

## Greetings from the President

Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership hosted a three day gathering to bring our elders together to share their experiences and to give us guidance on the the Misinipiy Integrated Land Use Plan which was discussed and ultimately approved. I thank all the elders who participated including the working group. We thank them for their guidance and their support through this process.



Chief Tammy Cook-Searson

I want to specifically recognize the passing of one of our long time Kitsaki Management employees Ida Sanderson. Ida worked with us for over 20 years. We will miss our dear friend, who was an important member of our community. It is not surprising that during the Elders gathering was when Ida passed away, where she had been helping out and supporting others.

As I reflect on Senator Myles Venne's comments when he made reference to the creation of economic opportunities for the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, he had a vision that would be achieved through Kitsaki Development Corporation (KDC) and now Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership (KMLP).

Presently, our Lac La Ronge Indian Band communities are having the opportunities to share in the financial success of our ongoing and progressive economic endeavors. Through collaboration and determination, the vision has now come to be realized at a personal level as each community shares in the \$1.1 million dollars to meet their needs through various projects and events.

At this opportunity, I want to express my gratitude to all the staff and employees associated with KMLP and LLRIB. It is through your perseverance, transparency, and accountability that we have attained success. On behalf of our Board of Directors of KMLP, I want to wish everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year - mitho makosikisikanisik ikwa mīna mitho ocimikisikanisik.

Chief Tammy Cook-Searson

# Hotel completes renovations

The La Ronge Hotel & Suites, owned by Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership on behalf of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, has been almost completely renovated. All that remains to be done is the restaurant, says hotel manager Paul Dicks. They are currently completing the beer and wine store.

"All the rooms are finished, including the two executive suites and the two deluxe suites," he says. "The corridors, meeting rooms, fitness centre, laundry and two houses behind the hotel proper have all had the flooring replaced with laminate, and all the rooms on the lake side have electric fireplaces".

"The exterior of the hotel has been spruced up, and we have new "Guest Parking Only" signs in some spots".

### Building services and business

Hotel staff are now focusing on building promotional packages, increasing sales, and paying attention to detail particularly where services are concerned.

New department heads and good core staff are contributing to the success of the operation. Chef Bert Hoogeveen in particular is doing lots of training in the kitchen and dining room area, says Dicks.

### H1N1 prevention measures

On another front, the hotel has become a country-wide leader in taking precautions against spreading the H1N1 flu virus. "We're way ahead of the industry, and our efforts gave us national exposure on CBC, on Canwest Global, through all the major news networks and talks shows," says Dicks. "Even the federal department of health said we were a pacesetter in the province, and local health authorities called us a role model in the community".

Wait staff no longer put place settings on tables, and condiments are wiped before each use.

Dicks challenged the provincial Hotels Association to do more in terms of prevention, saying that if everyone would do a little more, the virus would not take hold.



The Senator Myles Venne Suite



A queen bed room



Fireplaces and flat screen TVs



## Athabasca Catering moves to urban reserve in Saskatoon



Athabasca Catering Limited Partnership (ACLP) recently moved its head office from its previous location on Robin Crescent, near the airport in Saskatoon, to 120 - 335 Packham Avenue, a Muskeg Lake First Nation urban reserve in the Sutherland industrial area of Saskatoon. "The on-reserve location is better for a First Nations-run organization. We don't have more space than at Robin Crescent, but we have more functional space," said ACLP's general manager Kevin Danchuk. Currently there are nine staff working at Athabasca Catering's head office.

Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership plans to move its Saskatoon office to a nearby location on the same reserve.



# KITSAKI UPDATE

Fall 2009



MC Ray McKay speaks to elders at the June gathering.

## Elders approve land use plan

Last June, about 100 Lac La Ronge Indian Band elders and other band members gathered at Youth Haven on Bigstone Lake for a three-day gathering. It was a great opportunity to meet and visit, eat traditional food, play games, dance and listen to stories. It was a good time enjoyed by all, and as usual with elder's gatherings, there were many young people in attendance too. They played games, helped the elders with the cooking, visited, and slept in tents in the rain!

Part of the purpose for the gathering was an opportunity for elders to hear all about the Misinipiy Integrated Land Use Plan, 10 years in development, and to make their views on it known.

Dwayne Rinholm of the provincial Ministry of Environment was there to explain the plan, developed with his help by a local working group and community advisory committees.

The explanation was done in Cree by Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and Joe Roberts along with MC Ray McKay. They went through the lengthy PowerPoint presentation page by page, explaining every bullet point in language everyone understood.

"It was the only way to do it," said Ray McKay. "The Cree presentation communicated directly with the elders, and they understood that the plan is sustainable, would protect their treaty rights, and that any development would be in partnership with the people who live there.

"Our trusted working group consisted of Cornelius Ballantyne, Jonas Bird, Lester Roberts, Joe Roberts, Tom J. McKenzie, Eddie McKenzie and myself. We had a representative from each community, and we were never given a deadline, so we took the time to look at it carefully. Dwayne Rinholm, as a government worker, was prepared to spend the necessary time, and was also trusted by the people", said McKay. "And we learned so much from the elders".

The plan lays out allowable uses of the land in an area that includes the traditional lands of the Lac La Ronge

Indian Band. Elders appreciated being brought into the picture, and at the end they gave their unanimous approval to the plan.

"Even after the elders approved it, chief and council allowed more time for discussion. A Letter of Understanding from the trappers within the land use plan area was added to the plan, indicating their understanding that their rights would be respected". A Churchill River Management Plan is still to be developed within the Land Use Plan, says McKay.

"This was a great opportunity for elders to learn about the plan, but there were also many younger people there who use the land and who could discuss what is going on on their traditional territory. The Cree presentation by the working group was a big step in helping people understand what the government and the band are planning to manage the land into the future, taking into account everyone's traditional interests," said Dwayne Rinholm, an Integrated Land Use Planner with Sask. Environment.

The plan is now under review by the executive management level of government. When finally approved, there will be a celebration ceremony with chief and council, says Rinholm.

Kitsaki Management was one of the funding agencies for this gathering.



Elders make dry meat.



Mining



Wild Rice



Training



Environmental

# CanNorth gets ISO certification

Canada North Environmental (CanNorth) is one of Kitsaki Management's member businesses, based in Saskatoon. CanNorth offers a variety of environmental services inside and outside Saskatchewan. The company specializes in environmental monitoring and impact assessments, environmental baseline data acquisition, aquatic studies, and wildlife, habitat, and vegetation assessments.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, CanNorth became the first Aboriginal owned environmental consulting firm in North America, and likely in the world, to successfully qualify for ISO 9001:2008 certification. ISO stands for International Organization for Standardization and is the world's largest developer and publisher of international standards. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, and is fully endorsed by the United Nations, which has commended ISO for its contribution to sustainable business worldwide.



A technician prepares to take a lake bottom sediment core through the lake ice in winter.

An ISO certification is a guarantee to clients worldwide of the quality of CanNorth's work.

It took a lot of work to obtain this certification and it was also expensive.

The certification process took approximately six months to complete. It involved the development of detailed proce-



CanNorth's General Manager Peter Vanriel (right) holding the ISO certificate that was presented to him Nov. 17 in Saskatoon. At left is John Hill of IMSM Canada Ltd.

dures and extensive record keeping for many things, such as field methods, report and equipment maintenance logs, regular calibration of scientific equipment, and staff training records.

In addition, internal quality management meetings have to be held at regular intervals and customer satisfaction has to be evaluated.

The company will be audited annually in order to assure clients that CanNorth is maintaining a high quality and meeting the international standards in their work.

With this guarantee of quality management and products, CanNorth has further solidified its relationship with existing clients and also anticipates to attract more clients worldwide. This will also introduce the Kitsaki and Lac La Ronge Band names to an ever-wider audience.

"CanNorth's achievements and growing reputation worldwide are an indication of where our Kitsaki companies can go", says Russell Roberts, Kitsaki's CEO.

LLRIB Chief and Kitsaki board chair Tammy Cook-Searson agrees. "I congratulate CanNorth on their ISO certification", she says. "They are emerging as a leader in their field."

# Poor year for wild rice

## Processing plant needs refurbishing

The wild rice industry was in trouble this year, with a total crop of only 700,000 pounds compared to 2.2 million pounds last year. Cold summer weather, high water levels and very windy conditions were the main culprits.

The crop was down across the board. As a result, many growers may be claiming on the three-year-old crop insurance program this year. Crop insurance payments are based on 70% of an average harvest.

The west side delivered 160,000 pounds below the guaranteed 70% level, and those growers will get a crop insurance payment. The east sides had very little production, except for good crops in the Hudson Bay area, which skewed the average to make east side growers ineligible for crop insurance this year. The central region delivered about 100,000 pounds below the average crop to the processing plant in La Ronge, and insured growers will receive some payment.

Then there's processing capacity. The small plant at Denare Beach operated this year, but only got rice from Saskatchewan since the Manitoba harvest was non-existent. The plant at The Pas, which was holding large inventories from last year's good crop, did not open at all, although the owner reportedly plans to operate next year. Some east side growers who normally delivered to The Pas instead chose to process their rice at the La Ronge plant.

The processing plant in La Ronge was built in 1982 and has reached the stage in its life where it will soon need refurbishing, says plant manager Bill Plunz. "We have kept the equipment serviceable through the expertise of our engineer Heinz Brechbuel, but the parching drums in particular need attention because of wear and tear and heat stress



over the years".

In addition, to be cost-effective, the plant should really change to natural gas heat for its parchers. The board was informed of this last spring, although SaskEnergy had advised that there was no guarantee natural gas would be available at the site. "While we're at it, we are looking at the whole production system and have engaged an engineering firm to take a professional look at it and make suggestions for improvements, better technology and energy-saving," says Plunz.

The board has looked at other drying technologies such as microwave, infrared and steam among others, some of which are used in California, but they all alter the taste and flavour of the rice, sometimes, trying out all positions on both day and night shifts.

One of the problems is the lag time in getting new equipment. "I ordered a parcher drum from Saskatoon in 2002 and it took two months to build. Now, the company is saying a year", he says.

Plunz would like to direct the plant's directors into installing more user-friendly modern equipment so local people could operate it easily.

"We are trying to access funds from different levels of government, but there's not too much money around," says Terry Helary of Northern Lights Foods, Kitsaki's wild rice marketing company.

Markets are another factor in the depressed industry. "Europe is holding its own, but we're losing markets in the U.S." says Helary, who recently returned from his annual selling trip to western Europe. "Even the paddy rice producers are sitting on high inventories, which will only bring prices down".

# Golden Band's mine plans delayed

## More reserves, changing mining methods

Plans to develop a gold mine north of the Churchill River are still under way, if a little delayed, and Kitsaki is still very involved.

Golden Band Resources intends to develop a mine-mill operation on its properties in the La Ronge Gold Belt, which extend from the Churchill River all the way north to just west of Brabant Lake. They are well-positioned for this, owning 12 known gold deposits in the area. They also own the former Jolu mill, which will be refurbished at an estimated cost of \$11 million to again produce doré gold bars.

### Approvals received

The company has completed the necessary environmental impact studies and received environmental approval from the province to proceed with development. A surface lease agreement covering the Bingo, Komis and EP deposits (which will be mined first) as well as the Jolu mill site was finalized in August, and a construction license has been applied for. Golden Band has received approval to remove vegetation and construct an access road, and to construct an above-ground tailings management facility at Jolu.

### Band Involvement

The lands being developed are central to the traditional lands of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. Kitsaki Management and its partners have been involved in the project since 2004. Golden Band signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and a General Services Agreement with Kitsaki and their joint venture partner, Procon Mining, for provision of services in 2007.

Kitsaki and Procon Mining & Tunnelling of Burnaby, B.C. formed a joint venture to bid on the mining side of the operation. They successfully completed underground exploration development at Bingo in 2007-8, and are negotiating for further work as general contractor for all underground and open pit mining. They also hope to provide labour services for the Jolu mill operations, site services and ore haulage. Kitsaki and member companies CanNorth Environmental and Athabasca Catering would provide support services for environmental monitoring, camp accommodation and catering.

Golden Band has committed to furthering employment, training and business opportunities for northerners. The project will employ 75-100 people during operations.

# Training for the food industry:

## Athabasca Catering gives people a leg up into a career

Athabasca Catering Limited Partnership (ACLP) has put a lot of effort into employing northerners and starting them out on a career in the food service industry if they so desire. In this company, which caters to all the northern uranium mine sites, training is an integral part of daily life at all levels.

Onsite training has improved by leaps and bounds as far as safety is concerned, says general manager Kevin Danchuk. "There's a written work procedure for everything we do, from mopping floors to making coffee, to using a meat slicer or a vacuum cleaner," he says. "We went through a job hazard analysis and came up with a good, safe logical work procedure. Everyone gets formally trained, and the supervisors sign them off as qualified for the particular process".

ACLP has taken advantage of Northern Career Quest funding to run its Institutional Cook and Housekeeper programs. The Institutional Cook program was held in La Ronge, with 15 people spending 10 weeks in class and then rotating to the Key Lake mine for two shifts, trying out all positions on both day and night shifts.

Housekeeping training is done through the *emerit Housekeeping Certificate of Recognition*, a nationally certified program which involves 2-3 weeks of classroom training to get basic certification in things like WHMIS and first aid, followed by a rotation through the mining camps. They are then tested by STEC (Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council) right at camp. "For this training we teamed six new employees with six experienced housekeepers, and they all took the training. The new ones learned the standards from the start, and the experiences ones also benefitted from updated information," says Danchuk.

The hardest part about apprentice cook training is to find qualified employers, says Danchuk. "We like to put our existing employees through apprenticeship, but they need some basic academic skills to start with, such as reading, writing and math. Often, applicants do not have the necessary academics, and the program is slow getting going for that reason".

Moving up to higher levels of staffing, ACLP provides ongoing manage-



The Bingo site in February 2008

### Investment needed

All that is needed is the money to go forward, money Golden Band is trying to raise from investors. To help make the project more attractive to investors, the company is working to identify even more gold resources, including a newly discovered extension to the Bingo deposit just north of the Churchill River.

### 10-year mine

Golden Band has revised the mining method for the Komis deposit to access the ore from underground, starting from the old workings, rather than constructing an open pit. This will lower both the initial capital costs and the operating costs. The start of production is currently forecast by the last quarter of 2010.

The company's longer-term objective is to produce at least 100,000 ounces of gold over a minimum 10-year mine life. Golden Band and its partners in Kitsaki/Procon are considering possible plans to provide worker residential services in cooperation with the communities of Grandmother's Bay and Brabant Lake rather than building separate camps at the Bingo and Komis mine mill site.

ment training at two different levels. The Athabasca Professional Supervisor Training Program involves six days of training offsite to cover Level 1 and Level 2. Neither is a prerequisite for the other. Saskatoon has been the location for this training, but the next program will be held in La Ronge next spring.

This training gives all managers the basic management skills to allow them to manage conflict, to counsel or evaluate employees, to organize, and to take accurate notes or perhaps keep a journal.

"The trainees network with similar positions from other sites", says Danchuk. "We use the Commissionaires as facilitators - they have developed a training program that fits our situation".

Danchuk is proud to note that more than 50% of his management staff are northern Aboriginal! He would like to increase that percentage as northern peoples' skills progress.

ACLP works with the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC) by taking advantage of its "Ready to Work" programs. These programs teach work skills through a community-based cooking/food service course that lasts about 10 weeks. Each graduate that wants to then gets a rotation or two in a mine camp, to try their skills on a real job. Some are hired, other prefer to stay closer to home. ACLP is always there at graduation, interviewing each graduate to see if there are potential employees.

STEC also comes to the mine sites to do a "Train the Trainer" session for ACLP's supervisors. "Some material overlaps with our supervisor training, but it helps fix the information in peoples' minds," says Danchuk.

Senior management is not forgotten in the training scenario. Division managers get about five days a year of advanced training to give them the skills to develop onsite management teams. They learn strategic planning, and even have project-based homework! "It's a great program," says Danchuk.

ACLP is truly an employer that holds the key to a career. With the right attitude and dedication, a person can start from the bottom and work their way right up to managerial level.



# Farewell to Ida



Ida Sanderson, July 8, 1951 - June 5, 2009

On June 5, 2009, co-workers, band members and friends were saddened to hear of the sudden and unexpected passing of Ida Sanderson during the Elders Gathering at Youth Haven on Bigstone Lake.

Ida had been an employee of Kitsaki Management for 21 years. She worked in our La Ronge office as human resources officer. Her loss is keenly felt by our staff as well as by her extended family and many friends.

Ida started work with Kitsaki in 1988 as an administrative officer, providing services to our member companies where staffing was concerned. Ida performed her duties as the HR officer with pride and enthusiasm.

She had a knack for successfully dealing with any situation that might arise, and was valued for that asset among others.

Ida was well known and loved for her distinctive laugh, her great sense of humour and her compassion for other people. She was always there to help local families who lost loved ones, cooking and comforting at countless wakes.

Her position has not yet been filled, and is being re-advertised. "She leaves big shoes to fill," says friend Liz Chenard, another long-time Kitsaki employee.

KMLP will be offering an annual memorial scholarship of \$1,500 in honour of Ida and her contributions to the company.

## Condolence

Kitsaki Management offers sincere condolences to Paul Dicks, manager of the La Ronge Hotel & Suites, and his wife Shannon Arsenault on the loss of their 6-year-old younger daughter Hannah this past summer. Hannah's underlying health problems were compounded by the H1N1 flu, and her weakened body could not sustain itself against the virus. She was a special little girl and she is greatly missed by her parents and sister Erica, and all who had come to know her.