



## Yukon Prospectors' Association

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### AL CARLOS: PITTING WITS AGAINST MOTHER NATURE AND GOV'T

By Jane Gaffin

*(Much of this profile about mineral prospector Allen Carlos and his family was adapted from Jane Gaffin's book **Cashing In** and her e-book **Justice Served Up Yukonslavia Style**.)*

Allen Carlos was born October 6, 1941, in the mining area of Kirkland Lake, Ontario, where his father worked for Noranda Mines.

His mother was Polish; his father was born in the Ukraine.

When immigrants landed in Canada in the early 1900's, it was usual for surnames to be changed intentionally, or for a government agent to record it incorrectly. When Grampa Carlosh brought his family to Canada, the 'H' was dropped and the surname changed to "Carlos".

Allen grew up with two younger sisters, Iris and Natalie, on a two-section farm southeast of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. There, he learned integrity, principles, responsibility and work ethics. He learned how to handle firearms.

A rifle was parked at the ready behind a door or in a corner of a room. The kids never heard warnings not to touch. Parents taught their tender-aged offspring to shoot and handle guns. It was a natural part of growing up. There was no superstitious fear or curiosity attached to firearms as toys. Guns were tools used to protect livestock from predators and to hunt game. Allen was 14 years old when he took his first deer.

He had pride in his personal appearance and in his belongings. He had an aptitude for anything mechanical and kept his valuables oiled, polished and in immaculate working condition.

The outdoors also appealed to young Carlos, who sharpened his curiosity about the earth and why hills were there while cutting his reading teeth on *The Northern Miner*, a weekly Toronto-based mining tabloid laying around the house for as long as he could remember.

An interest in mining, stemming from his father's background, was coupled with an interest in the geosciences. After high school, he entered the University of Saskatchewan to study geology and mechanical engineering for three years.

Then wanderlust set in. He struck out to see the world, fleeing west by train toward good geology country. In Vancouver, in the westernmost province of British Columbia, he landed a job with one of Placer Development's mining operations located up in the Northwest Territories.

When he finished at Pine Point in 1967, he was traveling south through the Yukon Territory. Like many others who stumbled accidentally upon the paradise of the Sixties, the rather zany place grabbed his imagination.

Most of the 22,000 residents were living tough in some fairly primitive conditions, but the Yukon had potential for anybody who wanted to create and build things for himself and to contribute to the progress of the people.

There was a carnival-like atmosphere to the place. Bands pumped out music and couples danced till the wee hours of the morning. Jobs were plentiful. A person could quit at 5 o'clock one afternoon and have new employment by morning. People worked hard and played hard. Any excuse was a good excuse for a party. Mining fortunes were made and lost over deals signed in coffee shops and lounges.

Carlos fortuitously met and became friends with Mac Ladue, a Ross River Indian, who fascinated the newcomer with stories about prospecting in his backyard. Ladue's legends would serve to steer Carlos toward a career as an independent hardrock mineral prospector. Those mountains were studded with hidden deposits of silver, lead, zinc, copper, nickel, tungsten and barite. There were chances to find highly-sought commodities like asbestos and coal. But gold was the primary prize.

He already had an innate ability as a woodsman, "something God gave him," he said. He developed a strong rapport with the Indians who held the white man in high esteem for his bushmanship, which might be disconcerting to townsfolk not familiar with the body movements of a woodsman.

Reminiscent of James Penimore Cooper's legendary character Leatherstockings, Carlos was wily in the bush. He negotiated the bush with long strides that carried him with the speed of the rabbit. His senses were alert, his physical movements quick to respond to the slightest snap of a twig behind him.

He was a thorough stone-smith and ran many miles each day to keep his body in top shape for those strenuous bush trips. Exercise kept the mental processes tuned up and ridded him of any frustrations that might creep in.

He was lean, his eyes blue, and his hair the color of Prairie wheat. He was shy, modest, sensitive, articulate, respected, aggressive and tenacious. He had an easy laugh to attract friends wherever he went. Compassion was a natural part of his makeup, and he would stand up for the rights of others quicker than his own. He believed in freedom and in himself.

Like everybody he had his own unique personality quirks. He was his own person and harbored his own ideas about the way the world should turn. It sometimes caused conflict.

He was honest with himself and sometimes too honest with others. Always one to speak his mind, he would be rude, cutting, sarcastic, insulting or disdainful, goading others into arguments for the sake of an argument. He could be moody and broody, wound tight, and had a short fuse. He could test people's good nature and make enemies out of friends. After simmering down, he might try to mend a rent relationship.

Under no circumstance was he a scrapper though. He would never raise a hand to strike anybody, and avoided getting drawn into those humdinger barroom brawls that were usual occurrences in a frontier setting.

Life was agreeable until the spring of 1973 when Mac Ladue died in an avalanche. Carlos found the body. Shaken by his friend's death and not really paying careful attention, Carlos was half-blinded when a wood sliver lodged in his right eye while chopping trees for claim posts.

To be suddenly physically imperfect was another blow to his troubled mind. He took a tour on his Norton motorcycle down into Panama to improve his disposition. He functioned fine with one eye.

After three months, Carlos came home and settled into formulating his own prospecting philosophies. Over the years, he had notched his belt on a variety of employment experiences with junior exploration companies throughout the Yukon and northern British Columbia. He soon realized there was neither money nor a future working for someone else.

He wanted the freedom to make his own mistakes – not somebody else making them for him – and to reap the rewards of any successes. He struck out alone as the modern version of the old-time prospectors who were at the roots of practically every Yukon mine. He resolved to retain his identity as an independent.

### **In Pursuit Of A Dream**

Carlos' idea was to stick to areas previously proven as mining provinces and concentrate on geology, geochemistry and geophysics.

He didn't waste time getting started either. Out in the Ross River area, he was holding a direct interest in a large package of lead-zinc claims with various partners.

Each of his prospects from then on had to be considered unique and treated separately, he said. "It is good to compare. But one prospect should not be related to another, for there is nothing definite about geology. A prospector cannot preconceive ideas or try to draw the lines too straight on maps."

Carlos also made contingency plans. If preliminary probing on a property invited a follow-up investigation, he planned to drill the target with his own rig and crew, and have definitive evidence before approaching a major company.

Another reason to choose a Boyles BBS-1 testing-machine, capable of penetrating a thousand feet into the earth, was to make money on contract if he had to. A low overhead

and bidding in the same price range as an established drilling company could return a handy profit.

“Drilling is mining involvement, bona fide exploration work,” he advised. “I’m not harassing anybody or parasitically tying on claims. I’ve done a legitimate job, contributing toward exploration and society.”

The biggest reward from prospecting is the freedom, an extremely important concept to Carlos. But the true meaning of the word didn’t come until later when he was economically free.

“Money is a way to carry on projects,” he said. “To experience life fully you must have financial wherewithal. I’m self-sufficient. Economics prevents people from being free. But they should be left alone, encouraged and given a chance to struggle for what they want.”

He contended the nation’s most productive, hardest-working people, who have a genuine understanding of what life’s all about, are on the Prairies. Yet many so-called progressive thinkers tended to look down on Prairie people as backwards. Carlos sometimes clashed with those who had been dumbed-down by too much formal education or been bored too long with unimaginative bureaucratic thinking.

### **A Bachelor’s Plans Can Go Awry**

Allen Carlos was a bachelor. Like many of the senior prospectors before him, he planned to retain his single status, although, undoubtedly, some women viewed him as an eligible catch. If aware, he ignored them. He was content with his successful career and uncomplicated lifestyle. He surrounded himself with books and rocks, and kept very busy with prospecting endeavors, business ventures, maintaining equipment and looking after his house in Whitehorse. But the best laid plans can go astray real fast with the free-spirited Mr. Prospector happens to meet up with the free-spirited Ms. Perfect.

Paula Suzanne Carlson was born on July 5, 1952, in Vancouver, where she grew up and went to school. She ventured north from British Columbia and met Allen Carlos in Whitehorse about 1977. Paula’s adoptive father, Roy, also in the mining business, liked to wait until a crowd clustered around him and proclaim, “There are winners and there are losers; Al Carlos is a winner.”

On their first date, Paula was fashionably turned out for dinner in a silk print pant suit. Carlos came by for her in his spotless yellow chariot – a 1966 Fargo ¾-ton flatbed bush truck.

He apologized slightly for the mode of transportation, maybe to test the waters. If this lady was offended by his truck, this might be a short romance. However, in her usual

spirited mannerism, she flashed a big smile and jabbed a sandaled foot upon the dashboard. “Let’s go!” she directed.

They were acquainted over a surf-n-turf dinner and wine in the Cellar, a nice restaurant

downstairs in the Edgewater Hotel.

Typical of a man who owns toys, the nightcap was a thrilling ride on the Norton. His one helmet had been given to Paula before they rrrrmed down the highway.

An RCMP officer spotted the pair astride the motorcycle and pulled them over. After a pleasant “good evening”, the officer suggested politely that maybe the driver should put on the gray helmet and take the bike home. The officer would bring the lady home behind him in the cruiser.

All the way to Carlos’ house, Paula bubbled to the young officer about her first date with this wonderful man who had taken her out to dinner that evening at the Cellar. The bemused officer knew love in bloom when he saw it.

The cruiser pulled up quietly in front of the house. There were no sirens or flashing lights. Still, this was Carlos’ first brush with the law. He never had so much as a speeding ticket. What would the neighbors say if they saw a police car pull up in front of his house? Honestly, they probably never noticed. Their bedroom windows would have been covered in black plastic garbage bags or aluminium foil to block out the summer light so they could sleep.

The officer’s parting suggestion was that Mr. Carlos might want to invest in a second helmet if he was going to carry passengers. He bade them “good night” and was gone.

Those were the days when policemen were friends of the people and a welcome part of the community.

The next day, Carlos went shopping and bought the most feminine helmet he could find. It was fuchsia-pink – the color of one of Paula’s favorite flowers – and speckled with sparkles and stars that reflected the lights.

Perfect!

### **Grew Creek Property**

To shorten a long romantic tale, Allen and Paula were married and had three children: Luke, Shane and Alanna.

Life was busy and agreeable. The Carloses’ home base was the Aspen Street house in the Porter Creek subdivision, a few miles north of Whitehorse. Summer months were spent together as a family unit on the Grew Creek gold-silver property about 20 miles west of the Indian village of Ross River where Carlos had started his mining involvement back in 1967.

The package of mineral claims, staked by Carlos in 1983, was located within a major geological fault zone known as the Tintina Trench, or Tintina Fault, as it’s often referred to.

The Tintina Trench runs for hundreds of miles as it slices the Yukon Territory diagonally from southeast to northwest. The major fault passes through the highly-mineralized Faro-

Ross River area, heads off toward Fairbanks, and sweeps through Alaska's girth in a 1,200 mile arc. Anywhere along this fracture in the earth's surface was proven excellent mineral-hunting ground.

The year before Carlos staked the Grew Creek claims, the Yukon mining industry was dealt a brutal blow. The big mine operators had ceased production in 1982. While ore exhaustion sounded the death knell for Whitehorse Copper, it was a slump in the world metal markets that struck the blow to United Keno Hill Mines and the giant lead-zinc-silver mine at Faro, plus the tungsten and asbestos mines across the border in the Northwest Territories and British Columbia.

When the fleets of trucks stopped rolling along the highways, people lost jobs. White Pass and Yukon Route had been running a train since 1900, but in 1982, closed down forever the 110-mile narrow-gauge railroad that had moved ore concentrates to Skagway, Alaska, to be transferred to the ocean-going ships destined for Japanese and European smelters.

The brakes brought economic activity to a screeching halt. For Sale signs were planted in the lawns of hundreds of houses while desperate residents vacated the territory in droves.

Carlos practically had the whole place to himself. He was cognizant that mining is cyclical and hiccups occasionally. At some point, he knew mining would rebound. One only needed to be patient.

Like any good prospector, he carried on, optimistically staking several mineral claims and digging in the dirt. The next season, Mincan Joint Venture (Hudson Bay Mining and Minerals) started an extensive two-year exploration program on his Grew Creek property.

Later, the property was optioned by Noranda, a major mining company that had a regional Whitehorse office managed by geological engineer Hugh Copland. Encouraging results from Noranda's 1987 exploration program sparked a mini-staking rush in the Grew Creek vicinity. Noranda extended its exploration program throughout 1988.

Mining was on the road to recovery when Wheaton River Minerals took out an option agreement with Carlos in 1992. As often happens, ideas are bigger than the bank account. Plans fell short for conducting any underground development.

The option was picked up by YGC (Yukon Gold Corp.) Resources Ltd. In 1995 and 1996, TGC Resources did a diamond-drilling program. In other words, the drill rig was equipped with diamond-studded bits to cut a cylindrical core from the rock to send to assay labs.

By now, Allen Carlos' name was definitely synonymous with prospecting.

### **Prospector of the Year 1991**

Earlier, in 1991, he had been presented with an engraved rock hammer when named Prospector of the Year by the Yukon Prospectors' Association during an annual Geoscience Forum banquet.

His name is engraved on the base of the bronze prospector statue, a several-ton metal statement about prospecting that was officially unveiled by the prospectors' association in September 1992.

The larger-than-life prospector epitomizes those who follow their dreams. Proud and confident, he towers watchfully over downtown Whitehorse from the flagstone courtyard of the Elijah Smith Building, later dubbed Red Square.

Allen Carlos was deserving of the tribute.

### **Yukon Mining Hits The Skids Again**

Yukon mining had sprung back at one time. A heap-leach gold mine was in production at Brewery Creek near Dawson City in the central Yukon. In the southeast, near the settlement of Ross River, staking rushes were generated by big poly-metallic finds in the Finlayson Lake area.

Then came the next downturn. Partial blame was credited to the stink lingering after the Bre-X scandal was exposed in mid-1997. The Calgary-based junior company duped the North American investment community into believing the fake Busang gold deposit in the steaming Borneo, Indonesia, jungles was the largest in the world. A mining consultant from Toronto, Ontario, was called in to investigate. He discovered samples had been "salted" with gold during the assaying process.

The world's greatest stock swindle sent chills through the mining community. The bulls pulled in their horns. Share prices went down on stock markets which revamped rules to prevent another Bre-X fraud. Any junior companies that were able to raise capital were cautious about how to spend what little they raised. Mineral exploration ebbed.

Besides investment capital drying up, the double whammy came with the "Asian flu" that knocked the wind out of the world metal prices. Major companies curbed exploration spending to ride out the turbulence.

When mining did recover somewhat in the neighboring U.S. jurisdiction of Alaska and Canada's Northwest Territories, Yukon mining remained stalled. Industry's woes were exacerbated by blights associated with environmental concerns, land alienation, land claim settlements and special management areas. All were products custom-made to fit the Yukon.

### **The 1990's Slams Shut On A Sour Note**

The Yukon had been tested and proven as a good geological province for a hundred years. Yet the 1990s decade slammed shut on a sour note. Everything was taking longer, costing more, risks were higher. The value of a hardrock mining industry, once worth a half-billion dollars in production, slumped to virtually nil once the Brewery Creek gold mine closed.

Exploration dollars plummeted from \$50 million to roughly \$9 million, and went into free-fall while companies figured out how to raise risk capital and hurdle environmental-permitting processes. Unreasonable mining land-use inspectors and fisheries officers were

having a field day running roughshod over the small operators and independents who wanted only to be left alone and to go about their productive work,

### **The Carloses Stay Focused**

Allen Carlos knew exactly what was happening in the mining world but he did not get mired in the political muck. Otherwise, he might divert attention from his immediate objective which was to continue development work so that when gold prices rose, he'd have a handsome property to offer.

He studied during the winter months, formulating new theories and techniques, planning work programs to try out during the next field season. The Carloses were optimistic to expand the known geological reserves and increase the grams-per-tonne grade on the 332-claim Grew Creek property.

Carlos cherished having the whole family out on the property working together as a unit toward their future. During summers they drilled, played, fished, picked berries, raised a garden, cooked and explored. They loved entertaining overnight and drop-by guests. They entertained government geologists who were out on routine property visits and any other guests who happened into camp. Allen's two sisters and their families came from Saskatchewan for spectacular northern vacations that would never be offered in the tourist brochures.

Life was agreeable until later when the Carloses were forced into survival mode. The damnable economy never recovered. Paula was resilient and high-energy. For the first time in their marriage she took an on-call office job with Land Titles in the Justice Department to help with expenses until an income could be realized from the property again. That meant she and her daughter stayed closer to town most of the summer months, only going out to camp for occasional weekly visits.

Perhaps the inconvenience wasn't destined to drag on too long. After all, the Yukon is "next year" country. Each year is a renewed faith that the next year will be better. The Carloses looked forward to the day when they could once again spend the entire summers together as a family and not have the short field season of five months interrupted by the aggravation of separation just so they could hold onto what they already owned and had earned.

### **Ol' Yellar**

The Carloses had acquired another flatbed bush truck of 1982 vintage. But sentimentality trumped any thoughts of selling the spiffy 1966 Fargo ¾-ton flatbed that he and his wife dubbed "Ol' Yellar".

Al and Paula had gone out on their first date in the yellow truck and were attached to the sturdy hulk of metal. Besides, factories didn't manufacture trucks like this one anymore. It was built like a Sherman tank.

There was a winch mounted on the heavy-duty front bumper, and the four-on-the-floor gear shift made the truck a dream for both to drive. The parents felt secure that the chariot was



safe transportation for the whole family to ride in when the kids were small, and just as safe later when the boys learned to drive.

Instead of putting it on the auction block, the Carloses opted to refurbish the old workhorse. It was repainted the original corn-kernel color and retreaded. In his shop, Carlos spent many hours under the vehicle and under the hood, meticulously restoring the faithful machine to mint structural and mechanical condition. At age 32, the classic ran smoother and looked sharper and received more comments than when it rolled fresh from the Ford factory in 1966.

Shortly after the Carloses daughter Alanna was born in 1986, the five-member family moved to a spacious, upscale house in the Riverdale subdivision.

The well-oiled, split-level house, set back from the street, was aproned with a thick carpet of grass. They benefited from the neighbor's shade trees which served as a subtle property divider.

One of Paula's passions is flowers. In summers, a kaleidoscope of fragrant bouquets bloomed in the flower beds, hanging baskets and white planters. The small back yard was left rustic to entice the squirrels and birds to visit.

Another attractive feature was the attached garage where the 1979 bronze and leather Cadillac was tucked. They had gone shopping in Vancouver in 1979, the year their first child, Luke, was born. Paula had a knack for seeing down the road, so to speak. Al groaned over the price while his wife made the wise choice. The square-back, classic design looked as stylish 20 years later as the day they drove the car off the dealer's lot.

Behind the house was a larger matching workshop, perfect for storage and maintaining of equipment. It was the ace that attracted the couple to buy the multi-bedroom house.

Each child had a bedroom. Upstairs, across from the master bedroom, an extra bedroom was converted to an office to house geology maps, reports, journals, an extensive library, and files pertaining to mineral claims, house, vehicles and firearms.

In the dining room, an exquisite \$1,000 gun case blended with the other furniture that glistened to a high sheen, as did the stocks of the long arms displayed behind the cabinet's locked glass doors. Some pieces in the gun collection were valuable for the price they would fetch in the marketplace. Others carried a higher sentimental value, like the rite-of-passage rifle Al used to take his first deer.

Life hummed along at a lively pace for the peaceable, community-minded family who had an eclectic taste of interests and hobbies. There was never a dull moment.

There was prospecting-related work, field time, maintenance and mechanics. There was harvesting and gathering food, preserving and canning, and dressing out a moose or caribou for the freezer. There was menu-planning, weekly baking and daily meals. The whole family sat down together every evening to talk about their day over a hearty home-cooked dinner. Birthdays and holidays were events marked with special cakes and surprise treats.

The youngsters had homework and sports practices. Paula was a classroom assistant when the kids were little and chaperoned groups to outside sports competitions. All the kids “loved Mrs. Carlos!”

Both parents took an avid interest in school boards and attended school functions. There were election campaigns, door-to-door knocking, planting signs, working polls, and serving as board members on various political and mining organizations. There were fund drives and volunteering for any number of community and neighborhood activities.

The Carloses didn’t smoke tobacco, do drugs, abuse alcohol, or throw wild parties. They were a clean-cut, wholesome family. They didn’t have a road map for raising children but had a natural homing instinct for guiding them to the desired destination. The kids were popular and had a host of friends, but they preferred staying close to home with their parents rather than tearing around town with a young crowd.

Allen and Paula were quite capable of disciplining their own lives without any outside interference. They were just and generous, respectful and understanding of each other, to their children, to other people, which accounted for why their kids adored them, and why they had so many friends.

Paula always juggled a number of projects at one time. She had an innate ability to keep her mind on several things at once and succeeded at whatever new endeavor she undertook.

She had a natural instinct to handle whatever was thrust unexpectedly upon her, keeping a cool head in emergencies, and holding the world together in a crisis.

First and foremost, she catered to her family. And God help anyone who tried to hurt them. When need arose, she was quite capable of positioning herself on the front line to protect her husband, children, hearth and home with the same fierceness of a momma bear protecting her cubs and den.

Each year as winter was in the throes of wanting to be spring, and the days were growing longer, Carlos itched to go to the bush.

February was a good time to bring in the geophysicists to do their magic on the mining property, or carry out whatever preliminary work could be done in deep snow.

This time of year, Carlos sometimes hankered to stake more mineral claims. Any excuse was a good excuse to go to the bush while waiting for summer when he and his sons could put down another grid of drill holes to test new theories.

But it would be over three months till the Carlos men could open Grew Creek camp. A quilt of white was still clinging to the lawns along the street where they lived.

Paula was working a part-time job that started at noon with Land Titles in the Justice building. This was the first time in their nearly 21-year marriage she had gone out to work.

Due to the awful slump in the economy and the reluctance of exploration companies to

invest in the Yukon, Paula was the main breadwinner, holding body and soul together to prevent siphoning savings. They had to be thrifty and resourceful. The two sons were university age and their daughter was fast approaching it.

It may have dented Allen's pride somewhat to be supported by his wife until the Yukon's mining economy perked up. While financial concerns weigh heavy on any person's mind, the close-knit Carlos family was a team. Each was versatile, honest and hard working. They were sought after to fill jobs.

The kids were responsible, scholarly and athletic, raised on old-fashioned standards and lavished with love and affection. They rewarded their parents by not giving them a moment's grief. Of that fact, Allen was proud.

So he retained a sense of humor about the temporary blip on the home front. Once, when serving guests a before-dinner toddy, he hefted a bottle of fine whiskey. "My wife paid for this is why I can afford the large size."

When they were in camp the summer of 2000, Allen Carlos usually came into camp dog-tired and dirty after 12 hours on the drill rig. He wanted a shower, clean clothes, and food. He was ravenous. Ambrosial smells wafted from the cook tent where his wife and daughter were putting the final touches on the evening meal for the five-member family.

He was just ready to step into a hot shower when he heard the sounds of a vehicle coming along the road from the creek. He heard the truck roar into camp, a bit too aggressively for his liking. He didn't hear anybody "hello, this camp", and then wait for somebody to respond to the "knock". Whoever had driven up didn't know bush etiquette. Then he picked up the words "mining inspectors".

Times were changing. Mining inspectors used to never visit his camp, which was easily accessible from the Campbell Highway near a government gravel pit. Visitors usually consisted of government geologists interested in his work and sometimes showcased the property to private-sector geologists. They might go back to head office and recommend the attractive Grew Creek property to the principals who might make a handsome option offer.

The geologists would pick up rock samples and drill core to examine with the naked eye or squint through a 10-power magnifying lens. The omnipresent lens was attached like an ornament to a piece of rawhide or lanyard draped around their necks. They "ooh-ed" and "aah-ed" and spoke in a strange tongue, the lingo decipherable only by other geo-wizards.

Other visitors to camp had been his parents. Carlos missed their annual visits. They were too old and infirm to make the long journey from Saskatchewan any more. But the Carloses were always delighted with Allen's two sisters, Iris and Natalie, and their families came from the Prairies.

Occasionally Art John (Hall of Fame) came by to see how the young fellow was progressing and would offer some sage wisdom on where Mother Nature might be hiding the loot. At one point, Carlos had set up a miniature sluice a few feet from the cook tent but not near the creek proper. The pump and hose were in such configuration to deliver water to the work

site and not discharge it into the creek. If he and the two sons had time, they planned to test the creek downstream from where Carlos believed a hardrock gold source might be concealed.

Carlos and Art John had been prospecting partners when employed by sundry exploration companies back in the 1960's. They got along famously and maintained a close relationship over the years. The Ross River elder was the same age as Carlos' dad.

It was nice knowing men like Art, so in tune with nature. He used to trap winters and prospect in summers. He was still prospecting and cutting property deals. Carlos, who sometimes helped him with paperwork, beamed whenever he spoke of the old gentleman of the woods surprising him with a visit. Art was so resourceful, gentle, easy-going, twinkly, a light comment about everything although he had known tragedies in his own life.

If Carlos were an office worker rather than a man of the bush, he might never have had the chance to meet and enjoy camaraderie with men like Art John, who make the whole mining scene worthwhile and rewarding.

Paula Carlos also loved company in camp, as much as she did in town. She liked meeting new people and entertaining those she already knew. She was the goodwill ambassador, the public-relations manager. Anybody who dropped by was welcomed in for tea or a meal or to pitch a tent and spend the night. Armed with a genuine smile, she might call out cheerily to whoever happened by, "Come in. I'll set more plates. There's plenty." She might serve tasty new potatoes dug fresh from her garden. And there was always a healthy supply of cookies, cakes, cinnamon buns and scrumptious pies baked with freshly-picked blueberries or cranberries. Yummy.

Sitting around the big late-night campfire, they sipped tea laced with a splash of Carlos' guarded stock of over-proof rum that he shared only with special guests. They might talk geology, debate theories, discuss the latest news in town, express personal opinions or tell whacky stories. Their laughter and giggles rippled through the soothing wilderness that was pulled around them like a comfortable old sweater.

Was it any wonder the Carloses were protective of their lifestyle on the Grew Creek property he had staked 15 years ago in 1983? This was living.

Carlos cherished summers in the bush surrounded by his family and friends. Life was agreeable but would have been perfect if an option agreement had not expired the previous year of 1997. Then a hoped-for deal fell apart – not on merits of the property – but based on the negative perception the government was spinning about mining exploration in the federally-controlled Yukon Territory, where the mining business had been the lifeblood for over one hundred years.

Within the last ten years, a new batch of bureaucrats with a new mindset was in control. The mining industry had been under assault by the federal regime with native land claims, land-use regulations and other environmental issues encompassing land alienation for parks, protected areas, plus water use, fish habitat, species at risk, development process, and so on. It was open-ended. Throughout the process, the chamber of mines had burnt out five

presidents. The feds and territorial bureaucrats were drafting and presenting proposed legislation faster than was possible for volunteers to keep up with and comment on.

After the 1998 field season, a government-sponsored workshop was scheduled to brief people on the new land-use regulations to be administered from the mining land-use division that was open for business on the third floor of Red Square.

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Mining rebounded as metal prices recovered; giddy speculators were in a mood to invest; stock markets were hot.

Good things come to those who work hard while waiting. The Carloses benefited.

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On July 14, 2004, the Vancouver-based Freegold Ventures Ltd., which trades on the Toronto Stock Exchange, announced that the company had entered into an option agreement whereby it would be able to earn up to a 100-percent interest in Allen Carlos' Grew Creek gold-silver property, located 35 kilometres (20 miles) west of the village of Ross River, Yukon.

According to the news release, the Grew Creek property comprises 192 mineral claims covering approximately 15 kilometres (nine miles) of the Tintina Fault, a major geological feature that passes through the highly-mineralized Faro-Ross River area.

Under terms of the initial option agreement, subject to regulatory approval, Freegold was to incur exploration expenditures of \$1.5 million and make cash payments of \$305,000 over five years and issue 200,000 shares over four years.

The property is subject to pay a three-percent net smelter return to Carlos. In the event that commercial production has not commenced on the property by the sixth anniversary of the agreement, Freegold shall make advance royalty payments in the amount of \$50,000. On the seventh anniversary, the annual advance royalty payments shall increase to \$100,000.

Freegold's exploration program was focused on expanding the known mineral resource already identified and a 10-hole diamond-drill program commenced in late August, 2004, and carried on throughout the winter months, and, as of this writing, had carried on through the 2005 and 2006 seasons.

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*Allen Carlos' name is engraved in the base of the bronze prospector statue that watches over downtown Whitehorse from Main Street and Third Avenue. His name also is inscribed on a brass plate attached to the Hall of Fame artpiece on display in the foyer of the Yukon government administration building.*

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