

# TAKU

## Champions

Issue #10 Nov 2023



TAKU RIVER TLINGIT  
First Nation



HAA KUSTEYÍ 2023 GRADUATION



## T'aakú Téix'i The Heart of the Taku

### Editor's Note:

We're pleased to present the 10th Edition our TRTFN Taaku magazine. We've packed this issue with new and exciting content, and we hope it brings you joy. Your thoughts, ideas, and content suggestions for future newsletters are always appreciated.

Feel free to share this publication with your loved ones and friends. We strive to spread positive stories, understand our community better, and encourage a sense of unity in our community.

For more about TRTFN, please visit our website at [www.trtfn.com](http://www.trtfn.com). There, you'll find this and prior issues available for download, allowing you to enjoy and share them online. Do remember to join our TRTFN mailing list while you're there.



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Photo by Jerry Jack

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TAKU RIVER TLINGIT  
First Nation



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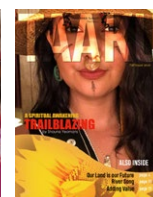
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*Front Cover: Photography by Manu Keggenhoff*





# Jinik

**Charmaine Thom**  
**TRTFN SPOKESPERSON**

Seeing you all championing yourselves and finding your individual paths serves as an undeniable testament to our collective strength as the Tlingit nation, and more importantly, as Tlingit individuals.

May this current edition of our TAAKU Magazine instill a deep sense of pride and delight within you. It showcases our collective endeavors and serves as an opportunity for us to celebrate what we've achieved together.

Gunalchéesh!"

In the heart of a champion lies the seed of perseverance, a drive to do their best. I believe we all embody the essence of a champion in our unique ways, primarily by carrying on our legacy and fulfilling the roles our ancestors entrusted to us.

Acknowledge that you hold a special place within your nation, a role supported by ancestors who preceded you. This role could be anything from a leader to an administrator, a trench worker to a caregiver, or any other position through which you choose to serve. Discovering your place within society is a true blessing, and it's indeed an accomplishment to realize this.

For those who are still searching for this sense of belonging, I urge you to continue championing your quest. It's through intentional, purposeful actions that you will find your place. There is an incredible momentum of people discovering their roles right now, and the successes I've witnessed this year are many.

I am filled with pride for our First Nation and for our graduates, whether you've graduated from high school or college or celebrated a year of sobriety. Every achievement is relevant and purposeful.

***"Every  
achievement  
is relevant  
and  
purposeful."***







**Marie Skidmore**  
Chief Administrative Officer

## ***"Each person is the champion of their own life!"***

**A**t the beginning of this journey to Atlin, I found myself at a stage where I was eager to return to my roots. I hail from the Ross River Dene First Nation, and seeing an advertisement for the post of TRTFN's CAO, I decided to seize the opportunity. I relocated to Atlin, joined by my husband and dog.

Working with a First Nation that follows the Clan system of governance was an entirely new experience for me. However, it has broadened my understanding and respect for the Tlingit's Haa Kusteeyi – their way of life.

Working in a First Nation community resembles being part of an enormous family. Despite occasional disagreements, we share one important commonality – we all strive for our community's prosperity, and that should be our focal point.

This magazine's title is "Champion!" To me, a champion is someone who relentlessly pursues a task, striving for perfection—or at least their understanding of it. However, the concept of perfection is subjective; your perception could differ from mine. Ultimately, each person is the champion of their own life.

I am on a quest to discover hobbies and strike a balance between my personal enjoyment and professional responsibilities.

This is challenging, having been a worker since my pre-teen years, but I have rediscovered my love for sewing, and it's brought me much joy lately.

So, as I continue to champion for your interests at work, I'll be equally relentless in nurturing mine at home—one stitch at a time.

**Gunalchéesh, Sógá sénlá , Thank You**





TRTFN Officially welcomes BC Ministers to the 2023 Haa Kusteeyi Celebration in Atlin July 28th to 30th.

Photos by Manu Keggenhoff



### A Beautiful Day for the Cemetery Restoration Project

In early summer, a group composed of TRTFN Citizens and Atlin residents united to restore and cleanse the TRTFN Cemetery in town. We absorbed wisdom from our elders on traditional methods of showing respect and reverence for the land we were working on, and the Tlingit ways to honor the ancestors. Participants, both young and old labored side by side to complete the task. It was a beautiful, sunny day that will be remembered.



### Community Emergency Preparedness Forum

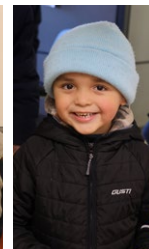
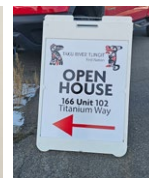
This event was organized to engage our community in important safety and emergency management discussions. All Atlin families (yes, ALL) who attended received a Grab and Go bag worth \$150. Dinner was provided. We work together to keep our community safe and prepared. **See at the upcoming events!**

### Opening of the new Whitehorse office Oct 2023

Our new family and cultural hub at 166 Titanium Way, Whitehorse, is officially open! The Open house was a success. This new TRTFN office space offers family advocacy and cultural engagement, including language support. The staff are requesting your input to tailor a dynamic program for the coming months.

Reach out to our dedicated team, featuring Ariel Durant, Child and Family Advocate, and Brenda Reeves, Children's Cultural Coordinator.

You can connect them for any queries at [familyadvocate.yt@gov.trtfn.com](mailto:familyadvocate.yt@gov.trtfn.com) or [culture.childrens1@gov.trtfn.com](mailto:culture.childrens1@gov.trtfn.com).





# Protect Our Moose Population



**Rodger Thorlakson**  
TRTFN Lands & Resources Manager

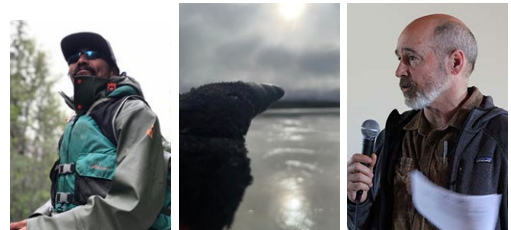
## PROTECT & PRESERVE



**O**ur many teams of dedicated staff, contractors and volunteers work together to keep a special promise. A promise we made to honor our ancestors' legacy, holding the task of guarding and caring for our beloved land. Every day, our love for this work shines through as we aim to accomplish this mission. The reason why? It's simple - We love this land. We ensure it, and the animals living there, are protected, knowing they nurture us in return.

*Scan the QR Code for videos, fisheries newsletters, reports, photos and updates on the amazing work our lands teams have been doing this year. Enjoy!*

*For news, videos & updates*





TRTFN

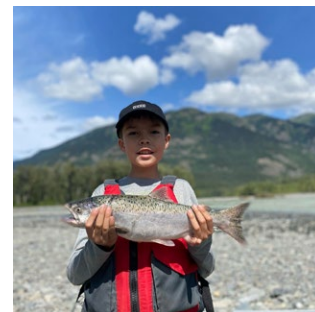
# LAND GUARDIANS

## SALMON RESILIENCY CAMP 2023

by Shauna Yeomans

It was another great experience at the Salmon Resiliency Camp this year. Blessed and grateful for my team, community, and nation. It is an absolute honor to work for and to protect our land and ways of life. Everything is so interconnected, and our watershed truly is the best classroom for all aspects of life. From engaging in stories to discovering new/old fish-cutting techniques, and witnessing our younger generation embrace knowledge and leadership, my heart is full and my spirit is soaring—this is where we become our best version of ourselves; right at home, serving the land and our people.

- ♥ TakuRiverTlingit
- ♥ tlingit
- ♥ tlingitAani
- ♥ HaaAaniTulatin
- ♥ WeAreWatchingOurLand
- ♥ haakusteeyi
- ♥ OurWayOfLife
- ♥ hatlatgi
- ♥ OurLand
- ♥ tlatsini
- ♥ PlacesThatMakeUsStrong
- ♥ LandNeedsGuardians
- ♥ TakuKnowledgeHub
- ♥ trtsalmonresiliency
- ♥ ancestorswildestdreams





# LATSÉENI 'House of Strength & Wellness'

# DAAKAHIDI

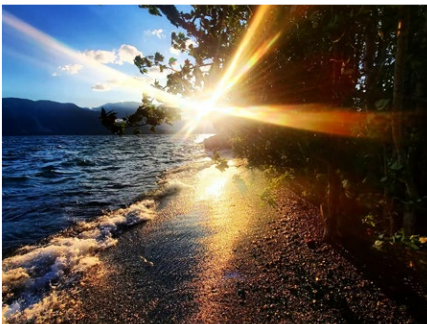


**M**y name is Megan Wenschlag, and I am happy to move into this position as manager on the Latseeni Daakahidi team! Born and raised in Edmonton AB, I moved to Aatlein in February 2023 to assist in developing programming as TRTFN's first Child and Family Advocate, a new position related to family wellness and prevention.

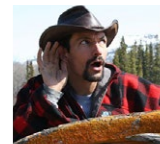
I have a passion for growth, healing, and learning - believing that the best work can be done when teams are healthy and have a foundation of trust and acceptance. My professional roots are in psychology and social work, serving citizens in rural Alberta in both front-line and

supervisory roles. I believe deeply in sustainable positive change and always take a strengths-based approach, bolstering both professional teams and the citizens I serve. I have spent the better part of the past decade adapting within the ever-changing landscape of the helping field, and I look forward to continuing this journey with the citizens of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. I love to travel, explore the outdoors, and dabble in landscape photography - all interests that have found an exciting new home in Aatlein!

I'd like to appreciate and motivate each and every member of our Health & Wellness teams. Your excellent work, consistently benefiting our community, does not go unnoticed. You truly embody what it means to be **Champions!**



*A few beautiful photos of Aatlein taken by our Wellness Manager Megan Wenschlag*



*Featured here are a **few** members of our amazing Health & Wellness Teams!*

**Gunalcheésh to all our dedicated staff & volunteers!**





TAKU RIVER TLINGIT  
First Nation



# GREENHOUSE

by Maria Vigneron **TRTFN Food Sovereignty Coordinator**



Providing our community with stable access to food is a top priority, and the opportunity to grow our own produce in Atlin is exciting! At first, considering its challenging history, I was uncertain about taking on this project. However, this season has proven to be a success. All who visited our greenhouse valued the drive to grow local food. The initiative has become helpful to the local food bank as well, creating a feeling of fulfillment when we can supplement peoples' pantry staples with fresh, homegrown produce that is a win!

Although our local food production is on the smaller side and does not yet fully meet the needs of the community, it's a positive beginning. The welcoming and healing environment of the greenhouse has community members often dropping by to lend a hand with watering and caretaking. Linda Johnson, a devoted partner, has been exceptional with her organization skills and nurturing personality. Her gardening knack played a significant role in our accomplishments this summer.

We're gearing up for an exciting transition—we're getting a hydroponics shipping container to grow fresh greens all year long. We aim to be functional by Spring 2024. In collaboration with Cold Acre, a company based in Whitehorse, we're launching an innovative facet to our project.

They have mastered the art of

providing Whitehorse residents with fresh produce subscription boxes, even managing to grow food in extreme -50 degrees! A single shipping container has the capacity to feed a crowd of 500, which covers our entire Atlin population!

Our greenhouse doors will always be open and be a laid-back place where anyone can contribute, relax, and wander around. As we prepare to launch our hydroponics container, we plan to hold community educational sessions. We intend to invite residents and local schools for tour visits to understand better how everything ties together.

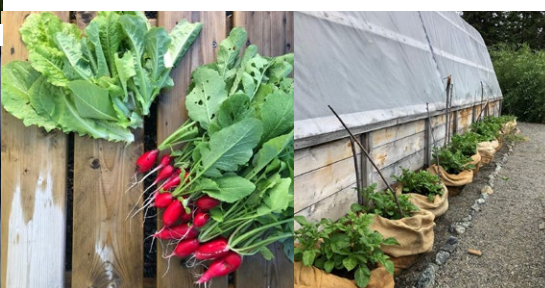
"Food sovereignty" is vibing with me. With climate change issues at the forefront and our community's isolated location, producing our food takes on a new level of significance. This includes our keen interest in testing traditional food plants in the hydroponics green container, like certain root vegetables integral to Tlingit diets—we're curious to see how they take to the new setup.

Effortlessly, food unites people. It transcends differences and fosters harmony as a shared pleasure. By ensuring food sovereignty and a reliable source of food for our community, we can reduce our dependence on imports.

**Real food,  
after all,  
has the power  
to heal!**



SCAN ME









# GRADUATION 2023 CHAMPIONS

On the 1st of June, 130 TRT and Atlin Community members gathered together at the Atlin School gymnasium. The focus of our attention was Mr. Izaiah Carlick, the sole 2023 graduate from district 87. This day marked the end of his high school journey. He received the prestigious Dogwood diploma, a certificate symbolizing not only his scholastic success but also his perseverance and dedication.

The significance of the event was felt by all of us. His aspirations have navigated him toward the challenging but rewarding role of Land Guardian, and simultaneously opened avenues for him to pursue mechanical trades at Yukon University.

Izaiah's sentiment was that of joy, he said to CBC in an interview; "It makes me feel pretty good, it's so cool that everyone came together. I really like that." He is passionate about preserving the land, the caribou, and the salmon on his ancestral territories.

In the words of Crow Clan Leader Vernon Williams, "Izaiah is a beacon of hope and honor for all young people in our community. Watching a young Tlingit man achieve his goals and graduate is profoundly inspiring. Izaiah and the graduates from TRTFN have brought immense pride to our community."

We also wish to applaud Britney Wesley, another proud TRTFN champion who enjoyed her graduation day on June 8th, 2023. Britney chose the path of independent learning and fulfilled her high school journey at the Individual Learning Center in Whitehorse. Her success story stands as a testament to the commitment of her loved ones who were there to celebrate her achievement.

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation extends its heartfelt gratitude to all the educators who supported our graduates throughout the years. From the loving hands and hearts of caregivers

at the Tlingit Family Learning Center to the Atlin School Staff for the care and dedication they invest to our youngsters.

School District 87's exceptional leadership and commitment have made amazing contributions to the success of our students. Heartfelt congratulations to our proud graduates! You are our hopes realised.

***Let us all remember  
to continuously  
reach for our  
goals, just as these  
incredible young  
people have.***



Photo Credit: Manu Keggenhoff







# Native Grad 2023

The Yukon First Nations' class of 2023 all wearing their striking traditional regalia graced the stage on June 2nd. This year, we witnessed the graduation of over 132 First Nation students scaling a new milestone in their educational journey. Following the much-anticipated distribution of awards, each graduating student enjoyed in their moment of glory with applause as their names were called under the tent at the Kwanlin Dūn Cultural Centre Lawn.

The Yukon First Nations have upheld this distinctive graduation tradition for over forty seven years now. The event commenced with an eclectic parade of graduates, ushered in by the heart-stopping performance by the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers. They powerfully guided the graduating class towards the main ceremony.

Everyone's regalia was a striking showcase of their cultural roots, on proud display.

The representation of our Taku River Tlingit First Nation graduates, for those of us who attended, added additional pride and joy to the Yukon First Nations graduation class of 2023.













# BILL 31 CHAMPION

## A Marjory Loverin story

request, it was an eventful journey. Aunty Marjory got the chance to explore the parliament building, guided by Ian, a strong supporter of her cause.

However, not everyone was supportive. An MLA from the Deese Lake area doubted her, but it only made her more determined. Thankfully, another MLA, Ida Chong, was supportive and she introduced her to the floor of parliament before the Bill was discussed.

Nervously sitting in the balcony, Aunty Marjory listened as Chong introduced her as a guest and gave reason for the bill. They discussed for a long time, then mentioned that Bill 31 was being tabled but that it looked very likely to be considered, the applause was so loud. "I felt a wave of achievement" said Aunty Marjory.

**M**arjory Loverin, our Tahlitan/Tjingit matriarch. In 2007, she managed to end mandatory retirement in British Columbia. This story starts on April 23rd, 2007, when Aunty Marjory received a government letter suggesting she think about retirement. "I felt like I'd been punched. Standing there with the letter, I was filled with shock. Then, I shouted a big 'NO!!!"

Remembering her stomach churning, caught in a storm of nerves and anger, she took a deep breath and everything became clear; she couldn't give in. "Once again, the government was trying to control my life, a pattern all too familiar since I was sent to a residential school when I was ten years old. I decided right then to fight against this unfair rule. The retirement law had to change, and this was the time for it."

Her battle began quietly. She contacted a local newspaper reporter, Andy Ives. Sharing her plan with him, she emphasized her frustration with the government controlling her decisions. He listened carefully, jotted everything down, and sent it to Victoria. Soon after, she got a call from Wally Oppal, inviting her to Victoria to talk about the issue. Marjory was thrilled but scared. Upon arrival, her cousin Patricia's trust in what she was doing replaced her fear with hope. Patricia proudly told everyone she met that day, "She will change this law!"

Victoria was a flurry of activities. From meeting supportive strangers to an unexpected CBC interview

***"We can instigate change  
on a monumental  
scale."***

A few months later, Aunty Marjory got a call confirming that mandatory retirement would end on January 1, 2008. The happiness was overwhelming. She remembers crying aloud, "I did it!" But the victory wasn't just hers. This decision would benefit all those who wished to work beyond 65. It wasn't just for native people, as some wrongly assumed; it was a win for everyone. They honored Aunty Marjory, by presenting her an order in Council to cover her if she turned 65 before Bill 31 got passed. Aunty Marjory worked until the end of August 2008 and had to retire as her husband was very ill. He passed in Nov 2011. ❤️

Aunty Marjory says, "This journey taught me a significant lesson - fear often clouds the truth. However, if we can find the nerve to say no, we can instigate change on a monumental scale."





by Barb Dawson



## YUKON RIVER QUEST

The Yukon River Quest is often thought of as the toughest river marathon in the world, a belief I got to check out myself this summer. I was part of an exciting team from Carcross, and we chose a wonderful canoe from Texas as our ride.

My team and I faced the mighty river, spending an impressive 52 and a half hour of hard work. We did get a 10-hour break in Carmacks, but we were incredibly tired.


The first day of the adventure definitely pushed us to our limits. But something cool happened after that. Our aches started to fade, and we got used to the continuous paddling. It almost felt like we were becoming unstoppable river champions.

Being part of the marathon was special for me as it was my debut. I'd long wanted to take on this challenge. Whether I'd do it again, I'm not sure, but one thing is certain - I am happy to tick off this achievement from my bucket list!









Discover Strength,  
Embrace Healing  
*The Land Awaits!*

Photography by Manu Keggenhoff













# ATLIN'S WARRIOR FAMILY

by Amun Dawson Tutan Hitt Cook

The Warrior Family, initiated on Vancouver Island in Nuu-Chuh-Nulth territory by Ricardo Manmohan, expanded to Atlin just this year. The small branch started in January when Ricardo and several leaders from Vancouver Island paid us a visit. They cast a net near the Point in 5 Mile for a night and grilled the caught fish over a fire. Their motto is simple yet profound: Provide, Protect, and Prepare.

The captivating stories they shared of their challenges, triumphs, and the success they have had with their youth intrigued Stephen Badhwar and myself. This inspired us to attempt the same here. So, in February, we started organizing. Stephen was hired by Health and Social, while I volunteered to be the coordinator. We chose Wednesday nights as our gathering time. Initially, progress was slow, with those early meetings mostly involving Stephen and I brainstorming ways to involve more individuals. Despite this, we persisted because we believed in the concept and in creating a space for youth to congregate, have fun, learn and contribute to the community.

In May, we were invited to the annual Warrior Games. This exhilarating event was an opportunity for the Warriors to

show us their accomplishments with local youth. The Warriors shared their camps, lands, and the fruits of those lands, such as oysters and clams. We even tried crabbing! I was accompanied to this trip by my mother and Sheldon Jim. What we witnessed was inspiring. A cabin built by a team of young individuals from afar, however, they felt at home. An entire area was prepared for traditional games like archery, running, log tossing, and hatchet throwing. Indigenous children were having fun, fostering strength together, and working to improve their homes, such as creating a clam garden. A youth named KC, who manages his home's archery ranges, knows how to set up a wall tent, and is a certified surfing instructor, introduced us to surfing at Long Beach, despite being much younger than myself!

The enormous potential I witnessed on that trip invigorated me, nurturing my commitment to fostering the Warrior family here in Atlin. The warmth and knowledge with which we were welcomed really resonated with me.

Emboldened by this experience, I continued to champion the Warrior Family here, supporting it in any way I could. When Stephen had to step aside to handle personal matters, I carried on to ensure our progress wasn't hampered. Max's consistent presence was a comforting sign that I was on the right path. Ricardo had shared a story with me about James, an initial member of the

Warriors from the town of Ucluelet. For a long time, it was just James and Ricardo. They would meet, engage in activities, and depart. It was a challenging period, but the family has since grown to become a tight-knit group that draws many together, a testament that inspired me to persist.

***My ultimate goal is the best for everyone, because it's truly what they deserve.***

Recognizing this, I was determined to bring Max to the Warrior Cup. Each night we met, I promoted the event, built anticipation around it. As the date drew nearer, my excitement mounted. I was eager to reconnect with the Warriors and introduce Max to this inspirational atmosphere. The visit to the cabin that day and our surfing session with KC are memories I cherish. Watching Max interact with the other warriors, play games, challenge them to chess and manhunt, and seeing him give his all on the go-kart track was exhilarating.

Above all, my aspiration is for this program to thrive and reach even greater heights. I look forward to seeing more youths like KC up here. I dream of seeing this family take root in other communities in the North.





# CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING *and* PUBLIC WORKS

**by Moses Track**

Principal Administrative Officer of Capital Infrastructure,  
Housing, and Public Works

We hope you enjoyed the Haa Kusteeyi celebration this year, along with all the other wonderful events that occurred in our dynamic community.

The Capital Infrastructure, Housing, and Public Works Department of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) has had a productive 2023 so far. Our dedicated team continues to work on a variety of projects, both minor and major, that contribute positively to the goals and cultural values of the Nation.

Our immediate plan involves ongoing maintenance of the services we provide to our members, while focusing on improvements in health and safety to enhance their living conditions. Our long-term objectives persist in paving new ways towards progress, with TRTFN working collaboratively with TELUS and Northwestel to establish Northwestel as the new service provider for Atlin.

Our aim is to provide connectivity services and access wherever possible. As we move forward, several active projects are underway, including our Access Road, Water Treatment Plant, Gymnasium and Community Centre, in addition to more housing and further infrastructure developments.

There is optimism for turning our community visions into reality. We encourage all TRTFN members to remain vigilant of any relevant health and safety measures and to reach out when needed.

Support for our Nation and the community of Atlin is an ongoing commitment.

***Gunalchéesh!  
to our hard-working  
dedicated teams!***





# HAA KUSTEYÍ

## — CELEBRATION

### Culture is Healing 2023

Looking back on the extraordinary event that took place from July 28th to 30th, we are filled with pride and gratitude.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to our sisters and brothers from the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Teslin Tlingit Council for their dedication. Without their support, and the collective efforts of countless volunteers, such an event would not have been possible.

Opening our community in Atlin to loved ones, friends, and visitors was an honor for us. The Haa Kusteeyí celebration holds profound meaning for us, the Inland Tlingit People. It's a time when we converge, reconnect and celebrate our traditions and our deep bond with our ancestral land.

The Haa Kusteeyí celebration was a resounding success. It reminded us all to continue to appreciate, preserve, and share the vibrant cultural traditions that make our communities such exceptional places.

#### **Sponsors & Donors:**

Gunalcheesh to our Sponsors and Donors without whom this celebration of culture could not have happened.

#### **Emergency Medical Services on-site:**

Kyle, Sylvia, John, Lorna, Scott, Ralph, Danny, Jordan, Miranda, Rosie, Korrea and others

#### **For Voluntarily Closing Off-Sales out of respect for the ceremony and the celebration of culture:**

Atlin Inn, Atlin Rec Centre

#### **Culvert for Sacred Fire, Water Truck for Fire Safety:**

ATELP & Stuart Simpson

#### **Sand for Kids Sandpile:**

Smallwood Enterprises, Bob & Jody & RJ Smallwood

#### **Site Logistics, Assets, & Outhouses:**

Atlin Arts & Music Festival

#### **Power and On-Site Electrician Extraordinaire:**

Christoph Geisler

#### **Internet Connectivity:**

Public Starlink: CanaGold

Private network for workers: Cherish Clarke

#### **Cultural & Ceremonial:**

**Gunalcheesh to all who shared their knowledge and passion for their culture. And a special Gunalcheesh to those who helped to bring the robe home.**

#### **Robe Repatriation:**

Peter Wright., Wayne Carlick, Bob Sam, Ben Carnell, Ben Louter, Mike McGee, Sara Cubbage, Dillan Scott Hunt., Henry Scott Hunt, Mary Evett Hunt, Victor & Dixie & Willow Scott Hunt, Donedin Jackson, James Williams, Vernon Williams

#### **Dance Troupes:**

Shawn & Sara Smith, KDFN; Gary Johnson, CTFN; Marilyn Jensen, Dakhka Khwaan Dancers; Taku Kwaan Dancers, Wayne Carlick, TRTFN

#### **Tlingit Language Speakers both New and Old:**

**Gunalcheesh to all who have worked hard to learn, or re-learn, their native tongue, and share its beauty with us all. You are inspirational.**

#### **All Cooks and Servers and Helpers for Feasts:**



# Gunalcheesh

TTC, Friday Feast; CTFN, Saturday Feast; TRTFN, Sunday Feast. Thanks to Jim Leech and Debra Michel.

## **Some of The Creator's Offerings for the Feasts:**

Moose from Teslin, Sheep from Carcross, Salmon from Taku River, Herring Eggs from Haines, AK

## **Elders and Clan Leaders and Guest Speakers:**

Gunalcheesh to all elders who travelled from afar to be here and to give this celebration the blessing of your presence. Gunalcheesh to all who spoke and shared their stories and their wisdom.

## **Salmon Filleting Contest:**

Louise Gordon, Christine Schreyer & UBC volunteers, Mandy Jack, April Schultz, Adeline Weber, Barb Hobbs, Violet McKay

## **Workshops:**

Caitlin O'Shea, Margaret & Karl Douville, Joanne Williams & Maurice, Cyndi Bermingham, Donedin Jackson

## **Sacred Fire Fire-Keepers:**

Bodean Wolfe, Stacey Clethroe, Phillip McLeod, Joseph Smarch, Max Wesley, Amun Dawson, Alfred Dennis, Mike & Davey O'Brien, and others

## **Displays, Vendors:**

Jackie Caldwell, Sharon Leach, Linda Johnson, Marie Jack, Annie-Claude Letendre., Roseanne, and others

## **Canoe Rides/Races:**

Carter Leuschen, Maria Vigneron, Barb Dawson, Wayne Carlick, Phil Williams (Safety Boat)

## **Salmon Filleting for Smoking:**

Greta Thorlakson, Tyler Thorlakson and others

## **Volunteers and Staff:**

Gunalcheesh to all the volunteers and staff who worked tirelessly to make this celebration the successful and joyous event that it was.

## **Organizers & Coordinators:**

Elaine Shorty, Event Planner; Wayne Carlick & Debra Michel, Event Coordination, Atlin

## **Volunteer Coordination:**

Cyndi Knill, Alex Konkina

## **Info Booth:**

Earl Clarke, Elaine Schroeder, Uschi Stehmann, Marie Skidmore, Roberta, Amaya Cherian-Hall., Karen Bittenbender

## **Merchandise Tent:**

Uschi Stehmann, Sam Wintrup, Katie Rittwage, Mia McTavish, Cher Hill, Maria

## **Elders' Hospitality Tent:**

Simone Schneiter, Shania, Pamela Jim, Ashley Jim, Roberta, Shannon Whelan, Ben Louter

## **Set-up Crew:**

Connie Morris, Anthony Morris, Wayne Morris, Stephen Badhwar, Sophie Carlson, Wayne Carlick

## **TTC 40'x60' Tent Crew:**

Melanie, Phil, Bones and Crew

## **Tear-Down/Clean-up Crew:**

Julie Suhardja, Mary Walsh, Jaydon Williams, Brandon Williams, Robert Williams, Phil Williams, Johnny, Carl Berg, Wayne Carlick, Anthony Morris, Wayne Morris, Connie Morris, Stephen Badhwar & Donna Patrick

## **Septic/Water Services:**

Terry Jack, Randy Green, Erv. Krumins, and Rob the fearless volunteer at the end of the suction hose

## **Spotless Janitorial Services:**

Shirley St. Cyr

## **Green Team, Garbage and Recycling:**

Lee Ogden & Layton, Rob and Alex and Mia McTavish (the amazing family of tourist volunteers)

## **Van Transportation:**

Moses Track, Andy Carlick, Mal Wesley, Marg Hollman, Meg Wenschlag

## **Pew Bench Painting Project:**

JoAnne Snobelin, with bench donated by Dorothy & Dennis Odian

## **Healers:**

Mark Hoppe, Yvonne Jack and April Schultz, Monika Steputh, Elissa Miskey

## **Counsellors:**

Donna Forbes, Chris Stebbings

## **Communications & Public Liaison:**

Communications: Rebecca Law, June Ramirez. Community Liaisons: Louise Gordon, David Thorn

## **Photography/Videography:**

Clayton Carlick, Manu Keggenhoff, Rebecca Law, Shakat Media Team

## **Site Management:**

Stephen Badhwar, Connie Morris

## **Tarahne Park & Campground:**

Dorothy Odian, Dennis Odian, Bob Wagner, and others

## **Security:**

Chief Connie M., Wayne M., Anthony M., Stephen B., Amun Dawson, Alfred Dennis, Max Wesley, Elie Badhwar, Bernice Smarch, John Smarch, Michael Point, Elaine & Bob Schroeder, The Commissionaires

## **Volunteers at Large:**

Gunalcheesh to all those who helped quietly in the background. You know who you are. We may have missed you on this short list. But this event was all the better because of your contribution.

## **Canoe Journey:**

A special Gunalcheesh goes out to Donna Johns and the Carcross Paddlers who withstood steady headwinds, waves, and thunderstorms to make the journey connecting our two inland Tlingit communities. You followed the path of our ancestors to link us together the traditional way via land and water.

In 2025 for our next Inland Tlingit Celebration, TRTFN will carry the ashes from this year's sacred fire to lay as a foundation for the sacred fire in Teslin.

## **See you all in Teslin in 2025**



















# CHILKAT ROBE CEREMONY

As the Chilkat robe came into the gathering, an amazing change filled the room. Quiet enveloped everyone. It felt as if the ancestors whispers filled the space, spreading peace and deep connection. A Tlingit prayer was said, touching our hearts deeply. Nothing more was left but the shedding of a single tear, softly whispering, "Welcome home."







A few staff members of TFLC at the Summer Party 2023 Photo By Manu Keggenhoff

# Tlingit Family Learning Center

by Jorge Llaca Buznego, Ph.D  
Education Manager

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) is dedicated to creating a healthy community through the promotion of lifelong learning and supporting citizens' educational aspirations.

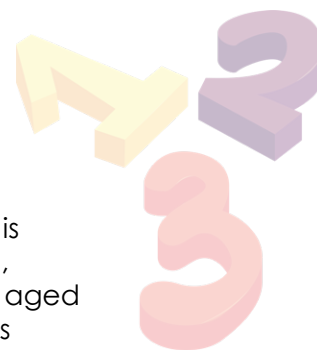
The TFLC, is an educational branch of the TRTFN, catering to various age groups with its programs. These initiatives range from conducting classes at the Atlin School for K-12 students, nurturing the Lingit Language, promoting TRTFN culture, and even providing a platform for university-level education.

In collaboration with the University of Victoria, based in British Columbia, Canada, TFLC organizes post-secondary programs and an Indigenous Language Revitalization curriculum.

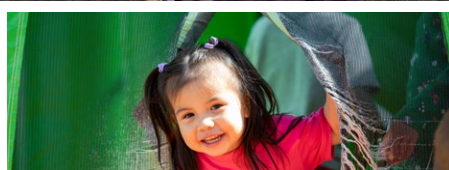
An important part of our services is the Infant Development Program, specifically designed for children aged birth to three years. This initiative is meant to support children who may experience developmental delays, establishing a connection between parents and experts to address such challenges effectively.

We continue to provide daycare services and healthy meals for your preschoolers, creating a safe and fun environment for your child at our building.

To learn more about what TFLC offers for you and your family, explore our section on the TRTFN website.







# THEME WALLS WITH AUNTY GRACE

*These stunning  
season-themed  
walls are  
created by our  
TFLC kids with  
Aunty Grace  
Sudlow.*



Food Prep/storage, Sharing, Being Thankful



Summer/Fishing



Hunting/berry picking



The gifts of  
**LINDA JOHNSON**



Beautiful Beaded Jewelry  
Made by Aunty Linda Johnson  
Phone **250 651 7900**

The gifts of  
**MARIE JACK**



Traditional Beaded Artwork  
Made by Marie Jack.  
These and other pieces can be found  
for sale in Carcross at the  
HAA SHAGÓON HÍDI



The gifts of  
**PAMELA JIM**

Contact Pamela Jim to  
order slippers, gloves,  
dream catchers,  
earrings and more.

[pamelaspassioninaction@gmail.com](mailto:pamelaspassioninaction@gmail.com)



The gifts of  
**AMELIA CARLICK**

Unique beaded  
Jewelry  
made with love.  
Phone

**250 651 0090**







# Haa K̓usteeeyí *Celebration Song*

GUNALCHÉESH TO OUR CARCROSS-TAGISH, ATLIN AND TESLIN SONGWRITERS.

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Has shuká léelk'w I yaw hey yo

**(Our ancestors)**

Ha kus tyea I yaw hey yo

(Our way of life-culture)

Ya naskwein I yaw hey yo

(We learn-from someone)

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Has shuká léelk'w I yaw hey yo

**(Our ancestors)**

Haa aani, haa heení I yaw hey yo

**(Our land, our water)**

Yan wa tuwu naak I yaw hey yo

(We stand up for-protect)

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Has shuká léelk'w I yaw hey yo

**(Our ancestors)**

Haa shíyí I yaw hey yo

**(Our songs)**

Wóosh gax tu shí I yaw hey yo

(We sing as one-together)

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Has shuká léelk'w I yaw hey yo

**(Our ancestors)**

Ha kus tyea I yaw hey yo

(Our way of life-culture)

Ka een at tu I yaw hey yo

**(We teach to others)**

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ah hey ya hey I yaw hey yo

Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo

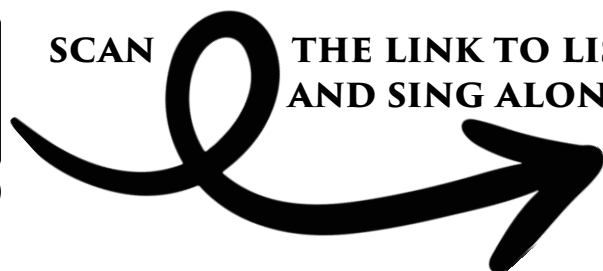
Ho-Ho Ho-Ho I yaw hey yo



SCAN ME

SCAN

THE LINK TO LISTEN  
AND SING ALONG





# HERITAGE CHAMPIONS

By Roberta Shepherd



We've been given the precious task of preserving the voices of your ancestors and loved ones through our Heritage Department. Our dedicated teams have spent many years faithfully recording and safeguarding these priceless gems of knowledge, both in video and audio formats.

We'd like to invite you to bring your personal tapes and recordings to our heritage officers. Not only can we assist in digitizing these valuable memories, but we're also eager to teach you how to do it yourself. Personally, I am a hands-on learner and like teaching others to participate in this procedure.

My job here is a source of endless joy and laughter. The tapes I get to listen to often feature funny stories and jokes of our elders. I consider myself lucky to work alongside Tamis Cochrane, the inspiring force behind our archiving project.

Part of our mission involves getting a

deeper understanding and control over TRT's historical administrative and operational records. The archiving process uncovers traditional knowledge time and again. This summer, for instance, we found a beautiful poem by our dearly loved Sylvester Jack.

In piecing together our past, the voices of our ancestors and fragments of history rise to the surface. We stumble upon sweet reminders of life back then - like a child's handwritten job application to TRT, or touching stories and poems penned by elders. There were even records of visioning meetings held many years ago, mirroring a dream for TRT to undertake this very work we're involved in now.

We are proud to say that we are making significant strides in turning those dreams into reality.







**Yaandekin Yeil** (Wayne Carlick)  
Cultural Centre Coordinator

# ROSE CREEK

Our team from the Health & Wellness Cultural team finished a wonderful trip at Rose Creek Cabin this fall, mentoring our youngsters. There's nothing quite like being out in the open land, it's such a beautiful experience.

Being out there, seeing so many out-of-town hunters was a bit disheartening, but the peace I felt when walking up to the moose that didn't mind my presence was unmatched. However, when other hunters startled them, it was sad seeing them flee. Still, it felt as if the land was embracing me.

The sight of our young people filled with awe and excitement was just special,

truly heartwarming. Gunalcheesh to Mamiya my beloved wife, Debra, for inviting me to assist. She did an outstanding job as the lead organizer.

Gunalcheesh to Debra Wesley, our main cook, really outdid herself. Thanks also to Linda Johnson and Marie Jack for their help, along with Wayne Morris and Adair Jack. And let's not forget Steven Badhwar. Gunalcheesh to our language teacher Khudeishéexh Esquiro.

Gunalcheesh to Britney Westley, and Melvin Westley, who both were a fantastic help. We wish you all a happy and healthy season of joy and warmth.







## GROWING IN NAKINA

by Henry Jack

Since I was a 5-year-old, I've been visiting Nakina. Fresh in my mind is harvesting berries with my family, playing in the yard, and the scent of smudging. Our home then seemed really big. Once, we spent entire days playing with a toy wagon that now seems so small! The river was a gathering place for bears. Though they steered clear of us, we had a peaceful coexistence. We would encounter many on some days, perhaps four or five.

Birdsong was everywhere. Here, at Nakina, the animals truly live free, proud, and bold. The journey to Nakina retraced the steps of our ancestors, a path made over many years. I remember my first walk on

the trail. I was 9 years old. It was a very warm year; the trail was filled with hanging branches and steep turns. But, being little, everything seemed magnified! We did find convenient shortcuts to save time. Upon reaching Nakina, I felt a sense of accomplishment. Arrival! Unlike the hot trail, the camp was cool—diving into the river was really refreshing.

As an adult now, I'm devoted to working at Nakina. It's sometimes hard, but I am proud of the work—building, repairing, and living on the land.

The thought of working in the same place as my ancestors gives me purpose. I respect the land and remain alert—it can surprise you. The land provides many lessons and a sense of security, helping me to grow.



*Here, I learned to ask for help when I need it, and to be grounded.*

*As I connect with the land I carry this connection everywhere.*

*This is home.*

## A SOOTHING PLACE

by Joseph Netro

I was eight years old when I first walked the Nakina trail to go to camp. When we got there, we played with sticks, pretending they were swords. I remember there was one, just one old army helmet we all used to play with – we shared it. □ I was never scared of bears or other animals because I knew my Uncle Bryan was around, plus we always had dogs too.

There used to be a guitar at the camp. Someone would always pick it up and play. But mostly, there were lots of people working. There was always something to do. Now that I've grown, life in Nakina has slightly changed for me. It's less about playing with sticks, and more about milling and working with bigger logs for building.

Nakina is like medicine to me. The work soothes me, giving me a sense

of purpose. This place is home. I'm more than comfortable here; I know it like the back of my hand.

There's something comforting about constantly hearing the river. It's so close. It makes me feel safe. The animals, with their morning sounds, serve as a natural alarm clock.

Living on the land, you develop strong survival skills. You eventually excel at everything because you have no choice.

I've learned from so many people. Terry Jack taught me how to run an Alaskan Mill, and since then I've worked on many others, mastering math, measuring, framing, and construction. Jared Strasdin has taught me a little bit of everything. Bringing those skills to Nakina gives me a strong sense of purpose, and I love it here!



*The land is soothing and offers a sense of peace and great Knowledge. If you get an opportunity to go, don't miss it!*





# CAREERS

JOIN OUR TEAM  
LIVE LOVE  
PLAY WORK

SCAN ME

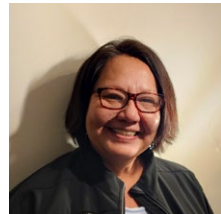
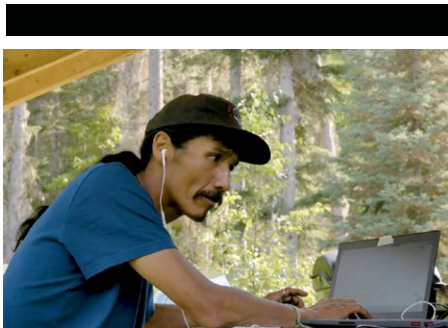
**G**unalchéesh to all our managers, staff members, and teams at TRTFN.

Thank you to our contractors and community members who support our events and projects.

Since the start of the year, we've had many successful events & gatherings. And more to come!

See what TRTFN has to offer, and experience the true embodiment of our mantra,

"Live Love Play Work."







# SUBSCRIBE!

*Stay Updated through email!*



## Upcoming Joint Clan Meeting (JCM) on December 16th, 2023: Mandate No. 3

Upcoming Joint Clan Meeting (JCM) on December 16th, 2023: Mandate No. 3

I would like to inform you about some crucial details regarding the upcoming Joint Clan Meeting scheduled for December 16, 2023.

Our meeting will primarily focus on the implementation of JCM Mandate No. 3, a copy of which is attached herein for your review and reference. A significant portion of our discussion will be dedicated to Resolution No. 6 within the mandate. This resolution requires the council to:

1. Finalize a protocol agreement,
2. Undertake a comprehensive review of the existing structures of the proponent, and
3. Examine if a community trust should be established to ensure that the wealth generated by the Optimized Project is administered and preserved for current and future generations.

Please note that this essential JCM Mandate will soon be delivered to all citizens via mail, completing the information package necessary for participation in our Joint Clan Meeting.

Stay tuned for further communication regarding the provision of a Zoom link, which will be shared closer to the meeting date.

Please feel free to reach out to our Clan Directors' Council Coordinator at [cdc.coordinator@gov.trtfn.com](mailto:cdc.coordinator@gov.trtfn.com) if you have any questions or need further clarification on any points related to the upcoming JCM.

Gunalchéesh,

**Spokesperson Charmaine Thom**  
Taku River Tlingit First Nation"

### JOINT CLAN MEETING

**MANDATE #3 UPDATES**

**DEC 16<sup>TH</sup>**  
**8:45AM - 4:30PM**  
Light Breakfast, Lunch, Snacks Provided

**Location (Atlin)**  
TRTFN Admin Basement  
Tutan Hit Building

Call JUNE for login info  
Tel: 250-651-7900

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# JOIN OUR TEAM LIVE LOVE PLAY WORK



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ALL TRTFN OPPORTUNITIES

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TAKU RIVER TLINGIT  
First Nation

