

NISQUALLY ABSCH News



Nisqually Tribal News

4820 She-Nah-Num Dr. SE Olympia, WA 98513

Phone # 360-456-5221

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July 2025

PRIDE 2025

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

The Nisqually Health and Wellness Center welcomed the community to PRIDE night at Nisqually, with food, resources, as well as speaker Itai Jeffries, who works as the Program Director for Path (Re)Membered Project for the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, as well as research focusing on Two Spirit health and community connection. The evening closed with a drag performance by Quileute Nation tribal member, Hailey Tayathy. Tayathy is a drag queen and fiber/digital artist in Seattle.

As always, the PRIDE event is nothing but smiles and love.

Itai Jeffries, (they/them/y'all), is a Yésah/Occaneechi Two Spirit educator (see page 2), qualitative researcher, and equity consultant. They talked about how their own journey and how they came to understand it from a tribal perspective. They also underscored the importance of continuing support even in a time when resources were being taken away. They noted there will soon be the "Support Boat," a resource collection aimed at continuing levels of help for Two Spirit LGBTQ+, even as other resources go away.

Hailey Tayathy, drag queen performer and fiber/digital artist, waits to be introduced while a youth works an umbrella.

Big shout out to Averí, CJ and the crew who sweated it out in the truck and still



Continued on page 2-PRIDE

had people coming for food after the program. Ray Bullchild Hicks talks about how they never felt hate while growing up in the Nisqually community. They talked about bringing someone to the PRIDE celebration and they were so excited to share all the Auntie hugs and love.



Nisqually Tribal Office Holiday Closures

Please mark them on your calendars!

Friday July 4, 2025

4th of July

Monday September 1, 2025

Labor Day

Monday September 29, 2025

Nisqually Day

How to Contact Us

Tribal Center 360-456-5221
Health Clinic 360-459-5312
Law Enforcement 360-413-3019
Youth Center 360-455-5213
Natural Resources 360-438-8687

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The deadline for the newsletter is
the second Monday of every month.

Nisqually Tribal Council

Chair, Ken Choke
Vice Chair, Cheebo Frazier
Secretary, Jackie Whittington
Treasurer, Norine Wells
5th Council, Chris Olin
6th Council, Guido Levy Jr.
7th Council, Leighanna Scott

Where to Find Information:

Squalli Absch Newsletter

- Mailed, on website

Street Buzz

- Mailout, on She Nah Num

Facebook and website

Nisqually Indian Tribe Facebook

- geared toward educating the public

She Nah Num

- Private Facebook page

Website - www.nisqually-nsn.gov

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Blessing of the Canoes

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

Photos by Aztec Sovereign, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services

It was a lovely day on May 16 to bless all the canoes and pray for the safety of all those who will paddle in the Salish Sea in the months ahead. The family of canoes continues to grow so more can participate in learning to be on the water. It provides opportunity for new skippers to become that teacher and guiding hand on the water.



Bringing out the cedar boughs for the blessing. Calliope follows grandma Daydishka McCloud's lead in blessing the canoe. Elizabeth Van Tiem follows behind. While it was a gray afternoon, it did not rain and the green trees were that vibrant green of spring. All the kids helped bless the canoe. Lifting songs of blessing and safety for those on the water in the months ahead.



2025 Nisqually Head Start Graduation



New Paved Parking Lot Update

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Tribe Communication and Media Services Director

According to Public Works, they ran into some issues with the drain fields that are being retired behind the Billy Frank Jr. Building and that has delayed the parking lot and road paving project in that area a bit.

They now hope to finish the paving and striping back there before July 4 -fingers crossed.

"We want to make sure this all cleaned up and it's safe for the community before we start paving," said Tony Berkson, Public Works Director for Nisqually.





BIG Shout-Out to Leonard Ikebe!

By Tia Lozeau, on behalf of the S.T.E.P. Board

We're so excited to celebrate Leonard on his graduation from the Nisqually Red Wind Casinos Strengthening Tribal Education Program (S.T.E.P.) this May! After more than four amazing years in the program, Leonard has really made a name for himself. He started out as a Slot Attendant Apprentice and found his true passion in the Keno/Sportsbook Apprenticeship.

In the Keno/Sportsbook Department, Leonard has learned so much and has taken on roles like Runner/Writer, Dual Rate, and Supervisor. We're thrilled to share that he's accepted a full-time position as a Dual Rate in the Keno/Sportsbook Department!

On top of all his professional accomplishments, Leonard's personal life is blossoming too—he met his fiancée at the casino and is on his way to buying a new home!

Congratulations, Leonard! We're super proud of you and all that you've achieved. Keep shining bright!



Congratulations Aiyana Sanchez

I wanted to take a moment to recognize and celebrate our amazing coworker and friend, Aiyana Sanchez, on a huge accomplishment!

June 5th Aiyana presented her capstone project at The Evergreen State College as the final step toward completing her Master of Public Administration with an emphasis in Tribal Governance — and she absolutely crushed it.

Her capstone presentation highlighted the incredible work she's been doing as our Wellness Court Coordinator here at the Nisqually Indian Tribe. She's helped further grow a comprehensive Wellness Court program that serves tribal members who are navigating challenges like addiction, domestic violence, and mental health. This program focuses on healing, breaking cycles, and addressing community trauma in a restorative and culturally grounded way, rather than relying solely on incarceration.

It was powerful to see her speak with such passion and strength about the work she is doing. We're all incredibly proud of her, and we feel so lucky to have her as part of our team.

It is an amazing achievement!
From Ashley Cichy





Nisqually Markets Continues Fuel Rebrand with Lakewood Store Transition

Nisqually Markets has taken another step in its fuel rebranding initiative by officially converting its Lakewood location to Nisqually Markets Fuel, marking a significant milestone in the Nisqually Indian Tribe's journey toward greater economic autonomy.

The transition aligns with a broader effort to unify all fuel and convenience store operations under the Nisqually Markets brand. This move follows the successful rebrand of the Yelm Highway store earlier this year.

"This is part of a larger move to align our fuel and store offerings under one consistent brand that supports the Nisqually Indian Tribe and our long-term vision," said Sam Roark, Director of Retail Operations for Nisqually Markets. "This move reduces external dependencies, enhances tribal sovereignty, and creates opportunities for reinvestment in community programs, jobs, and economic growth."

The Lakewood store temporarily closed during the rebrand to allow for the installation of new equipment and the removal of Shell-branded fuel offerings. Customers at the location now have access to Nisqually Markets Fuel – a product fully owned and

operated by the Nisqually Tribe through its business arm, Medicine Creek Enterprise Corporation (MCEC).

The rebranding effort not only replaces the fuel brand but also empowers the Nisqually Tribe to provide more competitive fuel pricing and create stronger ties between fuel purchases and in-store promotions.

"We're bringing everything under the Nisqually Markets brand so we can offer more competitive prices and better in-store promotions," said Laura

Myers, Media and Communications Manager for MCEC. "This allows us to be more responsive to our communities' needs while supporting the tribe's long-term economic sustainability."

The long-term vision for Nisqually Markets Fuel is to create a fully unified brand experience at all locations – reflecting the values, priorities, and sovereignty of the Nisqually Indian Tribe.

"As we continue to bring more stores under the Nisqually Markets Fuel brand in 2025, this transformation will stand as a symbol of tribal ownership, economic innovation, and our customer-first values," Roark said.



Culture and Community Assistance Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure are designed to provide guidance pertaining to the funding requests from Nisqually Tribal members for personal/family events or activity, including but not limited to memorial tournaments and like events.

Funding is limited and is first-come first-serve basis and on a one-time annual basis for one event per family. All events funded with tribal dollars are required to be drug and alcohol free.

For more information and application please see Financial Services.

New Elders Bus

Nisqually Transportation now has the Elders and Youth coach bus for adventures. Seats have charging ports and there are screens. There are a number of drivers with their

Commercial Drivers License and more to be added to drive this bus and some of the other transportation vehicles.





Salmon Recovery Projects for 2026

By Ashley Von Essen

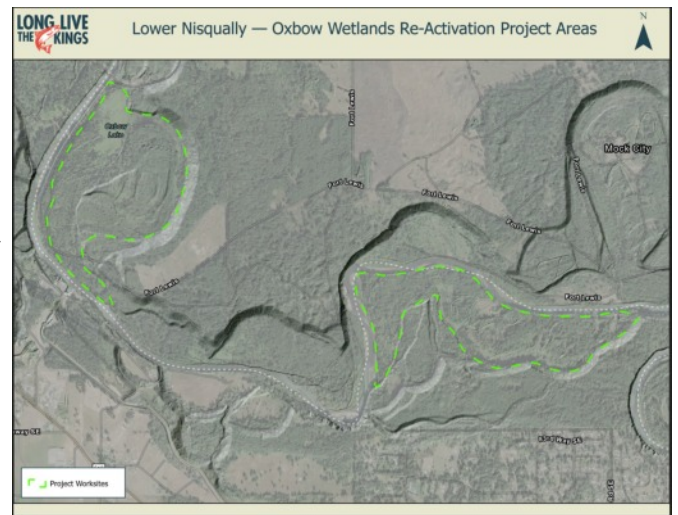
The Nisqually Indian Tribe is the lead agency for salmon recovery in the Nisqually River watershed. This seems normal for us, but it is actually unique – Nisqually is the only tribal government in Puget Sound to have such lead agency authority. Over the years, we have created an active workgroup to advise us concerning salmon recovery – the Nisqually Salmon Habitat Work Group (NSHWG).

There are approved recovery plans for the two Endangered Species Act-listed salmon species, fall chinook and steelhead. Early in workgroup history, ranking criteria was developed for evaluating proposed recovery projects. Each year, NSHWG receives and ranks these projects as to how well they fit into the recovery plans.

The amount of funding available for salmon recovery projects varies substantially from year to year. The Washington State Legislature appropriates funds for salmon recovery projects and, when available, funding may also include pass-through money from the federal budget. A certain minimum amount of funding is earmarked for each watershed each year.

This year, the NSHWG ranked four projects. Funding is available for the first priority project – developing a plan for oxbow wetlands reactivation in the Lower Nisqually

watershed. The site of this project is on Joint Base Lewis McChord upstream of the Tank Crossing bridge. Also, we will have partial funding for the second ranked project, continuing the process of floodplain protection in the middle reach of Ohop Creek.



Nisqually Wild Steelhead

By Craig Smith

The Nisqually Steelhead are listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and, despite that protection, spawning escapement numbers are consistently under the mainstem Nisqually goal of 2000 spawners. This year we caught two steelhead in the chum fishery and, since few folks get to see a Nisqually steelhead, here is a photo of fisherman John Scott with one of them.

To document the spawning escapement, we regularly float the Nisqually River counting redds (the spawning nests created by the females as they turn over gravel). Unfortunately, the spawning numbers this year are not an improvement from the low numbers of recent years. This year there was good winter stream flow, and we may have had better than average spawning in tributaries, especially the Mashel River, taking advantage of improved habitat conditions.



There has been a massive amount of research concerning marine mammal predation on juvenile steelhead. Recent studies have shown that seals eat as many as a third of the out-migrating steelhead smolt. Therefore, we are pushing for development of marine mammal management which, if implemented, could play a large role in allowing the steelhead run to flourish.

Finally, you should know that there has also been an increased effort to estimate steelhead spawning in the last decade thanks to an incredible team of Nisqually technicians and biologists. We partner with both JBLM and WDFW to expand our surveys both in space and time. We will continue to improve the accuracy of the escapement numbers as well as collect key biological data. This will improve when the new trap is deployed at the Centralia diversion dam.



Find My Device: The Hunt for Lost Tech

Tips from the IT-WebDev Department

Whether you've misplaced your device or simply want to track its location for security purposes, both Windows and Mac devices offer helpful tools to assist you. Here's how you can use the "Find My" feature on each platform.



Using Apple's "Find My" Feature: To enable "Find My" on your Apple device, go to System Settings and select your Apple Account at the top. From there, navigate to Find My and toggle it on. If prompted, make sure to enable Location Services to ensure the system can track your device. Once set up, you

can locate your device using the Find My app or through iCloud.com.

To track your device, open the Find My app on any Apple device that's logged into your account, such as another Mac, iPhone, or iPad. Alternatively, you can visit [iCloud.com/find](https://icloud.com/find), sign in with your Apple ID, and choose your device from the list.

Once located, you'll see your device's location on a map. If it's nearby, you can make it play a sound to help you find it. Additionally, you can remotely lock your device or erase its data for security purposes.

Using Windows' "Find My Device" Feature:

While Windows doesn't have a dedicated "Find My" app, it does offer a similar feature called Find My Device, which allows you to track your PC or tablet. To set it up, go to Settings > Update & Security > Find My Device, and toggle the feature on. You may need to sign in with your Microsoft account to link the device. Once enabled, you can track your device through your Microsoft account by visiting account.microsoft.com/devices. After logging in, you'll see a list of your devices.

Both Apple and Windows systems provide valuable tools for keeping your devices secure. Enabling these features is a smart precaution in case your device gets lost or stolen.

Disclaimer: Nisqually Indian Tribe does not endorse, promote, review, or warrant the accuracy of the services, products or links provided.

Editor's note: Recently, I left my laptop behind at the hotel I was staying at. I didn't realize it until 4 days later at 5:30 a.m. in the morning. I must admit, a bit of panic set in as the hotel had not contacted me regarding a lost and found item. I also realized I had not performed two important tasks... performed a cloud (or local external) backup nor activated "find my" for a lost or stolen device. I called the hotel and they had my laptop at the office, but it warranted another trip to retrieve the device. A bit of a hassle, but a good lesson learned.

Transportation and Fleet Services/Bicycle and Walking Path Dinner

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

Nisqually Transportation and Fleet Service hosted an informational dinner where tribal members could also provide input into improving bicycle and walking paths around the community. Folks could look at all the policies, including the new one for Elders receiving routine maintenance to their vehicles. The new Elders and Youth bus was there for tours, as well as several of the electric vehicles in the fleet such as the passenger van and the Mustang. Elders went on their first trip on the bus the following day to Northwest Trek.

Billy Henry, Fleet Manager for Nisqually Tribe, talks about the services provided, such as transportation

to appointments, fleet services for a variety of uses for tribal members and employees and the latest addition of routine car maintenance for Nisqually tribal elders.



Tribal members could pick up copies of Transportation and Fleet services policies and services.

One of the Nisqually Tribe's drivers, Dave, who has his Commercial Drivers License (CDL). That department has five CDL holders with others getting that certification as well.

Tribal members could also fill out input into improving the tribe's biking and walking paths.



Mullen is Building Department's Senior Solar Project Manager

Welcome to AJ Mullen, the new Senior Solar Project Manager for the Nisqually Tribe.



Mullen joined the Nisqually Tribe Building Department April 9, coming from A and R Solar in Seattle, where she was the Residential Solar Project Manager. Her position is paid for as part of a grant to the tribe.

Mullen is leading a team to add to Nisqually's solar homes, identifying

existing homes that qualify for grant funding for solar arrays, heat pumps and weatherization, along with the new homes and buildings that will have those things incorporated in their construction.

Mullen and Jessie Fox, Building Executive Assistant, have already created a helpful computer checklist that takes information about a home and the location and it identifies if there are problems for that site. Sometimes it can be overcome, but sometimes it may not be right for that home and/or location.

"Part of my job is making sure the grant is used in the way that is outlined when received and do the monthly or quarterly reports necessary to stay in compliance and keep receiving the grant," Mullen said.

With the completion of the road additions behind the early Nisqually homes across from the Nisqually Tribal Health and Wellness Center, more new homes will be built this year that will include solar and heat pumps.

There will be a new vocational building in the future behind the facilities, transportation and public works building that will incorporate more solar as well.

With the ever-expanding system of solar, the tribe will also be doing leading edge work to create a micro-grid system that also stores energy and releases it when it is needed. The goal is to create enough energy to nearly meet the intense energy needs of the tribe's wastewater treatment facility as well as the facilities building. All wastewater treatment centers use enormous amounts of energy and by providing most of that energy, it reduces the cost and does it with clean energy.

A big part of creating such a system is planning, and that is the other part of the work Mullen will be doing. "It requires really knowing, as much as you can, where growth is going to occur, what energy systems will be used there and the best way to connect those systems," Mullen said.

Tribes especially are taking the lead on many of these projects because of the remoteness of many reservations and rancherias (California). It allows energy self-sufficiency and reduces the cost of getting energy services.

"This is one more step to get Nisqually off the grid and be self-reliant," said Wayne Lloyd, Director of Nisqually Building Department.

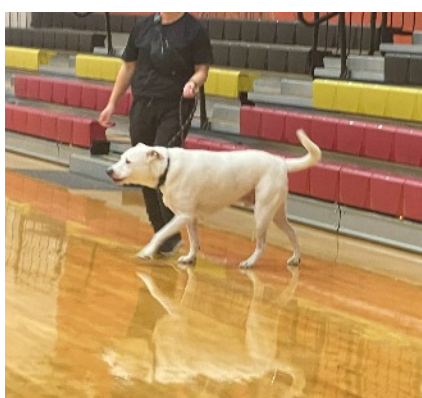
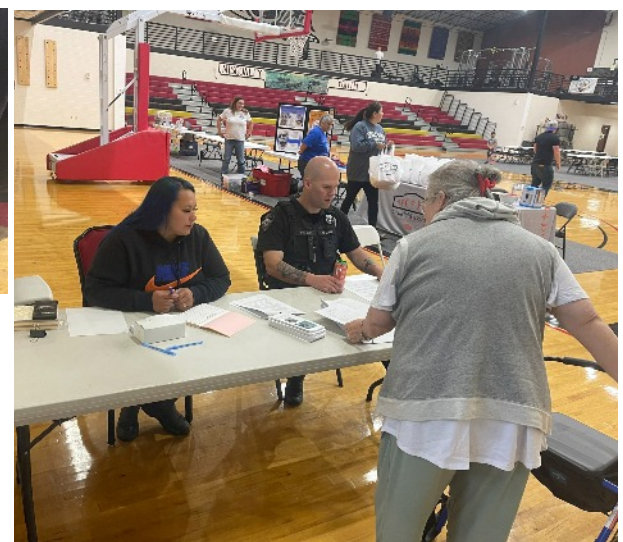
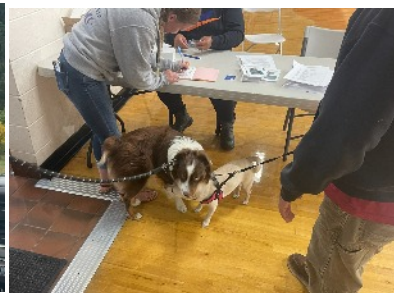
There will be public meetings in the future for tribal members as this work begins to take shape. In the meantime, while AJ is often wearing different hats, literally and figuratively, she wants you to know that most of the time, she will be wearing an actual hat. Her office is located on the second floor of the facilities and transportation building. Her extension is 1273.



Pet Party

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

A big thank you to Sgt. Terrell for getting these pictures of Pet Day. There were gift cards for pet goodies and registration of pets.



Pulling together for Success

Attendees to the May Pulling Together for Success, Community Resources Gathering enjoyed free books, information and the ability to apply for jobs, voting, going to college, leeks from the Nisqually Community Garden and much more. Big thank you to the folks from Community Services and SPIPA who put this event together.

Free books for all ages were available from South Sound Reading Foundation.

A medical provider with Sea Mar gives high fives out along with good information about medical topics and squishy toys that can build hand strength and maybe relieve tension.





ORLA visit to Medicine River Ranch

Aztec Sovereign photos, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services

The magic of horse medicine was in evidence again when 78 Olympia Regional Learning Academy (ORLA) students came to learn about and work with horses at Nisqually's Medicine River Ranch.

From a horse tack scavenger hunt to learning how to touch and groom a horse, to riding a horse, the 8, 9



and 10-year-old students were immersed in horse culture from a Nisqually

Tribe perspective.

"This day came out of a presentation I did at the school about Leschi and the Nisqually history last fall and I talked about the horses and their importance to Nisqually,"



said Cynthia Iyall, Medicine River Ranch Center Administrator. She also continues to corroborate

Nisqually history with horses. One observation she discovered from 1806 was cross-checked with two other historians. "It's in the treaty, our right to hunt, fish, gather and graze our horses," said Iyall.

"The students were just really captivated by the discussion about horses."

"So we started to talk about a visit, and decided that this time of year, right after the North Thurston students have come through, was a good time," Iyall said.

There were three groups and the students rotated through each. One was going on a scavenger hunt to find different kinds of horse tack, or the equipment used to handle and ride horses. A second group worked with equine specialists to learn how to approach and touch horses, as well as groom them.

The third group rode in a Nisqually canoe towed by a tractor to the outdoor area where they had the opportunity to ride a horse with a ranch rider leading the horse. Derrick Sanchez, ranch hand/wrangler and Canoe Family member, also sang Nisqually songs while riding alongside the canoe.

"The kids really loved that," Iyall said. "Even though it was a little cold, they were prepared and so enthusiastic," Iyall said.

A teacher related one of those moments that stick with all who do the work with students, whether educator or ranch hand. "A teacher had one of the students who has just had a rough go in life, just a lot of challenges. He saw Peaches and just ran over and threw his hands around her neck," Iyall said.

Peaches had a little moment of surprise about the rapid intrusion into her personal space, but quickly seemed to understand that the child needed a hug back.

"Apparently, Peaches just wrapped her neck around the boy with her muzzle aside his face and stayed that way for a bit of time," Iyall said.

The student told his teacher that it was the best thing that had happened to him all year.

"We have such a great crew that creates these opportunities. Working with Keoni (Kalama, Ranch Manager) is such a joy. He jumps in and pulls the crew



together to set up for all of our events, visits and anything we need. They all participated today and were instrumental in making a visit to Medicine River Ranch amazing," Iyall said.

The ranch prioritizes Nisqually tribal members in their programs, but the educational opportunities for the surrounding community are embraced to the extent possible and often involve many tribal members who are now a part of the ranch support.

"The outdoor classroom and barn therapy, as we sometimes call it, is good for everyone," Iyall said.



Wild Colt Race Clinic at Warm Springs

The amazing youth from Nisqually showed their talents, toughness and togetherness, representing Medicine River Ranch at the Sr. and Jr. Wild Colt Race Clinic in Warm Springs.

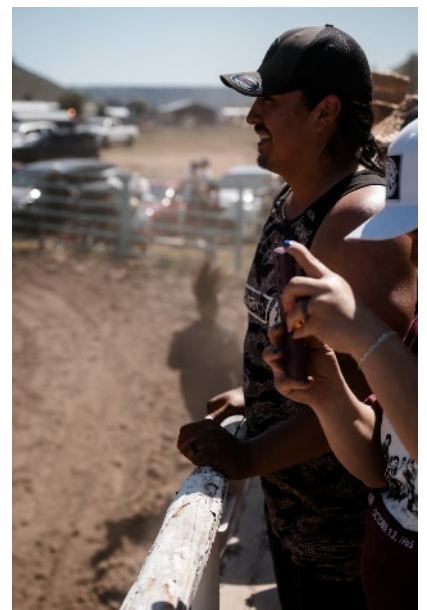
The event was in memory of Solomon Stewart and had Suicide Awareness and Prevention as part of the long weekend.

These kids will never forget this time that brought them together and forged their riding skills in the hot and dusty ring.

Jack George, Nisqually Communications and Media Services, took so many pictures and video. We will post video in the near future.

Mehanaa McCloud was awarded one of the beautiful saddles by the judges. The saddle is especially for riding rodeo



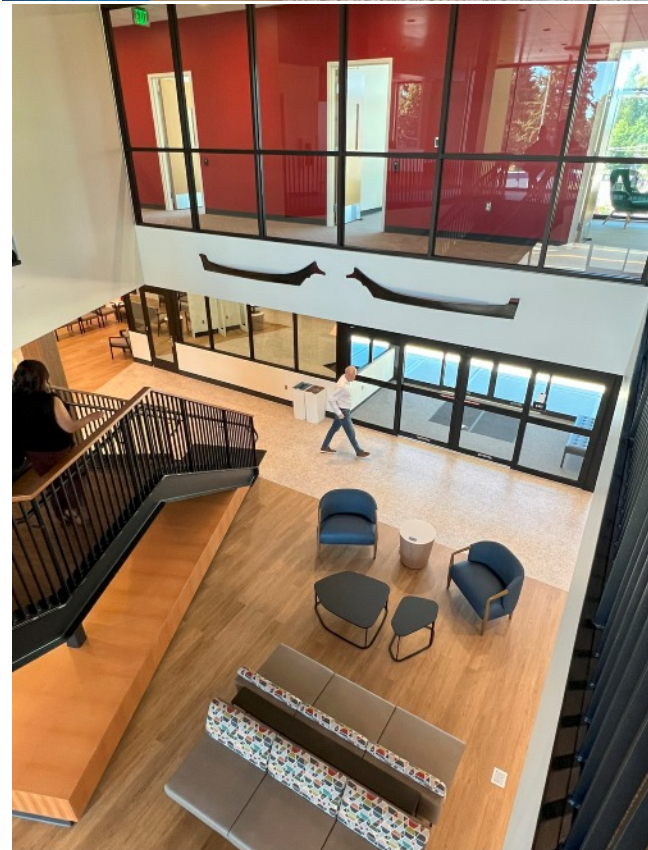




Medicine Assisted Treatment Tour

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Tribe Communication and Media Services Director

Chris Petrozzi, Director for the Nisqually Generations Healing Center (Medicine Assisted Treatment), has been introducing himself around to the agencies that will be a critical part of the clinic's success. There is much excitement around the project and a planned short meeting with a few of those agencies turned into a short tour with some of the folks who will be working with the clinic. The hiring for the center is going well, in a number of cases, those hired have additional qualifications that will assist in the recovery process. With the finishing of a few pieces in the building, the expected open date is now in August 2025 sometime. Guido Levy, 6th Council, talked with those who took the tour, about the process.

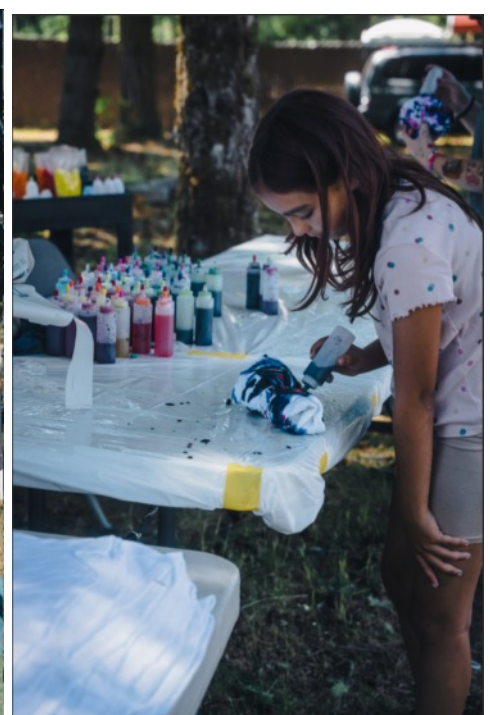




Summer Bash

By Aztec Sovereign photos, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services

A big shout out to all the volunteers, staff and others who made the Summer bash a success!





Stay Safe Near the Water: Life Jacket Safety Tips for Families

As warmer weather returns and we spend more time near rivers, lakes, and the coast, it's important to take steps to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe by encouraging safe water recreation for all ages.

Why Life Jackets Matter

Drowning can happen silently and in as little as 30 seconds. Even strong swimmers, including teens and adults, are safer when they wear a life jacket, especially when boating, kayaking, paddle boarding, or playing near open water. Life jackets are a powerful way to protect our community while honoring the sacred gift of water.

What to Look for in a Life Jacket

When choosing a life jacket, be sure it has:

- A U.S. Coast Guard approval label
- A snug fit (raise your arms—if the jacket hits your chin, it may be too loose)
- Head support and a crotch strap for young children
- A design appropriate for your planned activity
- Bright colors, which help others see you in the water

Comfort and style matter too, especially for teens. The more comfortable it is, the more likely they are to wear it.

Using Your Life Jacket

- Check it each spring for wear and tear. Discard it if you see mildew, rust, or broken straps.
- Never rely on inflatable toys like water wings or rings for safety.
- Practice using your life jacket in the water so you know how it works.

Where Life Jackets Should Be Worn

- While boating, paddle boarding, rafting, or jet skiing
- While swimming in lakes, rivers, or the ocean
- While playing near docks or the water's edge (especially for young children)

Let's continue to protect one another and our future generations by making water safety a priority. Life jackets float—you don't.

For more water safety tips, visit:

- **Stay Safe Near the Water: Life Jacket Tips for Families:** http://www.nisqually-nsn.gov/files/1017/4913/9466/Stay_Safe_Near_the_Water_Life_Jacket_Tips_for_Families_05_29_25.pdf
- seattlechildrens.org/dp
- indpc.org.





NTHWC Health Fair Returns July 11th!

Mark your calendars and bring the whole family, **the Nisqually Tribal Health & Wellness Center Health Fair** is happening **Thursday, July 11, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at the **Nisqually Youth Center!**

Our annual event is a time for our community to come together, connect, and celebrate wellness in all its forms. Connect with the NTHWC care team, fellow Nisqually Tribal programs, and outside vendors. The Health Fair will be filled with helpful resources, fun activities, and opportunities to learn more about how we can support our health, our families, and each other.

What to Expect:

- Health and wellness resources for all ages
- Games, giveaways, and interactive booths
- Opportunities to meet staff from NTHWC, tribal programs, and partner organizations
- A family-friendly space to ask questions, engage with services, and enjoy the day

This event is about more than health, it's about community, culture, and connection. Whether you're coming to gather information, play games with the kids, or simply spend time with others, you are welcome here.

Thursday, July 11th
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Nisqually Youth Center

Questions? Call 360-459-5312 to contact our care team. See you there!



World Day Against Trafficking in Persons – July 30

Human trafficking continues to affect people across the globe, including in Native communities. On July 30, we pause to raise awareness, recognize the signs, and stand in solidarity with survivors. Trafficking can be hard to spot—it happens closer to home than many realize, often to individuals who are vulnerable or seeking opportunity.

Traffickers use manipulation, violence, and false promises to exploit others for labor or sex. But with knowledge and compassion, we can make a difference.

By learning more and staying alert, we



strengthen our shared responsibility to look out for one another. Together, we can support survivors and prevent exploitation before it starts.

Explore more: Voices of Freedom – Indigenous Stories

This powerful storytelling initiative uplifts the voices of Native survivors and advocates in the fight to end trafficking.



Need help or want to take action?

Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888

Text "HELP" to 237333

Washington residents contact the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy at 1-800-822-1067



Plan for Wildfire Smoke This Summer

This summer is expected to bring a higher risk of wildfires and smoke across Washington, including our region. Wildfire smoke can be harmful to everyone, especially Elders, children, and those with heart or lung conditions. The tiny particles in smoke can irritate your eyes, throat, and lungs, and make it harder to breathe.

Portable air cleaners (also called air purifiers) help remove harmful particles like smoke, dust, and pollen from indoor air. Cleaner indoor air supports better breathing, reduces asthma and allergy symptoms, and lowers stress caused by poor air quality.



How They Work:

Most effective air cleaners use three filters:

- Pre-filter – catches large dust and hair
- HEPA filter – removes tiny smoke, dust, and pollen
- Carbon filter – helps reduce gases and odors

Choosing the Right One:

- Look for a HEPA filter
- Avoid models with ozone, UV, or ionizing features
- Choose the right size for your space
- Pick one that isn't too noisy

Use It Wisely:

- Place it in rooms where you spend most of your time
- Run it when you're home, especially during wildfire smoke or poor air days
- Keep filters clean and replace them as recommended

Extra Tips for Cleaner Indoor Air:

- Don't smoke or vape indoors
- Use kitchen and bathroom fans
- Open windows when outdoor air is healthy
- Cook with less frying or broiling
- Clean with damp cloth and use HEPA vacuums
- Fix leaks and control moisture to prevent mold
- Test for radon and install carbon monoxide detectors

Your indoor air matters. Take simple steps to breathe easier and stay well. You can learn more, including how to build a low-cost fan filter or choose a good air purifier, at: doh.wa.gov/smokefromfires
When we care for the air, we care for the whole community.

Protect Yourself and Loved Ones with Vaccines

Vaccines teach our bodies how to recognize and fight infections like measles, whooping cough, and flu. Vaccines are for everyone: pregnant women, babies, children, teens, adults, and elders. By strengthening our powerful warrior cells (immune system), together we help protect entire communities from serious illness.

To get vaccinated, or to ask about what vaccines you may need, please contact the Nisqually Health & Wellness Center Medical Clinic at 360-459-5312

More Info:

Vaccines 101: Vaccination Information for Natives by Natives: [http://www.nisqually-](http://www.nisqually-nsn.gov/files/5317/4913/9713/Vaccines-101_VacciNative.pdf)

nsn.gov/files/5317/4913/9713/Vaccines-101_VacciNative.pdf





Respecting Life, Honoring Recovery:

Opioid Awareness Month

Opioid Awareness Month in July is a time to come together as a community to learn, reflect, and act. The opioid crisis has deeply impacted Native communities across the country, including our own. Raising awareness is not just about understanding the risks; it's about protecting our loved ones, honoring the lives affected, and walking a path toward healing and wellness.

Opioid misuse can affect anyone, regardless of age, background, or circumstance. When we speak openly and with compassion, we reduce stigma and create space for support, recovery, and strength.

Know the Signs of Opioid Misuse or Overdose:

- Sudden mood swings or changes in behavior
- Excessive drowsiness or inability to stay awake
- Slowed or shallow breathing
- Small, pinpoint pupils
- Nodding off during conversations
- Unresponsiveness or difficulty waking someone
- Drug paraphernalia such as pill bottles, syringes, or burnt spoons

Recognizing these signs can save a life.

How You Can Raise Awareness and Act:

- Talk openly with your family, especially youth, about the risks of opioid use
- Safely store and dispose of prescription medications
- Carry naloxone (Narcan) and learn how to use it—it can save a life
- Pick up free Narcan at our Pharmacy—no questions asked
- Drop off unused or expired medications in the MedSafe box located inside the Pharmacy or outside of Behavioral Health
- Encourage loved ones to seek care and support if they're struggling
- Reach out for confidential assistance—call us at (360)-413-2727
- Remember: help and healing are just a phone call away

Ready to take the next step for yourself or someone you care about? **Schedule a confidential appointment today**—call the Nisqually Tribal Health & Wellness Center at **360-459-5312**. Healing starts with one call.

What are opioids?

Opioids are drugs that block pain signals from reaching our brain. They can also change our mental state making us feel happy, relaxed, sleepy, or confused.



How Do People Become Addicted to Opioids?

Opioids change the way our brain works and the way we think. One of the first brain changes that occurs is that opioids hijack the part of our brain that controls our cravings.



How Do People Become Addicted to Opioids?

People often start to misuse prescription opioids by taking them:

- more often
- in larger amounts
- for reasons they were not prescribed for



Visit our website to learn facts about opioids:
www.npaihb.org/opioid





International Self-Care Day—July 24

Self-care is more than bubble baths and quiet time—it's a daily commitment to honoring your mind, body, spirit, and community. July 24 serves as a reminder that caring for yourself is not selfish, it's essential. Whether you're reconnecting with culture, spending time outdoors, or simply drinking more water, small, intentional choices can lead to lasting wellness.

Mind & Spirit

- Step outside and breathe deeply. Connect with the land and your breath.
- Pray or smudge. Start or end your day in reflection and grounding.
- Journal for 5 minutes. Write freely, no judgment.
- Practice gratitude. Name three things you're thankful for.
- Read an inspiring quote or teaching. Let wisdom uplift your spirit.
- Say "no" when you need to. Honor your boundaries.
- Meditate or sit in stillness. Even 2 to 3 minutes can bring calm.
- Sing or hum a calming tune. Music regulates your nervous system.
- Speak Lushootseed words aloud. Connect with culture through language.
- Unplug from screens for an hour. Give your mind a rest.

Mental Wellness

- Talk to a trusted friend or Elder. Connection is medicine.
- Declutter a small space. Your surroundings affect your peace.
- Do one thing at a time. Multitasking causes stress.
- Set a small, achievable goal. Celebrate completing it.
- Limit news or social media intake. Protect your energy.

Physical Wellness

- Go for a short walk. Even a loop around the building helps.

- Drink a glass of water. Hydration is a daily act of care.
- Stretch your body. Release built-up tension.
- Eat a nourishing meal or snack. Choose foods that support your energy.
- Go to sleep 30 minutes earlier. Rest heals the body and mind.
- Dance, move, or sway to music. Joyful movement is medicine.
- Take a nap if you're tired. Permission granted.

Emotional & Relational Care

- Laugh with someone. Laughter is a sacred medicine.
- Write someone a kind note or text. Giving also heals.
- Spend time with an animal. Their presence can be calming.
- Let yourself cry if needed. Your feelings matter.
- Practice self-compassion. Speak to yourself gently.

Cultural & Environmental Connection

- Sit by water, trees, or a natural space. Let the land reset you.
- Take part in cultural practice or tradition. Connection strengthens resilience.
- Pick up a piece of litter. Caring for the land cares for us.

These small, daily acts reflect our shared values: balance, unity, humility, and respect. Self-care doesn't have to be big or expensive. It's about creating moments of intention and healing. You matter, and your wellness is worth tending to.

Taking care of your health is self-care, too. Call us at (360) 459-5312 to schedule a check-up, wellness visit, or follow-up appointment. Prioritizing your health is a powerful act of self-respect, and we're here to walk that path with you.



Summer Sun Safety and Skin Cancer: Protecting Our Skin and Traditions

By Dr. Satuar

Summer brings longer days, outdoor gatherings, and time spent on the land. While connecting with the sun is a part of many traditions, it's also important to protect ourselves from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Too much exposure can lead to skin damage and even skin cancer—a serious but often preventable health issue.

Understanding Skin Cancer

Skin cancer happens when UV radiation from the sun (or tanning beds) damages skin cells and causes them to grow out of control. The three main types are:

- **Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)** – Common and slow-growing, but should be treated early.
- **Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC)** – Can spread if untreated.
- **Melanoma** – Less common but more dangerous, and can spread quickly.

Even though it's often thought of as affecting people with lighter skin, **anyone** can get skin cancer, including people from Native and Indigenous communities.

- **Skin cancer can affect all skin tones**, and when it appears in darker skin, it's often diagnosed later, making it more dangerous.
- Cultural practices may involve spending extended time outdoors (fishing, ceremonies, harvests), increasing sun exposure.

Being sun-smart is about respecting both your health and cultural ways of life.

Sun Safety Tips for Everyone

Use Sunscreen Daily - Choose broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher. Reapply every 2 hours or after swimming/sweating. Even on cloudy days, UV rays can cause skin damage.

Cover Up When Possible -

Wear long sleeves, long skirts or pants, and wide-brimmed hats. Use UV-blocking

sunglasses to protect your eyes. When possible, choose lightweight and breathable materials that honor your traditions and keep you cool.

Seek Shade, Especially Midday - The sun is strongest from **10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Set up shaded areas during community gatherings or use natural shade from trees.

Say No to Tanning Beds - Tanning beds give off harmful UV rays and are known to increase the risk of skin cancer, especially melanoma.

Watch for Skin Changes - Check your skin regularly, especially places that get a lot of sun like the face, arms, chest, and legs. Look for any new spots, moles, or sores that don't heal.

Know the **ABCDEs** of melanoma:

Asymmetry.

Border changes.

Color changes.

Diameter over 6mm.

Evolving or changing.

If something doesn't look right, talk to a healthcare provider or clinic—early treatment can save lives. Caring for our skin is another way to care for ourselves, our families, and our future generations.



Resources

American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) - AICAF is a Native-governed nonprofit organization committed to eliminating cancer burdens among Indigenous peoples. They offer culturally tailored resources, including educational materials, survivor stories, and support for cancer screening and early detection.

Indian Health Service (IHS) – Cancer Prevention - The IHS provides resources and guidance on cancer prevention for American Indian and Alaska Native populations.



CONTACT NTHWC

📞 Main: 360-459-5312

You can contact us during business hours on our main phone line, or contact departments directly.



Business Office:
360-486-9599



Behavioral Health:
360-413-2727



Dental:
360-413-2716



Pharmacy:
360-491-9770



Traditional Healing:
360-493-6450



Always dial 911 for life-threatening emergencies.

DENTAL CLINIC CLOSURE NOTIFICATION: JULY 28-31

The Dental Department will be closed from Monday, July 28, through Thursday, July 31, as our dental team attends the National Indian Health Service (IHS) Dental Conference.

We encourage patients to plan for any routine dental needs. If you have a dental emergency during the closure, please call our main line at (360) 459-5312 for guidance.

This important event provides valuable training and professional development, allowing our team to continue offering the highest quality care to our community.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.



South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency

July Diaper Distribution

Nisqually Tribe

7/18/25
At the SPIPA Warehouse
10:00am-1:00pm

Pull-ups | Diapers | Wipes | More

Need diapers? You may qualify! Households on or near Tribal lands and enrolled in programs like WIC, SNAP, or TANF may be eligible.

Call SPIPA at 360.426.3990



SAVE THE DATE

Looking Forward Together:
Elders' Supports & Services ~ Your Health and Wellness

August 14, 2025

Lucky Eagle Casino Event Center

*You are invited
to an intertribal gathering of
tribal elders, caregivers,
and service providers.*

For more information please call: 360.426.3990

South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency



South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency

USDA Foods Program July Delivery Date

Nisqually

7/18/25
10:00am-1:00pm



NOTE: Please stick to the monthly schedule for the USDA Commodity Food Program. Food distribution staff have other duties that they are responsible for on the days they are not issuing commodities. If you're unable to make the date, please call and schedule an appointment with appropriate staff.

For USDA Food, call SPIPA at 360.426.3990

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Next WIC date:
Wednesday, July 16, 2025
SPIPA Warehouse

*We will offer both phone
appointments and in person
appointments. Date subject to
change.*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
Washington WIC doesn't discriminate.

Nisqually WIC

(Women, Infants, and Children)

provides healthy foods &
nutrition information for you
and your child up to age 5.

For appointments
and questions, contact:
Debbie Gardipee
360.463.4439

Email: dgardipee@spipa.org

SPIPA main number: 360.426.3990





Announcements

Tribal Estate and Will Planning

Tribal Estate Planning Services provided by Emily Penoyar-Rambo

Services offered:

- Last will and testament
- Durable power of attorney
- Healthcare directive
- Tangible personal property bequest
- Funeral/burial instructions

Zoom meetings will be set up for the first and third Thursday of each month. Available appointment times are 8:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

Please call Lori Lehman at 360-456-5221 to set up an appointment.



FREE Rides

Monday through Friday

Transit available

6:00 a.m. to 6 :00 p.m.

**Open to all tribal, community
and tribal employees. We offer
rides from 6:15 a.m. to last off
rez ride at 5:15 p.m.**

**Contact Cecile Hemphill,
Motor Pool Coordinator/Dispatch**

At 360-456-5236

Nisqually Housing Presents

Summer Clean Up 2025



*Gear, Raffle Prizes and
Lunch Provided!*

Clean-up Efforts Throughout the
Reservation 10am-12pm
Lunch and Raffle at the Youth Center
starting at 12pm

TUESDAY, JULY 8TH

MORE INFO: 360.493.0081

**Nisqually Indian Tribe
4820 She-Nah-Num Dr. SE
Olympia, WA 98513**

