



P.O. Box 902  
 Bakersfield, CA 93302  
[www.chalontribe.com](http://www.chalontribe.com)



*We are descendants of the Chalon and Esselen survivors of Mission Soledad whose traditional homelands encompass significant portions of Monterey and San Benito counties, including all of present-day Pinnacles National Park. Some of our people reside on or near our tribal homelands, while many others found refuge and subsistence in the distant regions of the city of Bakersfield, Kings county and elsewhere in California.*

**Dec  
2022**

## Chalon Indian Nation Tribal Council

### 2022 Board of Directors

Audrey Alvarado	Chairwoman
Natalie Garcia	Vice Chair
Bridget Escalera	Secretary
Sonya Dorado	Treasurer
Esther Hernandez	Sergeant-at-Arms
Julian Behill	Member-at-Large
Larry Lopez	Elders Rep.

### Elders' Council

Gloria Medina	Chairwoman
Irene Soto	Vice Chairwoman
Yvonne Estrada	Purser
Richard Suniga	Sergeant at Arm
Larry Lopez	Elders Rep.

**Holiday Gathering**  
**Sunday December 11, 2022 at 1:30 pm**  
**BAIHP Office**

## Our Mission

**T**he mission of the Chalon Indian Council of Bakersfield is to develop tribal resources, protect and preserve Native American heritage and cultural traditions, seek Federal recognition for our descendants, assist Native Americans in pursuing higher education, assist members seeking tribal affiliation, and to promote and refer healthcare services to Native Americans.

### Upcoming Events

The Council board meets the second Tuesday of the month via zoom. Contact us at [chaloncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:chaloncouncil@gmail.com) to access our meeting.

- ◆ Dec 13 Chalon Council Meeting via Zoom
- ◆ Jan 10 Chalon Council Meeting via Zoom
- ◆ Feb 14 Chalon Council Meeting via Zoom
- ◆ March 14 Chalon Council Meeting via Zoom
- ◆ March 24-26 Equinox Ceremony at Pinnacles Park



## CHAIRWOMAN'S CORNER

Greetings to all my family and tribal members. We have had a busy quarter these past few months. On September 17th we held our bi-annual equinox ceremony at Pinnacles National Park. The event brought together 31 tribal members along with Pinnacles Park staff (story below). On October 8th we were invited to share our fry bread making skills at the second annual GONA/GOAN event sponsored by the Bakersfield American Indian Health Project. We the tremendous help of **32 volunteers** we made about 450+ fry breads! Quite an accomplishment.

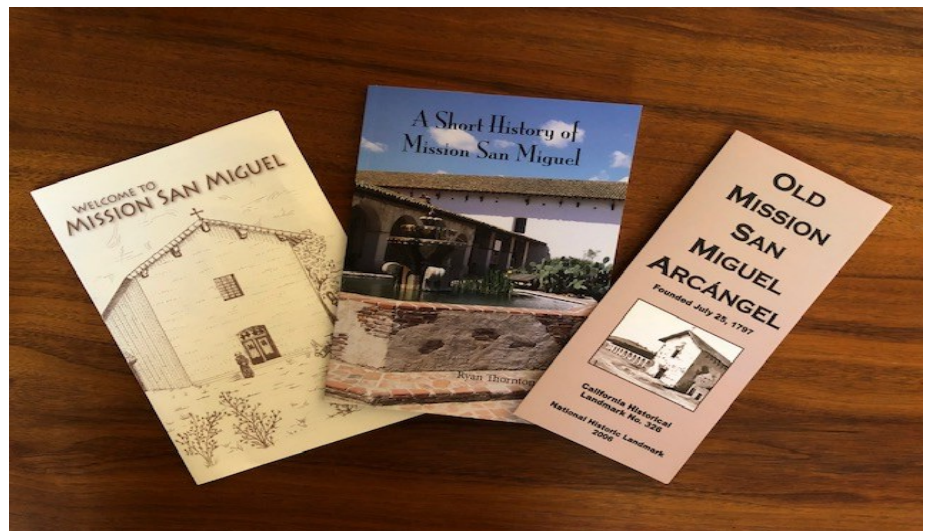
On a personal note, I recently visited Mission San Miguel near the area that our ancestor Piu-Uina was brutally murdered, along with her daughter and granddaughter. As you know, Piu-Uina is revered and celebrated both as a symbol of the strength and unity of our Chalon-Esselen ancestors. I made a silent promise to her that I would continue to work on behalf of her people, keeping true to our identity and traditions. I invite you to do the same. Please consider joining us as a volunteer, committee member, or attend one of our events designed to learn more about our history and traditions. Let us continue to unite as one people and build on our strengths.

It is not too early to plan for our next equinox ceremony scheduled for March 24-26, 2023 at Pinnacles National Park. We will again have two large tent sites for attendees. Our ceremony will be held on Saturday March 24th for those attending for the day. Trailer/RV sites can be arranged by going to [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

Blessings—

Audrey R. Alvarado, Ph. D.

Chairwoman



## **Summary Report Chalon Indian Nation Equinox Ceremony Pinnacles National Park September 16-18, 2022**

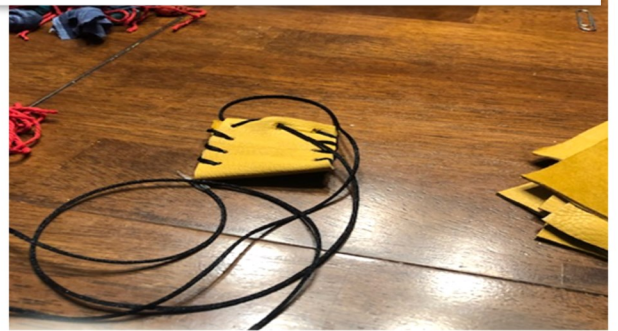
***Presentation with Cultural Craft Activity.*** Friday September 16th – Dr. Babalis welcomed attendees and introduced Dr. Alvarado who then introduced Dr. Kenneth Hansen, Arianne Garcia, Cameron Garcia, and Lizzie Arriaga. Ms. Garcia started with program with a prayer, as is our custom for our activities. Ms. Arriaga led us all in song. Dr. Hansen provided an overview of the Chalon people and their presence in the Pinnacles area. Ms. Garcia shared her personal experience identifying as Chalon and described some of the items she brought to share, such as drums and use of various plants. Mr. Garcia, a Chalon youth leader shared his views on becoming aware of his heritage at an early age and how he plans to become an archaeologist in order to be of service to his people. Ms. Arriaga shared additional songs and invited the audience to join in. A brochure was distributed that was created for the event telling the story of our Chalon-Esselen ancestor – Piu-Uina.

***Cultural Craft Activity.*** Dr. Alvarado invited all 40 or so attendees to create their own medicine bag and described the types of items one would insert in their bag. Tribal members who made the medicine bag kits were available to demonstrate how to complete the bag. Each participant then received a t-shirt with the phrase – *Pinnacles National Park Heartland of the Chalon People*. All were invited to join the walking tour scheduled for the following day.

***Walking Tour of Pinnacles National Park.*** Saturday September 17th — Dr. Babalis and his staff, along with Superintendent Stransky led a group of about 25 tribal members and a few campers on a short tour of the park, highlighting the Bacon Family Homestead. He shared a bit of history about the Chalon people that members found quite informative and interesting.

***Tribal Regalia.*** Tribal members will work with experienced individuals on how to make Chalon regalia. The completed items will be presented to Pinnacles National Park for display. Authentic materials have or will be obtained. Training sessions will be conducted with experienced instructors and many tribal “hands” will be involved in this project. The session will be videotaped for use by Pinnacles National Park.

***Equinox Ceremony.*** Saturday September 17th we held our equinox ceremony. We had 31 attendees ranging in age from 5-85 years of age to celebrate Autumn Equinox in our homeland Pinnacles National Park (we refer to it as the Heartland of the Chalon People). Additional individuals participating in our Equinox ceremony included the Park Superintendent, Blanca Alvarez Stransky and 7 park rangers. Our cooking team fed us all very well. A shout out to the team—Sonya and Frank Dorado, Natalie, Tom and Elijah Garcia and Larry Lopez See photos below.



Chalon Members assembling the medicine bag kits. Nicole Alvarado, Peggi Alvarez, Aubrie Flores, Janine Dorado and Sonya Dorado.



Presenters: Arriane Garcia, Lizzie Arriaga, Ken Hansen and Cameron Garcia.







# March Equinox at the Pinnacles

Reserve your spot at the upcoming equinox ceremony at Pinnacles National Park on March 24-26, 2023. We have reserved two tent sits that can accommodate up to 40 people. Fun and educational activities are planned for all ages. For more information and to reserve your tent spot contact us at [chaloncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:chaloncouncil@gmail.com).

Our youth group gathering was held on  
Sunday October 2, 2022

Yvonne Blank, Cynthia Rios and Yvonne Turner presented information on gourds and taught us how to make our own gourd. Yvonne Blank and Cynthia gathered the gourds near our local Hart Park. They directed Yvonne Turner (Frenchie) on the supplies needed and she gathered those. Nora (Noey) Alonso and Esther Hernandez handled set up and planning on food. We were happy to have our Chair in attendance and a few of the parents to help. In attendance we had a total of 10 children. These ladies went above and beyond to give our youth a great experience. This group was so much fun! Looking forward to our next one possibly the first week of November. Submitted by Esther Hernandez





## Bakersfield American Indian Health Project

The Chalon Indian Nation and the Chalon Indian Council of Bakersfield continues to have an ongoing partnership with the Bakersfield American Indian Health Project (BAIHP). They held the second annual GONA/GOAN event at Stramler Park on October 7-8, 2022 and members and friends of the Chalon Indian Nation came out in full force to help make fry breads for the 450+ attendees. We had 32 volunteers cooking, kneading, rolling, frying and serving. Thanks to all who participated.





Thank You  
Fry Bread  
Volunteers...

# Traditional Chalon Society

In the time before the Spanish invasion approximately 900 Chalon speakers were living in villages of about 50 to 250 people, maybe 300 at most. Some families lived in hamlets here and there beyond the villages. Villages were seasonal, both summer and winter to follow the food supply particularly deer and elk. There were also temporary camps in the spring, summer, and fall for collecting and processing a variety of foods. One example was camps in late fall for collecting and processing acorn.

Chalon villages were independent like all Ohlone/Costanoan groups and not centralized like the Chumash or Yokuts. Chalon society was **patriarchal** (*patri = male; archal = leadership*) with a male headman and an elders council made up of the male elders of the families. However, typical of all Ohlone/Costanoan peoples Chalon society was quite **egalitarian** with women being equal in status to their male counterparts.

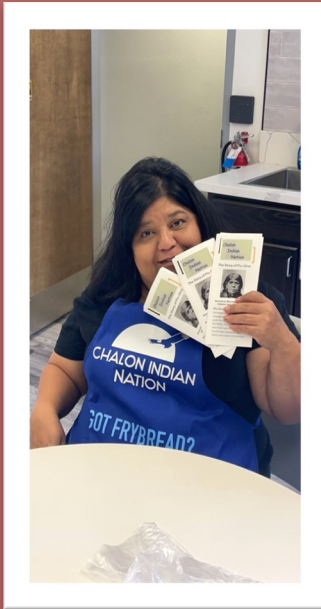
Village leadership was normally passed down from father to son or father to nephew, if seen as qualified and with consent of the elder's council. Thus Chalon society was **patrilineal** (*patri = male; lineal = lineage line of descent & inheritance*). On rare occasions with no male heir, a sister or daughter, if qualified, would be chosen by the council to lead the village and her successor would be a male relative. The headman had very limited authority and could be overruled by the elders council. He served as his own orator/speech-maker unlike in Chumash or Yokuts society where an assistant performed that task.

Chalon society was divided into two **moiety** groups: a Deer moiety and a Bear moiety, and marriages between two people in the same moiety was forbidden. [Note: a moiety is a two-group system; a clan system usually has four or more groups] Both moiety groups had several *totem* spirit-animals or spirit guides to assist its people. Once married the two individuals would live among the groom's family and, if from two different villages, within the groom's village. Thus residence in Chalon society was **patrilocal** (*patri = male; local = location of residence*). Marriages between members of two different Chalon villages usually strengthened to bonds uniting the two villages in terms of shared resources and most importantly in terms of protection from enemies. Marriages between a member of a Chalon village and a villager from another language group (e.g. Esselen) also tied the two villages together in the same way. Marriage, not language, produced village bonds. Village bonds could and were also be arranged by trade and/or by mutual agreement of some kind. Chalon social culture will be discussed further in future newsletters. Maksene wayas oniyet.

Charles Etnier, Ph.D.

## BAIHP Open House

Chalon Indian Council was invited to cook frybread for the Bakersfield American Indian Health Project Open House held on Friday October 28. Thanks to our volunteers who cooked and serve the attendees. Enjoyed by all!



Happy  
Holidays

The Chalon Indian Council of Bakersfield invites ALL tribal members to our Holiday potluck gathering. The event will be held on **SUNDAY December 11, 2022 at 1:30 pm** at BAIHP office located at 501 40th Street Bakersfield, CA. The Council will provide the main dish and drinks. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Activities are planned for all ages. Plenty of parking is available. We will have special gifts for children attending the event so we need a head count. Please RSVP at [chaloncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:chaloncouncil@gmail.com). We hope to see you there!

## Oral History Project Update

Professor Joseph Florez and Christina Contreras from California State University Bakersfield (CSUB ) continue to make progress on the oral history project. They have held two in-person group interviews with our elders. The purpose of this project is to create a repository of our elders' shared memories and knowledge as well as learn more about our long history in California. Elders are being asked about their memories and recollections of our families – traditions, practices, and gatherings. If you have an interest in participating or have any questions about this project contact Audrey Alvarado at [chaloncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:chaloncouncil@gmail.com).

### *Have Shells, Feathers or Smudge Sticks?*

*The Chalón Council needs shells, feathers and smudge sticks to complete our regalia and for other planned youth activities. If you have any spare shells, feathers or smudge sticks that you are willing to donate please contact us at [chaloncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:chaloncouncil@gmail.com). Thanks.*



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# CHALON INDIAN NATION NEWSLETTER

