

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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Calgary Board
of Education

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Blue Flax Flowers East of Cochrane

Photo Taken by Gord Copithorne

OKI, DANIT'ADA, UMBA-WATICH, TAWNSHI, TANSI, HELLO!

Welcome to the CBE Indigenous Team's quarterly community newsletter. Here you will find information resources, supports and teachings reflective of Indigenous knowledge and practices. Missed our last newsletter? Click [here](#).

SPRING EQUINOX: A TIME FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

March 20th marks an important passage of time. As shared by Elder Saa'kokoto, soon the snow will melt, the ice will break, and the first [thunder](#) will be heard, bringing songs and ceremony to Blackfoot Territory. The season of spring is a time of new beginnings as life begins again for the plants and animals who have rested through the winter and are awakening, and for new babies who will be welcomed into the natural world. For us two legged beings, perhaps it is a time of awakening as well. The new season is an opportunity to move on from any darkness in our lives, and to embrace the light and new possibilities surrounding us.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

MARCH 20TH
SPRING EQUINOX

MARCH 26TH
CBE SPRING BREAK BEGINS

APRIL 6TH
CBE CLASSES RESUME

APRIL 22ND
EARTH DAY

MAY 1ST
TSUUT'INA DAY

MAY 5TH
NATIONAL DAY OF
AWARENESS FOR MISSING AND
MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN

MAY 3-7TH
MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

MAY 10TH
BEAR WITNESS DAY
(JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE)

MAY 24TH
VICTORIA DAY

JUNE 1ST
CBE INDIGENOUS GRADE 12
VIRTUAL GATHERING



Crocus' West of Cochrane

Photo Taken by Clare Copithorne

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND

We would like to acknowledge the traditional territories and oral practices of the Blackfoot Nations, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai. We also acknowledge the Tsuut'ina and Stoney Nakoda First Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

[Calgary Foundation Acknowledgement of Land Video](#)



Great Horned Owl

Photo taken by Gord Gopithorne

FEATURED MEDICINE : TOBACCO

Elders have taught us that tobacco was the first plant given to the two-leggeds and is one of four traditional medicines used in Indigenous cultures. It is a gift of both reciprocity and respect. "When you use it all things begin to happen" (Northern College Indigenous Council on Education). The act of spreading tobacco on the land or the water is an offering of respect and gratitude an acknowledgement of an intimate relationship with the natural world and a request for guidance and protection. Tobacco speaks to the other plant spirits, telling them a harvest will be done in a good way and conveys a message to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper that an individual requires help, knowledge, or teachings.

[Click here to watch a video about Tobacco](#)



Image by Couleur from Pixabay

Tobacco can be carried in a pouch on a person, tied in a lodge, or from a branch as a form of protection. Different Nations have different protocols in their use of traditional tobacco but its importance within tradition and culture remains the same.

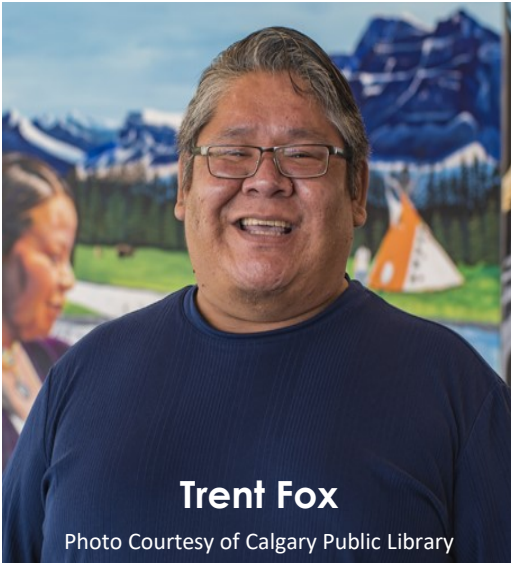


Photo Courtesy of Closer to Home

KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Darcy Turning Robe is from the Siksika Nation. He shares his gifts of song, drumming, stories and traditional ways of knowing with youth throughout the Calgary area. Darcy helps students develop their sense of belonging within the school community, supports overall wellness, shares cultural knowledge, and helps students of all ages to connect. Darcy works through the agency Closer to Home alongside Indigenous Program Facilitator Elder Marsha Hanson. Closer to Home focuses on family-centered strength-based services to ensure that children have stable, healthy, and safe living environments. Thank you Darcy we are so grateful for your partnership, knowledge, and wisdom.

[Click here to watch Darcy drum!](#)



Trent Fox

Photo Courtesy of Calgary Public Library

Find the book at the [Calgary Public Library](#)

CHECK OUT THESE AMAZING LOCAL AUTHORS!

Watâga Wiyâ A's, Â's and B's ze yuthpe îkiyabich (Grizzly Bear Woman Teaches the A's, Â's & B's)

By Tatâga Thkan Wagichi (Dancing White Buffalo), Trent Fox
Illustrated by Tanisha Wesley
Translation by Valentina Fox in the Iyethka language of the Stoney Nakoda People

About the Book

Watâga Wiyâ is a children's alphabet book. Author Trent Fox and illustrator Tanisha Wesley bring to life a beautiful lesson in the world and words of the Stoney Nakoda.

About the Author

Tatâga Thkan Wagichi is a member of the Wesley First Nation, Stoney Nakoda Nation. He is a doctoral student in education at the University of Calgary. His inquiry is on the history of the Stoney Nakoda people and development of the Iyethka language. A writer and columnist, he authored *Nakota Community* and aspires to continue writing.

Âba Wathtech Înâ Mâkoche (It is a Good Day, Mother Earth)

by Sheri Shotclose (Singing Across the Water)
Illustrated by Tanisha Wesley
Translation by Duane Mark

About the Book

This tale is about a young girl greeting the day and acknowledging her Stoney Nakoda family and the beautiful natural world in which she lives.

About the Author

Sheri Shotclose (Singing Across the Water) is a Stoney Nakoda member of the Bearspaw First Nation. She lives in Calgary and works in Morley as a high school art teacher. She is currently working on her Master of Education with a focus on Aboriginal Wellness. She is working to reconnect with her roots, reclaim her identity, and recover from the effects of intergenerational trauma. This book has helped her share this passion with her children, grandchildren, and others, re-learning her language and giving back to her community.



Sheri Shotclose

Photo Courtesy of Calgary Public Library

Find the book at the [Calgary Public Library](#)

Click [here](#) to listen to Sheri Read the book!

GREAT THINGS HAPPENING IN YYC

Collective Wellness Pow Wow

What: A virtual gathering of nations with everything including a virtual cooking class for bannok tacos!

When: March 20th 2021

Where: Virtual

Website: collectivewellnesspowwow.ca/

Virtually Meet An Elder

What: Request a meeting with an Elder or knowledge keeper to learn about different topics.

When: Daily at varying times

Where: Calgary Public Library (Virtual)

Website: calgarylibrary.ca/connect/indigenous-services/elders-guidance-circle/

Glenbow Museum: Animals Tour

What: Learn about the Indigenous studies collection and the objects dedicated to animals at the Glenbow Museum.

When: Ongoing

Where: Virtual

Website: glenbow.org/events/behind-the-scenes-tour-animals/

Braiding The Sweetgrass Information Session

What: Learn about community and culture and gain resiliency and strength. Info session for families.

When: March 25th 2:30 PM Contact Valerie (403) 207-2533

Where: Hull family services virtual

Website: hullservices.ca/services/braiding-the-sweetgrass/

WORDS OF WISDOM

ELDER RANDY BOTTLE (SAA'KOKOTO)

Elder Randy Bottle (Saa'kokoto) originates from the Blood Tribe First Nation (Kainai) Treaty 7 and is from the Tall People Clan. After serving on the Blood Tribe Council for 24 consecutive years he has become an advisor in Moh'kintsis and all of Southern Alberta. He provides knowledge and guidance to organizations such as Miskanawah, United Way, USAY, Writing on Stone, and the Calgary Board of Education, among many others. He brings forth invaluable knowledge and understandings of the history and traditions of the Blackfoot people. Saa'kokoto has a gentle and kind demeanour with children and his soft way grabs the attention of students and holds them in. Saa'kokoto's goal is to promote traditional spirituality through ceremony, storytelling and sharing personal experiences. His work focuses on urban aboriginal youth and helping them to understand their identity and develop a better sense of belonging. As a fluent Blackfoot speaker he plays a key role in preserving and passing on the language to the broader community. Saa'kokoto teaches us that the stories and teachings of Elders speak to each us individually and connect personally. Here are some words of wisdom from Saa'kokoto.



Photo provided by Elder Randy Bottle (saa'kokoto)

This is our foundation as shared by our Elders!

"TO CONTINUE ACKNOWLEDGING OUR ANCESTORS AS PROFOUND THINKERS WHO UNDERSTOOD THE ELEMENTS OF OUR WAY OF LIFE AND KINSHIP WITH NA'A (MOTHER EARTH), NIISTITAPII (TRUE BEINGS) AND NATOITAPII (SACRED BEINGS)."

AWESOME AGENCIES IN YYC

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre has long been an advocate for Indigenous social and cultural services as well as a support, community resource and partner with other Indigenous agencies. Since reopening its doors in 2004 it has been providing culturally relevant services, programs and events to urban Aboriginal peoples of the Calgary area. Some of these amazing programs include youth engagement, women's cultural teachings, positive parenting, housing services, language programming, Covid 19 supports, youth and family drumming, employment services, elder supports and crisis supports. Some of these amazing programs run virtually out of the The iitaohkanitsini'kotsiyyio'p Hub a place of gathering which is located downtown and is open 9-4 Monday to Friday.



**ABORIGINAL
FRIENDSHIP
CENTRE OF CALGARY**
Many Nations. One Family.™



Photo Courtesy of The Aboriginal Friendship Center

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
THE ABORIGINAL FRIENDSHIP CENTER
CLICK ON THE LOGO OR CALL (403) 270-7379**

**CLICK ON THE PICTURE TO WATCH A VIDEO ABOUT THE
ABORIGINAL FRIENDSHIP CENTER!**

Counselling Resources

Indigenous Mental Health Care at Sheldon Chumir Health Centre

Offers long term mental health counselling, with a focus on trauma therapy.

(403) 955-6645

Elbow River Healing Lodge

On site Traditional Wellness Counsellor (Elder) by appointment.

(403) 955-6600

Access Mental Health

Inner-city health care center including 24-hour emergency, urgent care, community health and mental health access. Information and referral options for addiction and mental health resources and services.

(403) 955-6200

Distress Centre Counselling

Free and confidential. Assisting with stabilizing people when they are in crisis.

(403) 266-4357

Wood's Homes Mobile Family Crisis Support

Counsellors provide supports to families in crisis and are focused on supporting families experiencing parent-child or parent-youth conflict, and/or concerns about a child or youth's mental health.

(403) 299-9699

Cultural Programming

Click on the logos to learn more about programming at these agencies!



miskanawah
empowerment • strength • family



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**URBAN SOCIETY FOR
ABORIGINAL YOUTH**

Emergency Food Hampers

Awo Taan

<https://www.awotaan.org/>

(403) 531-1880

Aboriginal Friendship Centre

<https://www.afccalgary.org/>

(403) 270-7379

Calgary Food Bank Self-Referral Line

<https://www.calgaryfoodbank.com/>

(403) 253-2055

Additional hamper supports and assistance

<https://ab.211.ca/>

Call 2-1-1

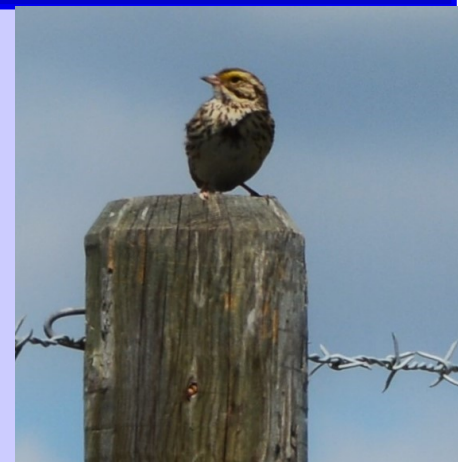


Photo Taken by Clare Copithorne