

Smoke Signals

Lhut Beh Nehudanih – They Told Us By Smoke

Volume 6, Issue 09



Nandlechonun nan•dle•cho•nun ᑕᐅᐅᐅᐅ September



Community Medication Return-It Event

Saik'uz Health Centre & Carrier Sekani
Family Services team up for safer homes
and community wellness

Through the Councillor's Lens:
Summer Highlights & Celebrations

Transcribed Article: A Retrospective on "Stoney Creek Woman a Canadian classic"

Community Calendar:
September 2026 Events

**Nechako First Nations Membership
Code Project: An In-Depth Guide**

Prince George Welcomes You – August 1997

Page 17

Stoney Creek Woman a Canadian classic

Stony Creek Woman was launched almost 10 years ago and became an instant touchstone for the plight of Canadian natives and life in general north of the Trans Canada. The book propelled Prince George author Bridget Moran to star status in the B.C. literary world. It made Mary John, the subject of the book, into a folk hero.

Arsenal Pulp Press was a small press company taking a considerable risk on an untried author writing about regional topics, when they published the book. But the topics weren't so regional to the public, who made it a best seller. A special 10th Anniversary Edition comes out this summer.

"I don't know if I'm bonded to the new one yet, I'm pretty attached to the old one," says Bridget from her PG home. "I feel really good about it, though. There are more pictures of Mary John's life, a little blurb about me which wasn't in the other book, a new cover and a new prologue."

APP loves the new design and has confidence that this edition will even outsell the past runs of the book.

"Stoney Creek Woman is one of our leading titles and I think it says a lot that after 10 years and 10 printings people are still interested in



Mary John's life is immortalized in Stoney Creek Woman, which is required reading in many classrooms across Canada.

Mary John and in learning about northern history and aboriginal history," says Blaine Kyilo, marketing director for APP. "Educational institutions are continually re-ordering

and so are the major chains and independent book stores. It's such a compelling story. I don't know if you've met Mary John but she's a warm, engaging person with a great story

and I think Bridget Moran did that justice in the book."

Mary John suffered the oppression of residential boarding schools, racism, gross unemployment among

natives, destitution and disease on her reserve, the death of six of her 12 children, and other depravities that were all part of being native in B.C. at the time. She overcame these obstacles, found a job, became a mentor for her people and spearheaded a drastic change for the better on the reserve. This past year she was awarded with the Order of Canada for her trouble. Bridget wrote her story partly in tribute to her friend, partly to indict the various government agencies involved at the time.

"Mary John didn't even want the book published," says Bridget, remembering Mary's trepidation at becoming a public figure. "I feel she is proud of it now because it is being used in schools and because I think she feels her people enjoy the book. It's a pretty exciting bit of business to see it still so popular. I had been getting rejection letters from publishers for years before this happened, and it wasn't until I was over 65. I hope I'm still around for the 20th anniversary because I honestly believe it will go that far."

Stoney Creek Woman is now a Canadian classic, selling in excess of 23,000 copies and counting. Bridget Moran has written three other books, also published by APP, and she received an honorary doctorate from UNBC. The re-launching of Stoney Creek Woman is in September.

Historical Note & Disclaimer: The excerpt below is reproduced from a 1997 publication featuring the header "Prince George Welcomes You." The specific publisher or newspaper title could not be confirmed. The text is shared for historical interest and archival context; references, dates, and contact details reflect the time of original writing and may no longer be accurate or current.

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SAIK'UZ
FIRST
NATION

EDUCATION DEPT PRESENTS

CULTURAL DAYS

**September 17th, October 6th and 27th
November 10th and 24th,
December 9th**

**3 pm – 7 pm
The Gathering Place
Saik'uz Band Office**

Cultural Activities

Light Meals

Everyone Welcome

Have Questions? Contact:
education@saikuz.com | 250-567-9293

Community Colouring Corner - September 2026



Saik'uz Health Center & CSFS Nursing present..

MEDICATION RETURN-IT EVENT



On Wednesday, Sept 16th, from 12:00 to 4:00 pm , we will be going Door to Door to pick up any expired and unused medications! If you are not home, you can drop off at the Saik'uz Health Center! You will be entered to WIN!

PRIZE! \$250 COOP GIFT CARD & PORTABLE SPEAKER



Keep medications out of the wrong hands!



Protect our Community!



Clean out your medicine cabinet



Support Overdose Awareness

DRAW WILL BE HELD:

Friday, Sept 18, 2026

3:30 pm



**SAIK'UZ
FIRST
NATION**



**CARRIER SEKANI
FAMILY SERVICES**

EVENT DATE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2026



Nechako First Nations

Membership Code Development



Nadleh Whut'en, Saik'uz, and Stelat'en First Nations are working together to develop our own Membership Codes.

Right now, band membership is managed under colonial policies created through the *Indian Act*. All First Nations automatically go by these rules to manage membership, unless they adopt a custom Membership Code. The **Membership Code Development** project is about supporting each of our Nations to develop a community-led Membership Code that reflects our unique values, priorities, and identities.

Although we are working together on this project, each Nation will create and adopt its own custom Membership Code through extensive member input and a community vote.

Why is this important?

Many members have identified challenges and gaps in the current system. A Membership Code can help **create clearer, fairer guidelines led by our own communities**.

What is a Membership Code?

A Membership Code covers topics such as:

- Who is eligible for membership (birth, adoption, marriage, residency)
- How to apply and how decisions are made
- How to appeal a decision
- How to voluntarily give up membership

What is the difference between Indian Status and First Nation Membership?

A Membership Code does not affect anyone's Indian Status. Only the Government of Canada determines Indian Status. First Nation membership is a separate system decided by each Nation if they choose to adopt a custom Membership Code.

What are the Nechako First Nations working together?

Saik'uz, Stelat'en and Nadleh Whut'en are collaborating to reduce costs, coordinate events and share research, **but each Nation will create, review and vote on its own Code independently**. One Nation's vote will not affect the others.



How to get involved:

- Community meetings and information sessions
- Online and in-person engagement (such as surveys)
- **Join the Oversight Committee**, made up of members from each Nation, including Elders, youth, and knowledge-holders
 - Contact Michelle Ossi, Project Coordinator: mossi@resonantstrategic.ca

What will the Membership Code Development process look like?

- Project launch > Community Engagement > Drafting the Code > Community Review ("What We Heard" Reports) > Community Vote (mid-2027)

How can I stay informed about this project?

Information will be shared through community meetings, email updates, social media, printed materials, and a dedicated webpage, nfnmembership.ca. You can also scan this QR code with your phone to visit the website.

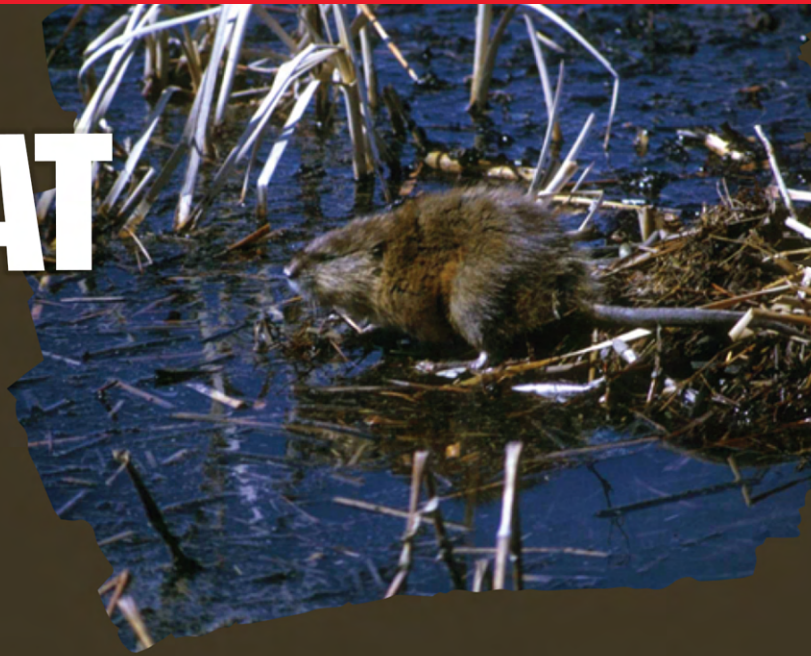


Contact the Project Team

For additional information or to join our mailing list, please email **Michelle Ossi**, Project Coordinator, at mossi@resonantstrategic.ca.

MUSKRAT

**DAKELH:
TSEK'ET**



Saik'uz people have long trapped the muskrat as an alternative to the beaver as their fur is waterproof and soft, but they were not eaten unless necessary.

Smaller than the beaver but still considered a rodent in the same family the muskrat thrives in slow rivers, streams and marshes and love areas with cattails growing.

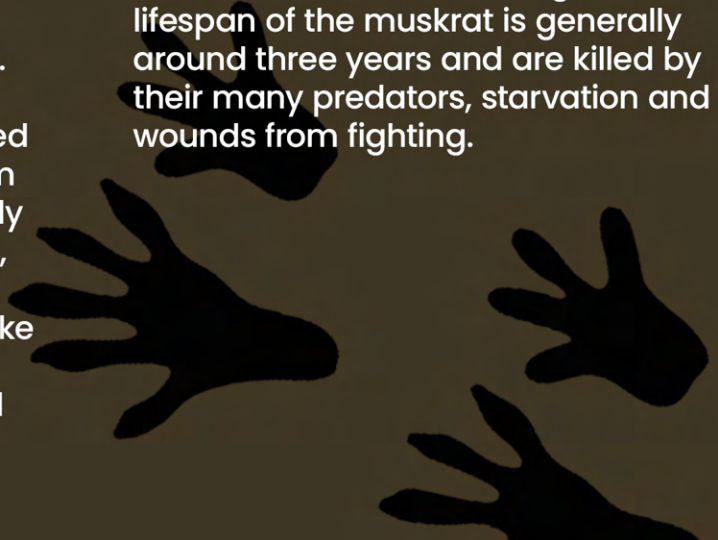
The muskrat is about 60 cm in total length having a scaly, narrow, thin tail that is half their length weighing 1-1.5 kgs, the females are slightly smaller. The main coat is generally a shade of brown with an undercoat that is greyish in colour overlaid by shiny long guard hairs.

Like the beaver they build Muskrat Lodges (tsek'etken) from vegetation. The layers of mud and vegetation create a den that is dry well insulated and can be up to 1.5 m high and 2 m in diameter. They eat plants primarily cattails but also shoots, roots, bulbs, leaves, bulrushes, horsetails, smartweeds, and cultivated crops like alfalfa, they are also known to eat clams, snails and bird nestlings and some fish.

Their home range rarely is outside of 100 m from their lodge finding company with their breeding mate they can be aggressive towards other adults especially when populations are high, and lodges are very close. Muskrats mature early and breed often having multiple litters of six to seven young in May to early August.

The babies known as kits are born blind, naked weighing 20 g and rely completely on their mother but develop quickly; swimming within two weeks and weaned by four weeks. They are fully grown by 3.5 months.

The male remains in the den with mother and kits but does not contribute to their wellbeing. The lifespan of the muskrat is generally around three years and are killed by their many predators, starvation and wounds from fighting.





**SAIK'UZ
FIRST
NATION**

SEPTEMBER 2026 EVENTS

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

EVERY MONDAY

4:00 – 6:00 PM
Elders Centre
3110 Casimer St

Economic Development

Community Dinners

September 15, 2026

**Saik'uz First Nation
Admin Building
The Gathering Place**
135 Joseph St., Vanderhoof, BC
Doors open: 4:30 pm

September 16, 2026

**House of Ancestors
"Uda Dune Baiyoh"**
355 Vancouver St.,
Prince George, BC
Doors open: 4:30 pm

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
PRESENTS

CULTURAL DAYS

September 17, 2026

3 pm – 7 pm
The Gathering Place
Saik'uz Admin Office

BACK-TO-SCHOOL COMMUNITY GATHERING

September 22 • 5 pm

The Gathering Place
Saik'uz Admin Office

FIRESMART COMMUNITY DINNER

Thursday, September 24, 2026
4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
The Gathering Place (Band Office)

Contact:
Adam Thomas | 250-570-8282
adam.thomas@saikuz.com

HARM REDUCTION COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

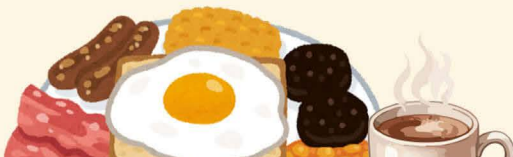
September 30 • 10 am
Saik'uz Health Centre



Truth and Reconciliation Luncheon

Venue:
The Gathering Place
Saik'uz First Nation
Admin Building

Date and Time:
September 30
11 am – 2 pm



Through the Councillor's Lens

Captured by Councillor Melanie Labatch



Wedding of Alexandra and Sapion Joe held at the potlatch house grounds.



Wedding of Alexandra, pictured with her grandmother and parents.



Em fishing at Tatuk Lake.



Rodney and Randy performing for Uncle Johnny and Aunty Arlene.



Tending to the smokehouse, Tatuk.

PHRASE OF THE MONTH



'Awet dak'et suli.

·ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ

Translation: Now it is autumn.

'Awet (·ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅ) = soon, now, behold

Dak'et (ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅ) = autumn

Suli (ᐅᐅ) = become, is

Danielle Mueller • 9th

Erik Johnny-Martin • 15th

Joseph Barfoot • 16th

Wendy Antoine • 16th

Lydia Thomas • 19th

Leila Weibe • 29th

Darius Prince • 18th



September CELEBRANTS



Join our Team and Serve Our Community!

- **Custodian**
- **Events Coordinator, Interim**
- **Manager, Health**
- **Media Technician**
- **Security Officer**
- **Supported Child Development Worker**
- **Youth Support Worker, Interim**
- **Guardian Junior Monitor**
- **Lead Monitor Guardian**

**SCAN HERE
FOR MORE INFO**



How to Apply

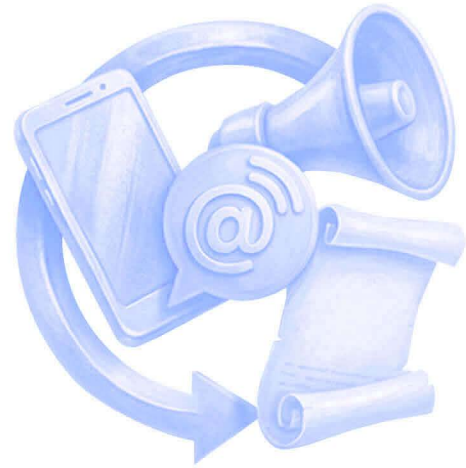
Submit your CV/Resume to:

Email: resume@saikuz.com

(Please specify the position title in the subject line)

In Person: Saik'uz Band Office — 135 Joseph St., Vanderhoof, BC

ARE WE REACHING YOU?



At Saik'uz First Nation, we want to ensure that the information you receive is timely, relevant, and easy to find. This survey is designed to audit our current communication channels—from emails to town halls—to see what's working and what isn't.

Your feedback will directly influence our communication strategy to help reduce digital noise and keep everyone better informed.



Scan the QR code above to participate in the survey

COMMUNICATIONS
S U R V E Y



**SAIK'UZ
FIRST
NATION**

Share Your Stories, Ideas, and More!

This is your personal invitation to contribute to our next issue of Smoke Signals. We're always on the lookout for fresh perspectives, engaging content, and exciting new things happening in and around our community. Whether it's a personal essay, a photo series, a local hero spotlight, or an advertisement for your unique offering, your contribution could be exactly what our readers are looking for.

To submit your work, please email it to **communications@saikuz.com** with **"Smoke Signals"** included in the subject line.

Saik'uz First Nation

135 Joseph Street Saik'uz, BC V0J 3A1
(250) 567-9293
band.office@saikuz.com