FROM ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO ACTION

Mat-Su Borough School District has incorporated Land Acknowledgements in all the Mat-Su Borough Schools. Tsin’aen Katie Ellsworth, Director of Federal Programs.

A HtNa ElDer WilSon JuStIn once told me a Land Acknowledgment is when you present a “happy face” and cross onto another’s land in a respectful way. Your “happy face” is putting on your beads and dentalium and introducing yourself in your language. You do this to offer respect to the stewards of that land, the Indigenous people, and to tell those stewards who you are and what you stand for.

Land Acknowledgment is a public statement recognizing the Indigenous people of a place. In Alaska we are on Indigenous land. Because of this truth, Land Acknowledgment has become a widely implemented practice across the state. It has largely become a performative signal of allyship and, from the outside, it leads us to believe we are doing the right thing. But what does Land Acknowledgment actually do for our communities within Alaska? What does it personally mean to hear, see, and say a Land Acknowledgment? Can Land Acknowledgment become action?

When I first heard a Land Acknowledgment I was attending a conference outside of the United States. I found myself within an institutionalized space where most of my peers were non-Native. This setting was not new to me. I listened as the chatter and networking around me quieted and the host approached the microphone. They welcomed all the attendees and thanked them for being there. With a pause they stated, “We are on Indigenous land.” They then proceeded to thank those specific people for their past and present stewardship of that place and to remind us that all places have both an Indigenous memory and an Indigenous contemporary story. In hearing this I felt my eyes tear and my throat tie into knots. I tried to calm myself as the host started again. Looking into the faces of my peers I realized my reaction, like my Native-ness, was singular in that room. This moment took time to process. I found myself asking the questions, “Why was I so moved by these words?”, and “Did other Indigenous people have a similar experience in hearing them?”

How can Land Acknowledgment in Alaska meaningfully contribute to equality?

By Melissa Shaginoff

Shaginoff, Melissa “From Acknowledgment to Action”, Forum Magazine, Alaska Humanities Forum, Pages 36-37, Summer 2020, Issuu.com
Elder Spotlight - Shirley Sorensen

Shirley was born in Chickaloon. Shirley has one son, Mikey, whom she adores. She is the sister to Helen, Katherine, William, Jessie, Raymond, Angelina, Mabel, Norman, Harold, and Albert.

Shirley wants to go on a boat again some day. She would love to have a job and recalls ditch digging with fondness. Shirley enjoyed her short time in Oregon while working as a nanny. She has a great love for cats, and dogs. For awhile, she used to have a farm with geese, chickens, turkeys and a cow.

Flowers bring Shirley joy; red roses and sweet williams are her favorites. She loves Hank Williams and Hank Williams Jr. Shirley lives for music and loved dancing when she was able to cut a rug. Cake and ice cream also bring Shirley joy. She hates cottage cheese.

The Health & Social Services staff very respectfully call her “the Queen” when they stop by each week to check on her.

Council Member Spotlight
Phil Ling
Language Apprentice/Researcher

Where was he born: Phil was born in Palmer, Alaska.

Immediate Family: Wife: Catherine, Kids: Alex and Ella, Dad: Shane, Mom: Ingrid (passed away), Brothers: Matthew/Dylan/Logan, Sister: Emily

Fun Fact: Phil has been to Italy and it was one of the greater experiences he’s had. “I look forward to visiting again.”

His Life Goal: “To be able to go on 2-week vacations, twice a month.”

A bucket list item: Phil would love to visit New Zealand someday. “[It] looks stunning, and I would love to see the Haka being performed.”

Who is his hero: “Has to be my mom. She was my biggest supporter, my #1 fan, and she helped sculpt me into who I am today. I live everyday to try and make her proud.”
CVTC Accounting/Administration Department is sad to say good bye to Marilyn Houser, Administrative Assistant II. Marilyn has decided to pursue other interests in her life at this time. We appreciate all the hard work and dedication Marilyn has put into CVTC over the years and wish her the very best of luck in her new endeavors!

Although we will miss Marilyn greatly, we are also excited for the opportunity to add a new member to our team. If you or anyone you know is interested in working at the CVTC Accounting/Administration Department or at one of our other fabulous departments, details can be found at https://chickaloon.bamboohr.com/jobs/?source=other

We welcome Karol Dixon, our new Executive Director. She is Deg Hit’an Athabascan and is an enrolled member of the Shageluk Native Village. Karol has worked with, and for, Tribes in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. She brings with her experience in fields of Medicaid policy, Tribal self-governance, national Tribal budget formulation and health care improvement. Karol has a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Alaska Anchorage, a Juris Doctor from the University of New Mexico School of Law and Master of Public Health from Johns Hopkins University. She and her family live in Wasilla.

“Chickaloon Village Traditional Council’s commitment to Tribal sovereignty is well known throughout Indian Country,” stated Karol. “I am impressed with the leadership, staff and the wide variety of services provided by the Village. In the face of a global pandemic, the community, CVTC leadership, and staff have been resilient and resourceful. I am glad to join the team.”

“Professor Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart would like to encourage Tribal citizens to take this beginning language class and think about continuing to the following semester, as each class builds on what was learned from previous classes.

“For those students who have taken the class, every class is a bit different, so I encourage you to take it again. The best way to learn is through repetition. I believe we can take back our language but we have to be the ones to seize the opportunity.”

There may be funding assistance/scholarships available for Tribal Citizens to attend through Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, Education Department, 477 Program.

Please contact Leah Walker, 477 Project Manager for CVTC, about availability of scholarships at lswalker@chickaloon-nsn.gov or you can call her at 907-795-6623.
**WHY DO WE SPEAK AHTNA?**

**BECAUSE WE HAVE NO MORE FLUENT SPEAKING ELDER IN OUR VILLAGE.**

**BECAUSE THERE ARE LESS THAN 6 FIRST AHTNA SPEAKERS LEFT IN THE WORLD.**

**AHTNA IS ONE OF THE 150 LANGUAGES IN THE U.S. THAT ARE THREATEN TO BE EXTINCT BY THE END OF THE CENTURY.**

**SNAKAHEY DATS'ELDIIXI SU**

**WE ARE TEACHING THE CHILDREN**

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Here are the new campus signs that will be displayed starting the 2020-2021 school year to remind all students, staff, and any visitors of the need to make choices that keep everyone healthy.

**More signs are also on pages 6 and 11**

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**Land Acknowledgement**

Want to know whose land you are standing on at any given location? Here are a couple of ways to easily find out

1) An interesting website will tell you. Go to [https://native-land.ca/](https://native-land.ca/) Type in any address and the map will zoom in to that place and the name of the Tribe whose land that address is on will appear on the screen.

2) Cell phone users can text either a zipcode or City and State to 1-907-312-5085 and the reply text will provide you the Tribal land identity for the information submitted.

Try it sometime!! *Tsin’aen to Amy Lalor for the phone number.*

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While in Alaska, Administration for Native Americans (ANA) Commissioner Jeannie Hovland met with Donita Slawson, Project Manager for Chickaloon Native Village’s Esther Martinez Immersion (EMI) funded grant titled “Ahtna Keneage’ Ugheldze’ Le’ Cilaes (Our Ahtna Language We Share).”
Nadosi Ts’akae—Ant Woman and the Blind Man

Once upon a time, there was a man. He was a good hunter and a good provider. He was married to an Ant Woman. She did something to him that made him blind. She was a cruel woman.

So one day, they went hunting. The man said, “I’d like to go hunting like I used to. You can lead me to a moose.” “Alright,” she said. So they went hunting. “Oh! I see a moose,” she said. “Ok, you point the arrow at it and I’ll shoot it,” he said. So she did. She pointed the arrow at the moose and said, “Alright, shoot!” When he shot, it sounded like he hit the moose. “Did it hit it?” he asked. “It sounded like I hit it.” “Oh, you missed it,” she said. “You always miss.”

Whenever he said he was hungry, she would hand him old rotten wood. “Here eat this.” And the blind man couldn’t see. Whenever he asked for water, she gave him water. He said, “Oh, this water tastes bad. Where did you get it?” “Oh, it’s good water. There is nothing wrong with it,” she said.

She left him and he wandered away by himself. He kept feeling around with the stick and calling for her. After running off, she made a camp by the moose and she ate and ate.

He kept wandering around for quite some time and he finally found her. “Oh, why did you leave me?” She said, “I didn’t.” He said, “You left me.” So he told her that he was hungry. “I smell meat,” he said. “There is no meat,” she said. “Here!” She gave him a piece of rotten wood. “I’m thirsty,” he said. She gave him some water. “Oh, this water tastes awful,” he said. Then she said, “Oh, I see a moose.” “Lead me to it and let me shoot it,” he said. “Alright.” She pointed the arrow at the moose and he shot it. “It sounds like I hit it,” he said. “Oh! You didn’t hit it,” she said. “You missed it as always.”

Then she left him again. So he started wandering around with a stick and calling for her. Soon he hear a loon down by the lake. He felt his way down to the lake. He kept hitting around with the stick. He drank some water and he talked to the loon.

“I heard that you can make blind people see. I’m blind. I’m helpless and I have a wife, but she left me. I don’t know what to do. Please help me.”

Loon said, “Alright, I’ll see what I can do for you. Put your head under my wing and hold your breath. I’ll dive in with you to the other end of the lake.” That was what he did and again to the other end. Then he asked him if he saw anything.

He said, “Just a little.” “Alright, again to the other end,” said the loon. “Now can you see?” “Yes, I can see,” said the man. “Alright, go find your wife,” said the loon.

So the man did. He looked because now he could see. He found her and pretended that he was still like he was before. He kept hitting around with a stick.

“Oh!” he said. “I’m hungry.” He went right for the camp. He said, “I smell meat. Oh! Why did you leave me?” She said, “I didn’t leave you. You left me. Here!” She gave him old rotten wood. He looked through his eyelashes. She had her back turned. She was cooking something.

He said, “I’m thirsty.” She went down and got water and gave it to him. He looked through his eyelashes again and the water was all wormy and wrigglers were in it.

As she had her back turned to him, he poured the water down her back and grabbed the ax and chopped her in two places. She dragged herself into a tree, a rotten tree and she became an ant.

So they say that is why the ants drag themselves around like they do. So the man had a good feast with all the meat. He ate and ate.

Atna’ Yanida’a (Ahtna Stories), 1979, (Pages 47-53), Written in Ahtna by Molly Billum, Translated by Millie Buck, Director Bilingual Education Program for the Copper River Native Association
Have you been looking to buy a piece of property lately? If so, you might want to make sure that it hasn’t been contaminated in the past with petroleum products like oil and gasoline, or other hazardous chemicals. Under federal and state law, whoever owns the property at the time the contamination is discovered is considered to be the responsible party for cleaning it up: even if the previous property owner didn’t know about it; even if the new property owner didn’t make the mess! You’ve probably heard the saying, “If something seems to be too good to be true, it probably is.” Well, if someone offers to sell you a piece of property at a price that’s too good to be true, make sure that you’re not buying their problem.

What can you do to protect yourself? Before buying questionable property, make sure that you get a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) done. A Phase I ESA is the process where a qualified, independent third-party searches through records to figure out how the property was used in the past; contacts people who knew the prior property owners for interviews; and actually walks the property to do a visual inspection. Their findings go into a report that will either say that the property seems fine, or they will advise that more work should be done. This report is the shield you will need to protect yourself from liability, if contamination is discovered on the property later, after you buy it. It is what will send the state looking for a responsible party to pay for the cleanup, and it will also open doors to money that can be used to pay for a cleanup that would otherwise be closed to you.

A Phase I ESA isn’t all that expensive to get done when you consider all the factors that go into property prices: usually $3,000 – $5,000 depending on the company. Additionally, it might be required by your lender. The seller may have paid for one already, to make the property more marketable. The cost of a Phase I ESA could be added to the closing costs of the transaction: it’s all negotiable. What isn’t negotiable is whether or not to clean the property up later, if you are identified as the owner of a contaminated property who didn’t get a pre-purchase Phase I ESA. And, if you can’t afford (or you refuse) to clean up the contamination, the state can legally take over and do it for you, at 3-5 times the original cleanup cost which the state will charge you. (Yikes! Nts’e ghusga’ida!)

If you have questions about Phase I Environmental Site Assessments and the terms I used here, or about brownfields, or just want to say ‘hi’, I can be reached at rechiolero@chickaloon-nsn.gov
Staff Member Spotlight

Shelia Olson—Paralegal, Court Clerk & Newsletter Editor

Where was she born: Shelia was born in Hamlin, West Virginia in a clinic. Unfortunately, the nurse misspelled her name, and her mom didn’t have the heart to make the nurse retype the clinic, city, county, and state forms.

Immediate Family: She has a brother, Jerry; sister, Eva both still in WV; husband, Mark; a few children (his and hers, all ours), Stephanie, Jennifer, Heidi, Melissa, Robin, Joel, Charlie, Nate, and Sarah; and a passel of grandchildren, Sammie, Michele, Shaun, Noah, Chris, Michael, Austin, Adelynn, Mark, Sky, Teddy, and Eliza. Holidays and birthdays are a big deal in her family usually.

Fun Fact: hubby and she were extras in a CSI episode in 2004.

Her Life Goal: to have work and home organized.

A bucket list item: Shelia wants to really use their passports and travel abroad to places like France, Norway, Scotland, Ireland.

Who are her heroes: Her mom and mother in law, hubby, and our kids.
**Transport Schedule**

****UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

**Transports are limited to medical/emergent needs ONLY**

**Monday:** LifeHouse Clinic/Valley Native Primary Care Center/ and Transportation also provided for Elder’s needing assistance with shopping, local resource access.

**Tuesday:** LifeHouse Clinic/Valley Native Primary Care Center/Alaska Native Medical Center/Southcentral Foundation (Anchorage)/ and Valley Native Primary Care Elder Wellness

**Wednesday:** LifeHouse Clinic/Valley Native Primary Care Center/Alaska Native Medical Center/ and Southcentral Foundation (Anchorage)

**Thursday:** LifeHouse Clinic and Elder’s Lunch Home Deliveries

**Friday:** LifeHouse Clinic and Elder Activities (please contact HSS Department for a list of upcoming activities)

**Please contact 907-745-0704 to schedule a ride.**

**Please provide a 48-hour notice when requesting a ride.**

We do our best to take every transport request; however, Anchorage transports are based upon driver availability.

Our service area includes the communities of Glacier View, Chickaloon, Sutton, as far as Palmer to Seward Meridian and the Butte.

**The Effects of Trauma in Our Lives**

Dr. Rita Blumenstein, Traditional Doctor, stated that trauma effects individuals in several ways—**physically** (anxiety that displays as difficulty concentrating, difficulty sleeping, changes in appetite or overall feelings of overwhelm), **cognitively** (mind wandering or becoming confused making it hard to work are take care of family), **emotionally** (various feelings that in turn cause people to disconnect from others around them), **behaviorally** (the actual withdrawing from family and friends), and **spiritually** (questioning ourselves, our faith in Creator, an imbalance that needs resolution).


**The C’eyiits’ Hwnax Life House Community Health Center is open to the public for primary care needs.**

**My AK Wellness has a new challenge and health incentive for the month of September.** Enter a random drawing for a prize by logging on to My AK Wellness and pledge to log your steps using the steps tracker tool. You can even sync your FitBit or Garmin device. Log in using your MyHealth username and password at [https://bit.ly/3cLrPWi](https://bit.ly/3cLrPWi)

They offer free COVID-19 Testing.

**DONATIONS OF JIGSAW PUZZLES WITH UP TO 250 PIECES ARE WELCOME. THEY WILL BE GIVEN TO ELDERS AND OTHERS RECEIVING THE WEEKLY HOME DELIVERIES.**

**CONTACT DOROTHY BOATRIGHT AT THE HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES DEPT BY CALLING 907-745-0704 IF YOU WANT TO DONATE.**

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**Community Wellness Circle (online)**

If you, or someone you love, is in need of a little more connection or support, please join us. This is a safe place to share and reflect, and to learn new ways to cope with stress and sadness. Meetings are every Thursday from 2-4, on-line. For RSVP, details, and/or any questions you may have, please contact Ryan at (907) 745-0704 ex. 202 or at rplaine@chickaloon-nsn.gov.
Protect with Courage ~ Serve with Compassion

Our Peace Officer and Tribal Court are available to meet the needs of the community. If you have an immediate emergency requiring assistance, please seek help, DIAL 911. If you have questions about Tribal Court, call Shelia Olson.

The Tribal Court will be adding a group of individuals to our team that will advocate for the needs of children requiring additional services of CVTC.

If you are interested in being an advocate or learning the information on how to become an advocate, please contact Shelia Olson, Tribal Court Clerk.

Transportation Department

The Transportation department continued to have a very busy summer. So far, we have put the finishing touches to the school parking lot and landscaping at the front of the building.

We started preparing for the foundation work on the Visitor Center Pavilion that will be located where Aunt Katie’s home had been, behind the Moose Creek campus building at 9255 North Glenn Highway.

We will also add a better access road and parking will be completed so that visitors can park closer to the building and accommodate the needs of handicapped or our Elders so they can enjoy the facility.

Chickaloon Area Transit System (CATs) is pleased to continue to provide rides for our community. Our drivers are keeping our vehicles clean and wiped down with disinfectant to provide a safe environment for riders and staff members.

To schedule a ride, please call 745-CATs or 745-2287. You may need to leave a voice mail message with your name, call back number, dates and time of travel, and specific location you will be traveling to and from.

In order to continue to provide services, CATs limits ride for one person at a time or two if from the same household.

Passengers are asked to: 1. Let CATs personnel know if you have symptoms of COVID19 at the time they schedule a ride and when they are picked up. 2. Asked to wear a clean and well-fitting mask during each of their transports.

We have masks available, please let the drivers know you need one.
deeper Indigenous beliefs of public recognition and gratefulness. This created the Land Acknowledgment Workshop.

In the Land Acknowledgment Workshop we start with the truth. We are on Indigenous land. Through guided conversation we talk about what Land Acknowledgment is, what it is not, and what it can be. In many instances, Land Acknowledgment opens a space with gratefulness, allowing Indigenous individuals to feel seen within what are traditionally settler situations. But it can also reinforce the erasure of Alaska Native people in both their history and current experiences. Land Acknowledgment is a performative statement. When it is not supported with sincerity or personal investment, Land Acknowledgment can be used with colonizing intent—removing obligation and accountability from individual allyship, leaving the hollow shell of institutional rhetoric. To avoid this, allies must ask: “What can Land Acknowledgment be, and what does it actually do?”

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT can be a chance to look inward. To evaluate personal power and privilege within colonial systems and strategize how to give both away. This way of thinking embodies Indigenous ideologies that value allegiance and the reciprocal work of knowing someone. As an Ahtna person, I grew up in a visiting culture that taught me how respect comes from telling someone who you are, where you come from, and what you stand for. When you enter a person’s territory you put on your “happy face” and you introduce yourself in your language. This offering is a moment in which you give a little bit of yourself with the hope that the other person will do the same. In Dene leadership, power lies in the ability to understand one another.

Land Acknowledgment has largely become a performative signal of allyship and, from the outside, it leads us to believe we are doing the right thing. But what does Land Acknowledgment actually do for our communities within Alaska?

Land Acknowledgment is also a moment to reflect on ways to invest in actions of reconciliation. As citizens, visitors, and intruders it is our responsibility to know the sovereign tribal entities and Indigenous organizations within each place we move. We should do the work to understand their structures, their values, and their current work. It is our responsibility to invest in those entities’ success through equitable means. This is how we can turn the words of Land Acknowledgment into action. Learning about the sovereign tribal entities and Indigenous organizations informs our Land Acknowledgments, and holds us accountable in supporting these important groups.

Acknowledgment becomes action when we do the personal work of evaluating our contributions to colonial institutions and considering how that work does or does not include Indigenous people, knowledge, or ways of being. It is important to ask: “What actions meaningfully contribute to equity and how can we substantiate this learning?” This personal work recognizes truth. In the case of Land Acknowledgment, truth counters the settler narratives of the “untouched wild” or the “last frontier” that remove Alaska Native people from history. The land, in what is now called Alaska, is an incredibly old and cared for place, and Alaska Native people are the only people to have sustainably lived here for thousands of years. Honoring that legacy by looking to Alaska Native Elders and youth for guidance is the only way forward. We must take action to be respectful guests, as we continue to be here alongside Alaska Native people.

In this time of pandemic, when we cannot gather, what does Land Acknowledgment become? How can we create visibility of Indigenous work without a platform to speak? Over the next few months, I will be working with various community groups to explore Land Acknowledgment in physical work. Through personal signage, public murals, and community conversation I will collaborate in developing new ways that Land Acknowledgment can take form as we navigate the current and multi-faceted situation of pandemic, protest, and subsequent isolation and division. There is an opportunity to innovatively reconstruct the formula of Land Acknowledgment into one that values in-depth personal work, honoring Indigenous ways of being, and actions of accountability.

We are on Indigenous land. ■

Melissa Shaginoff is part of the Udzisuyu (caribou) and Cul Ul Tieutta (fish-eater) clans from Naydiniita Na Kayax (Chickaloon Village). She is an artist and curator. Her Land Acknowledgment workshops are offered through her website at melissashaginoff.com
Smoked Salmon Dip
Submitted by Dorothy Boatright, from Food Network Magazine article including Ina Garten’s recipe

8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
1/2 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
1 teaspoon prepared horseradish, drained
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 pound (4 ounces) smoked salmon, minced

Cream the cream cheese in an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment until just smooth.

Add sour cream, lemon juice, dill, horseradish, salt and pepper and mix.

Add the smoked salmon and mix well.

Chill and serve with veggie sticks and/or crackers or baguette slices.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The Nay’dini’aa Na’ Kayax Hwnic Giligagge (Chickaloon Native Village News) is brought to you by the efforts of Shelia Olson, Editor; Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart, Copy Editor; and Lisa Wade, Council Secretary with the gracious blessing of the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, cooperation of the CVTC Department Directors, and involvement of many Tribal Citizens. The newsletters are provided to CVTC funders, fellow Tribes, staff, Tribal Citizens and friends.

Submissions from any Tribal Citizens are always welcome! Or if you want a topic researched and reported on, let us know. This is your newsletter!

Editions are now viewable on the Chickaloon Village webpage at www.chickaloon-nsn.gov and on the CVTC Facebook page in the Notes tab. They can be mailed or emailed to you, friends, or family by request to the editor at skolson@chickaloon-nsn.gov.

Donations are accepted to defer any of the costs of printing and postage. You can make an electronic payment through the CVTC website; click on the “Make a Donation” button, enter amount, click on “Select Program”, select “Other” and type in “General Discretionary—Newsletter” in space provided.
AHTNA VALUES

Ba c’ehwdetniis - Hard Work
Udiia ḥudakudo’ohnii - Respectful/Humble
Naeldaan’ - Family Relations
Snakaey’ gha t’ine’esen - Love for Children
Ku’iyaan - Be Wise
Kayax - Village Responsibility
Dlo’ dadedlii - Humor
Koht’aen ke’ dozolts’ii - Living Native Traditions
Ugheli ilaen - Honesty & Fairness
Ts’utsaetne - Honoring Ancestors
Ugheldze’ hwle’ cilaes - Sharing & Caring
Łudołniił-Self-sufficiency.
Ts’ilghan Kedot’ae - Unity