships not seen elsewhere in Canada. We have a lot to be proud of and we are looking forward to sharing this knowledge with our peers.

Tracey Anderson, Executive Director
Yukon Historical & Museums Association

Season's Greetings



TIA Yukon Staff L to R: Emilie Joslin, Tracey White, Jennifer Sugden, Krista Prochazka

FROM THE STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT TIA YUKON

Please note the TIA Yukon office is closed for the holiday season **Monday, December 26, 2011 – Monday, January 2, 2012.**

The office will reopen on Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season – see you all in the New Year!

Season's Greetings

from your friends at The Deck and the High Country Inn and Convention Centre.

We will be closed for renovations from December 18, 2011 until January 28th, 2012.

Thank you for making 2011 such a successful year and we look forward to serving you again in 2012.



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Holiday Open House

with TIA Yukon, the Yukon Convention Bureau, and Nakai Theatre

Thursday, December 15th
4:30pm to 7pm

TIA Yukon office, 2nd Floor White Pass Building

This year we're excited to be hosting our annual Holiday Open House along with fellow White Pass Building residents Nakai Theatre and the Yukon Convention Bureau!

Stop by for a drink and some holiday goodies - hope to see you there!

DEADLINE EXTENDED!

Giovanni Castellarin Scholarship Fund (GCSF)

The GCSF was established in 2002, in memory of Giovanni Castellarin, long time champion of tourism for the Klondike and the Yukon. The GCSF is designed to assist Yukoners who are entering post-secondary education in the field of tourism or related studies. One \$1000 scholarship will be awarded in 2011.

The deadline for applications has been extended to Friday, December 16, 2011 at 5pm.

For more information and to apply, please visit www.tiayukon.com or call (867) 668-3331.

The Tourism Times is published four times a year by the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon.