

# Aroma Borealis is right on thyme

On the day I interviewed her for this article, Bev Grey was just back from demonstrating how to make all-natural skin cream at the Kwanlin Dun Health Centre for the Healthy Moms and Babies program.

She does a lot of such training, both locally and nationally.

She is a herbalist and aromatherapist, and, together with her husband Mike, runs the Aroma Borealis Herb Shop on Main Street.

Aroma Borealis is one of the companies "adopted" by the Technology Business Development project — a joint

effort by the Yukon Technology Innovation Centre, the National Research Council and the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce.

I have mentioned this project in the past: It is a program designed to provide a number of export-ready local technology businesses with the advice and assistance they need to take that next step up to business success.

We provide the chosen businesses with advisory boards tailored to their specific business needs, and also with the talents and time resources of Olivier

Pellegrin, the project manager/business adviser.

We selected Aroma Borealis as one of our "client businesses" because of its tremendous export

reputation, can play a significant part in.

The company is already exporting quite significantly, selling to in excess of 35 different resellers in BC, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec.

Richter's Seed Company, publishers of a nationwide catalogue, sells a line of goods called Herb Wild, which is made by Aroma Borealis.

It also has their own online catalogue (recently redesigned by the local firm Aasman Design) which handles both retail and wholesale orders.

There are currently four full-time employees at the store, and Bev and Mike are looking to hire one more full-time person, and perhaps two part-time staff as well.

In short, it is a "going concern," and doing quite a bustling trade.

Some of the hot products at the moment are their all-natural SPF lip balms, Green Aid (a healing skin ointment), Organic Herbal Skin Synergy Cream made with wild Yukon herbs like Usnea (old man's beard) and, with summer coming on, a natural mosquito repellent called Skeet-Addle Bush Spray.

But, as Bev readily acknowledges, she was always aware that she was missing the larger business opportunities out there, simply because she and her husband, though they are very capable business people, did not have the expertise or the resources to figure out how to organize themselves to penetrate the market more effectively.

"I'm passionate about the business," she says, "but you can miss the big picture in all the details."

That was where YTIC and Friends came to the rescue, in the form of Olivier Pellegrin.

Olivier (who has an engineering degree and two degrees in business administration) worked with Bev and Mike to do an assessment of the current state of

affairs of the business.

Then Olivier assembled a team of experts in natural health regulation, marketing, manufacturing and site planning.

That group met with Bev and Mike at the end of March, and, over the course of a very intense day of work, came up with in excess of 64 recommendations and "to do" items.

Olivier, Bev and Mike have been working on that list since that date, preparing for a second round with the advisory board in the fall.

They have invested in increasing their production capacity, and are busy re-calibrating their formulas and such things to fit those larger production runs.

They are looking to recruit a national sales representative to help them open new markets.

They are also taking steps that might lead to the franchising of the business in the future.

So, assuming everything works out, and the business blossoms (yes, the pun is intended), where does Bev see herself in five years?

"Still in the Yukon," she says. "Finishing one of my three books."

And working on new product lines.

"I love connecting plants with people" she says.

But she does like teaching people things, and she sees that in her future, too, both locally and nationally.

And just because they are in an "organic" industry does not mean Bev and Mike lack competitive edge.

Bev, for instance, keeps a can of Bert's Bees — a salve made by a competitor from the US — on her desk at work.

"It's there to remind me that my salve is better," she says.

With the Technology Business Development Project, we are betting she is right.

Rick Steele works for the Yukon Technology Innovation Centre and is a member of YTTIS.



potential.

Herbal health products are a rapidly growing industry, and one that the Yukon, with its pristine wilderness areas and exotic



**Moving Forward Together**  
Public Consultation on Corrections

## Your Views: Your Voice

The Corrections Consultation Project Teams will be holding public meetings in the following communities to hear your views about how the correctional system can be improved in the Yukon.

### Some questions for consideration

- What are the challenges facing offenders, victims, families and communities?
- What correctional programs and services are working well for offenders, victims, families and communities?
- What correctional programs and services are not working well for offenders, victims, families and communities?
- What could communities, governments, non-government organizations or others do to help meet the needs of offenders, victims, families and communities?
- What should the corrections system in the Yukon look like ten years from now?

Public meeting	Date	Time	Location
Beaver Creek	Tuesday, May 17	5:30 – 9 p.m.	Community Club (light dinner provided)
Old Crow	Tuesday, May 17	5 – 9 p.m.	Community Hall (light dinner provided)
Whitehorse	Thursday, May 19	7 – 9 p.m.	Yukon Inn: Willow Room (coffee, tea & snacks provided)
Haines Junction	Thursday, May 26	7 – 9 p.m.	Village of Haines Junction Council Chambers (coffee, tea & snacks provided)
<b>Open House</b>			
Old Crow	Wednesday, May 18	11 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Community Hall (light lunch provided)
Whitehorse	Thursday, May 19	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Yukon Inn: Willow Room (coffee, tea & snacks provided)
Haines Junction	Friday, May 27	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	CAFN Membership Room (light lunch provided)

Copies of the Public Consultation Document are available at First Nation offices in the communities and at the Inquiry Desk at the Government of Yukon, Administration Building in Whitehorse.

If you cannot attend these meetings you can still express your views. Please contact the Corrections Consultation Office at (867) 667-3206 or e-mail us at [corrections.consultation@gov.yk.ca](mailto:corrections.consultation@gov.yk.ca).

If you are phoning from outside Whitehorse, call the toll-free number 1-800-661-0408 and ask for extension 3206. website: [www.correctionsconsultation.yk.ca](http://www.correctionsconsultation.yk.ca)



## MARSH LAKE RECYCLES!

Marsh Lakers who care about recycling are welcome to come out and donate a few hours helping to build the new community recycling depot! Come to the Marsh Lake dump anytime between 11 am and 3 pm Saturday the 14th and/or Sunday the 15th.

Bring work gloves, hats, and hammers!

Call Gloria at 660-4328 or Marcy at 660-4516 (eves) for more info. Also - looking for donations of windows for the new depot. (Greenhouse style ok.) Marsh Lake cares about recycling!

