



GITXSAN HEREDITARY CHIEFS

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A Gitksan Update

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S'keexwhl k'ali 'Aks

Darkness befalls the Skeena River, the elders would say. Three Wolf Clan members in the span of a week made their way to the spirit world. Our condolences go to the two families of Sika'tox, the Wesley's, the Sampsons and the Wegyets of 'Anspayaxw.

At a time like this, everything slows down to a crawl. While accepting that death happens and that no words can rectify death, our elders say, "the sun will shine again." It's the coming together of the Wolf Clans at a time like this that brings the most comfort to the grieving families. Not only the Wolf come together, the father clans, which can be Fireweed, Frog or Eagle, play their supportive roles in being Gitksan.

We are lucky to have maintained our hereditary system. Many a native nation have lost themselves but survive on the remnants of who they were. This was the desired intent of the Indian Act. When persons embrace the Indian Act, it says the desired intent is getting them too.

In any case, we need to help the families see themselves through the grief. Respect comes first, attend the ceremonies, then we can begin to focus on what to do to move on.

Woman's Day

The theme, "caring for the 'otsin" is such a fitting theme seeing what we've just gone through. The spirit of all living things is what most do not think about in our day-to-day lives. The focus could be one's Gitksan spirit, what it is, and how do you care for it. Maybe a question for many a young folk.

I thank The Interior News for accommodating my weekly articles. I thank the people on the street who say positive comments about my writings. I try to put it out like it is. When the reader thinks the Gitksan have nothing to hide, they feel better in thinking they are making every effort to do the right thing. We have fought hard to get the tools we have and we intend to make good use of them for the betterment of all Gitksan.



Any questions? Call the above or awilson@gitksan.com