

TULITA AUGUST NEWS

Vol. 3 Issue 7: August 1st, 2025



Tulita Newsletter would like you to have a great day.

Most of the information in the newsletter is taken from Wikipedia, and/or books mentioned.

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

New to Tulita or Just Bored?

We have 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 or email tlfc.2018@hotmail.com. Check out our website at www.tulitalandcorp.ca.

Events and Announcements:

July 23rd-August 1st, 2025: Pre-Employment Training at the Cultural Center. To register, email Admin@AspireTA.ca for more info.

August 1st-5th, 2025: Culture and Healing Camp. Outside the Park Canada Office – in the teepees and canvas tents. No sign up needed, come by and join!

August 4th, 2025: Civic Holiday. Most businesses closed.

August 6th, 2025: Advance Poll for Tulita Dene Band Council Election. 9am to 7pm at the Band Chambers.

August 28th, 2025: Tulita Dene Band Election, 9am to 7pm at the Band Chambers.

August 30th-September 2nd, 2024: Tulita's 25th Handgames Celebration. Contact Tulita Dene Band to register.

Swimming Pool is open every day except on Sunday from 1:30pm to 8:30pm. Entrance fee: \$4 (16 and under); \$7 (17-60); Free of charge (60+).



COMMUNITY HOURS:

Fire: 588-2222

Health Centre: 588:4251

RCMP: 588-1111

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

Aurora College (588-4313): Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-5pm.

BJs Market & Take Out (subject to change):

Check Tulita Buy, Sell, Trade on FB.

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

Cornerstone Oilfield Services Inc. (588-3001):

Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

ECC (588-3441): Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-5pm.

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

Gas Station (588-3044): Mon-Fri. 11am-12pm, 2pm-4pm. Sat. 11am-12pm. 1pm-2pm (For call outs, 867-688-7934 or 867-374-0371)

Government Service Office (588-3002): Mon-Fri. 1pm-5pm.

Hamlet of Tulita (588-4471): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

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

Income Support (588-3211): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

IPCA (588-3053): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

Mackay Range (588-3051): Mon.-Fri. 9am-5pm.

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

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

NWT Power Corp (588-4291): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

Parks Canada (588-4884): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

Pentecostal Mission (374-0451): Sun. at 11am at the Cultural Centre.

Post Office (588-4331): Mon-Fri. 1:30-5:30pm.

Preschool (588-3401): Mon-Fri. 1pm-3:45pm. Closed for summer months.

Radio Station (588-3233).

RCMP (588-1111): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

RRC (588-4724): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

SRRB (374-4040): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

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

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

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

Tulita CARS Station (588-3191): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

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

Tulita District Lands (588-4894): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

Tulita Housing (588-4111): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

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

Wellness Center (588-4271): Mon-Fri. 9am-5pm.

Wright's Convenience (588-4927): 7pm-11pm or check Tulita Buy, Sell, Trade on FB.

RECREATIONAL TIMES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Fitness Hours: Mon. to Fri. from 1pm to 9pm at the arena. Sat. from 3pm to 9pm.

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.


Map of Tulita for newcomers!





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.





Birthday/Anniversary Messages (1st-31st)


 Sally-Ann Tatti would like to say Happy Birthday to her daughter **Tamara** for August 1st. You make me proud in so many ways. Happy Birthday to you with lots of love. ❤️


 Lydia MacCauley would like to say Happiest 30th Birthday to her best sister **Tammy** for August 1st!! Welcome to the years of back pain!! Your twenties have officially expired... lol. 🤪


 Seanna Menacho would like to say Happy Birthday to her bff **Tamara** for August 1st. I miss you, and we love you so much, love, Seanna & kids.

 Britney MacCauley would like to say Happy Birthday to her cousin **Tamara** for August 1st. 🎂🎉 Hope you have an awesome day.


 Zaaida Stewart would like to say Happiest Birthday to the bestest bestfriend **Tam** for August 1st. I'll always celebrate you always. ❤️ LOVE YOU BOTH – zaid.


 The TLC Staff would like to say Happy Birthday to their fellow staff member **Tamara** for August 1st. Enjoy your weekend!


 Kristianna Andrew would like to say Happy Birthday to her bff/auntie **Mara** for August 1st. We love you so much, - love me and Ashton. 🍀


 Erica MacCauley would like to say Happy Birthday to her **Mara** for August 1st. I love you 😊❤️


 Evelyn Peter would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to **Channing** for August 1st.


 Nicole Andrew would like to say Happy Birthday to her niece **Addison** for August 1st. We love you all hope you all enjoy your blessing day. 🍀

 Evelyn Peter would like to wish a Happy Birthday to her granddaughter **Addison** for August 1st.


 Britney MacCauley would like to say Happy Anniversary to **Uncle Roy and Auntie Vicky** for August 1st. Enjoy ur special day. 💜


 Sally-Ann Tatti would like to say Happy 27th Anniversary to **Roy and Vicky MacCauley**. Congratulations on another year of putting up with each other! ❤️


 Tamara Tatti would like to say Happy 27th Anniversary to her 2nd parents **Roy and Vicky MacCauley**. So glad we share this day together. <3


 Lynn Doctor would like to say Happy sweet 16 Birthday to a beautiful young lady **Damy**a for August 2nd. Love you.

 Chels Doc would like to say Happy 16th Birthday to **Jerome** for August 2nd.

 Nicole Andrew would like to say Happy Birthday to **Rihanna** for August 2nd. We love you all hope you all enjoy your blessing day. 🍀🎉🎂


 Shyla Bayha would like to say the Biggest Happy 2nd Birthday to her son **Zerryn** for August 4th. 🍀 We love you ... two infinity and beyond! 🥰❤️👉👈

 Tina Etchinelle would like to say Happy Birthday to **Andrew** for August 4th. To the boy who stole our hearts, may your birthday be as unique as you are. Happy Birthday, son!


 Natalice Etchinelle would like to say Happiest Birthday to her baby brother **Andrew** for August 4th. I love all very, very much.


 Kimberly Stewart would like to say Happy Birthday to her mother **Cecile** for August 6th.


 Judy Menacho would like to say Happy Birthday to **Cecile** for August 6th.


 Kerri McPherson would like to say Happy Birthday to the bestest mother **Cecile** for August 6th. Hope you have an awesome day! ❤️


 Debbie Yallee would like to say Happy Birthday to **Sheldon** for August 7th.


 Evelyn Peter would like to wish a Happy Birthday to her daughter **Mandy** for August 8th. Love mom n dad n sister n brothers.


 Nicole Andrew would like to say Happy Birthday to **Mandy** for August 8th. We love you all hope you all enjoy your blessing day. 🎂🎉🎉🎉


 Sally-Ann Tatti would like to say Happy Birthday to her son **Troy** for August 8th. Happy Birthday son, you make us so proud, and we love you more than words can say.


 Lydia MacCauley would like to say Happy Birthday to her brother **Troy** for August 8th. I hope you have the best day!! 💙

 Zaaida Stewart would like to say Happy Birthday to the best brown cousin **Troy** for August 8th. You amazing man, LOVE YOU BOTH – zaid.


 Britney MacCauley would like to say Happy Birthday to her cousin **Troy** for August 8th. 💜 Hope you have an amazing day.


 Tamara Tatti would like to say the Happiest Birthday to her little brother **Troy** for August 8th. 💜 I love you and enjoy your day & don't work too hard!


 Jeannie Bavard would like to say Happy Birthday wishes to her mother **Nelly** for August 9th. I hope she has an amazing day filled with love and laughter. 🎂


 Darlene Etchinelle would like to say Happiest Birthday to her beautiful mom **Theresa** for August 11th. Love you more than words can say.


 Karla Ann would like to say Happy Birthday to her mom **Glenda** for August 12th. 🌹🌹 Love Karla and Leland.


 Tamara Tatti would like to say Happy Birthday to her cousin **Ian** for August 13th. 💜 Enjoy yourself.


 Britney MacCauley would like to say Happy Birthday to her brother **Ian** for August 13th. I hope you have a fantastic day. We love you so much. Love your sister Brit, Mom, and Dad. 🎂🎉💜


 Tina Etchinelle would like to say Happy Birthday to **Mackenzie** for August 13th. Happy Birthday to my daughter. Best wishes for a birthday that is as beautiful as you are.


 Nataliee Etchinelle would like to say Happiest Birthday to her baby sis **Kenzie** for August 13th. I love all very, very much.

 Shyla Bayha would like to say Happy 11th Birthday to her baby brother **Colton** for August 17th. We love you sooo much 💙 love zerryn and i.


 Tina Etchinelle would like to say Happy Birthday to **Lyle** for August 20th. Celebrating the amazing person you are today, and wishing you an extraordinary birthday, filled with love.

 Nataliee Etchinelle would like to say Happiest Birthday to her big bro **Lyle** for August 20th. I lvoe all very, very much.


 Judy Menacho would like to say Happy Birthday to her daughter **Shaelyn** for August 21st.


 Kerri McPherson would like to say Happy Birthday to her niece **Shaelyn** for August 21st.


 Judy Menacho would like to say Happy Birthday to **Lawrence** for August 21st.

 Evelyn Peter would like to wish a Happy Birthday to her grandson **Pierre** for August 22nd. Love granny n grandpa. ❤️❤️

 Kimberly Stewart would like to say Happy Birthday to her uncle **John** for August 31st.

 Shirley Campbell would like to say Happy Birthday to her husband **Fabian** for August 31st. From Shirley, Shane, Jayanna and your grandchildren.

 Shirley Campbell would like to say Happy 36th Anniversary to **Fabian**!

 Nataliee Etchinelle would like to say Happiest Anniversary to her parents **Tina n Michael**. I love you both so much thank you for everything that you do for me ❤️



Funny Stories

Smart Bird?

His mother was now living in Miami Beach, and the young man didn't see her that often. His father was no longer around and he was worried that Mom was lonely. For her birthday, he purchased a rare parrot, trained to speak seven languages. He had a courier deliver the bird to his dear mother.

A few days later, he called. "Ma, what do you think of the bird?"

"The bird was good, but a little tough. I should have cooked it longer."

"You ate the bird?! Ma, the bird was very expensive. It spoke seven languages!"

"Oh, excuse me, but, if that bird was so smart, why didn't it say something when I put it in the oven?"

Second Anniversary

On their second anniversary, a husband sent flowers to his wife at the office. He told the florist to write, "Happy Anniversary, Year number 2!" on the card.

She was thrilled with the flowers, but not so pleased about the card which said, "Happy Anniversary. You're number 2."

Dress in the Window

A customer walks into a dress shop and asks, "May I try on that dress in the window?"

The salesperson replies, "We prefer you use the dressing rooms."

The Prodigal Son Returns

We were sitting in church a few weeks ago while the minister delivered a sermon based on the timeless story of the prodigal son. When he got to the point where the father sees his son returning and races out to meet him, the minister said, "Throwing wide his arms, the father said..."

At which point my younger son leaned over to me and loudly whispered for everyone to hear, "YOU'RE GROUNDED!"

Four Children

The Census Taker asked the woman, "How many children do you have?"

"Four." Replied the woman.

"May I have their names, please?"

"Eenee, Meenee, Minee, and George."

"Okay, that's fine. But may I ask why you named your fourth child George?"

"Because we didn't want any Moe after that."

New Apartment

When a young man left his dorm and moved into an apartment, he went shopping for cleaning equipment. His cart was loaded with a broom, mop, dust-pan, sponges, and a full array of cleaning products.

At the last minute, he topped off his cart with a long food purchase, a large bag of potato chips.

Seeing the checkout clerk's puzzled look, he explained, "I'm a very messy eater."

Forgetful George

"George is so forgetful," the sales manager complained to his secretary. "It's a wonder he can sell anything. I asked him to pick me up some sandwiches on his way back from lunch but I'm not sure he'll even remember to come back."

Just then the door flew open and in bounced George. "You'll never guess what happened!" He shouted. "While I was at lunch, I met Old Man Brown, who hasn't bought anything from us for five years. Well, we got to talking and he gave me a half-million-dollar order!"

"See," sighed the hungry sales manager to his secretary. "I told you he'd forget the sandwiches."

Seat Belt

I was driving home from work when I was pulled over for not wearing a seat belt. Three days later, I got the same ticket, at the same stop, from the same cop.

"So, have you learned anything?" Asked the cop.

"Yes, I have," I began. "I've learned it's time to find a new way home from work."

Hiccups

A man came into the pharmacy and said to the technician, "Do you have anything that will stop hiccups?"

The tech leaned over the counter and slapped the man's face.

The man said, "What did you do that for?"

The tech replied, "Well, you don't have any hiccups now, do you?"

The man replied, "I never did. I came in for my wife who's waiting in the car."

Lost Parrot

A man received a phone call one day, and the caller asked if he had lost a parrot.

He said that he had indeed lost the bird, but wanted to know how the caller located him as he did not put any lost signs out yet.

The caller said that the bird landed on his balcony and kept repeating, "Hi, you have reached 555-9851. I can't come to the phone right now, please leave a message at the tone."

Making Faces

Finding one of her students making faces at others on the playground, Ms. Smith stopped to gently reprove the child.

Smiling sweetly, the teacher said, "Bobby, when I was a child, I was told if I made ugly faces, it would freeze and I would stay like that."

Bobby looked up and innocently replied, "Well, Ms. Smith, you can't say you weren't warned."

Great Writer

There was once a young man who, in his youth, professed his desire to become a great writer. When asked to define 'great' he said, "I want to write stuff that the whole world will read, stuff that people will react to on a truly emotional level, stuff that will make them scream, cry, howl in pain and anger!"

He now works for the IRS writing tax regulations.

Slavey Words to Learn for Kids or Beginners (as taken from A Grammar of Slave by Keren Rice) (Hr-Hare, Bl-Bearlake, Sl-Slavey, Mt-Mountain)

5.3 Oral stops and nasals

In section 5.2, it was shown that all surface prenasalized stops derive from underlying nasals. In Hare and Bearlake, some phonetic oral stops derive from underlying nasal consonants. While nasal consonants generally merge with oral stops in stem-initial position in Hare and Bearlake, there are alternations between oral and nasal stops suggesting that the alternating phonetic oral stops are underlying nasals. Some examples of alternations are given in (22).

(22) -dee	-nɔ	'win (imperfective/perfective)'
-bee	-mɨ	'swim (imp pf)'
-daá	-natu	'eye/tear' (Bl)
-bé	méhdɔ	'food/stomach bag of grouse' (Bl)

In these forms, the oral stops are underlying nasals. There is an obstruentization rule that creates obstruents when no nasal follows. The underlying representations for the forms in (22) are as in (23).

(23) a. -nee	-no + ñ
b. -mee	-mee + ñ
c. -na + é	na + tu
d. mér	mér + don

In the first two forms, -ñ represents the perfective morpheme. In the third form -é is a possessive marker that indicates a branching construction. The final /r/ in the last form neutralizes to [h] except when syllable-initial, as when the possessive suffix follows.

The Hare and Bearlake rule of obstruentization is shown in (24).

$$(24) \quad C \rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{-nasal} \\ \text{[+nasal] [-sonorant]} \end{cases} / _ _ V \quad ([\text{-nasal}])$$

= stem boundary

In the forms in the lefthand column of (23), obstruentization applies since the nasal consonants are stem-initial and are not followed by a nasal within the syllable. In the forms in the righthand column of (23), nasalization fails to apply either because the syllable is closed by a nasal (23a, b) or because the nasal is not stem-initial (23c, d). This rule is similar to the Slavey-Mountain rule of obstruentization shown in (16).

While there has been a general merger of Proto-Athapaskan *n and *d and of *m and *b in Hare and Bearlake, in some cases [d] derives from /n/ and [b] from /m/. [d] and [b] thus have two sources in Hare and Bearlake, either a nasal or an oral stop. In Slavey and Mountain, [d] and [b] have only one source, /d/ and /b/ respectively.

5.4 /ñ/

There is evidence that a segment /ñ/ is part of the underlying inventory of Slave. This segment either nasalizes the preceding vowel or is absolutely neutralized to [n]. The evidence for this segment is of three types.

5.4.1 $n \rightarrow r$ in Hare

In Hare, there are some *n*'s that are not affected by the rule that changes /n/ to [r] when no nasal follows. See section 5.1 for discussion of this rule. Those *n*'s that are unaffected by this rule are the initial segments of the second person singular morpheme [ne-], the adjectival class marker [ne-], and the disjunct adverb [nee-] 'across.' Other prefix-initial *n*'s undergo this rule, as in (3). The forms in (25) show [n]'s affected by this rule and those in (26) [n]'s not affected by the rule. Bearlake forms are given for comparison.

(25) Hare	Bearlake	
ríreh̄ta	nínehtla	'I arrived'
rákee	nákee	'two'
(26) neʔá	neʔá	'you sg. eat'
nez̄ɔ	nez̄ɔ	'it is good'
needéh̄ta	needéhtla	's/he started across'

While most [n]'s alternate with [r], some do not. If surface [n]'s derive from two underlying sources, the failure of this rule to apply in some cases can be accounted for.

5.4.2 Nasalization and raising

In all dialects, the second person singular morpheme causes the vowel of a preceding conjunct prefix to be raised.

(27) a.	xad̄ts'é	'you sg. drink up'
	/xa # de + ñe = ts'é/	
	xadets'é	's/he drinks up'
b.	bash̄jda	'you sg. tease him/her'
	beshehda	'I tease him/her'
c.	ʔeghálajda	'you sg. work'
	ʔeghálaeda	's/he works'

The first line of each pair shows a second person singular form, where the nasal of the second person singular raises the vowel /e/ of the preceding prefix. The fact that this vowel is /e/ can be seen by examining the second line of the pair, where no rule applies.

Other nasal-initial morphemes do not trigger raising. The *n*- conjugation marker does not, as in the examples in (28).

(28) a.	tedéwé	's/he fell in water' (Hr, Bl)
	/te # de + né = wé/	
b.	riyêshu	's/he places sg. object' (Hr)
	/ní # ye + né = chu/	

Some nasals trigger raising, others do not. If there are two different nasals underlying, the differences in raising can be accounted for.

IPCA ELDERS MEETING: MOUNTAIN GROUP



The Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas office held an Elders meeting with the Mountain group on July 30, 2025. The discussions included the draft map of the mountains, the protected areas and the potential next steps. With a great turnout of 19 elders attending, we look forward to future meetings and programs with our elders.





IPCA OPEN HOUSE



On Friday July 25 2025, the Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas Office welcomed the community to the IPCA Open House that shared information on the IPCA proposed areas and discussed next steps. The open house was a great turnout and look forward to doing more.







IPCA NEWS



“Mahsi cho for coming to the table and standing with us.”– Chief Ernest Betsina, YKDFN



Today in Yellowknife, representatives of the Government of Canada and the Our Land for the Future Trust signed a grant agreement to release \$300 million for Indigenous-led conservation, stewardship, and economic development across the Northwest Territories.

The initiative was built through years of collaboration among 21 Indigenous Governments, the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories GNWT, and private donors.

“This is about putting Indigenous Peoples at the centre of decision making on conservation. This is reconciliation in action.” – Honorable Minister Julie Dabrusin

The Indigenous Leadership Initiative is proud to have played a convening role throughout the design of the NWT: Our Land for the Future. We’ve been honoured to witness this unprecedented level of cooperation.



And we congratulate the partners on showing the world what it is possible when we respect Indigenous-led conservation and self-determination!

“This partnership is about investing in our people and taking care of our land.” –
?ek’wahtı́dó Danny Gaudet,
Délı́nę Got’ı́nę Government.





TULITA'S 26TH HANDGAMES CELEBRATION

August 29th - September 1st, 2025

Tulita celebrates 26th
Annual Men's Traditional
Handgames!
Contact the Tulita Dene
Band to register. \$2,000
per team. Registration
Forms available.

**August 29th -
September 1st, 2025
\$80,000.00
Tulita, NT**



AGE 14-UP

**Alcohol & Drugs Prohibited.
Anyone under the influence will be
disqualified.**

Events to be Announced



Nááts'jch'oh
National Park Reserve

Réserve de parc national
Nááts'jch'oh

In partnership with the Tulita Dene Band

Culture and Healing Camp



No sign up needed, come by and join!

📍 Outside the Parks Canada Office - in the Teepee and Canvas Tents

 August 1st - 5th 2025



What to Expect:

Each tent will host a unique cultural experience led by an Elder,

- Sewing and beading
- Medicinal plant teaching
- Traditional games
- Storytelling with Elders
- Drumming
- Traditional food knowledge

Questions?

Contact Lacey Wrigley

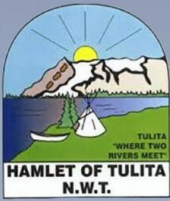
867-588-4884

lacey.wrigley@pc.gc.ca

Final Day Celebration!

Join us on August 5th for a celebration with Traditional Games, a community feast and a Drumdance.





Great Bear Rock Hike

Saturday, August 2nd 2025

All ages welcome

Hikers are asked to meet at the arena at 1pm sharp, from there we will walk down to the dock for boat rides.

Then we will hike Great Bear Rock and return back to Tulita.

Once back in town (Approximately 7pm) there will be a BBQ at the arena. Elders will also be welcome to join the BBQ and share traditional knowledge and stories about Great Bear Rock.

Tulita History Corner

Taken from the book “Yamoria the Lawmaker: Stories of the Dene” by George Blondin.

PRAYER SONGS AND DRUM DANCES

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Prayer was of the highest importance to my people. They used their drums and voices to sing or chant their requests and thanks to their Creator and to the spirits.

Even though our ancestors were scattered across a huge land and always moving, people gathered annually for drum dances. At these ceremonies, they prayed and gave offerings in gratitude for their lives and for the abundant provision of the Creator. After a good hunt or after survival of a long winter, a drum dance was often held.

My father would always light a fire after he shot a moose and place fat in it. He would talk to the fire a long time, thanking the Creator for the food and asking for continued good life for his family and people.

At the traditional tea dances which take place today, a feast of wild meat is prepared and, before everyone eats or drinks, offerings of food and tobacco are placed in the fire. This is called “feeding the fire.” This great source of light and warmth represents the Creator. People place small, valuable things that they own in it as gifts while they talk to the fire, asking for help in their lives.

Elders stand up to pray and tell the people how the Creator made everything so they can live. They talk about higher powers that can help them if they live a clean life. They encourage people to always share and care for each other, for the animals, and for the earth.

If medicine people have any visions for the future or special

messages for the people, they speak about them before the dancing begins. They share what they know about the spirit world in a way people will understand. They are also careful not to say too much to avoid breaking the taboo of silence they have to keep regarding their own powers.

As everyone dances around the fire to the beat of the drum, they pray for others and think good thoughts for their community. As you leave your footprints on the ground around the fire, you are building your trail to heaven. There is such a good feeling at drum dances; everyone is smiling and laughing and they remember they are all one family under the Creator. Their good thoughts make good things happen in the community.

The songs the drummers sing are special. They are ancient songs and many have been received in dreams. These chants fly up to the Creator and the spirits, asking for blessings for women and children, and for the hunters, or perhaps seeking guidance and strength to live a good life on this earth.

Medicine people enjoyed themselves at gatherings and ceremonies like the drum dance, where spirits were high and the people were happy to listen to their messages about living a good life. Some holy people had powers to influence people's minds and make them come to spiritual gatherings and listen to everything they said.

When you hit the drum, you are sounding the heartbeat of the people. Before Christianity came, the drum was our Bible. It opens up a channel to the Creator so our prayers are heard. As the old people say, if you sing your prayers, it is twice as powerful as if you just say them. Singing is powerful, and the repetition of Dene chants helps to centre your mind so you can be more in touch with the Creator.

When you are afraid, sometimes you sing to calm yourself. Prayer songs put you in a good frame of mind. You can sing out your gratitude to God or ask for blessings. The elders say animals and plants have their own songs and if we know how to sing them, they will help us.



View of the dance, Fort Rae, NWT 1937.

In 1931 a man called Yasuiley from Tulit'a (Fort Norman) began receiving one song from the spirits every week until, by the end of a year, he had fifty-two songs. He sang all the time, and Dene travelled kilometres to Fort Norman to hear his beautiful prayer songs that made them feel so connected with God.

After Yasuiley died in 1937 from tuberculosis, which had killed most of his Mountain Dene people, no one sang his songs anymore. They were almost forgotten until around 1975 when Tulit'a people began to revive them. I was a field worker sent to the community at that time to research land claims, and I used the tape recorder I had been issued to record a few of those wonderful old songs from the few elders left who still knew them.

I had a meeting with the Tulit'a elders and advised them to practice the songs as much as possible, to sing them at every drum dance feast and to teach them to the young people as well. Out of

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the fifty-two songs Yasuiley received, the people managed to keep only about twelve, but they still sing them today.

Some tea dance songs are so meaningful that when the drummers sing them, everyone gets up and dances. During prayer songs my people stand still and bow their heads in respect to the Creator. Prayer songs have been received in a dream by someone who has lived a good life. The visionary or prophet hands the songs down to the next generation and so some of them may be hundreds of years old.

Sometimes, someone who has died will send a song to a loved one in their dreams. Songs are sung to honour the holiness of life and to make us feel connected to our Creator and to each other.

The Brothers

Long ago, the Creator sent two brothers into the country to help the people. One brother was Yamoría, who came down Kátl'o Dehé into Tucho, and from there down Dehcho to Sahtú. He helped the Dene fight beasts that killed people.

The older brother travelled to the east, and in the mountains. But instead of helping people, he became a warrior and started wars. His name was Yamoga, and he fought with a warrior named Eyonecho.

The two warriors could not kill each other, because they were equal. So they killed each other's relatives. If there were a hundred people, they killed a hundred. Then they separated, found more people, and started another war.

Yamoga raised a big family by marrying many women in the Dene country. But Eyonecho had left a big family in the place they had come from.

One autumn, Yamoga and his in-laws went on a long hunting trip, leaving their wives and families behind. They killed caribou and moose, and made dried meat; then they started home. In the meantime, Eyonecho found Yamoga's family and killed them all.

The night before Yamoga got home, he and his hunting party found a grizzly bear in a hole. They got the bear out and killed it. It was fall, so the bear was fat. They took the hide first, from head to toe. Then they took the fat, all in one piece. But they couldn't take all the meat, because their packs were already full.

So Yamoga rolled the meat into a shape like a log and laid it on the snow. In the morning, when the hunters took up their packs, Yamoga carried the frozen bear meat over his shoulder like a pole.

By that evening they were near their home camp. But the night was quickly getting colder and darker, and their shoulders were wet and cold. Yamoga wanted to camp.

"We should camp and dry all our clothes, and in the morning we can get home early," he urged. But Yamoga's in-laws were young, and they wanted to get home that very night.

"You should listen to your Elders," Yamoga said. "I think what I'm saying is right. But if you want to go, we'll go, even if it's dark and our clothes are wet."

Yamoga had a habit of shouting ahead to his young nephew, Eyonecha, when he got near camp. When Yamoga called this time, Eyonecha answered, but he didn't stutter the way he usually did.

"Now I know that my enemy is in the camp," Yamoga said to himself. "My nephew never used to answer me like that. They are guarding him."

Suddenly, his enemies were running toward him with fighting clubs. Yamoga's in-laws were tired and their clothes were wet. They couldn't protect themselves. Quickly, Yamoga threw down his packsack. He swung the big bear-meat pole around him like a club, but all his in-laws were killed in the fight. Yamoga ran away, throwing his bear meat aside.

Later, Eyonecho bragged about his victory, but Yamoga warned him not to brag too much.

"Next fall, when the caribou turn white, I'll be back with different people," he told him.

All that winter and the next summer, Yamoga gathered people together. By autumn, he was looking for Eyonecho's camp.

Eyonecho had gone hunting by himself, but many people were staying in his camp at the bottom of a mountain. Yamoga only had a few people with him. They hid nearby and watched the people in the camp have a big drum dance. They danced all night, then fell asleep. Yamoga and his people went into Eyonecho's tents and started fighting.

Some of Eyonecho's people took the children and escaped, running toward the mountains to hide. Others also got away. Eyonecho had a brother in camp named Eyonichi, who had medicine for running and could outrun anyone. During the fighting, Eyonichi ran as fast as he could toward his brother's hunting ground, to tell Eyonecho what had happened to his people.

Yamoga had medicine to turn anything into stone. Using it, he started yelling, and all the people running toward the mountains turned into stone. They looked like statues on the side of the mountain.

"In the future, we'll call this place 'Eyonecho Narezha' — people made out of rock standing," Yamoga said. At the foot of the mountain range, near Rádeļi Kõ and Ļe Gõhļiņi, you can still see these stones. Some people think they look like women packing babies; others think they look like people holding children by the hand.

Yamoga said to his people, "Wait here. I'm going to chase the one who escaped." He ran after Eyonichi and caught up to him at the Carcajou River across from Ļe Gõhļiņi, where there's

a big canyon. Eyonichi ran to the top of the mountain and tried to jump across the canyon, but Yamoga threw him down, into a cave.

"Kill me right away," begged Eyonichi. Yamoga did as he wished.

Carrying the body over his shoulder, Yamoga walked along a hunting trail. He took out his knife and cut out the stomach, then left the body on a stump and walked some more. He lit a small fire and went to sleep.

In the meantime, Eyonecho was on his way home with a big packsack of meat. He heard his dogs howling and said to himself, "Yamoga must have fought with my people while I was away."

He saw ravens flying around a stump, and when he went to investigate, he found his brother's body.

"Yamoga did this," Eyonecho cried angrily. "I want to kill him." He dug a hole in the ground and buried his brother. He threw away his packsack of meat. "All my people are dead," he howled, and he ran all the way home in a rage.

Eyonecho saw a small plume of smoke and found Yamoga snoring beside the fire. He took up his club and was going to kill Yamoga, but even when he was sleeping Yamoga had his power. He got up and the two fought, using clubs and knives and anything else they could find. But they couldn't kill one another.

They needed to rest. When they sat down, they spoke together. "What do we do now? We can't kill each other. We've killed all the other people, and we've been doing that all our lives. Why don't we live together in peace?"

Yamoga and Eyonecho shook hands and went home. They promised they would live together all their lives. They became great men, protecting and feeding their own people. They could kill animals that scared everyone else. Other tribes wouldn't fight them, because they were afraid of the two men.

Eyonecho and Yamoga grew so old that they could only eat broth. They must have been more than a hundred years old. Their people took care of them, fed them, and took them on their travels. They lived in the same tent.

One day, Eyonecho talked about the time the ravens ate his brother. "I had meat and I was happy to feed my people, but when I heard my dogs howling, I knew right away that Yamoga had killed my people. I thought my brother had escaped, but when I saw his body, I cried; that was my brother. I wanted to kill Yamoga."

Sitting across the fire, Yamoga said, "What are you talking

about? You're the one who killed so many of my people." He dug under his blanket and got out a small bone knife. He threw it to Eyonecho. "This is the knife I used to cut your brother."

Eyonecho became angry. He took the knife and tried to crawl around the fire and stab Yamoga. But he wasn't strong enough. The two old heroes tried to fight, but they just stumbled around. They wanted to bite each other's ears, but they had no teeth. All they could do was wet each other's ears. They couldn't even pull each other's hair.

"Partner, I think we should die now," said one. "There's no use living any longer." They called their people in.

"We have a power to die when we want to, and we're going to die tonight," they told the people. "When we die, you must bury us side by side, and call the place Eyonechowheteh, which means 'great people are sleeping here'."

Their landmark can still be seen on the mountain. It looks like two big people sleeping side by side.

Old Photos of Fort Norman



Fort Norman July 1978. Women gathered for Treaty Payments at the Hall. Photo by Native Communications Society.

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Fort Norman July 1978. Elder speaking during Treaty payment. Photo by Native Communications Society.



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Fort Norman July 1978. Jimmy Yakeleya demonstrates with his hands how the treaty talks lasted three days he was present at the treaty talks in 1921. Photo by Native Communications Society.

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Fort Norman August 1978. Drummers during Dene Assembly. Photo by Native Communications Society. (Photo below)



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Words: Adventure, **Air Conditioner**, Barbecue, **Bare Feet**, Baseball, **Bathing Suit**, Beach, **Bees**, Berries, **Blueberries**, Bulldogs, **Cloudy**, Concerts, **Dragonflies**, Drinks, **Fan**, Flies, **Hamburgers**, Hammock, **Hat**, Hiking, **Hot**, Hotdogs, **Ice Cream**, Mosquitoes, **Rain**, Raspberries, **Relaxation**, Sand, **Showers**, Sizzling, **Strawberries**, Summer, **Sunny**, Sunshine, **Surfing**, Swim, **Umbrella**, Vacation.



Dene Laws



~Share what you have~

~Help each other~

~Love each other as much as possible~

~Be respectful of elders and everything around you~

~Pass on the teachings~

~Be happy at all times~

~Sleep at night and work during the day~

~Be polite and don't argue with anyone~

~Young boys and girls should behave respectfully~

Thank you for reading!
Tulita Land Corporation

