

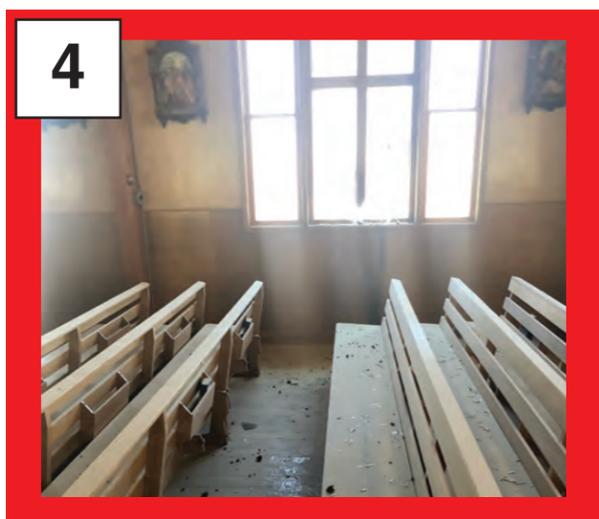
# Aitsiniki

Siksika Nation's Most Trusted News Source

## Calgary Stampede Marshal Katari Right Hand



*Photo by Wesley Water Chief*  
 Katari Right Hand's family organized a community celebration in recognition of her being chosen as parade marshal for the 2021 Calgary Stampede parade. Her grandparents Marcell and Delores Right Hand and Calgary Stampede President Steve McDonough pictured at the event.



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## Office of Chief and Council Government of Siksika Nation

*Submitted by Chief & Council  
Communications Consultant  
Lynn Calf Robe*

### **Siksika Nation Chief and Council Update: June 2021**

#### **General Business:**

In solidarity with the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nation and the families of the 215 children who lost their lives while attending the Kamloops Indian Residential School, Chief and Council wrote an Open Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau, calling on the Canadian federal government to work with individual First Nations to launch an immediate and thorough investigation into all 139 Indian residential schools and sites across Canada, as was recommended in the final report *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls To Action, Missing Children and Burial Information*.

#### **Siksika Nation celebrates Summer Solstice and National Indigenous Peoples Day**

Siksika Nation Chief and Council celebrates the Summer Solstice and National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21, 2021) with Siksika Nation members and guests with a community BBQ and outdoor market on June 19th, 2021. The event kicked off at 10:00 am in the parking lot of Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park. It provided a BBQ drive thru service from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm by leadership, Siksika N7, staff, volunteers and Siksika Nation Fire & Rescue.

Special guest Katari Right Hand, the Calgary Stampede Parade Marshal was on-site for a special meet and greet and handing out copies of the official 2021 Calgary Stampede poster. The poster was created by Lexi Hilderman, 22, winner of the Calgary Stampede Youth Poster Competition and features an image of Katari in her fancy dance outfit.

MC and Councillor Samuel Crowfoot introduced the dance demonstrations and door prize winners. Despite COVID-19 measures, the event was well attended and Siksika Nation Chief and Council would like to thank all who came out including Nation members, guests, cooks and volunteers.

#### **TASK FORCE**

#### **Community Outreach/Charities/Communications:**

**Inaugural Chief and Council Livestream Community Update for June 9, 2021** - Siksika Nation Chief and Council is excited to introduce Siksika Nation to YouTube Live with the inaugural livestream community update to Siksika Nation members on June 9th, 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic restricted leadership from connecting with community members the traditional way; in-person interviews, meetings and gatherings so they had to look at new ways of sharing information with Siksika Nation members.

The need to remain transparent and respect COVID-19 restrictions at the same time has proven to be a challenge for all communities worldwide, Siksika Nation included, so many have opted to use technology as a new way to do business. While it does not replace the old way of meeting with people in-person, it does provide another opportunity for leadership to share the work they are doing and to reach a larger Siksika Nation audience including off-reserve members who often do not have the opportunity to visit Siksika and stay informed.

The livestream community update began at 1:00 PM and ran until 4:30 PM from the Siksika Nation Chief and Council Chambers in Siksika. The agenda included introductions from Chief Ouray Crowfoot and Councillors Ike Solway, Armond Duck Chief, Kent Ayoungman, Leon Cranebear, Carlin Black Rabbit, Wade Healy, Susan Solway, Rueben Breaker, Tracy McHugh, Jenny Goodin, Samuel Crowfoot, Kendall Panther Bone. An overview of the agenda was delivered by Chair and Councillor Ike Solway and Taskforce updates were provided by Taskforce Chairs.

The virtual event included a question and answer segment that gave Siksika Nation members an opportunity to engage with Chief and Council regarding agenda items by email. Chief and Council thanks all who participated in the first livestream community update and looks forward to connecting with more Siksika Nation members at future events. To watch a recording of the livestream community update, check out our website at [SiksikaNation.com](http://SiksikaNation.com) or our YouTube Channel at Siksika Nation. Watch for more information on the next livestream community update.

**Public Safety/Policing/Security/Legal:****Announce the New Peace Officer Program for Siksika Nation**

Siksika Nation (June 15, 2021) – Siksika Nation Chief and Council is excited to announce that the Solicitor General Peace Officer Program of Alberta has provided authorization to employ Peace Officers in Siksika. The new program will provide Level 1 Peace Officers to work directly in the community, including three Siksika Nation members.

“The Peace Officer program is a huge step forward for the Nation. The Public Safety Task Force and leadership continues to ensure our community is safe for our people, and we are committed to upholding our responsibility. With the Peace Officer development, this is a major milestone that we can all be proud of as a Nation.” Shared Councillor and Chair of the Siksika Nation Chief and Council Public Safety Task Force Carlin Black Rabbit. (See press release for more information)

**ENTITIES****Old Sun Community College:**

On June 1, 2021, Old Sun Community College issued a statement of support to the Tk'emlups to Secwepemc First Nation and the families of the 215 children who lose their lives while in attendance at the Kamloops Indian Residential School; and called on the Federal Government to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls To Action. Since then, numerous people have visited the college to offer prayers, tobacco, and gifts. The college received a large amount of teddy bears that will be put on display in the near future, as a way of honouring the children who attended Old Sun Indian Residential School. Old Sun Indian Residential School operated from 1929-1979, and was re-purposed into Old Sun Community College shortly afterwards. Staff and students are thankful for all of the heartfelt gestures that have been shown by the community, to honour the children.

Students in the Academic Upgrading Program ended the 2020-21 school year on June 25, 2021, with a small awards ceremony and feast. Congratulations to all students for completing the school year!

June 15th was the funding deadline for all new and continuing post-secondary students for the 2021-22 year. Please send in all supporting documentation as soon as possible.

**Siksika Family Services Corporation:**

A call for Community Consultation Task Force Applications regarding Bill C-92 and Siksika Specific Legislation for Children and Family Services was sent out to Siksika Nation members on June 5th. We are looking for members of the Siksika community to sit on a task force to review legislation that is being developed and provide feedback to the technicians.

All are welcome to apply, special preference will be given to those applicants who: know Siksika culture and language, have backgrounds in social work, former or current foster parents, former children who have passed through a foster home(s)/group home(s), applicants with experience in drafting and or reviewing legislation, educators and elders. The deadline to apply is July 16, 2021. See copy of Request for Proposal for more information. If interested please send a resumé and cover letter describing why you wish to participate to:

Samuel Crowfoot (Piitaisa'ksinam), B.A., J.D. Siksika Nation Councillor  
P.O. Box 1314, Siksika Nation, AB, T0J 3W0 Phone: (403) 361-4039  
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[www.siksikanation.com](http://www.siksikanation.com)

# Early morning fire at waste transfer station

By Wesley Water Chief

A fire occurred in the early morning hours of June 28 at the Siksika Waste Transfer Site and flames could be seen for miles.

The fire burned piles of garbage but no buildings were consumed in the early morning fire. The cause of the fire is not known but Siksika Fire Chief Tom Littlechild speculates it could have been caused by someone intentionally lighting the fire, or organic material combusting.

An air quality advisory by Siksika Nation Emergency Services had been issued to residents living close by to keep windows, doors or any other opening that may allow the smoke to enter the home kept closed to decrease the inhalation of airborne pollutants.

Temperatures reached +34 Celsius on the day of the fire that made abiding by the advisory tough to manage.



Photo Photo by Carly Weasel Child

## Fires were set at two churches in Siksika

By Wesley Water Chief

On June 28, the same night a fire broke out at the waste transfer station in west Siksika, a suspicious fire was started at the Holy Trinity Church in the Cluny area of Siksika Nation.

Among the damage to the church was a broken window on the north side of the church and fire damaged the window sill of the broken window.

RCMP were on the scene in the morning to investigate and were waiting for fire investigators to arrive, but did state that damage to the building was not extensive.

On the morning of June 29, someone also tried to burn down the St. John the Divine Anglican Church in North Camp of Siksika Nation.

Siksika security did a check on the church at 6:30 a.m. and found evidence that someone had tried to set the church on fire.

Catlin Big Snake with Siksika Security said the RCMP were notified and arrived to the scene shortly thereafter to investigate.

There was minimal damage to the church other than a broken window and burnt curtains.

Arson is an indictable offence with a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment to imprisonment for life.



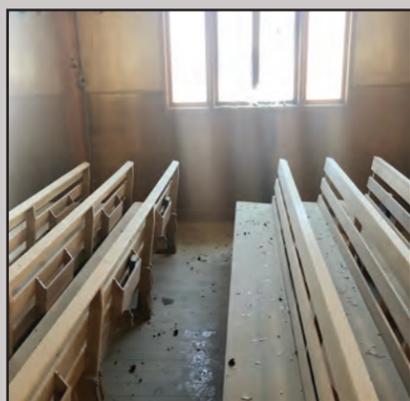
Photo by Wesley Water Chief

Photo of broken window and fire damage to Holy Trinity Church. Interior photos of Trinity church courtesy of Kory Duck Chief.



Photo by Wesley Water Chief

Broken window and fire damage to the St. John the Divine Church.



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# Katari is Calgary Stampede parade marshal

By Wesley Water Chief

Katari Right Hand is the 2021 Calgary Stampede parade marshal and her aura of resilience, determination, and strength are some of the reasons the President of the Calgary Stampede, Steve McDonough said she was chosen to lead the parade.

The story of Katari being chosen as parade marshal starts with Katari's photo being used by youth artist Lexi Hilderman as the subject in a Calgary Stampede poster contest. The entries were cut down to a select few and Hilderman's poster was ultimately selected by the president himself as the winning entry.

"There were about 30 images and this is the one I stopped at. Of course, there is a very colorful dancer on that image but that look in Katari's eyes was something that struck both Lexi and myself as something pretty special," said the president, who was in Siksika Nation for a community celebration of her being selected as marshal.

"That picture was actually taken on the grandstand stage when Katari was dancing, the rest of it is from the mind of Lexi. But what that image, put together, we had asked our youth artists to tell us what they think of the Calgary Stampede, through their eyes. As we were heading into a period of darkness, the pandemic, the clouds and smoke in behind her really came through. But it's the determination, the strength, and the resilience in Katari's eyes that really made the difference."

McDonough said through interaction with Katari and her family he was able to get to know her better, and she personifies optimism for the future.

"Because I believe as the clouds are going away and the sky

is turning blue, and we are getting through this pandemic together, that this is a good reflection and Katari is an excellent image and person to lead the parade, that is really what I wanted to say," said McDonough.

"You know it is a lot to put on a 17-year-old's shoulders, the hopes for the future, but here she is and I think she is up to it and she has done a beautiful job so far. So, thank you for having me out here

I hope you enjoy the image, I hope you enjoy the fact that we are bringing that image to life with Katari leading the parade."

Katari is thankful to the Calgary Stampede for this honour and knows this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and the experience will open doors for her in the future. "I'm very thankful for all the opportunities the Calgary Stampede has given me and I am excited to see where I am going to go in life," said Katari.

"They told me a week before they announced it and I was happy but I didn't know what a parade marshal was. My grandparents were really excited but I didn't know what it was so I was sort of confused. My grandma just gasped and my grandpa was just

like 'holy!', you know. He was really excited and I was wondering why they were reacting that way."

The whole experience has been full of surprises for the Right Hand family, from Katari first being told she was on the poster for the 2021 Stampede, to being asked to lead the parade as the marshal. And each time they were asked by the Stampede not to tell anyone until an official announcement was made. Katari's grandfather Marcell

Right Hand said keeping the news secret was hard to do and he knows the Stampede enjoyed their reactions each time they told them good news.

When they were told Katari's poster was chosen for the 2021 Calgary Stampede poster Marcell said their emotions were hard to contain. "We were just in shock and

they enjoyed looking at us, they seen the expressions on our faces. I think all of us were ready to cry, you know, that honour for my granddaughter."

The Stampede board was not done with surprises. A couple weeks later they asked if they could meet with the family again. Marcell thought it had to do with public relations work for the poster.

"They sat us down and said 'the reason why we brought you here Katari, we wanted to ask your permission, we selected you and would you do the honour to be the 2021 Calgary Stampede parade marshal?' We just went into shock again and they were enjoying looking at the expressions on our faces. My granddaughter said 'what is that?' We were really happy for her, so that is how it happened."

Marcell added that he never expected anything like this to happen and he is proud of this granddaughter and this is a great moment for his family, for Siksika Nation, and everyone. "I am very honoured and I thank the Stampede board, Lexi Hilderman, for all this and I am very happy and proud for my granddaughter."

When Katari's grandmother Delores Right Hand was asked what does she think her grandfather the late Leo Pretty Young Man, who was also a parade marshal with other Treaty 7 chiefs, would say of his great granddaughter following in his footsteps, she said he too would be very proud.

"He would probably say 'you are doing a great job Katari.' My grandfather taught us our culture, our heritage, to respect our elders, to respect everything that has to do with our culture. He taught us great, the whole family and the Nation. He was a good leader and he loved each and every one of us individually," said Delores.

"I think he would be very proud of Katari knowing what she is accomplishing. He would be very blessed for the work she is doing and she is still trying hard. They also told us to succeed in whatever you do and to respect one another. That is what my grandfather taught the family and I think that is what he would be saying to Katari right now."



Image submitted  
Lexi Hilderman's winning Calgary Stampede poster of Katari Right Hand.

## Northern men walking to Ottawa for awareness

By Wesley Water Chief

Adam McDonald, Stanley Jean, and Leo Simpson are walking to Ottawa to bring attention to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, as well as the 215 residential school children whose remains were found buried in a mass grave in Kamloops B.C.

"We are walking across Canada for the murdered and missing indigenous women and girls, and for the 215 we first found out about, then after that the numbers have went up to over 500. We are taking our awareness across Canada and there are other groups that will be meeting us in Ottawa. There are many people that are supposed to be there when we do get to Ottawa.

We are going to raise our concerns with government. No more back benching on First Nation issues," said McDonald.

McDonald is a Metis from Fort McMurray, Jean is from Chipewyan Prairie First Nation, and Simpson from Fort Chipewyan and is a Miki-sew Cree First Nation. The indigenous men from northern Alberta started their walk from Fort McMurray AB. on May 29 and arrived in Siksika Nation on June 14. McDonald, who has walked to raise awareness for other causes in the past, said they don't expect to get to Ottawa until Sept. 1.

The men received lodging, meals, prayers, songs, gifts, and words of encouragement while in Siksika Nation and were joined by

supporters while walking through the Siksika portion of their journey.

McDonald said the main message he wants to get out is indigenous people from Canada have been marginalized for decades and he wants to bring attention to their issues. "The message that I am trying to get across to government, to people, the First Nation people, the people across this country, why are all our First Nation people, our Inuit people, the Metis people, why are they always getting hurt?" said McDonald.

"We are just like a different, small minority that is slowly getting pushed away through the many centuries and decades that we have endured so far. And that has to stop, that has to stop."



Photo by Justice Poor Eagle  
McDonald, Jean, and Simpson stop at Old Sun College rally.

# Siksika people, places and faces



Photo by Justice Poor Eagle

Chief Old Sun School held a graduation ceremony for its elementary students.



Photo by Justice Poor Eagle

Tyler White is honored by Agar Wolfleg at the Blackfoot Crossing virtual Indigenous powwow on June 21.

## NOTICE

Please be aware, the Siksika Nation's newspaper *Aitsiniki* will be posting the photos of all Siksika Nation students graduating from the various high schools in the July issue.

We are working with the Siksika Board of Education to ensure we do not miss anyone, so please ensure your graduate photo is available to them.

Siksika Media



Photo by Wesley Water Chief

With the announcement of 751 unmarked graves being found on Cowessess First Nation, Lisa Big Snake organized for prayers and songs to be said and sung for them.



Photo by Wesley Water Chief

Siksika elder Darrel Breaker says a prayer for Cowessess First Nation



Photo by Justice Poor Eagle

Siksika Nation High School graduates 2021 (Back LtoR) Jerry Black Plume, Joshua Healy, Parker Red Gun, Zanty Red Crow, Kacey Breaker, Desiree Water Chief, Kayci Yellow Fly, Whitney Sitting Eagle. The July issue of *Aitsiniki* will have photos of all high school graduates from the Siksika Nation.



Photo by Justice Poor Eagle

Denver Backfat is missing from the group photo but also graduated from Siksika Nation High School.



Photo by Justice Poor Eagle

Siksika Elders Lodge residents watch performance and drive-by.



Photo by Justice Poor Eagle

On June 18, SN7 organized an Every Child Matters drive-thru for elders lodge residents to honour the residential school students.



Photo by Carly Weasel Child

Chief Old Sun Elementary School students walked to the former Indian residential school Old Sun College in remembrance of residential school children and the 215 found in a mass grave in Kamloops B.C. A ceremony was done and students left stuffed toy animals in remembrance.



Photo by Wesley Water Chief

Northern AB. men walking to Ottawa to bring attention to MMIWG were greeting with words of encouragement by councilor Jenny Goodin and prayers by Leanne Sleigh. Members joined the walk in Siksika.



Photo by Wesley Water Chief

Community members, led by Gabriella Many Shots, organized a remembrance ceremony for the 215 found in a mass grave in Kamloops B.C.

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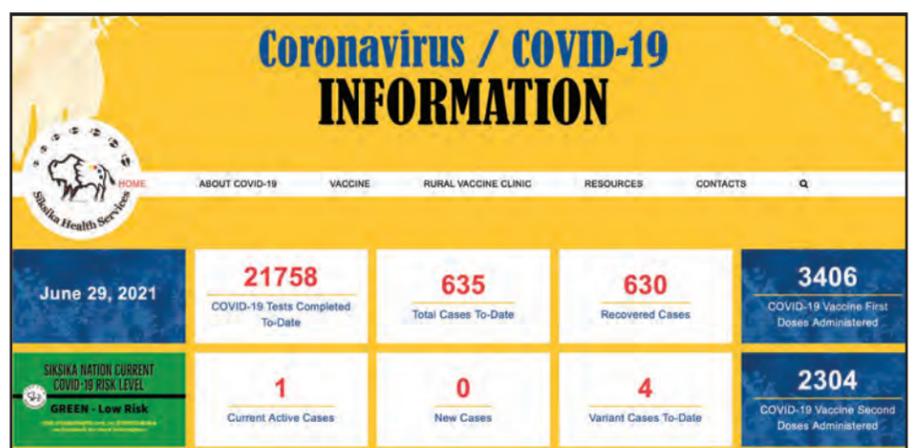
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# Skateboard park opens in Siksika

By Carly Weasel Child

The Old Crow Skate Spot and Cousins Siksika officially launched on June 21, which also fell on National Go Skateboarding Day and National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Community member CJ Cutter, who has been skateboarding his whole life, shared that this project has been a long time in the making. The event launched in partnership with Cousins Skateboard Community and The Source Snowboard and Skateboards.

Cousins Siksika is one of the chapters of Cousins Skateboard Community, which is a non-profit Indigenous owned organization aimed towards bringing skateboarding access and facilities to indigenous communities.

The all ages event also had giveaways, contests, prizes, and skateboard demonstrations. The Old Crow Skate Spot is located by the old Chief Crowfoot Elementary School and is open for anyone of all ages and levels to join.

Stuart Young, executive director of Cousins Skateboard Community, said that the goals of the organization are skateboarding, community, and culture.

Stuart met Cutter through the skateboard scene in Southern Alberta and the two wanted to collaborate to build a positive community within Siksika Nation through the skateboarding lifestyle. Cousins Skateboard Community and Cousins Siksika aims to support skaters of all levels, ages, and genders.

"CJ has been a part of the skate scene for a while, so I met him through a number of events in Calgary. I got to know CJ and a few other friends who are indigenous. I grew up on a reserve as well and we all never had access to skateboarding.

CJ and I started to think of what can we do to support and build a

skateboard community and a place to skate within indigenous communities. So that's actually how Cousins came about.

Cousins Skateboarding is a non-profit and CJ has been a big part of that. There's actually six of us who kind of lead the organization and CJ's one of the six," said Young.

"We're about three things, skateboarding, culture, and community. Those three things, everything we do, we want those three things to be ingrained. So today, you see people skateboarding, you see the culture, and you see people from the community.

To see this happening today, it's the accumulation of a ton of dreams. There are ramps, a lot of people, and a lot of effort that went into making this a reality.

We also know that this is one small step. If this is the beginning, we're really excited to see what the future looks like.

It's also inclusive. For example, over there's a 10-year old girl learning to drop in for the first time, and over there you see a 25-year-old guy with tattoos and everyone's okay.

That's the kind of community you want to build. It's just such a positive thing for everyone. At the end of the day, skateboarding brings us all together and we just want this to be a safe, good, healthy place."

For Cutter, skateboarding has been an important part of his life. From skating at a young age to skating all over Alberta, he wanted to bring more skateboarding opportunities and facilities to the nation for the youth to enjoy.

He believes that skateboarding is all about community, inclusivity, and having fun. Cutter also said that the park is the first of its kind here in Siksika Nation, but it's only the beginning as the group plans to have more activities, skate schools,

and skate nights in the near future.

"We never had something like this on the reserve before. This is the biggest thing we've done in skateboarding in Siksika, and I'm very proud to see this happen.

It was a lot of work and I'm thankful for my team, it's worth the work. It all started with trying to get a place to skate. I started years ago on the other side of the reserve, but on this side I saw that there's skaters out here with barely any spots. So I got a place in Cluny, and I got it solely to get this project going.

I started building a shop in my garage, we made our team Siksika Cousins, we planned, we built, and we just kept that pace. Every week we added something new.

we're going to have more events soon and skate schools, and I want them to meet us. Come out and have fun and be comfortable. That's what skateboarding is all about, just going out and having fun.

We want to have skate nights twice a week, and we want to gradually build a skate school. We want an all-girls skate night as well and teach them stuff and give them prizes.

We're gonna be doing beginners skate night for kids and hopefully adults only Friday nights, stuff like that. We want to show the kids how to skate and give them the stuff that we didn't have growing up and to also nurture them in the



Photo by Carly Weasel Child

Sponsors, skateboarders, and supporters showed up for the launch.

We wanted to do something for go skate day, and it was perfect because it was around the time we wanted to launch. And then we wanted to mix it with Indigenous Peoples Day because that's our culture. It just happened to be together.

With COVID and everybody being apart and not knowing each other like strangers, I think we needed this. We needed this to show that there's life still out there," said Cutter.

"I wanted kids to see this, and

right way so they don't have to go into that pathway thinking that with skateboarding, you have to be this kind of person, you have to do this, you have to be a drinker or this and that.

No, this an escape from all of that. What's going on in your home? Or what's going on in your school? Or everywhere else, this is where you can come hang out and be safe. That's what I wanted to create, an area that's fun, you can nurture, you can be safe, and you can just have fun."

## Suzy Slough Community Comes Together

By Justice Poor Eagle

Driving south on Calf Child Trail, going towards Siksika Health Services or Axe Flats, you will pass a community whose residents work together to keep it communal and clean.

Having welcoming neighbors such as Lucy Wright, Jann and Jeff Bear Hat, and Marie Melting Tallow has brought the community together to look after one another and improve the look of the community.

Wright has received donated nonperishable foods from the local church, which she personally hands out to her community to share. Jann and Jeff Bear Hat also generously give baby clothes, handmade baby blankets, sanitization packs, and nonperishables as well.

The spokesperson for Suzy Slough is Marie Melting Tallow, whom her fellow neighbors refer to as the mayor for her take charge manner, and she encourages her fellow neighbors to clean the surroundings of their homes and the local garbage bins.

This is when she set out with a vision and asked neighbors for donations. The donation drive was a success and the community soon welcomed in a new Suzy Slough Sign. Health services assisted with a donation for the sign. The sign not only provides both the name and Map number, but aids in serving First Responders with an accurate and faster way of identifying households.

The church also noticed the community efforts and openhandedly donated lilac trees to plant amongst the area.

Residents have found their community

has become more tranquil and hope other communities within the Siksika Nation will follow in the same footsteps; to get individuals to clean up the reserve and keep Siksika lands beautiful for future generations to come.



# Siksika honours lives lost to IRS

By Carly Weasel Child

On May 27, the buried remains of 215 Indigenous children were discovered outside the Kamloops Residential School on the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation in British Columbia.

On June 24, 751 unmarked graves were found at the Marieval Indian Residential School on the Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan. As of June 28, only 6 sites have been searched, however the remains of just over 1,300 children have been found in unmarked graves.

The announcements have sparked many across Canada to bring awareness and honour the survivors and lives lost to the genocidal institution that was Canada's residential school system.

It has also been a heavy topic for many Indigenous people across Canada to take in, with many mourning and praying for the spirits of the children to return home.

Many supporters, including Siksika Nation members, wore the color orange, organized walks, and brought teddy bears and children's shoes to locations such as former residential schools and city halls to pay their respects.

Siksika Chief and Council announced that on July 1, searches will begin throughout the reserve on four sites.

June 2, Chief Old Sun Elementary School and Siksika Nation High School staff and students organized a walk to place flowers and teddy bears on the steps of Old Sun Community College.

In honour of Indigenous Peoples Day, Chief Crowfoot Elementary held a memorial walk on June 21 to honour the 215 children found. Also on June 21, the Siksika Outreach School made an art display and drew 215 chalk hearts in front of the school for the children who never made it home from residential schools across Canada.

Siksika Board of Education staff have emphasized the importance of teaching students the truth about residential schools while honouring the lives lost.

Superintendent Lenora Rabbit Carrier believes this topic is important for the youth to learn about because it is also essential to the healing process.

"It has been an emotional past few weeks for many staff, students and community members in relation to the 215 children discovered at Kamloops Residential School that did not make it home to their families.

Many emotions surfaced and many prayers were sent to all Indigenous people and those affected. Our school district hosted a variety of events, including a commemorative walk to Old Sun Residential School, currently known as Old

Sun Community College. Teddy bears, ribbons, and flowers were also presented at the College.

Siksika Board of Education (SBE) will continue to teach on the topic of Residential Schools to our children as it is part of the local SBE Siksika curriculum. Our healing will begin with learning the truth about the Residential Schools and the intergenerational pain and suffering endured for over a hundred years.

This needs to be taught in all schools. Together we can heal, but acknowledging the past is necessary, not only by our Indigenous people, but by the overall population," said Rabbit Carrier.

Siksika community members showed their support via social media posts and/or in person by leaving teddy bears, ribbons, and children's shoes at memorial sites.

Canada had over 140 Residential Schools with 26 being in Alberta. Listed on the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, there were 2 residential schools operating in Siksika Nation; Old Sun (Blackfoot, 1886-1971) and Crowfoot (St. Joseph's 1900-1968).

On May 31, shortly after the news of the Kamloops school were reported, Siksika members worked together to organize a walk and candlelight vigil. Nation members walked and rode bikes from Old Sun Community College to the Crowfoot school and held a memorial for the children who never made it home.

Nikki Yellow Old Woman, who worked with other nation members to organize the vigil, said it is im-



Photo by Wesley Water Chief  
**Gabriella Many Shots cuts hair to mourn 215 Kamloops IRS children.**

portant to come together as a community to heal and honor the lives lost.

"When I first heard about the discovery of the children in Kamloops BC, my heart was heavy and all I could think about was our Nation and the grief we will be experiencing.

I felt it was only right to have a candlelight vigil to provide healing and give honor to our ancestors whom had to endure this horrific time.

When we come together as a community, you could feel the strength and love. Community gathering helps us to feel connected and get to know each other.

Through this ongoing discovery and time, I continue to encourage everyone to aatsimoyihkaan (pray) and show ikimmapiiyipitsi (compassion). It will make our ancestors proud. Today and every day my heart goes out to our members of Siksika and all affected by this tragedy," said Nikki Yellow Old Woman (Natoisaiiakii).

On June 1, the Siksika Nation Elders Lodge staff and residents set up a display in front of the Elders Lodge to honour the residential school survivors and lives lost with orange ribbon, teddy bears, and children's shoes. As well as on June 18, the Siksika SN7 Program held a drive-thru event at the Lodge to honour the survivors of residential schools.

The SN7 Program donated teddy bears and painted rocks, as well as sang round dance songs and performed a mini pow wow for the residents.

There are approximately 7 residential school survivors from Crowfoot and Old Sun residing at the Lodge. Elders Lodge Team Lead Kory Duck Chief said the residents of the Lodge were hit hard with grief following the news of the Kamloops school, but the support and love shown from the community has helped lift their spirits.

"We wanted to show the support. When the announcement was made about the 215 children, it really hit them hard. You can see the hurt in their eyes and the memories that it brings up. We're working with them to help them through this as much as we can. The teddy bears outside, the painted rocks outside.

The N7 group also had an event where they did a drive-thru and mini pow wow and round dance. It was safely done, and it was so uplifting seeing them smiling because they could hear the drums and they could see the dancers.

We still want to continue collecting teddy bears, anyone's welcome to come donate teddy bears. But you can really see the resiliency in our people. We've come so far. My own parents are residential school survivors. It was terrible for them as well. All of them have shown so much strength," said Duck Chief.

"We have a unique model here at the Siksika Elder's Lodge. We truly care for our residents. With

the pandemic, we did everything here to ensure that our residents and our staff are safe. Now we're hit with the news of the children, it's just adding more to what they were beginning to heal from and the isolation.

I know they told us stories about the isolation they felt from the residential schools. How they were treated and how they were neglected. I would never want to see anyone go through that. Here at the Elders Lodge we treat everyone like family. The residents are close with the staff here, and I think that shows the compassion and dedication that the staff here at the Lodge have.

It's looking like a better world for Siksika and other First Nations and so much strength is instilled in us. Seeing what our parents and grandparents went through, it makes us want to try harder, and there's a word for that in our language; iiyikakimat."

On June 25, Old Sun Community College held their annual student awards and staff appreciation. Prior to the awards ceremony, OSCC staff held an honoring ceremony and memorial for the children who were forced to attend residential schools.

A balloon release was done with everyone in attendance, releasing orange balloons into the sky. As well, a presentation unveiled a new memorial of flower beds in front of the College, which were made by Siksika Nation High School students.

Dr. Vivian Ayoungman, a residential school survivor, gave the opening prayer for the lives lost and a message of hope for Siksika youth.

"Every single one of us experienced these atrocities. We didn't get to be happy, fun-loving, giggling, mischievous children. Some became institutionalized, quiet, obedient robots. I was one of them. I attended this school. I had to live in this place for nine years. It was far from positive and what we had to go through was horrendous," said Ayoungman.

"My message to the young people is to embrace who you are. Learn. Don't let them win and beat the Indian out of us. We've got to try our utmost. Commit to learning your language. Commit to understanding more about ourselves. We were so brainwashed that so many of our people are afraid of our ways. They're scared and skeptical. There's no skepticism there, it's a beautiful and loving life.

We're resilient. We're going to bounce back. Yes, we'll cry for all those that are still trying to find their path and for those who never made it home. But, here at the college we're trying our very best to help our nation find that path and to be Siksika strong."

# Virtual powwow at Blackfoot Crossing

**Submitted by Shay Yellow Old Woman - Blackfoot Crossing**

The residential school system is viewed by much of the Canadian public as part of a distant past, disassociated from today's events. In many ways, this is a misconception.

The last residential school did not close its doors until 1996, and many of the leaders, teachers, parents, and grandparents of today's Indigenous communities are residential school Survivors.

Although residential schools have closed, their effects remain ongoing for both Survivors and their descendants who now share

in the intergenerational effects of transmitted personal trauma and loss of language, culture, traditional teachings, and mental/spiritual wellbeing.

Overall, students received a poor education at the residential schools. This was true both in terms of academic subjects and vocational training. Students had to cope with teachers who were usually ill-prepared, and curricula and materials derived from and reflecting an alien culture.

Lessons were taught in English or French, languages that many of the children did not speak. In the workplace, the overseers were often harsh, and the supposed train-

ing purpose of the work was limited or absent.

Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park will be now implementing a new WEBINAR LESSON that will discuss the topic of the residential school impacts amongst the Siksikaitsitapi.

This lesson is free every Wednesday, all you need to do is download the app Zoom, make an account, and email bookings@blackfootcrossing.ca.

You can also find this information on our Social Media platforms via Facebook(Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park), Twitter(@BlkftCrossing), and Instagram(blackfootcrossing).

On June 16th, with the cooperation alongside the Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre, we have brought some of our museum displays that are shown to those just outside the building.

This was a good opportunity to make new connections with surrounding communities and display our culture to downtown Calgary.

"We thought, this is awesome because people walk up and down the streets, drive by there and this is one way we can promote our culture.."( Grant Many Heads).

The following day of June 17th, General Manager, Stephen Yellow Old Woman had the opportunity



Photo submitted by Blackfoot Crossing  
**Blackfoot Crossing GM, Stephen Yellow Old Woman receives gift from Elbow River Healing Lodge.**

to be the representative on behalf of Blackfoot Historical Crossing to meet with Program & Services, Elbow River Healing Lodge, Care Manager, Danene Lenstra and accept a gift.

On June 21st, 2021, Nugget Bull Bear held a virtual powwow, sponsored by Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, one of the first social-distanced powwows since the first lockdown of Covid-19.

Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park made sure to follow the correct guidelines to maintain the safety of the community thus, we have accommodated the needs of the community and had begun broadcasting the powwow live, in the hopes of uplifting the community on Indigenous Day.



Photo submitted by Blackfoot Crossing  
**Blackfoot Crossing sponsored a virtual powwow held by Chris Bull Bear on June 21. Butch Wolfleg and Vincent Yellow Old Woman MC'd.**

## Letter to the Editor

Aitsiniki is accepting letters to the editor which will be printed in the monthly issue of this newspaper. Letters must include the name of the writer and location and may be edited for length and clarity. In order to protect our publication, Aitsiniki reserves the right to refuse any submission that can be viewed as potentially libelous, discriminatory, obscene, threatening, or copyrighted. A Letter to the Editor can be mailed or emailed using the contact info. listed on the Siksika Media credit and contact section. Include a phone number so we can contact you to verify the authenticity of the letter writer.

## Local artist is Siksika Media's summer student

Oki my given Blackfoot name is Aayaohkinaya'ki. My birth name is Justice Karen Poor Eagle and I am 25-years-old as of this year. I reside on Siksika Nation with my family and am working as a summer student with Siksika Media.

I hope to experience more about the production aspect that keeps us informed and to learn more about our people at a personal level.

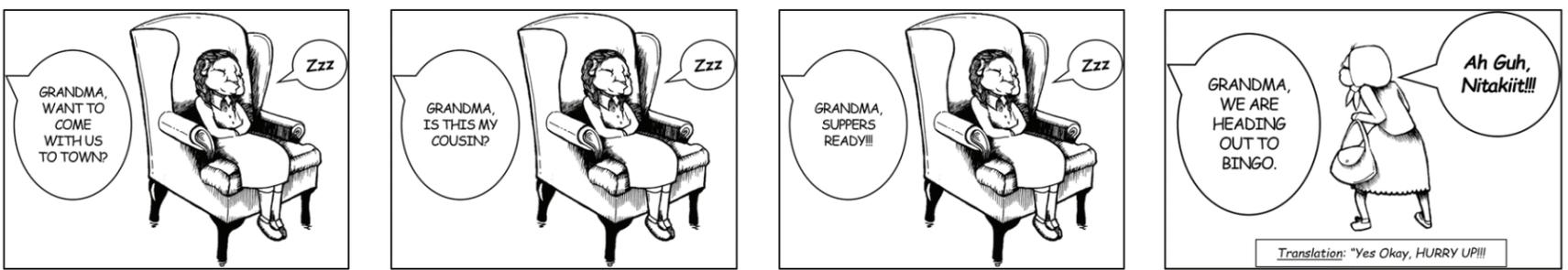
I'm excited for Siksika Nation and those who read the newspaper to find humor, thought, and feelings in the stories, as well as in the art, that I will be sharing with the readers.

Thank you and I look forward to this experience.



Photo Wesley Water Chief  
**Poor Eagle's comic strip for Aitsiniki called Modern Native.**

### The Modern Native



# Immunization Special Forces Vehicle



Submitted by Jennifer Kohlhammer - Siksika Health Communications



Photos submitted by Siksika Health

The aisokinakio'p Immunization Special Forces vehicle is an extension of Siksika's circle of care to protect matapiiks from further impacts and spread of COVID-19. The mobile clinic delivers close-to-home first and second doses of COVID vaccine to Siksika Nation members 12 years of age and older.

Siksika Home Care is leading the roll-out of the aisokinakio'p Immunization Special Forces vehicle in Siksika. In-home appointments are available weekly on Tuesdays; please call 403-734-5695 if you are interested in booking an in-home appointment.



**IISOMIIPAITAPIISIN  
DRIVE-THRU  
FOOD MARKET**

Summer markets every Thursday @ North side (rear entrance) of Siksika Support Centre

Thursdays from 12:00-2:00pm

Fresh food baskets available: \$30 of fresh produce for \$20





**Siksika Rural  
COVID Vaccine Clinic:  
FIRST & SECOND DOSES AVAILABLE**

Available to Albertans 12+ from  
Wheatland, Vulcan, and Newell Counties

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY: 10AM-4PM  
THURSDAY-FRIDAY: 10AM-6PM  
@ DEERFOOT SPORTSPLEX

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY  
Visit [siksikahealth.com/rural-vaccine-clinic](https://siksikahealth.com/rural-vaccine-clinic)  
or call 403-734-5706



**Siksika Family Services Corporation**  
Post Office Box 1189  
Siksika, Alberta T0J-3W0  
Telephone: (403) 734-4360 Fax: (403) 734-4010  
Calgary Direct: (403) 264-8573 Toll Free: 1-888-734-5140

**Request for Community Consultation Task Force Applications: Bill C-92 and Siksika Specific Legislation for Children and Family Services**

Currently, Indigenous children are disproportionately over-represented in Canada's Children and Family services across the country with Alberta being no exception. Statistics show that in Alberta the Indigenous population is 6.5% of the total population, but 69% of the children in care are Indigenous.

The system as it currently stands fails to recognize and prevent the cultural deterioration and resultant harm that is still occurring in Indigenous communities. The Provincial Children Youth and Family Enhancement Act of Alberta (CYFEA) does very little to protect our culture for our children currently in the system—in many ways the CYFEA acts as an obstacle to reunification and enables non-Siksika foster parents to adopt our children with very little-to-no mechanisms in place that protect the Siksika way of life for our children.

There has long been a critical need for a children and family services model that prioritizes Indigenous culture and community in the life of an Indigenous child; a model that allows Indigenous communities to assume jurisdiction over the care of their own children in accordance with their own laws and traditions. Bill C-92 - a new federal legislation geared toward Indigenous children and families came into effect on January 1, 2020. **One of the main features of Bill C-92 is that it allows Indigenous communities to exercise their inherent jurisdiction over the care of their own children and families in accordance with their own traditional laws and values by developing their own legislation** – legislation that will be binding on the provinces and carry with it the full force of the federal government. Siksika Family Services Corporation (SFSC), under the direction of Siksika Chief and Council is developing legislation that will prioritize Siksika way of life for our children.

We are looking for members of the Siksika community to sit on a task force to review legislation that is being developed and provide feedback to the technicians. All are welcome to apply, special preference will be given to those applicants who: know Siksika culture and language, have backgrounds in social work, former or current foster parents, former children who have passed through a foster home(s)/group home(s), applicants with experience in drafting and or reviewing legislation, educators and elders.

If interested please send a résumé and cover letter describing why you wish to participate to:

Councillor Samuel Crowfoot J.D.  
Siksika Nation Chief and Council  
Chair - SFSC Board of Directors  
Siksika Nation Tribal Administration P.O. Box  
1100, Siksika Nation, AB, T0J 3W0  
Email: [samuelc@siksikanation.com](mailto:samuelc@siksikanation.com)

**Deadline to Apply: July 16, 2021.**



**Office of Chief and Council  
Government of Siksika Nation**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
June 15, 2021

**New Peace Officer Program for Siksika Nation**

Siksika Nation - Siksika Nation Chief and Council is excited to announce that the Solicitor General Peace Officer Program of Alberta has provided authorization to employ Peace Officers in Siksika. The new program will provide Level 1 Peace Officers to work directly in the community, including three Siksika Nation members.

"The Peace Officer program is a huge step forward for the Nation. The Public Safety Task Force and leadership continues to ensure our community is safe for our people, and we are committed to upholding our responsibility. With the Peace Officer development, this is a major milestone that we can all be proud of as a Nation." Shared Councillor and Chair of the Siksika Nation Chief and Council Public Safety Task Force Carlin Black Rabbit.

Each Peace Officer is authorized to enforce approximately fourteen Provincial statutes including the following:

- The Traffic Safety Act;
- The Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, Part 9 Division 2;
- The Provincial Offences Procedure Act;
- The Dangerous Dogs Act;
- The Gaming Liquor and Cannabis Act restricted to Sections 83, 84, 87, 89, 107, 108;
- The Gaming Liquor and Cannabis Regulation restricted to Sections 87.1

Peace Officers in the future will be eligible for enhanced appointments through the Solicitor General Peace Officer Program, when those opportunities are approved. This may include Motor Vehicle Collisions under 2000 in damage with no injuries, or Theft under 5000. Community Peace Officers will be a vital part of the Restorative Justice Program as they will be working in the community proactively for community safety not just enforcement practices. They have the ability to refer non-criminal matters to restorative justice and spend time with those in the program for continued success. The goal is not enforcement, but community-based policing initiatives that seek to work with the community, for the community, and help the community develop programs that fit Siksika and make sense for the success and well-being of Siksika.

"This is a very big opportunity for Siksika Nation as we step forward to provide our community with safety and a program we operate, design, and manage so that the needs of all our

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P.O. Box 1100 Siksika, AB T0J 3W0  
(403) 734-5109 | Toll Free 1-800-551-5724  
[www.siksikanation.com](http://www.siksikanation.com)



**Siksika Nation Tribal Administration**

Siksika Nation Lands & Resource Management

**Public Notice:**

**Livestock Owners**

Siksika Land & Resource Management would like to address public safety of livestock neglect and abandonment.

Livestock owners are encouraged to follow the National Farm Animal Care and handling of horses and cattle guidelines.

Nation livestock owners are urged to uphold their responsibilities of:

- feed
- water
- shelter
- and maintenance of pasture lines

Siksika Lands and Resource Management will continue maintaining boundary fence lines along provincial hi-ways and Nation boundaries

Questions, concerns, and reporting for livestock or breaches in fencing can be directed to Siksika Lands & Resource Management Office during regular office hours, or Siksika Security after hours.

**Siksika Lands & Resource Management are currently in the process of reviewing Land Use Policies that will be a tool to address land use within our communities.**



WWW.SIKSIKANATION.COM

**Siksika Communal Land Use**

Land Management is the day-to-day management and administration of reserve lands, environment and resources. It generally includes activities related to the benefit of use and development of land for individual, collective and economic purposes.

The land cannot be seized by legal processes or be mortgaged or pledged to non-members of a First Nation. Siksika lands are communal, there is no title or ownership within the Siksika Nation boundaries. All Siksika Nation members have interests to all Siksika Land, and it is land management's task to ensure that all land use transaction is completed in a fair and equitable manner that reflects the best interest of the Siksika Nation and it's members.

Siksika Lands & Resource Management P.O. Box 1580  
Siksika, AB  
ON-Call Number: 587 832 0646  
Main Office: 403 734 5282

Siksika Security Services  
P.O. Box 1690  
Siksika, AB  
403 734 3815



**SIKSIKA FAMILY SERVICES CORPORATION  
REQUIRES TWO (2) BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Community Representative**

Siksika Family Services Corporation is seeking a responsible Siksika Nation member with knowledge in Social Work, Policy, Finance and Management experience.

**AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY:**

The Board of Directors is the legal authority for Siksika Family Services Corporation. As a member of the Board, a Director acts in a position of trust for the community and is responsible for the effective governance and in the best interest of the corporation.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Requirements of the Board of Directors include, and are solely responsible for the following:

1. Attend regular Board meetings and other important related meetings (i.e. Annual General Meeting).
2. Volunteer and willingness to serve on committees and accept assignments and completes them thoroughly and on time.
3. Establish vision, mission, and values
  - Determine the corporation's vision and mission to guide and set the pace for its current operations and future development.
  - Determine the values to be promoted throughout the corporation.
  - Determine and review corporation goals.
  - Determine corporation policies.
4. Set strategy and structure
  - Review and evaluate present and future opportunities, threats and risks in the external environment and current and future strengths, weaknesses and risks relating to the corporation.
  - Determine strategic options, select those to be pursued, and decide the means to implement and support them.
  - Determine the business strategies and plans that underpin the corporate strategy.
  - Ensure that the corporation's organizational structure and capability are appropriate for implementing the chosen strategies.
5. Support to Chief Executive Officer/Senior Manager
  - Supports authority to management, and monitor and evaluate the implementation of policies, strategies, and business plans.
  - Determine monitoring criteria to be used by the Board.
  - Ensure that internal controls are effective.
  - Communicate with Chief Executive Officer/Senior Manager.

**REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:**

- Social Work, Management and Financial background.
- Possess excellent planning and negotiating skills.
- Ability to analyze reports and documents (i.e. budgets, financial, funding agreements).
- Good knowledge of different Legislation Acts (Provincial and Federal).
- Good oral and written skills. Assertive and attentive listener.
- Fluency in Siksika language will be considered an asset.
- Valid Driver's License.
- Security Clearance Letter (obtain from local City Police or RCMP), Clear CYIM (Intervention) check.

**APPLICANTS ACCEPTED FROM ON/OFF RESERVE**

Please submit letter and resume via email to [tanyamh@siksikafamilyservices.com](mailto:tanyamh@siksikafamilyservices.com):

Siksika Family Services Corporation

ATTENTION: Board of Directors

PO Box 1189

Siksika, AB

T0J 3W0

**Deadline to apply: Until positions filled**

**ALL APPLICANTS WILL BE SCREENED TO SUITABILITY. ONLY THOSE CONSIDERED FOR AN INTERVIEW WILL BE CONTACTED.**

Are you interested in building, purchasing or renovating a home?

**FINANCING IS AVAILABLE!**

*Siksika Homeownership Program*



For more details, phone Nelson Breaker, Treasury Department at (403) 734-4368 or email [NelsonB@siksikanation.com](mailto:NelsonB@siksikanation.com).



Are you interested in homeownership / renovating your existing home or purchasing a home?

Do you need financial counseling?



**OUTREACH**

Confidential one-on-one financial counselling is available via Zoom or by phone - 7 Days a week



To use Zoom you will need a computer with a mic and camera (optional). The service is available to band members.



For more information contact Scott Flamand at (705) 618-1093 or email [flamandmservices@gmail.com](mailto:flamandmservices@gmail.com)

