

BRINGING BC'S COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

BCLocalHomes | flyerland.ca


[Mobile Edition](#) [Photo Store/Gallery](#) [Classifieds](#) [Auto](#) [Travel](#) [Jobs](#)

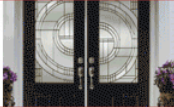
HOME NEWS SPORTS BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNITY LIFESTYLES OPINION

Calendar Weather Horoscopes Lotteries Comics Obituaries Blogs

LOCAL NEWS | BC NEWS | ELECTION NEWS | NATIONAL NEWS | WORLD NEWS | ODDITIES

part of bclocalnews.com





Williams Lake (250) 398-7118
910 E. MACKENZIE AVE. S. • WILLIAMS LAKE
Doors, Flooring, Wood, Hardware, Expert Advice



Xeni Gwet'in elders gather at Big Onion Lake

Published: July 23, 2009 8:00 AM

1 Comment

Elders and youth gathered for four days, July 13 to 16, for the Xenii Gwet'in Elders Gathering at Big Onion Lake near Nemiah Valley to teach and learn from each other.

The gathering was short on rhetoric and long on demonstrating practical skills to live on the land, says Xenii Gwet'in Chief Marilyn Baptiste.

"The biggest statement from the elders was to be out there on the land practicing and teaching our traditional ways," Baptiste says.

She says elders like Minnie Charleyboy, Eileen William, Julianna Lulua, Mabel Solomon, and Christine Lulua were joined by youth from several Tsilhqot'in communities to make willow fish traps, tan and smoke hides, gather and prepare spruce roots for basket making, play traditional games like lahal, drum and sing songs, and prepare meals together.

One of the highlights of the event was the talent night where Mabel Solomon mustered up the courage to play her button accordion. She turned her back on the crowd so as not to be distracted and was helped out by her daughter Dinah Lulua who held the microphone.

Youth mentor Cecil Grinder got young and old people involved drumming and singing right to the 10 p.m. curfew.

Cariboo North MLA Bob Simpson, who is also the aboriginal affairs critic, attended the gathering, as did members of the Council of Canadians and the Williams Lake Field Naturalists. Baptiste was joined by fellow Tsilhqot'in chiefs, Ivor Myers of Yunesit'in (Stone) and Bernie Elkins of ?Esdilagh (Alexandria) and Tsilhqot'in stewardship director Roger William.

Big Onion Lake is a few kilometres from the outflow of Taseko Lakes and is a short distance from Fish Lake or Teztan Biny, where Taseko Mines Ltd. is proposing to build a copper and gold mine.

From Big Onion Lake field trips were taken to Fish Lake and Little Fish Lake for people to go fishing, swimming, exploring, and to appreciate the significance of the watershed to the culture of the Xenii Gwet'in and Tsilhqot'in people.

A film crew gathering footage for hearings concerning the mine, spent a couple of days interviewing community leaders and filming the activities at the gathering.

Youth attending the gathering helped out by hauling buckets of water, cutting and packing firewood, picking up garbage, and preparing meals.

They also had fun playing and visiting.



Yunesit'in chief Ivor Myers drums at the Big Onion Lake gathering last week. Sage Birchwater photo

Buy Williams Lake Tribune Photos Online

Email Print Letter to Editor Share

OTHERS ALSO READ...

- Williams Lake Tribune
- Brittany Gathering this weekend
- Brittany Gathering this weekend excitement for the greenhorn COMMUNITY BRIEFS
- Horses and wagons will roll into town for Stampede
- Nemiah ride to Stampede
- Work begins on TRU Gathering Place

Text










what is Real Value?

it's purchase financing from

0%



make things better

COMMENTS

COMMENTING ETIQUETTE: To encourage open exchange of ideas in the BCLocalNews.com community, we ask that you follow our guidelines and respect standards. Simply, don't say anything you wouldn't want your mother to read. [More on etiquette...](#)

Discussion by DISQ...

Add New Comment

D Profile