Happy children in front of the traditional ʔak ̓ is hanq̓u tipi created by Robin Louie in collaboration with Ktunaxanin̓ tik and other helpers. Also shown is a yaqsuʔmiǂ, built by Jordan Louie. Both Louies (who are cousins) are devoting considerable energy and expertise to tend the traditional Ktunaxa cultural and technological practices that make being Ktunaxa so unique. See Page 6 for more. (Photo, R. Louie)

Treatment Centre Update

The Seven Nations Soaring Eagles Treatment Centre will be built on Lower Kootenay Band territory. The project has been in the works for several years. Nasuʔkin Jason Louie of Yaqan Nuʔkiy says it represents the seven First Nations that live in B.C. He says the 12-bed facility will accept all Indigenous Canadians who seek help and treatment.

As Nasuʔkin Louie told MyCrestonNow.com in 2019, “They’ve made the decision that they want to change their lifestyle. They’re realizing that there’s an issue with alcohol and drugs in their lives. That their lives have become unmanageable. We just want to get them here.”

Debbie Whitehead, Director of Ktunaxa Nation Council Social and Economic investment sectors, and Cover (the architects). The group had regular meetings to review drawings and designs. They raised many questions around layout and functionality. The group finalized the schematic designs based on the needs of the treatment centre clients. Most funds are in place, with other applications in process.

Next steps
The members of the design committee have been finalized, and meeting dates have been set. The committee will tackle decisions on siding, roofing, materials, flooring, colour choices... all the choices needed to complete the entire project.

Meanwhile, the architects will create the construction documents and get ready for the bidding/tender submissions.

If everything goes according to the schedule, by end of January, 2023, the bid package/tender will be sent out to potential contractors. By end of February, 2023, the tender will be awarded. And by April or May, 2023, construction will begin.
**Navigation for the Nation**

“All Indigenous people are connected. What happens to an Indigenous person in the hospital here is happening to my grandparent, my auntie and uncle, my cousin; and that’s how I approach the work.”

Everett Willier is from Treaty 8 Territory in Northern Alberta, and a member of Sucker Creek First Nation.

He is married to Erin and they have four children. They’ve lived inʔa·kisk̓aqǂiʔit (Cranbrook) since 2016.

Everett is the Aboriginal Patient Navigator (APN) at East Kootenay Regional Hospital (EKRH). His employer is Ktunaxa Nation Council.

This is a new role for him, he’s been full time for a few months. Before that, he was working part time, one day per week. He’s on site at the hospital from Monday to Friday, 8:30 to 4:30, and he wants Ktunaxa to know he’s there for you.

“My situation is unique in that I am the only APN in Interior Health who is Nation-based, not employed by Interior Health,” he said. “The role is to improve Indigenous people’s experiences in the hospital.”

What that looks like from day to day is different for everyone. “It can be as simple as seeing someone in the waiting room for emergency and explaining the process to them,” he said. “Sometimes, we see other people going in ahead of us, and it doesn’t seem fair. For me, it would be a natural thing to wonder ‘Is it because of the colour of my skin?’ But in the hospital there’s a process, and if people knew about it, it would make sense to them.”

Other times, it helps people just to see someone in the hospital who looks like them, he said. “And sometimes, it’s doing outright advocacy.

“When you’re in the hospital, there are almost two different worlds,” he said. “People going in are going in scared, worried, ‘elevated’ (with anxiety.) You’re walking in like that.

“So, how can I, as a worker in the hospital, bring that down?”

Willier referred to the report commissioned by B.C. Minister of Health, Adrian Dix in 2020 and released in November of that year that explored Indigenous-specific racism in B.C. health care.

“What happens to an Indigenous person in the hospital here is happening to my grandparent, my auntie and uncle, my cousin; and that’s how I approach the work.

“I do the same thing for them I would do for my own family.”

Willier appreciates hospital leadership. “I feel supported by them, and I feel they’re invested in reconciliation in a bigger context,” he said. “And also in the more local context, as they build a better relationship with ʔaq̓am and the rest of the Ktunaxa First Nations. We’re working together to improve the experiences of Ktunaxa people, primarily, as well as all Indigenous people who access hospital services.”

**Mentorship, learning & spreading the word**

Willier knows firsthand what a difference an APN can make to someone’s experience in the hospital.

“I went into the hospital here in 2020, and it was a good experience,” he said. “But after I moved to the hospital in Kelowna, I met their APN, Gloria Big Sorrel Horse. She was fantastic.

“I call her ‘Auntie APN,’ and in my role I find myself looking to her for guidance. She’s on my list of people to call.”

Overall, Willier said it’s a challenge to get the word out about the APN service.

“How do we get the service known?” he said. “Part of it is in the hospital. Part of it is in community. Being out there so people know there is an APN they can call, so they see someone they know they’re comfortable with, and can connect with.

“I don’t expect to receive immediate trust from someone who is in an acute, elevated state,” he said. “Connection is developed over time. It means you have to be a part of the community before you can be a voice of that community. As an outsider, I can’t be that, but I can still advocate.”

**Find Everett in East Kootenay Regional Hospital every Monday to Friday, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.**

**Or reach him by phone at 250-464-1053**

**Or email at EverettD.Willier@ktunaxa.org.**

**Patient or Care Navigator?**

Willier is grateful for the Aboriginal Care Navigators (ACN) he works with.

“ACNs work directly in community, so when one of their clients comes into the hospital, they can call me,” he said.

“Their relationship with the people coming in is most important—it’s that continuity of care. They help clients find me, we work together throughout, including during discharge planning. We all want the client to feel they have been supported through the entire visit.”

**MORE NEWS:** Aboriginal Health Care Advocate (AHCA)

This year, Shawna Biron became Interior Health’s first Aboriginal Health Care Advocate (AHCA). She began work with Ktunaxa Nation on April 1, 2022. Because of her existing relationships, Shawna’s move into this new role has felt like a natural progression. Read more at: https://www.interiorhealth.ca/stories/new-role-helps-address-racism-build-relationships-between-in-and-nations
Introducing Ktunaxa Care Navigators

Aboriginal Care Navigators (ACNs): Say ‘Hi’ to your community care contacts before you navigate through the larger medical system.

BECKIE CAYENNE
NAME Beckie Ban Quan (Cayenne)
PLACE I was working in Cranbrook, Kimberley and ʔaq̓am areas. However, I’m currently working casually as I am completing my Bachelors Degree in Social Work.
WHO DO YOU SERVE? First Nations, Métis and Inuit clients.
LITTLE-KNOWN FACT ABOUT WHAT YOU DO? Attending doctor or specialist appointments with clients.
BEST PART OF BEING AN ACN? Building relationships and listening to people’s stories.
FAVOURITE KTUNAXA WORD? My favorite word is ʔaqanaxuʔmik (to learn). I believe learning is a lifelong journey and with learning comes growth.
TO GET IN TOUCH Rebecca.Cayenne@ktunaxa.org

SAMANTHA SAM
NAME Samantha Sam
PLACE ʔakisq̓nuk / Invermere area.
WHO DO YOU SERVE? I see clients that are in hospital but most are self-referrals from people needing some help navigating the complex system of health care.
LITTLE-KNOWN FACT..? I am able to attend appointments if needed, and I am also able to take notes of questions people may have. Sometimes appointments can seem rushed and you remember the questions after your appointment. The idea is to assist people so they feel heard and are able to ask questions.
BEST PART OF BEING AN ACN? There are many parts about this role I enjoy. One part I like is having a team readily available and we are able to share ideas and resources to ensure the patient receives the care/services they are needing.
TO GET IN TOUCH Samantha.Sam@ktunaxa.org

OSCAR MEJIA
NAME Oscar Mejia
PLACE Cranbrook, ʔaq̓am, Kimberley areas.
WHO DO YOU SERVE? Ktunaxa Citizens and Indigenous Peoples.
LITTLE-KNOWN FACT ABOUT WHAT YOU DO? I’m now to the position, open to being creative and supporting community.
BEST PART OF BEING AN ACN? Cultural safety and personal care are the two aspects of my work that I ensure are adhered to every day with every person I come into contact with.
TO GET IN TOUCH Oscar.Mejia@ktunaxa.org Cell: 250-421-4056

CANDICE MARION
NAME Kiʔsuʔk kyukit, my name is Candice Marion.
PLACE Cranbrook, ʔaq̓am, Kimberley areas.
WHO DO YOU SERVE? I am an ACN for the Ktunaxa Nation, mostly with ʔaq̓am and Cranbrook area clients.
LITTLE-KNOWN FACT ABOUT WHAT YOU DO? My work is super important to me.
BEST PART OF BEING AN ACN? Cultural safety and personal care are the two aspects of my work that I ensure are adhered to every day with every person I come into contact with.
TO GET IN TOUCH Candice.Marion@ktunaxa.org Cell: 250-420-1411

“The idea is to assist people so they feel heard and are able to ask questions.”
Samantha Sam, Aboriginal Care Navigator
Statement of Reconciliation

Ktunaxa readers and contributors are the “Why.”

Join us for Pow Wow Prep

September 29th, 2022
3:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
At the ?aqam Arbour and KKCFSS Parking Area

Learn about powwow protocol, regalia, drum, and dances. Everyone is welcome!

Ktuq̓qakyam readers would love to hear from you!
Stories, announcements, photos and events...
Please email news@ktunaxa.org
or visit ktunaxahakqyit.org/ktunaxanews for the “Who...What...And How!”
Ktunaxa readers and contributors are the “Why.”

Next Issue: Winter 2022
Contributions until December 15
Each year, September 30 marks the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The day honours the children who never returned home and the Residential School Survivors, their families and their respected communities.

Orange Shirt Day is an Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative day intended to raise awareness of the individual, family and community inter-generational impacts of residential schools, and to promote the concept of “Every Child Matters” incorporating “Reconciliation” and forging a pathway forward.

WITNESS RECONCILIATION IN ACTION

We respectfully invite anyone who would like to bare witness to Yaq̓it ʔa-knuq̓il’it (Tobacco Plains Indian Band) Flag Raising Ceremony at the Fernie City Hall. This event commemorates Fernie’s willingness to work with Yaq̓it ʔa-knuq̓il’it to build meaningful relationships that are based on trust.

You will hear what “Reconciliation” means from:
Mayor Ange Qualizza, Fernie
Nasu7kin (Chief) Heidi Gravelle, Yaq̓it ʔa-knuq̓il’it

If you would like more information on this event please reach out to Lisa McCoy at lisa.mccoy@tobaccoplains.org

This event is held on the traditional and unceded territory of the Ktunaxa/Ksanka Peoples, specifically Yaq̓it ʔa-knuq̓il’it (Tobacco Plains Indian Band).

For more information on Indigenous Issues please visit the following:
UBC: Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre
https://irshdc.ubc.ca/learn/indian-residential-schools/
Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action
Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples/BC’s Declaration Act Action Plan
https://declaration.gov.bc.ca/
Consolidation of Indian Legislation: Indian Act & Amendments 1868-1975
R5-158-2-1978-eng.pdf (publications.gc.ca)

www.akisqnuk.org
www.tobaccoplains.org
www.aqam.net
www.lowerkootenay.com
Robin Louie is a 42-year old ɂa·ɂa man facilitating a ᓃḯski hänq̓u (muskrat’s arrow or cattail) fish ceremony lodge project. We caught up with him via email. All photos, courtesy Robin Louie.

Who are you and where do you live?
I am ɂa·ɂa and I live on the flatlands three kilometres north of the specific landmark called Yaqan Nuʔkiy.

What inspired you to do this?
The honest answer is that with the loss of my teachers I had to do something full scale and practical that nobody of my generation or younger has ever seen, before it is lost forever.

I can’t even say that I love weaving. But all it takes is just one to remember for the next four generations. It works because here I am today facilitating the construction of our largest structure of our fish ceremony lodge that has not been done on this side of our territory since the Grand Coulee dam was put into place.

Can you share what’s involved?
We can either use tanaǂ (bulrush) or the much nicer and sturdier ᓃḯski hänq̓u (muskrat’s arrow).

For the tanaǂ, it is selectively harvested after full cycle when it is brown and just before it bends over. It can be easily cut down after the water freezes on the marsh. Simply bundle and store the material for later use.

With the ᓃḯski hänq̓u, it is best to harvest after full cycle during the coldest months of winter. The tops need to be removed and stored for the use in insulation, bedding, diapers, etc.

Spine leaves need to be immediately stripped before the embedded worms wake up. Worms will immediately start to chew through the stalk that cause undesirable weak points. The stripped stalks must then be bundled and stored under cover and with adequate airflow for drying.

A byproduct from the drying is a material equivalent to the texture of aloe which can be collected and used as is or in medicines. The drying process will take two to four months, depending on the moisture in the air and how frequently the bundles are rotated.

After the ᓃḯski hänq̓u is dry they need to be sized, sorted and bundled again for use. For the fish ceremony lodge, we started the harvest in January and it was not until July that weaving could start. Aside from the poles the only other material is a custom hemp cord made to my specifications that closely match our traditional cordage.

Traditionally, we would have used ᒕa·quǂaqpis; this is a year-long process that involves storing for one year to remove the poison before making cordage.

Ingesting any part of this plant can stop a person’s heart. Unfortunately, with direct impact caused by poor forestry management and spraying, this plant is only a fraction of the size it once was only 20 years ago and no longer practical.

I have never made a full-scale lodge of any type before, in fact nobody has made one in over 85 years. Fortunately, its dimensions were documented and I already have the skills and understanding of what needs to be done.

Aside from many smaller scale projects, I transitioned to full scale tipis meant for practical use in 2020, starting with one made of tanaǂ that I sacrificed to the elements to make adjustments for future projects using the more desirable ᓃḯski hänq̓u.

In 2021, I had my passion project of a meeting tipi that took nine months to complete. (That does not even count the time for harvest, basic processing, and drying.) I always learn from my previous experiences and implement solutions.

Can you talk about the materials and how they respond to weather like rain?
Both materials need be harvested only after full cycle to gain the desired properties of being able to swell in the rain or add water for traditional air conditioning on really hot days.

What does it entail to make a lodge from ᓃḯski hänq̓u? Robin Louie explains.
Being of organic material that absorbs carbon dioxide, mosquitoes do not become a problem. Also, the material is great at masking scent that adds some other great benefits. Woven mats also allow for air flow, and with first hand experience can easily withstand over 50 kilometre winds without even a breeze being felt inside the tipi.

Can these be used year-round?
The tipis made of these materials were not used all year. As semi-nomadic people, we used these basically as one would use tents today during the middle of spring until early fall, before we transitioned back to the much heavier tipis made of hide.

Are they suitable for dwellings as well as shared community spaces?
I never feel comfortable talking for all of the Ktunaxa but I do know that as Flatbow we used tipis of various sizes as dwellings for individuals up to families. In the case of a ceremony lodge, everyone in the community would collectively supply mattings from their own tipis to cover the lodge.

How might a community work together to create these?
If a community were to build one tipi, multiple tipis or even focus on just a large lodge, it would require camping out next to the source. Having designated cooks, hunters and foragers to feed everyone. Having experienced members selectively harvest, youth to transport, and others to process. After drying, an experienced member would select, inspect, place and maintain quality control, with three people weaving in unison each of the mats.

I am still amazed... just remembered how well this weaving system worked through observing my aunts and grandmother working together.

How many people have participated so far?
For the harvesting, processing and bundling, it was a total of 136. People from other Indigenous Nations such as Tlingit, Squamish, Stó:lō, Cree, Blackfoot, Syilx, Ojibwa and Métis helped. Along with non-Indigenous throughout our territory and a family from Calgary. We had people from France, Syria, Ukraine, Ireland, Scotland, Australia, Germany and the United States. For weaving, we had a total of 41 people, which I am proud to say the majority came from our Nation. Specifically, from the communities of ʔaq̓am and Yaqan Nukiy.

I appreciate the traditional learning methods of ensuring exposure to cultural practices to the point where my children understand that we have practices that are done during certain times of year, because of the last three years of harvesting and processing materials it has become part of my children’s culture.

What would you say to younger Ktunaxa who are curious but may be hesitant to delve into traditional Ktunaxa technology that interests them?
When it comes to the younger Ktunaxa, I strongly encourage that they just do it.

Continued on the next page
This is not the day and age when we are shamed or punished for practicing our culture. For those who choose to come learn from me, I share that I only know my small piece of our culture, and there are many teachers out there that have their own piece. Only a fool speaks as if they know everything, because only as a collective do our cultures exist.

When learning traditional culture a great hindrance with many of our people is that they felt deterred after asking a knowledge keeper how to do something, such as building yaqsuʔmiǂ, the keeper would respond with “Figure it out yourself.”

What I was taught is it’s because when you see they are doing it, you help.

You will learn the basics, then you have to figure out how to do it for yourself; if you try to copy another person then you will always be doing it wrong. Keep doing it until your perfect it for yourself, and never let anyone deter you, because they are not you.

Our culture will not grow if you don’t figure it out for yourself. Remember to think practical, and know that you are not doing it wrong if your heart is in the right place and you at least know the basics. I truly believe in you and want you to thrive.

What are you learning as you do this work?

This project has been helping me understand the necessity of patience in helping others who don’t have the same amount of experience. I know that I can weave 8-14 feet a day all on my own, but the average person typically can accomplish 18-24 inches a day.

I found that the biggest limitation is actually not because of the speed of the weaving or having to maintain lines, it is actually physical limitations.

It takes some time of repetition to build up the hands to work with the cordage, and also for individuals to figure out for themselves how hold the cordage for weaving to minimize discomfort and blisters.

These projects are a major part of my healing process, the more I do, the better I understand myself and purpose.

Thanks to traditional medicines and the land, I was given another chance at life.

I had to adapt materials as the government and industry impact on the land hinders my cultural practices, from environment to the plants.

The lessons I learned is go to the source of the impact and instead of just complaining, I offer to work with government and industry without desire of compensation to help them understand the culture of the land and how they can make a difference to change practices that hinder my practice of the culture of the land.

I found establishing myself to thrive completely independent gives me the unique opportunity to speak for myself and not caring about someone’s position or title that allows me the ability to actually talk with the person inclusively instead of objectively.

What would you like to be doing in five years?

In five years I plan to be already in the process of building my own seasonal village on what people refer to as “crown land,” using the knowledge and skills founded in my culture and strengthened by my extensive world travels and experiences and contacts.

What are you most grateful for these days?

I am most grateful for my family and my health. There was a time when I needed a cane and motorized scooter to get around.

Thanks to traditional medicines and the land, I was given another chance at life.

During my healing process I also learned to stop focusing on all of the negative traumas and pains and move beyond to focusing on today for tomorrow. Besides, what a better way to finish an interview with some advice:

Always remember, no matter how bad the situation you are in, how terrible the traumas of the past hurt, you made it through and always will learn to trust yourself to the point you can look at your reflection and you finally say “I believe in me.”

Once you believe in yourself, you can actually believe in and support others.

Where is the project at now?

Currently, we’re still weaving the matting for the fish ceremony lodge. Right now (early September) we have 100 linear feet woven with another 500 feet to go, so there is plenty of time to come help.

I don’t like telling our people that I am teaching them, instead I am just here to help them relearn. The ability still exists within all of us, we just need opportunity.

If anyone would like to come and help weave, the open weaving days are Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9 am - 4 pm.

People are free to stop by anytime to 716 Hurry Road, Creston, B.C.

Arrangements can be made to accommodate groups for any day or days.

Lunch and beverages are provided through grants from the First Peoples Culture Council, Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance and Columbia Basin Trust.

Progress of this project and to view previous projects can be found on the Facebook and Instagram pages under the same name of Flatbow Culture.
Revising the Ktunaxa Land Declaration

By Ray Warden


The Declaration was an expression of our sovereignty during a time when Ktunaxa were hugely ignored and our rights denied by Canada and the outside world.

The Ktunaxa Nation Lands and Resources Council has called for the renewal and update of the 1981 Kootenay Nation Land Claim and Declaration in today’s language, to be informed by our values and responsibilities, recognize previous leaders while also re-affirming the 1981 version.

A large part of this is engaging with Ktunaxa People. To find out more, please go to the Ktunaxa Hakq̓yit site at: https://ktunaxahakqyit.org. There, you will be able to review the original 1981 document and other resources.

Please note, this project is open to Ktunaxa only, therefore you need to register in order to access it.

If you have issues registering or accessing the project, please contact engage@ktunaxa.org.

To do the survey:
You can use a cell phone to read the QR code, which links to the Ktunaxa Hakq̓yit online engagement site.

This timeline is a work-in-progress that Ray Warden, Special Advisor on Jurisdiction, is compiling. Ray is looking for additional notes, dates and photos from Ktunaxa to collaborate in telling a fuller story of our historic rights fight. Reach Ray at RWarden@ktunaxa.org.

Historical Timeline: The Rights Fight

{Colonizer Actions}

The Royal Proclamation
Recognizes Title & Rights. Creates the basis for negotiating treaties.

1763

First Trading Post Established
David Thompson crosses Rocky Mountains from the east and establishes Kootenaie House.

1807

Honour of the Crown
Staff and Medallion given to Kootenay Peoples from the crown. Now housed at the Fort Steele Museum.

1870

Indian Act (IA) enacted as Federal law
An act of the colonial government that allowed the federal government to create Indian reserves.

1876

Indian Reserves Established
Kootenay Reserves allotted by O’Reilly. Some never came to be.

1886

Sundance Declared Illegal
Through an amendment to the IA.

1895

Illegal to hire lawyers
From 1927 to 1951, Canada makes it illegal to advance Aboriginal Title cases through the Indian Act. Allied Tribes of B.C. dissolves as a result.

1912

1916

1927

Constitution Act Section. 35
Recognizes ‘existing aboriginal and treaty rights.’ Hundreds of court cases ensue.

1980

1981

1982

Justice & Simonetta Report
Kootenay Traditional Land and Resource Use Study completed for KIAC. Informed by Elders and coordinated by Wilfred Jacobs.

1984

1986

Tsilhqot’in SCC
Ruling on Title
Courts reject Crown argument that Title was extinguished in 1871 when B.C. joined Canada.

1986

2014

Constitution Express
Initiated by UBCIC, caravan to Ottawa to lobby for rights to be part of the Canadian Constitution. Caravan travelled to Europe in 1981. Kootenay People part of both.

Kootenay Nation
Land Claim & Declaration
Signed by Chiefs and the Coordinator of the KIAC.

1981

1982

Tsimshian
Held gathering to signify 100-year survival of the Federal Indian Reserve System.

2014

SCC: Supreme Court of Canada

{Indigenous Peoples’ Actions}

Indian Rights Association
Petition Prime Minister Borden on Rights. Includes Kootenay Chiefs.

Delegation to Ottawa

Allied Tribes of B.C.
Indian Rights Association dissolves; folds into Allied Tribes of B.C., includes Kootenay Indians.

UBCIC Formation
Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs: 144 Chiefs meet to discuss the “white paper” and recognition of title. Were Kootenay Chiefs at the meeting?

Kootenay Indian District Council
Formed to by the five bands to promote political and social development. Renamed Kootenay Indian Area Council (KIAC) in 1974.

Kootenay Nation
Land Claim & Declaration
Signed by Chiefs and the Coordinator of the KIAC.

1981

1982

1984

2014

Pakisq̓nuk
Held gathering to signify 100-year survival of the Federal Indian Reserve System.

1981

1982

Tsimshian
Held gathering to signify 100-year survival of the Federal Indian Reserve System.
Bringing back burbot

By Jaydon Francis, ʔa·knusti Technician

Ktunaxa Nation Council, in partnership with the BC Ministry of Forests have started a program to help bring back the burbot in the St. Mary and Kootenay rivers.

The burbot population has been in a decline in the St. Mary and Kootenay rivers for the last 30 years, from impacts like mining (Sullivan mine), forestry, the Koocanusa reservoir, over-fishing and rising water temperature. **Burbot are an important species for food for Ktunaxa, and if they are not protected they will be lost.**

Burbot, or Lingcod, grow to as much as 1.5 m in length and 30-plus pounds, and are yellow, light tan or brown, with dark brown or black patterning on the body, head and fins. Like other cods, they also have a single barbel located on the chin. They are camouflaged, ‘ambush predators,’ clean cold-water specialists who spawn in “balls” in winter, January to March. Typically they spawn over coarse substrates in lakes and coarse substrate with groundwater upwell- ing in rivers/streams.

Lower Kootenay River burbot below Kootenai falls are red-listed provincially and other populations such as the upper Kootenay are of serious concern and should also be listed.

The weeks of August 29 and September 5 2022, Ben Meunier, Katrina Caley, Lance Thomas and myself worked on the St Mary River electrofishing for juvenile burbot. When caught, we measure their length and weight, take DNA samples and tag the fish so we can ID and track where they came from. After the burbot are processed, they are then transported to the Kootenay Trout Hatchery, where they will stay until they reach maturity. Once the burbot reach spawning maturity, the hatchery will collect and fertilize the eggs of the burbot, and raise them for stocking the St Mary and Kootenay rivers to help sustain the population.
Show(case) time!

By Marion Eunson

Check out the brilliant 2022 Ktunaxa Business Showcase this October. It will feature Ktunaxa businesses, entrepreneurs, and, new this year, artisans with their wares, and will take place October 27 at Prestige Rocky Mountain Resort in Cranbrook.

The morning will be networking event for pre-registered Ktunaxa attendees to meet with industry and government partners. The afternoon showcase will be open to the general public.

So far, 30 Ktunaxa businesses, entrepreneurs and artisans have agreed to attend. In addition, nine industry and government partners have pre-registered for the morning event with these Ktunaxa groups.

Ktunaxa Businesses, entrepreneurs, and artisans have agreed to attend. In addition, nine industry and government partners have pre-registered for the morning event with these Ktunaxa groups.

The doors will open to the public at 1 pm, with a special opening event presented by the Ktunaxa Dance Troupe.

Ktunaxa Artisans will have items available for cash sales, offering a great pre-Christmas shopping opportunity. Please, come, see, learn and support the diversity and capacity of Ktunaxa First Nation businesses, artisans, contractors, and entrepreneurs. We are also providing return transportation from each of the Ktunaxa First Nations to join us for the afternoon showcase. The event is organized by KNC Economic Investment Sector.

Leadership was the theme. The summit, originally slated for April, had been postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. A summer event meant we adjusted the agenda to offer more hands-on and traditional activities and insight into the KNC; as last year’s participants asked for this in their feedback forms.

Day One opened with a grand entry led by Nasuʔkin Joe Pierre, with Councilors Garrett Gravelle, Vickie Thomas, Avery Gravelle, Jason Andrew, and Kyle Shottanana also in attendance. Some leadership stayed to share lunch with the youth, and for us all to gather from across the Nation. The afternoon was dedicated to a rotation of presentations to provide youth with insight into some of KNC initiatives and opportunities. Lands & Resources did a presentation by Caytlyn Luke, Chad Luke, and Kerri Garner on Qat’muk and IPCA; Bertha Andrews and Brandon Hunt opened up the SEM Interpretive Center to show the Red Brick School video; and Jared Basili gave an inspiring talk about being proud to be Ktunaxa. All of the youth seemed to have a good time; there were a lot of questions for each presenter.

After the group sessions were done, we did a closing as we would be moving to a new location for Day Two. Nasuʔkin Joe Pierre led the closing. We would like to give a big thank you to the Leadership who attended.

Frybread for Fund$ for the delicious food they prepared for us and nuna ka-kin drum group for being available for the grand entry and closing of Day One.

Day Two was dedicated to providing youth with time to meet some ?a knusti staff and learn about their diverse positions through interactive activities. The ?a knusti Rangers, represented by Jared Cayenne and Dean Nicholas, shared the work they have been doing on the ?aʔam trap line and gave youth the opportunity to scrape a hide and learn about what goes into preparing for that job.

Group 2 was led by Jaydon Francis and Lance Thomas, who took youth to Joseph’s Creek that runs through the SEM into the St. Mary River to see some of the bugs they have been catching, and to describe how these bugs provide them with data on the health of the stream.

Jesse Thomas and Cisco Jimmy gave an archeology presentation to explain a bit about this career, and showed pictures from work sites. They took youth to visit archaeological sites in the ?aʔam community.

Thanks to the sponsors, we were able to provide prizes, including grand prizes of two electric scooters and two Apple MacBook Pros. Congratulations to winners Mica Gilhuly, Natesha Johnson, Tabatha Capilo, and Ashton Jolin.

Thanks to all the youth for attending and for the great feedback that will guide next year.


Thanks to Láz Louie for the great logo!
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