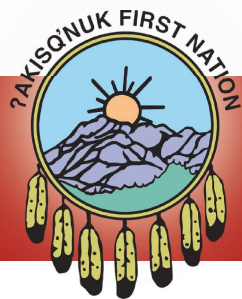


?AKISQ'NUK COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



JUNE | KUQ'UKUPKU



Soaring Eagle - Robert Austin

ISSUE INDEX:

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In Loving Memory of Mary Nicholas

By: Barb Gervais

Mary will be remembered for her kindness, her strength, and the warmth she brought into the lives of those around her. She had a way of making people feel welcome and cared for, and her presence left a lasting impression on family, friends, and everyone fortunate enough to know her.

Although saying goodbye is never easy, we can take comfort in the memories we shared with her – the laughter, the conversations, the love, and the moments that Mary made special. Those memories will stay with us always.

Mary was my very first client when I started working for ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation. When we first met she was very quite and reserved. But that did not last long.

As time went on, I got to know the real Mary – warm, caring, funny, and full of personality. She had a gentle way about her. but once she opened up, you could see her strength, her humor, and her kindness shine through. It was truly a privilege to spend time with her and build that connection. Over the years, Mary became much more than just a client to me. She became someone I deeply respected and cared for. The conversations we shared, the laughs we had, and the moments spent together are memories I will always treasure.

Mary touched many lives in her own quiet but meaningful way, and I know many of us carry special memories of her in our hearts.

Mary often spoke about the adventures she had growing up – hitchhiking all over the valley and the many memories she shared with her cousin and aunts. She would tell stories about riding horseback to the store just to buy candies, and you could see the joy in her face as she remembered those carefree times.

Listening to Mary share those memories was a gift. Through her stories, you could feel her love for her family, her sense of humor, and the deep connection she carried for the people and places that shaped her life.

Mary enjoyed the simple things in life that brought her comfort and happiness. She loved beading, reading romance novels, and spending time working on her word searches. She also had quite the love for sweets and sunflower seeds.

Mary would often joke, “Lawrence must think I’m a bird – he’s always bringing me seeds.” That was Mary’s sense of humor: gentle, playful, and always able to make people smile.

Mary stayed here in the area until she graduated high school. After that, she moved to Golden for a short time before eventually making her way to the Island with a few friends. The Island became her home for most of her life, and it was there she raised her son, Wayne.



Tamara Coates Photos

In 2024, Mary returned home, and the last couple years she spent back here were filled with meaningful moments and reconnecting with community and family.

Although Mary is no longer with us, her spirit lives on – in our memories, in our laughter, in the stories we share, and in the love she gave us all.

February 4th, 1954 - May 13th, 2026





Looking Back On Red Dress Day Recalling a Day of Remembrance

By: K R Austin

ʔakisq̓nuk Community Newsletter Editor | AFN Administrative Assistant

Every year on May 5, communities across Canada gather to honour all Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirited Peoples (MMIWG2S+). Known as Red Dress Day, the movement began through the REDress Project created in 2010 by Métis artist Jaime Black; empty red dresses hung in public spaces became symbolic reminders of the Indigenous women and girls who should still be here today (Canada Nurses Association, 2021). The colour red itself carries spiritual significance in many Indigenous cultures, as it is believed to be the colour spirits can see. Jamie Black describes the dresses symbolize both absence and presence; honouring loved ones lost while calling visual attention to the ongoing violence Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirited peoples continue to face (Black, n.d.).

This year's march brought together community members, families, workers, and advocates, all walking with a shared purpose: remembrance, awareness, advocacy, and action.

For Nation member Glynda Joseph, participating in the march was deeply meaningful.

"Being a part of something meaningful and having purpose," she shared, adding that her favourite part of this year's event was the opportunity to express her feelings through song alongside her comrade of harmonious drummers.

As both a mother and grandmother, Red Dress Day carries personal weight for her.

"Red Dress means strength to me, but it also worries me as a young mother and grandmother knowing what is really going on in the world. I have three daughters of my own, and I am very protective of them."

Her words reflect the reality many Indigenous families continue to carry; balancing resilience with fear for future generations. While Red Dress Day is a time for honouring lives lost, it is also a reminder that this crisis is ongoing and continues to impact families and communities across the country (Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, 2026).

Glynda believes stronger conversations and education within communities are necessary moving forward.

"I would like to see more in our Nation addressing this issue and our communities. Having workshops within the community on this issue."

For her, acknowledgment and accountability matter deeply.

"At the end of the day, I want this issue to be known, ... addressed, and ... [never] pushed under the rug."

AFN worker Margot Cain shared similar reflections, emphasizing that Red Dress Day is about both remembrance and awareness.

"Red Dress Day is not just to honour the memory of all the missing people, but to make people aware that there are still so many missing."

Over the years, she has noticed awareness growing within the valley and among those witnessing community marches.

"Yes, there has become more awareness. You can tell that just by the amount of people that showed up this year. As we walked, there were people slowing down or watching us that were learning."

The visibility of the red dresses and marches has become one of the movement's most powerful tools. What began as a stationary art installation has grown into a national movement involving marches, art, ceremonies, educational events, and grassroots advocacy efforts across Canada.

Margot believes meaningful change starts close to home.

"The biggest thing we can do is spread awareness within our community. It is always easier to talk to your neighbour about this than to try and talk to a politician or someone across the country. Grassroots campaigns are how change happens most often. If every community did this, the movement could grow."

Her words echo the spirit of Red Dress Day itself; collective action rooted in visibility and accountability within all communities.



Tish Lovely Photo

When asked what message she hopes readers take away from this article, Margot emphasized the importance of continued commitment and prevention.

"Never stop working to make life better for everyone affected by the missing people, and never stop working at preventing more people from going missing."

Red Dress Day remains both a memorial and a movement. It honours those who are missing, supports families and survivors, and reminds communities that awareness must continue beyond a single day. Through advocacy and community voices like Glynda's and Margot's, the movement shall continue moving forward; ensuring Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirited peoples are valued, protected, and remembered forever more.

References:

- Black, J. (n.d.). Exhibitions. Jaime Black Artist. <https://www.jaimeblackartist.com/exhibitions/>
- Canadian Nurses Association. (n.d.). Honouring MMIWG2S: Red Dress Day. <https://nac-cna.ca/en/stories/story/honouring-mmiwg2s-red-dress-day>
- Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. (2026, May 5). Red Dress Day. <https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/news-events/news/2026/red-dress-day>



New Building Update: Community Spaces Designed with Purpose and Identity

By: K R Austin & Cassie Humber

ʔakisq̓nuk Community Newsletter Editor | AFN Administrative Assistant, Administrative Services Coordinator

As work continues on the new ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation building, recent interior additions are beginning to show how the space will support both community use and daily operations.

The Band Hall continues to take shape as a beautiful space for ʔakisq̓nuk members to gather together. The hall will be equipped with all the necessities, such as a large commercial kitchen, portable event seating, and comfortable conversation pieces perfect for meeting with friends for coffee or game of cards. This space will host events, gatherings, and other activities - with room to hold 86 people table seating style, and about 120 people theater style seating.

Rather than feeling like a stuffy corporate building, the Band Hall has been designed to feel inviting; using natural building materials, such as the timber and stone, all found within ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa, to reflect both sustainability and ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation's connection to the land. The architectural design also focuses on openness and accessibility, creating a space intended to feel welcoming and functional for a variety of community uses. Even empty, the room already feels alive with possibility.

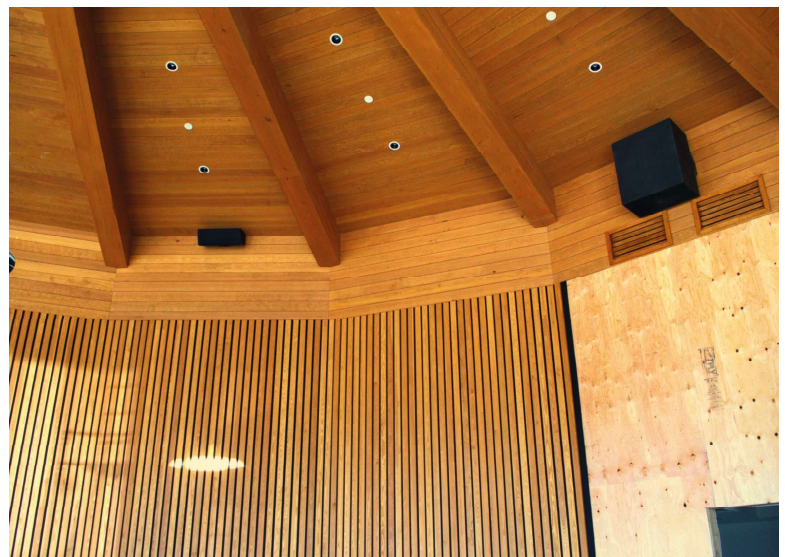
Across the building, new installations are helping bring identity into the finished spaces. The new resource library, which will be open and available to membership, will house a library of ʔakisq̓nuk history with cultural displays, artwork, and artifacts. We also have a vision for membership to one day have access to ʔakisq̓nuk's cultural archives, that will be stored and protected in our new water and fire proofed archival room, by accessing one of the readily available computers in the new resource room.

One of the most meaningful design features throughout the building is the flooring. The extraordinary custom flooring, in the Band Hall, display the river systems connecting ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa; to help continue teaching future generations the Creation Story everyday they walk through their ʔakisq̓nuk Band Hall. In addition, the carpet flooring patterns and textures were intentionally chosen to represent land, with images of mountains and rivers, keeping the building rooted in the rawest form of ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation. These details help carry the presence of the surrounding landscape into the space itself while reinforcing the importance of integrated community identity.

Walking into the administrative wing, you will find yourself surrounded by plenty of natural lighting and the color tones to reflect the land, then as you enter into the Health Centre, you are welcomed with calming tones reflecting the rivers, lakes and shores of ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa.

Together, these additions show the building becoming more than just functional. Each completed detail helps create a space that is both practical and reflective of ʔakisq̓nuk values. Every beam, shelf, floor panel, and chair contributes to a larger vision; one centered on community wellness and spaces that future generations can grow into together.

As construction moves closer to completion, these additions continue transforming the building into a space that reflects practicality,





comfort, culture and community use for generations to come.

The vision from the start was no matter what area your walking through in this building, it encompasses ʔakisq̓nuk culture, whether you are in the beautiful Band Hall, the administrative wing or the health wing; natural lighting and natural components found within ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa.

The vision from the start was no matter what area your walking through in this building, it encompasses ʔakisq̓nuk culture, whether you are in the beautiful Band Hall, the administrative wing or the health wing; natural lighting and natural components found within ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa.

Below, AFN Capital Projects Manager Bob Cotterall, shares an update on the continued progress and final construction stages of the new facility:

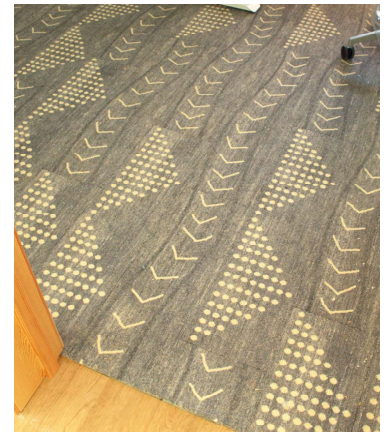
"Dear Community, Construction Progress of the MPF continues to make steady progress to completion.

As reported in the last newsletter work is continuing within the Facility. Flooring whether it be carpet or tile is completed. Final Painting is completed and all ceiling tiles are installed. The electrical and mechanical systems are nearing completion with the testing of the systems to start in the next couple of weeks. The Band Hall mosaic flooring is completely installed. The band Hall commercial kitchen is also nearing completion with the installation of stove and freezers. Final shelving will follow shortly. The sound proofing wall with wood trims is now underway in the Band Hall. Reception counters for both the health and administration areas are now being installed. Installation of office doors and side lights to both administrative and health components continues. We will be applying to BC Hydro for power connection within the next couple of weeks. The installation of the office furniture was delayed somewhat due to parts not arriving however, this work will start next week.

As noted in our last report with the start of spring exterior landscaping and and finishing of walkways will start shortly. When will the Facility officially be open is yet to be outlined , as we want to have the Community give their best prediction. A prize will be given as to the closet date to our completed date. Please submit your date to either Keely Austin or Theresa Kains.

As always, we would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Please drop by the ATCO Trailer anytime."

~ Bob Cotterall





Columbia Lake East Side Updates

By: Claire Peyton

Lands Stewardship Planner, Ktunaxa Nation Council

Columbia Lake North Wetlands – The Nature Trust of BC

- Western boundary has some invasive plants
- Have taken out some ghost fencing in the past
- No active stewardship planned for this year

Lemaster Property - The Nature Trust of BC

- No active stewardship planned for this year

Halterman Property - The Nature Trust of BC

- No active stewardship planned for this year

Columbia Lake Provincial Park

- Some work happening with KNC to install a sign kiosk with an archeology theme at the parking lot
- Bighorn sheep - Monitoring with cameras and collaring
- Land healing project
 - remove trees to a prescribed density to prepare for prescribed fire.
 - Flammulated owl study being completed (following up from a study completed 10 years ago).
 - More archeology work being done to help inform the burn prescription being developed. Will ID potential no-go zones.
 - Set up Fire Effects monitoring plots with UBCO in collaboration with KNC and ʔakisqnuq.
 - Funding request submitted for Ktunaxa citizen involvement
 - Invasive species treatments
- Southern part of the park has been included into the Lot 48 burn plan
- Fence removed between lot 48 and the park

Columbia Lake Ecological Reserve - Province of BC

- No work being planned this year.
- Ecological Reserve wardens visit it sporadically.

Lot 48 – Nature Conservancy of Canada

- Over the years there has been a reduction in the amount of motorized traffic
- Removed the fence in preparation for the burn and to help with wildlife movement.
- The Fairmont airport beacon has been removed.
- Treat knapweed on an annual basis.
- The culturally informed prescribed burn has been delayed until fall 2026 or spring 2027. This will give more time to consider Ktunaxa Cultural heritage understanding and protection.
- Plan to keep an eye on mountain bike trails and ensure they don't expand.
- Want to see increased use by bighorn sheep and badgers.

East Side Columbia Lake Wildlife Management Area - Province of BC

- Yearly operation and maintenance activities
- Government has limited funding to support management and stewardship.
- Continue access management – infrastructure repairs, compliance review with CO's
- Invasive Species management plan – planning to collaborate with EKISS on work
- Recreation –planning to do continued monitoring as well as engage Village of Canal Flats to understand community needs to find better alignment.
- Ecosystem enhancement projects
 - a. Stand mgmt. prescription with an end goal of a prescribed burn
 - b. Rod and Gun club beach, remediation of old roads and trails
 - c. Modernizing a prescribed burn from 2013 that is within the middle of the WMA.

Mount Sabine Ecological Reserve – Province of BC

- No work being planned this year.
- Ecological Reserve wardens visit it sporadically.



2026 Comprehensive Community Plan

Let's build a future rooted in our culture, guided by our values, and shaped by all of us.



Youth—We Need You!

We're looking for youth voices to join the CCP Working Group. Your ideas, energy, and perspective are vital to shaping a future that works for everyone.

For questions, comments, or suggestions contact:
Jose Galdamez: Theresa Kains:
[✉ jgaldamez@ktunaxa.org](mailto:jgaldamez@ktunaxa.org) [✉ theresa.kains@akisqnuq.org](mailto:theresa.kains@akisqnuq.org)
Lisa Cannady: [✉ lisa.cannady@akisqnuq.org](mailto:lisa.cannady@akisqnuq.org)



It's Growing Season!

By: Alfred Joseph

ʔakisq̓nuk Community Elder

To fellow 'akisq̓nuks:

2026 Growing season is now starting and gardening can be fun. It is very easy to plant a potato; it's one of the easiest foods to grow. Did you know that when the cattle drives up to the caribou area, the cowboys would dig a hole and plant potatoes, so when they were on their way home, back to the states, they had some food source. It was an interesting part of history that I found.

Back in the day, all our families had gardens with veggies and potatoes. They used the old root cellars and never had a shortage of food. Corn can be grown here in this area, but the trick that I found by mistake, was that you leave the plants in the ground until Thanksgiving weekend, even if the plant is yellow from the frost. The cob of the corn still matures when the plant looks dead. I talked with the gardener and he told me that there is space available for the different

people that would like to try to grow something this year up at Wiyu. You can also help with whatever is needed to be done up there throughout the growing season. I also would need help with weeding, and when things are ready to harvest, people that help are welcome to the produce, as I do not eat too much of what I grow.

There will also be raspberries available when they are ripened. Also, don't forget to sign up for the Potato Contest. During the summer, I would like to get a group of interested people to talk about and plan a Community Fun Fall Harvest day, where the Potato contest participants can show off their potatoes, carrots or parsnips. Get in touch with me if you are interested in helping to plan this.

Happy Gardening.
Alfred.



Welcome Baby Tyson!

By: K R Austin

ʔakisq̓nuk Community Newsletter Editor|AFN Administrative Assistant

A very special welcome to baby Tyson Douglas Montgomery, born on March 30! Over the past couple of months, Tyson has already become a special new addition to the community as family and friends celebrate his arrival and watch him grow.

Tyson joins proud parents Mary and Doug, beginning an exciting new chapter for the family. He is also a cherished grandson to Glynda and Sammy, who especially enjoy Tyson's visits. Surrounded by the care and support of family, Tyson is already bringing plenty of smiles wherever he goes.

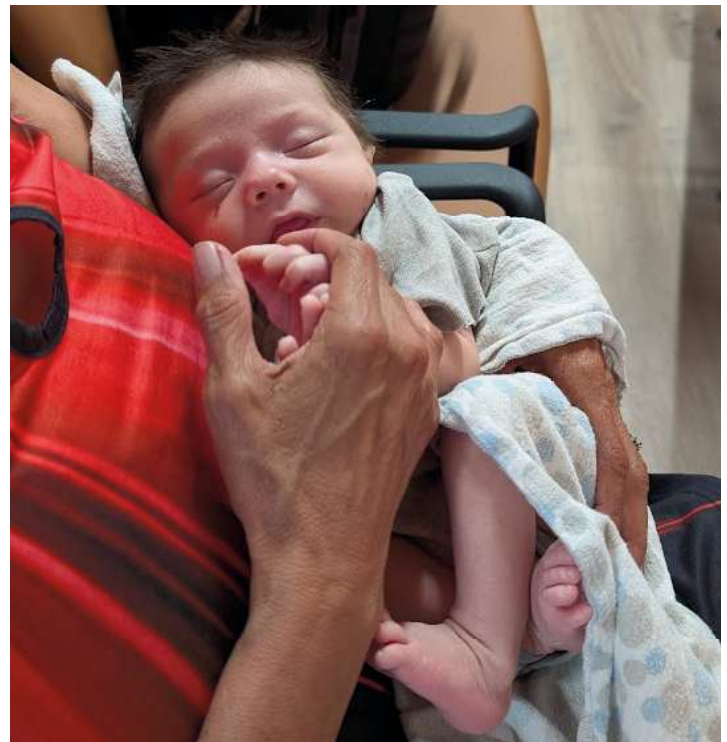
The arrival of a new baby always brings many memorable moments, and Tyson's family has been enjoying this special time together as they settle into life with their newest little member. From quiet visits with loved ones to the everyday milestones of these first few months, Tyson's arrival has already created many moments to treasure.

Congratulations to Mary, Doug, and the entire family on welcoming baby Tyson Douglas Montgomery. We wish Tyson a lifetime filled with good health, happiness, love, and many wonderful memories ahead.

Welcome BABY

If you or someone you know in the community is expecting a baby, we'd love to hear about it. Whether it's your first or new addition to your family, let us know so we can offer any support or resources that maybe helpful.

Please reach out to
**ʔakisq̓nuk Health center at
 250-342-6379 or email
 Ashley.killin@akisq̓nuk.org**





Alfred's 2026 POTATO – CARROT – PARSNIP GROWING CONTEST

Gardening season just starting and it is time for planting! Not only will it keep you busy, but it will also put delicious food on the table.

So what is this contest about? It is open to all ʔakisq̓nukniks, young and old.

No gardening experience? Potatoes just need a 4 -6 inch deep hole to put into, cover with dirt, water and then watch it grow. Once the bush starts to flower, you just have to “hill” the plant, which means, just shove some more dirt on to the plant and try to bury again.

Carrots and parsnips can be planted in row or a square block; You just have to thin the plants once they are tall enough to pull. They grow larger with about 1 inch on each side, but if you want some fancy shaped carrots, just leave a smaller space between each plant.



1. There will also be a “largest weed pile” category. Weeds pulled from the garden, NOT the kind that is smoked.



Potato Categories

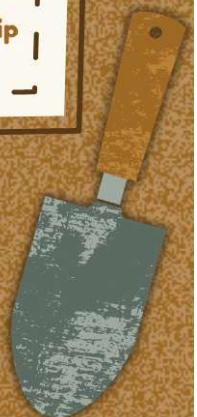
1. Largest Red Potato
2. Largest White Potato
3. Largest other color potato [purple]
4. Most Odd Shaped Potato
5. Most potatoes from one plant
- 1 inch Minimum size, 2 witnesses to confirm
6. Best Dressed or Decorated Potato

Carrot/Parsnip Categories

1. Largest, fattest Carrot or Parsnip
2. Longest Carrot/Parsnip
3. The Stubbiest Carrot/Parsnip
4. Most Odd Shaped Carrot/Parsnip
5. Best Intertwined Couple Carrot/Parsnip
6. Best Dressed or Decorated Carrot/Parsnip

If anyone wants to participate, let me know with the name of participant, age and home town by mailing a postcard to Alfred Joseph, 2801 Kootenay #3 Road, Fairmont Hot Springs, B.C. V0B 1L1 or message by Facebook.

Deadline will be July 1, 2026





*We continue
to live &
flourish, we
have never
left, and we
will always
remain in
ʔamakʔis
Ktunaxa*



Celebrating National Indigenous People's Month

Lakeshore Campground

June 18th 2026 5-7pm

Open to All!

- Dinner Provided
- Hide Tanning display
- Moccasin demonstration
- Drumming
- Outdoor games



Funded by the Government of Canada

Canada





COLUMBIA VALLEY
PRIDE



ʔAKISQ̓NUK FIRST NATION INVITES
YOU TO OUR 3RD ANNUAL

PRIDE

**PANCAKE
BREAKFAST**



SATURDAY, JUNE 13TH

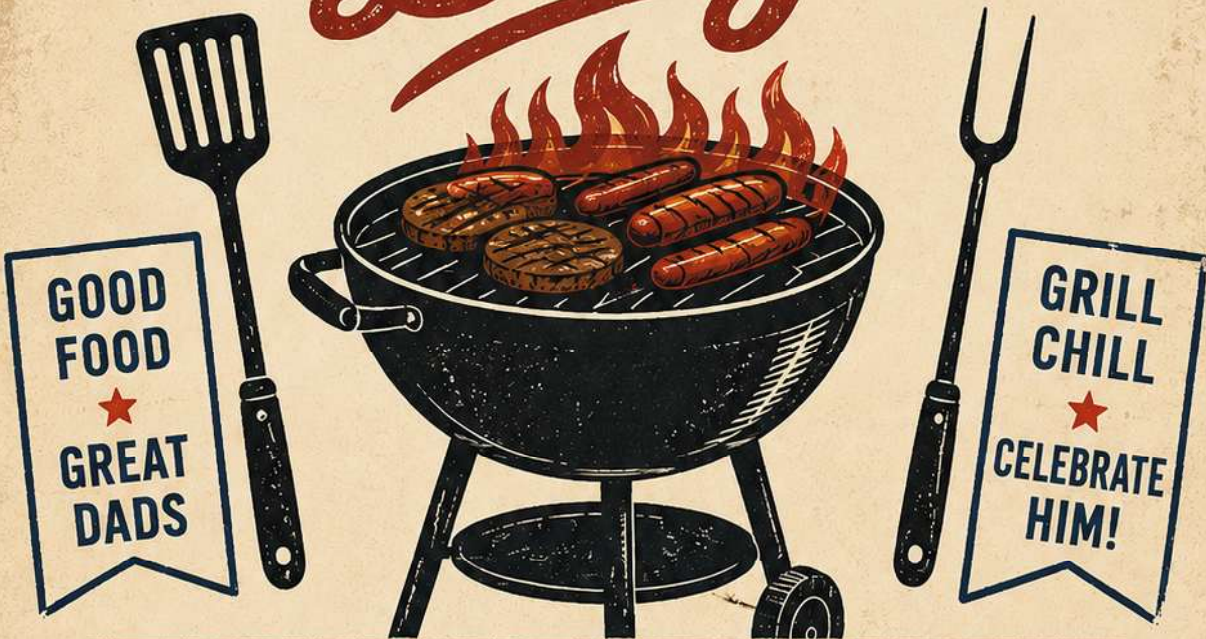
**JOIN US FOR GREAT FOOD, GREAT COMPANY AND
MUSIC BY DJ KEVIN & DJ DORELL!!!**

**9AM - 12PM
INVERMERE OFFICE
#506 - 625 4TH STREET
FREE OF CHARGE!!**





HAPPY FATHER'S *Day*



BARBEQUE

★ GOOD FOOD. GREAT COMPANY. BEST DAD. ★



TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2026

5pm - 7pm

@ Columbia Valley Rec Centre





2026 Ktunaxa Nation Annual General Assembly *Logo Design Contest*



YOUR
LOGO
HERE

We invite all *Ktunaxanir̓tik* to enter the 2026 Annual General Assembly logo contest, and win a \$200 prize.

This year's host is Yaqan Nukiy and the theme is:

Reconciliation Through Economic Strength.

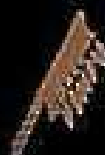
The winning logo will be used on the AGA buttons for this year's AGA. Please try to design your logo as a circular pattern.

Deadline is June 12, 2026 - 12pm

Send entries to:
rachellef.sebastian@ktunaxa.org or drop them off at the Ktunaxa Nation Government Building (220 Cranbrook Street, N.)

One entry per *Ktunaxanir̓tik*.

Visit us at
www.ktunaxa.org



**KTUNAXA
NATION**



**guppa
CORE
SERVICES**



WHAT'S NEW AT WIYU?

James Sullivan, AFN Agriculture & Grounds Coordinator

Spring Garden Explosion!!

So far we've been gifted with great spring weather with some rain and lovely temperatures that have made this year's green up bring an explosion of life to the valley. The garden has been expanding as well with the installation of Berry Lane. This area of the garden will be home to saskatoons, haskaps (A.K.A honeyberries), strawberries, raspberries and more with some berries already presenting themselves for a taste test. Have you tried a haskap berry before? They're delicious!



Our Laying Hens Have Arrived!

After a long road trip from Westlock Alberta our hens are home and healthy. All 50 made it safe and sound. They are slowly starting to get acquainted with their new accommodations but still hesitant to leave their cozy coop. They have started to lay eggs already although small to start the eggs will grow in size as the birds mature. Come stop by Wiyu to say hi. See if you are a chicken whisperer. Keep your ears and eyes open for when eggs will become available. Start saving your egg cartons and we will happily re-use them for distribution.



WIYU Visioning BBQ Updates

The Wiyu Visioning BBQ took place on May 21. I would like to personally thank all who came out and shared ideas and opinions on what direction they would like to see the Wiyu gardens and lodge go. Your voices have been heard and we will provide further updates on our progress as we work to action these ideas. Please know that the garden is intended to be a safe place for all and we will continue to encourage all to come out, leave our differences at the gate and connect with the land. Please never hesitate to provide feedback. I am available to meet you in person at your convenience if you have any ideas or thoughts you would like to share about any happenings at Wiyu or anything relating to your garden at home; Call or text James 705-494-6550 or email james.sullivan@akisqnuk.org

We are still seeking help in the garden please apply at the health center or contact James 705 494 6550 or james.sullivan@akisqnuk.org

There is no shortage of work to be done. From planting, watering, weeding, building and chicken keeping there is lots to do and lots to learn. It's time to get planting !





EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We Are Hiring!

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

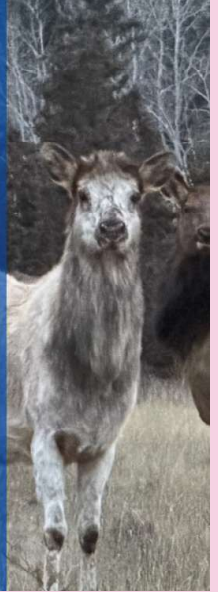
ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation is seeking a talented individual to support the Nation's mission by promoting initiatives, achievements, and objectives through clear and engaging communication with internal and external audiences.



We Are Hiring!

DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES

ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation is seeking a dedicated individual to provide leadership and oversight for programs that support the well-being of community members.



Still Available:

ʔAKISQ̓NUK GUARDIANS & COMMUNITY HELPERS – CASUAL

We are seeking values-aligned individuals to help support ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation



FOR ʔAKISQ̓NUK MEMBERSHIP FINANCE AUDIT INVESTMENT COMMITTEE (FAIC) BOARD



<https://akisq̓nuk.org/governance>

Submit your interest to
Robby Roy at
robby.roy@akisq̓nuk.org

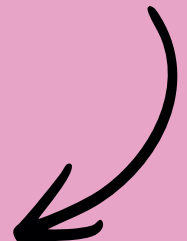
MAKE AN IMPACT BEHIND THE SCENES!

- Detail-oriented individuals
- Strong critical thinkers
- Team players with integrity
- Anyone interested in finance (experience is a bonus, not required!)

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Honorarium provided
- Meetings typically last 2 hours, held every 1–2 months
- Occasional full-day meetings (mainly during budget discussions)

If you are interested in any of our ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation employment opportunities, please visit our website to see the full requirements and submit your application.





HEALTH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

HEMBC INITIATIVE | INTERIOR/ KOOTENAY REGION

- Kootenay region preferred
- Full time

SEARCH JOB ID

197869E

at jobs.phsa.ca

Supporting coordinated emergency preparedness, response, and recovery alongside communities, healthcare partners, and organizations across the region.

Grounded in collaboration, cultural safety, and coordinated systems approaches.

WHAT THIS ROLE LOOKS LIKE

- Leading emergency preparedness and response planning
- Working alongside health authorities, communities, and partners
- Supporting regional coordination during emergencies and disasters
- Developing emergency management plans, training, and exercises
- Building strong relationships across healthcare and community systems

WHAT THIS ROLE IS ABOUT

- Relationship-based emergency management and planning
- Supporting culturally safer and more coordinated healthcare systems
- Working collaboratively across organizations and communities
- Advancing preparedness, resilience, and response capacity
- Supporting culturally safer and anti-racist approaches within healthcare systems

About Sanya'kula

PHSA's Sanya'kula team supports First Nations, Inuit, and Métis applicants and employees.

Questions or interested in connecting? Reach out to Melissa & Rebecca:

Indigenous.Employment@phsa.ca



Jen Wood, Human Resources Coordinator

Email: careers@steugene.ca

Website: www.steugene.ca

"We still have several seasonal positions available at the resort, as well as a full-time, year-round Houseperson position. We encourage you to check our Career Centre regularly, as new opportunities are posted frequently."

Follow the QR Code for More Details.



Kristi Strobbe

Team Lead – Capacity
Development & Education,
Ktunaxa Nation

"Canfor is hiring in the Kootenay region! 🌲 ✨"

There are several opportunities currently posted in Radium Hot Springs, Elko, and Cranbrook, including:

🔧 Certified Saw filer – Radium Hot Springs

Includes a \$5,000 signing bonus!

📁 HR Admin Assistant – Elko

🌲 Forestry Supervisor – Cranbrook

🔧 Certified Heavy Duty Mechanic – Cranbrook

These opportunities may be a great fit for those looking to build or continue a career in forestry, trades, administration, or operations."

Follow the QR Code for More Details.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Director: Rachel Bach

MAY 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JUNE 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
				Cranbrook Shopping Trip 9am		
				Seabird Diabetes Clinic 8:30am-3:30pm		
				Play Group @ Little Badgers 10:30am - 12pm	Kootenai Falls	
				Family Night @ Rec Centre 4:30 - 7pm		
	Women's Circle At Wiyu Lodge 5-8pm		Wiyu Wednesdays 1-8pm	Drum Practice @ Wiyu Lodge 6pm-8pm		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Women's Circle At Wiyu Lodge 5-8pm		Wiyu Wednesdays 1-8pm	Play Group @ Little Badgers 10:30am - 12pm		Pride Day @ Invermere Office 9am-11am
				Dr. Page Clinic 2-4pm		
				Drum Practice @ Wiyu Lodge 6pm-8pm		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
		Massage Clinic 10am-3pm	Foot Care Clinic 9:45am- 3:15pm	Play Group @ Little Badgers 10:30am - 12pm		
				National Indigenous Peoples Day Community Strengthening Dinner 5pm-8pm	End of School Year Celebration	
	Women's Circle At Wiyu Lodge 5-8pm		Wiyu Wednesdays 1-8pm	Drum Practice @ Wiyu Lodge 6pm-8pm		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
National Indigenous Peoples Day	Office Closed - In Leju of National Indigenous Peoples Day			Good Food Box		
			Wiyu Wednesdays 1-8pm	Acupuncture Clinic 11:00am-4:00pm		
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
	Women's Circle At Wiyu Lodge 5-8pm					

JULY 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Please contact the ʔakisq̓nuk Health & Wellness Centre at healthcentre@akisqnuk.org or 250-342-6379 for more information or to book or cancel

For more Health & Wellness program information, please visit our Website through the QR code below





ʔakisq̓nuk Peer Support Team

Reach out for support, harm reduction supplies, transportation, and social connection.

Available Monday to Thursday from 12-8pm

Call or text Tegan at (250) 688-9483 for more information.

There are resources available to you if you need support.

Circle of Care: KUU-US First Nations and Aboriginal Crisis Line Support is Available 24 Hours. Call 1-800-588-8717.



Aboriginal Head Start & Paq̓mi Nuq̓yuk

SPRING PLAYGROUP

Join us every Thursday morning for 8 weeks of fun, outdoor play, and engaging activities.



When: April 30th to June 18th
Time: 10:30am-12 pm
Where: ʔakisq̓nuk Community Garden
Beside the Little Badgers Centre
3046 Hwy 93-95, Windermere, BC
Sessions are weather dependent



Enjoy hands-on gardening in the ʔakisq̓nuk Community Garden besides Little Badgers Centre. Children and caregivers can connect with nature and explore the season together. Bring your little ones ages 0-5. **Everyone is welcome!**

For more information, contact:
Ashley.killin@akisqnuk.org or Jennifer.hilder@ktunaxa.org

Paq̓mi Nuq̓yuk
Aboriginal Early Years Services



www.akisqnuk.org



JUNE 1, 8, 15, & 29

WOMEN'S CIRCLE

WIYU LODGE

5-8PM: Dinner Included
Shuttles Available

Call/text: 250-961-0993 for more info

Seabird Mobile Diabetes Team



Living • Well • Together

What The Appointment Includes:

- Testing Blood Sugar and Cholesterol Levels
- Checking Kidney Function
- Diabetes Education

Where: ʔakisq̓nuk Health Centre

When: June 4th, 2026

Contact: Lindsey

Number: 250-342-3679

WEDNESDAYS AT WIYU LODGE

TIME FOR CREATION,
CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY

1-8PM

DINNER SERVED EVERY WEEK

NO SIGN UP REQUIRED, RIDES OFFERED
CALL OR TEXT TEGAN
FOR MORE INFORMATION

TEGAN- (250)688-9483

Address: 2410 ALPINE RD. WINDERMERE, BC
V0B 2L2



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ʔAKISQ'NUK FIRST NATION AND SHUSWAP BAND



PARENT AND TOT FARM DROP IN



Every Tuesday Starting May 26th - June 16th

TUESDAYS 10-12pm

FREE

Serenity Farm

4825 THE DELL ROAD, WINDERMERE

Caregivers and children 0-6 are invited to come play, visit
and feed farm animals.

Parking is limited and there is a bit of a steep driveway to walk,
strollers are recommended.



SERENITY FARM
Made with PosterMyWall.com

Call Angela at 250-341-5216 or email
serenityfarmcv@outlook.com with
any questions



MEMBER SERVICES

Overseer: Georgina Lieverse

A poster for a 'Good Food Box' event. It features a light beige background with various colorful illustrations of vegetables like carrots, kiwi slices, mushrooms, and leafy greens. At the top center is the ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation logo. The text is in a mix of English and ʔakisq̓nuk. The main title is '‘a-kuq̓wuk’is ksukikiʔ kikiʔ' in a stylized orange font. Below it, 'Good Food Box' is written in a similar font, flanked by small floral sprigs. The date 'Thursday, June 25th' is in a large, bold, dark brown font. Below that, 'Pick up in the Recreation Centre' and 'From 12pm - 3pm. Cost \$7.00' are in a smaller, dark brown font. At the bottom, contact information for Trisha Clowers is provided: 'Contact Trisha Clowers if you need to make alternate pick up arrangements: trisha.clowers@akisqnuk.org 250-342-6301 ext. 3215'.

A poster for an 'End of School Year Celebration'. It has a bright blue background. In the top left, 'JUNE 19TH' is written in white inside a pink rounded rectangle. Below it, 'END OF SCHOOL YEAR CELEBRATION' is in large, bold, green letters. To the right is a circular logo with a stylized bird and the text 'ʔAKISQ̓NUK LIVES KINDNESS'. The main text says 'Come Join Us for Food, Fun and Good Vibes to Celebrate Finishing Another Year at School!' in white. Below that, '4pm - 7pm @ Lakeshore Campground' is in white. At the bottom, it says 'Please RVSP to kevin.morrall@akisqnuk.org by June 12th if you will be attending and to inform the planners of any dietary restrictions' in white. On the right side, there are illustrations of colorful confetti, a red apple with a face, and a yellow star character wearing a graduation cap.



ʔAKISQNUK Family Adventure

SAVE THE DATE
July 24-26, 2026
Registration will start in June.

Adventure stops will include
Head Smashed in Buffalo
Jump, Telus Sparks Centre,
and Calaway Park.

Connect with Trisha Clowers for more information or questions
trisha.clowers@akisqnuq.org



BC Farmers Market Coupons Are Back!



STARTS: JUNE 15TH

Participant Registration:
OPEN NOW

Contact Person:
Trisha Clowers -
trisha.clowers@akisqnuq.org



ʔAKISQNUK ELDERS MEETING

JUNE DATE & TIME TBD
LOCATION TBD

For more information contact
Eldene Stanley
ʔakisqnuq Language, Culture Manager

Office Phone: 250.342.6379
extension: 3874
eldene.stanley@akisqnuq.org

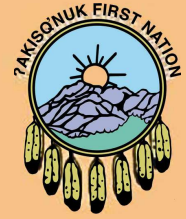
Study Club

If families are interested in setting up study time, please reach out directly
to Kevin to arrange a time that works best.

kevin.morrall@akisqnuq.org



YOUR BENEFITS YOUR WAY



Kiʔsuʔk kyukyit ǰapiniskiʔ. We have had over 200 ʔakisǰnuknik sign up for member health benefits! Below are some resources to help download the app(s), sign up for CINUP, and submit claims. Click the video below, my-benefits for Employees, to see a quick how-to tutorial. Or go to: <https://cinup.ca/my-benefits/>

We hope this helps make submitting your claims easier! If you are still having trouble, email healthcentre@aksignuk.org more assistance.



Submit Online

my-benefits eClaims® allows you to submit many of your Health and Dental claims online, quickly and easily – no paper claim forms to complete. Claim payments are deposited into your account within 48 hours of being processed. It's easy:

- Select the service or product supplied (the type of claim)
- Enter the service date and amount charged by the provider
- Attach a digital copy of the original receipt and submit

It's as simple as that. You will receive an email notice when your Explanation of Benefits has been prepared and claim payments have been deposited into your account.

Not registered, **sign up now!** All you need is your Firm and Certificate number.

my-benefits for Employers



my-benefits for Employees



LOGIN

Submitting claims with your phone or tablet?

Download the **my-benefits** app. It's as simple as taking a picture of the receipt using your device.





Accessible Housing — Inclusive First Nations

*Indigenous Disability Canada/
B.C. Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS)*

for more info



· PROJECT DESCRIPTION ·

The goal of this project is to identify best practices, gaps, and barriers, to accessible housing in Indigenous communities in Canada.

This project centers the lived experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples with disabilities, to examine the current state of accessible housing in participating communities. With the guidance and insight of community members and leaders, we aim to create recommendations, that we hope will be adopted and acted on, to create more inclusive communities across the country.

who are we?

Indigenous Disability Canada (IDC) is a nationally recognized and award-winning, national **Indigenous non-profit organization**.

Our vision:

An inclusive and accessible Canada for all Indigenous persons and families living with disabilities, where their disability and health priorities/needs are identified, planned for and addressed through relevant and holistic programs and services.

“When it comes to adequate housing, one size does not fit all. Adequacy means meeting people where they’re at.”

MARIE-JOSÉE HOULE
FEDERAL HOUSING ADVOCATE

fill out our **survey** on
accessible housing for a
monthly chance of winning

SCAN ME!



an iPad!



Questions? Contact Us!

researchadmin@bcands.bc.ca

+1 226-345-4310

Toll Free: 1-888-815-5511

www.bcands.bc.ca

www.indigenousdisabilitygathering.com



LANDS & RESOURCES

Director: Lorne Shovar

FireSmart June 2026 Wildfire Season is Here!

By: Kevin McNab

AFN FireSmart Representative|Wildfire Mitigation Specialist

Tips to FireSmart Your Home

Storing combustibles at least 10 m away from your house can make a big difference. Firewood and propane tanks are clear risks, but other common household items, such as patio furniture, toys, and paddleboards, can easily ignite during a wildfire.

Grass shorter than 10 cm is less likely to burn intensely. If possible, keep your lawn well hydrated, as dry grass is more flammable.

Trim tree limbs to be at least 2 m above the ground. This prevents ground fires from climbing trees, which can carry flames and embers to your home.

Regularly remove dead leaves, branches, and dry grass from your lawn to help ensure it's fire-resistant. Clean gutters regularly, or consider screening them with metal mesh to prevent debris from accumulating.

Make Evacuation Plan

Build your evacuation plan online, share it with the people you live with, and keep a copy in your grab-and-go bag so it's ready when you need to be.

Pack a Grab-and-Go bag

Assemble a kit with all the essentials: food, water, first aid, important documents, and more. Pack it today so you're always prepared.



SAVE THE DATE:

ʔakisq̓nuk

COMMUNITY CENSUS

STATISTICS CANADA CENSUS ENUMERATOR CHRISTOPHER LARGE IS INVITING RESIDENTS OF ʔAKISQ̓NUK TO COME OUT AND COMPLETE THEIR CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRES AT THE BAND OFFICE ON JUNE 18TH AT 10:30. FULFILLING THE CENSUS IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT, AS ACCURATE POPULATION NUMBERS DIRECTLY HELP THE COMMUNITY SECURE VITAL FUNDING FOR ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS. THIS INCLUDES SUPPORT FOR CULTURAL AND NATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING, HEALTH CARE, LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE, AND HOUSING. PLEASE DROP BY TO MEET CHRISTOPHER AND ENSURE OUR COMMUNITY IS FULLY COUNTED!

**JUNE 18TH 2026 @HEALTH CENTRE
STARTING AT 10:30**



Meet The Animal

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep

By: Yvonne Patterson

AFN Biologist

kwiᑭq̓i or Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep are fascinating animals that dwell in the high cliffs and slopes of mountains and lower elevation grasslands of ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa. Within the Columbia Valley, they are found along the eastern benchlands where they use and move across seasonal habitat. During summer months they use high-elevation meadows, and during colder seasons spend time in lower elevation benchlands and valley bottom.

Spring is a critical season for kwiᑭq̓i as they move out of their winter ranges and pregnant ewes (female sheep) prepare for lambing. With snow melting in higher elevations in June, many herds have moved up into greening mountain slopes to feed on fresh grasses, sedges and other nutritious flowering plants becoming abundant. Herds seek out natural mineral licks to supplement their diet and restore levels of essential minerals. This is especially important for pregnant and nursing ewes.

Lambing season tends to peak between mid-May through mid-June, and during this time ewes will isolate themselves and keep close to 'escape terrain' (rocky ledges and cliffs). This helps to keep them and their lambs safe from predators yet still be close to feeding habitat.



Simple Soul Photography Photo

kwiᑭq̓i



Amazing Fact:

Newborn lambs only weigh between 8 – 10 pounds (4 - 5 kilograms), yet within hours of being born they are able to stand, nurse and following their mothers across ledges and rugged terrain!



C. Donohue Photo



FOR ʔAKISQ̓NUKNIK
KICK OFF LABOUR
MARKET SURVEY
INFORMATION
SESSION

THURSDAY, JUNE 25TH

AFN Health Centre, Round Room
 Dinner at **5 pm**, Meeting at **5:30pm**
 (In-person or Via Zoom)

Join Zoom Meeting:
 Meeting ID: 851 2206 5768, Passcode: 196934

<https://akisqnuḱ.org/governance>






Save the Date
Friday, June 19th 2026

Nasuʔkin and Council
 Swearing in Ceremony





GOVERNANCE

Overseer: David Bach

SAVE THE DATE 2026 AGA

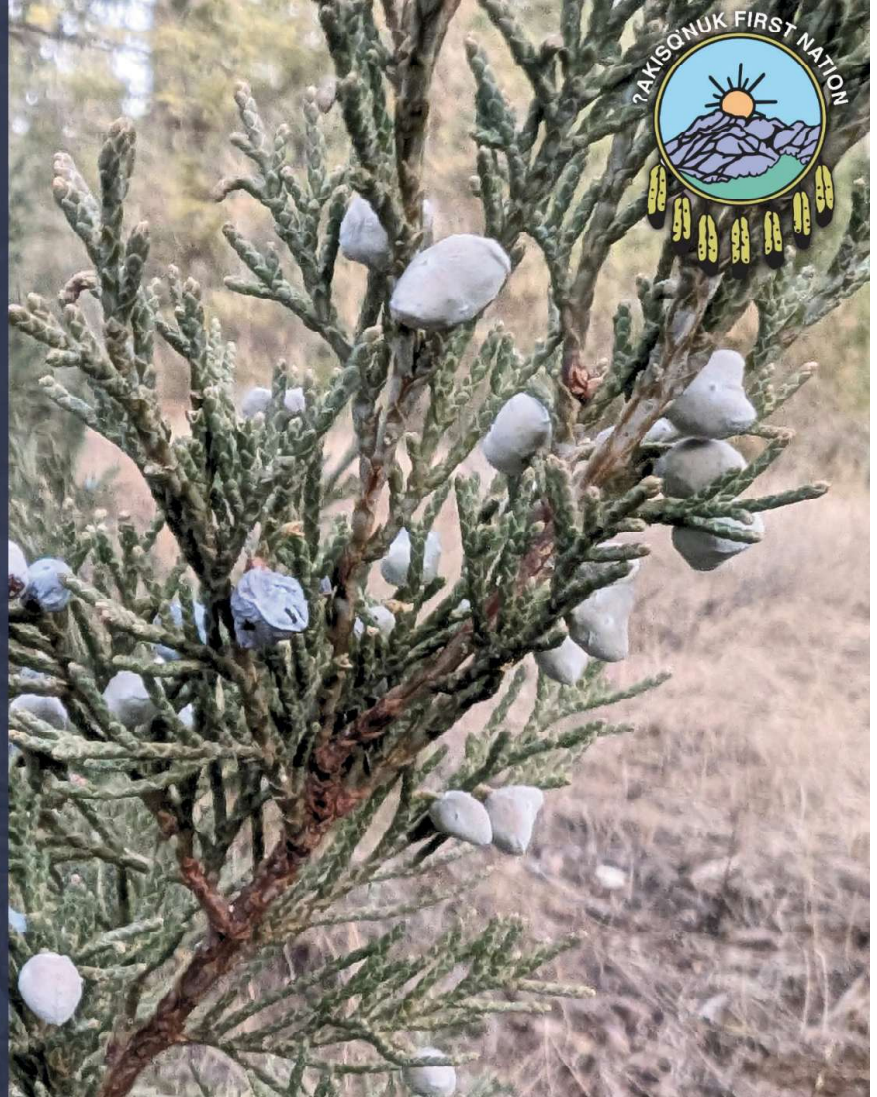
**August 21st, 22nd & 23rd,
2026**

Please mark your calendars and join us
for the Annual General Assembly.
More details will be shared soon!

Interested in Helping Plan the 2026 AGA?

Members who would like to join the
2026 AGA Committee are invited to
contact:
Val Stackhouse
The Committee will meet every 4–6
weeks, and participation is available in
person or via Teams.

Contact
val.stackhouse@akisqnuk.org
(250) 342-6301 ext. 3879



Call for Caterer



**Annual General Assembly (AGA)
August 21, 22, and 23, 2026**

Food Safe Certificate is Required
Follow QR Code for More Information.

Bid submissions must be received by 4:30 pm June 3, 2026
Attn: Val Stackhouse Email: val.stackhouse@akisqnuk.org





News Release - May 20, 2026

ʔAFN Advancing Evidence-Based Water Stewardship

INVERMERE, B.C. - ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation (AFN) is continuing to advance a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to water stewardship on ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa, including Columbia Lake and Lake Windermere.

As a witness to the serious consequences of unchecked demands and pollution on the health of the lakes and associated biota, AFN is tackling the issue head on with a holistic approach grounded in environmental science, regional collaboration and AFN's longstanding stewardship responsibilities.

AFN Council has approved more than \$200,000 to conduct bathymetric mapping of both lakes. The work will collect measurable data on lake depth and help us better understand sediment movement and shoreline conditions to fill gaps in data, support informed decision-making, and clear up misinformation being reported by some groups.

AFN is also commissioning a labour market survey to better understand the impact of recreational use of the lakes, including ballasted boat use, on the regional economy. Assertions that lake conditions, wake impacts, or boating activity are unknowable are incorrect. These are measurable environmental conditions, and AFN is investing significant resources to ensure



decisions affecting the lakes are based on credible data, technical expertise, traditional ecological knowledge and long-term ecological sustainability rather than assumptions, hypotheticals, or speculation.

AFN's stewardship initiatives include ongoing engagement with the District of Invermere, the Regional District of East Kootenay and neighbouring Indigenous communities, including the Shuswap Band. Water stewardship has been identified as a strategic priority in AFN's annual planning processes, demonstrating AFN's ongoing commitment to protecting culturally and environmentally significant waters for future generations. AFN will continue engaging with regulatory agencies, local governments, residents, and lake users as technical work progresses and additional information becomes available.

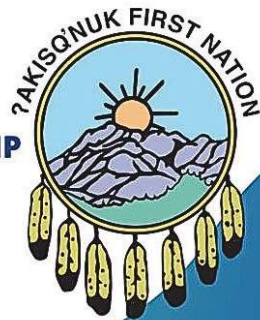
QUOTE:

Chief Donald Sam - "AFN is committed to working government to government with Province and Federal governments to protect our homelands. Our people have stewarded these lands and waters continuously for more than ten thousand years. ʔakxarhis ʔapi qapsins refers to our original relationships to "all living things". While colonization disrupted our ability to fully exercise those rights, it did not erase our responsibility to protect these waters. We will continue to lead with credible science, respectful collaboration, traditional ecological knowledge and evidence-based stewardship that reflects our obligations to future generations."

Media Contact info@akisq̓nuk.org 250 217-5339

FOR ʔAKISQ̓NUK MEMBERSHIP BAND MEETING

ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation members are welcome to submit agenda items until May 29th. Submissions can be emailed to Sue Smythe at sue.smythe@akisq̓nuk.org. A finalized agenda will be posted on June 4th.



THURSDAY, JUNE 4TH

ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation Health Centre, Round Room
Dinner at 5p.m. meeting start time **5:30 - 7:30pm**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85918263860?pwd=3v4wGuvAhl3kNqY1EPcOMocRoF2LYC.1>
 Meeting ID: 859 1826 3860
 Passcode: 141636

FOR ʔAKISQ̓NUKNIK

INDIAN BEACH ESTATES (IBE) MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT



MONDAY, JUNE 8TH

ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation Health Centre, Round Room
Dinner at 5 pm. Zoom starts at **5:30-7:30**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81329117640?pwd=0PSBOAsEXm9QCx436CsBMja5ZpPSI6.1>

Meeting ID: 813 2911 7640
 Passcode: 597025

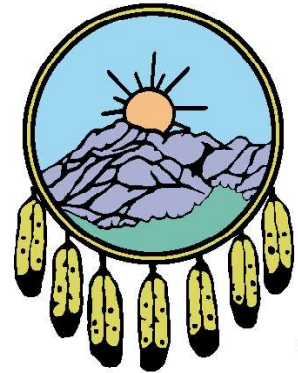


<https://akisq̓nuk.org/governance>



<https://akisq̓nuk.org/governance>

Help Shape How ʔAkisq̓nuk Communicates Our Story



We want to hear from you.

What values and teachings should guide how ʔAFN communicates?
What works well? What needs to improve?

Join us for a session.

Tuesday, June 9
5:30–7:30 PM

Location:
**Health Centre Round
Room**

**Dinner provided at
5 PM.**

Wednesday, June 10
5:30–7:30 PM

Location:
**Health Centre Round
Room**

**Dinner provided
at 5 PM.**

Thursday, June 11
5:30–7:30 PM

Location:
**River Rock Casino
Resort (Richmond)**

**Meet and Greet with
Chief and Council
7:30-8:30 PM**

**Dinner provided at
5 PM.**

All ʔAFN members invited. Facilitated by ChangeMakers.

Your voice matters. Join the conversation.



CORE SERVICES

Director: Donna Melnychyn

Letter from the Editor

Hello Everyone!

I'm very excited to be part of this new issue of the newsletter and grateful for the opportunity to contribute as the publication continues to grow.

You may notice a few changes in this edition of the newsletter. We're taking this opportunity to refresh the format, explore new ideas, and introduce some creative updates as we continue building and improving the publication.

We appreciate your continued readership and welcome feedback throughout these changes. If you have any questions, comments, or inquiries regarding the newsletter or its recent updates, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Please feel free to contact me through email at keely.austin@akisq̓nuk.org

Warm Regards,
K. R. Austin



TRADITIONAL POW WOW!



Save the Date:
Saturday, August 8th 2026

Next Planning Meetings: June 15th, 2026 1:30pm
Everyone — ʔakisq̓nuknik, families, and staff — is invited.



Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82647151777?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82647151777?pwd=vMisLozzZLUJ84gIbbELQcG3xWha1W.1)

[pwd=vMisLozzZLUJ84gIbbELQcG3xWha1W.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82647151777?pwd=vMisLozzZLUJ84gIbbELQcG3xWha1W.1)

Meeting ID: 826 4715 1777

Passcode: 370294

Contact: Glynda Joseph @

reception@akisq̓nuk.org

OR 250-342-6301 for

more information



ʔAKISQ̓NUK FIRST NATION invites you to

DRUM PRACTICE

Come enjoy an evening of drumming with community

All ʔakisq̓nukniks and community welcome to come learn how to drum and sing.

Call or text Glynda for more information at 250-409-5513 OR reception@akisq̓nuk.org



Thursdays
May 14th to June 18th
6:30 pm
Wiyu Lodge



Learn Ktunaxa

FROG AND CHICKADEE

na'kyu
(nuhk-yew)
Fox



watak
(wuh-tuhk)
Frog



kiṭq̓aʔi
(kilhh-galhh-lhee)
Elk



miṭq̓aqas
(mits-ga-gas)
Chickadee



Look for this legend in Ktunaxa Legends

compiled and translated by Kootenai Culture Committee Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Phase of the Month:

q̓ayaqanaṭ suʔkni

(gay-ya-gan-nalhh soo-kan-nee)

It's really good or It's Wonderful



listen

Words for Month:

ʔaḡkuamaṭamiʔnam

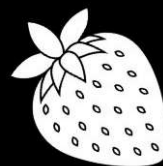
(a -koo-a-malhh-a-mee-nam)

Honeysuckle plants



ʔa·q̓uku kaṭmuxu

(ak-oo-koo kath-mo-ho)



strawberry



Apps
Ktunaxa First
Voices



Facebook

ktunaxa/ksanka Language Group 2.0



TikTok

@ksanka_ktunaxa



Community is built on people, stories, and accomplishments that should be recognized!
It's all about lifting each other up and sharing moments of pride together

Membership Spotlight!

Work Anniversaries & Achievements
Birthdays & Wedding Announcements
Education & Training Achievements
New Additions to Families
Special Celebrations

Know someone who should be celebrated?
Submit a Membership Spotlight to celebrate them
in our monthly newsletter!

Please make sure the person you are celebrating is comfortable being featured.
We want every shoutout to feel positive, respectful, and something they're happy
to share with the community.

Send your submission to communication@akisqnuk.org