

Yooyoolah

ONE WHO CALLS



COWLITZ TRIBAL NEWS
SPRING 2025 | 6TH EDITION

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Cover photo of the Northern Lights over lawilátla by Cowlitz Tribal Member, Whitney Mosback.

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS TO YOYOOLAH COWLITZ TRIBAL NEWS

We invite you to submit your articles, artwork, business information, photographs, and event details for our upcoming edition. To ensure your submission is considered for publication, please follow the guidelines below:

ARTICLES

Submit in Word or a similar format
Word limit: 500 words or fewer
Include a title for the article
Provide author credits
Include your email address and phone number

PHOTOS / IMAGES (IF APPLICABLE):

Submit high-resolution image format (.jpg, .png, .psd), original images
Do not embed images in the document
Clearly identify people, places, and other subjects
Number images in the order of preference
Include photo credits and descriptions of people or places for caption
Provide text descriptions for images to aid those with visual impairments

Note: Articles may be edited at the discretion of the editorial staff and will become the property of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in this publication do not reflect those of the editorial staff. Submissions must not contain defamatory, malicious, or libelous statements, or personal attacks against individuals, staff, Tribal organizations, administration, or the Cowlitz Indian Tribe as a whole.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition. We appreciate your time, effort, and dedication. We look forward to receiving more submissions for future editions!

QUESTIONS?

Email us at: yooyoolah@cowlitz.org

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN



By:
William
(Bill) Iyall

COWLITZ FAMILY,

This year, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe celebrated 25 years of federal recognition—a milestone that reflects the incredible progress our Tribe has seen in this brief chapter of our Tribe's long history.

The Chronicle

Division of CT Publishing

Commentary: Celebrating 25 years of federal recognition for the Cowlitz Tribe



FILE PHOTO — Cowlitz Indian Tribe chairman Bill Iyall, center, stands with two of his tribe's spiritual leaders, Tenna English, left, and Roy Wilson, right, at a gathering on the tribe's new reservation land near La Center in late December 2016.

Photo courtesy, January 27, 2020 © CT Press

By Cowlitz Tribe General Council Chairman Bill Iyall

Editor's note: Last week, Cowlitz Tribe General Council Chairman Bill Iyall issued the following statement in celebration of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's 25th anniversary of federal recognition. This is a significant moment for the Cowlitz Indian People.

The accomplishments our Tribe has achieved over 25 years of recognition are simply unprecedented and a testament to the strength and resilience of our people.

This anniversary is a testament to the resilience and determination of our ancestors. Their commitment to building a better future for the Cowlitz people paved the road to recognition and made it possible for us to stand where we are today— strong, sovereign, and thriving. We honor their legacy by continuing to build a future rooted in self-determination and prosperity for our people.



including funding programs that allow us to serve our people, hunting and fishing rights, forest management practices, and economic development initiatives. This past March, I had the opportunity to testify in front of the House Appropriations Subcommittee in Washington D.C., where I urged the prioritization of essential funding to ensure the well-being of our people and lands. As I have spent time in our nation's capital, it has become evident that the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's influence extends far beyond Clark County or Washington State, making a significant impact on Indian Country nationwide.

Our efforts to secure new opportunities in **clean energy and economic diversification** remain central to our mission of sustainability and responsible stewardship of our lands. We are committed to stewarding and preserving our precious natural and cultural resources as we advance our efforts to recover our homelands.

At the same time, we continue to transform our reservation into a **vibrant hub for our people**. The **Cowlitz Economic Authority** is advancing an ambitious agenda to expand economic opportunities, strengthen Tribal enterprises, and create pathways for future growth. These efforts are laying the foundation for greater self-sufficiency and new avenues to reinvest in our people and our community.

To every member of our Tribe— thank you for your contributions, your dedication, and your belief in the strength of the Cowlitz people. We have come so far in 25 years, and I believe that the best is still ahead. We will keep pushing forward, together.

– General Council Chairman William (Bill) Iyall,
wiyall@cowlitz.org



Photo provided by Linda Foley. From left to right: BIA official, Chairman John Barnett, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Kevin Gover, Spiritual Leader and former Chairman Roy Wilson, BIA official, Vice Chairwoman Marsha Williams.

At the same time, 25 years is a blink of an eye considering the full legacy of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe people. From time immemorial, our people have defined this region. We've cared for our lands, survived from its resources, which are central to our culture and way of life, and have passed on a legacy of responsible stewardship across generations. These are the teachings our Tribe will carry forward into new opportunities that will continue to shape our region.

As we move forward, 2025 will be a time of action.

We will continue to advocate for policies that uphold our sovereignty, enhance services for our members, and protect the natural resources that define our way of life. We will move forward with plans to build a **cultural center and longhouse**, spaces that will preserve our heritage and serve as gathering places for our people.

We will continue working with our partners in federal and state government to **protect Cowlitz's priorities**,

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL COUNCIL VICE CHAIR



By Greg Hitchcock

Yooyoolah has always been a valuable tool for updating our Tribal members on significant issues. I've kept many issues of *Yooyoolah* and enjoy revisiting the stories of the Cowlitz Tribe, especially our fight for federal recognition. For this article, I reviewed pieces from the 1990's about the federal recognition process for this summary.

For over a half-century, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe fought for its rightful place among federally recognized Tribes, navigating a labyrinth of bureaucracy, political opposition, and legal battles. The journey was not just a test of patience— it was a battle of survival.

The modern recognition effort began in 1978 when the Federal Acknowledgment Process (FAP) was established. While it provided a formal pathway for Tribes to gain recognition, the system was deeply flawed, political, and often arbitrary. Nevertheless, Cowlitz leaders, with unwavering determination, compiled a detailed petition proving the Tribe's continuous existence, governance, and community.

A pivotal moment came in February 1994. The Branch of Acknowledgment and Research (BAR) was set to change its rules, potentially placing new, more stringent barriers in the Tribe's path. Racing against time, the Cowlitz leadership, supported by dedicated researchers, finalized and hand-delivered the petition to Washington, D.C., beating the new regulations by just one day. This critical victory ensured that the Cowlitz would be evaluated under the existing, less restrictive rules.

But the challenges did not stop there. Opposition came not just from government bureaucracy but from political figures like Representative Jack Metcalf (WA-2), who proposed legislation that would have eliminated federal recognition for most petitioning Tribes, including the Cowlitz. His bill sought to impose arbitrary geographic requirements and give recognized Tribes veto power over petitions, effectively closing the door on justice for many Tribes.

Intertribal opposition also emerged. The Quinault Tribe, with vested interests in controlling lands and resources, repeatedly attempted to block Cowlitz recognition. They filed Freedom of Information Act requests demanding sensitive genealogical records, sought multiple deadline extensions to submit opposition briefs, and pursued legal actions that prolonged the process for years. The Cowlitz leaders, however, refused to be derailed. They countered every challenge, defending their rightful status with historic evidence, legal arguments, and grassroots activism.

The breakthrough finally came in 1997 when the BAR issued a **preliminary positive determination** for Cowlitz recognition, a moment of triumph after nearly two decades of struggle. However, true victory was still years away. Extensions, appeals, and additional scrutiny delayed the final decision, leaving the Tribe in a painful limbo. It wasn't until February 14, 2000— after 22 years of relentless advocacy— that the Cowlitz Indian Tribe was officially acknowledged by the U.S. government.

The recognition of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe was more than a bureaucratic decision; it was the restoration of justice. It was a testament to the resilience of a people who, despite every obstacle, refused to disappear. The fight for recognition may have ended, but the Cowlitz journey— as a sovereign nation— was just the beginning.

– General Council Vice Chair Greg Hitchcock, ghitchcock@tc.cowlitz.org

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Below: Tribal Council as of November 2024

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

- Audit Committee
- Boards & Committee Review Committee
- Canoe Family
- Code Revision Committee
- Cowlitz Economic Authority (CEA)
- Cowlitz Foundation - Clark County Fund
- Cowlitz Foundation - Statewide Fund
- Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Authority (CTGA)
- Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Commission (CTGC)
- Cultural Resources Board (CRB)
- Drum Group
- Education Committee
- Elections Board
- Enrollment Amendment Committee
- Enrollment Committee
- Executive Committee
- Finance Committee
- GWE Committee
- Health Board
- Housing Board
- Hunting, Fishing, Gathering Rights Committee
- Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Committee
- Land Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Powwow Committee
- Q'anápsu Board
- Time Immemorial Curriculum Committee
- Weavers Committee
- Yooyoolah Planning Committee
- Youth Board
- Youth Council
- Youth Technology Committee



INTRODUCTION TO THE COWLITZ ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

The Cowlitz Economic Authority (CEA) is a new board created by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe (CIT) to boost economic development and support the Tribe's growing economic footprint by overseeing the development, construction, operation, management, promotion, and financing of businesses and investments. The CEA has been established to report directly to Tribal Council while operating independently from other Tribal government branches, maximizing its ability to take advantage of opportunities that benefit our members and communities.

Since its creation in 2024, the CEA has taken on the management of several key enterprises, including the Cowlitz Tobacco Outlet, Q'anápsu, and the Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Authority (CTGA), which oversees ilani. The successful grand opening of the new Cowlitz Tobacco Outlet was a major highlight of the CEA's first year of operations, transforming a modest trailer storefront on the reservation into a 5,000-square-foot facility, offering a modern and upgraded customer experience. The new outlet features a convenient drive-thru service, an enhanced interior retail space, and significantly expanded stockrooms. This development serves as a positive initial milestone for the CEA and will bolster the CIT's ability to generate revenue that supports further Tribal investments.

Moving forward, the CEA looks to bring on executive leadership to further shape the vision and direction



CTO Opening Day. Photo by Derick Wright

for the organization. Additionally, there will be a move toward shared services between all Tribal entities, in an effort to create a cohesive and unified approach to economic development.

The CEA is committed to driving economic growth and prosperity for the Tribe and its members. By fostering new business opportunities and enhancing existing enterprises, the CEA aims to create a sustainable economic foundation. This growth will enable CIT to give back to its members and the community in more ways than ever before, paving the way for continued expansion of our critical role in Southwest Washington and beyond.



CTO Drive-Thru on Opening Day. Photo by Derick Wright.

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CEA cea@cowlitz.org

LETTER FROM THE TRIBAL MANAGER

By Michael Watkins

As Tribal Manager, it is incredibly rewarding to witness the successes and triumphs of our Tribal Government each day. With over 400 dedicated staff members working in offices from Tukwila to Vancouver, the collective efforts of these employees continue to strengthen the Cowlitz Indian Tribe in countless ways. These individuals strive daily to provide vital healthcare to our members and the broader community, protect and restore Cowlitz aboriginal land, preserve cultural heritage, carry out essential administrative duties, and tackle countless other initiatives that make a lasting impact. It is an honor to be part of a team committed to the progress and prosperity of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe.

Among the many accomplishments of the past year, one event stands out as a true testament to the collaborative and visionary spirit of the Tribal Government: the celebration in May 2024 marking the imminent removal of Kwoneesum Dam. The journey to the site was no small feat— a 30-minute van ride through steep, winding, one-way logging roads. Yet, alongside Tribal leadership, government officials, the press, and other community members, the trek proved to be worth every effort.

This gathering brought together people from across Washington State and Oregon, each with unique perspectives and backgrounds, united in understanding the importance of removing the dam and restoring Wildboy Creek, a headwater tributary of the Washougal River. The defunct Kwoneesum Dam previously blocked 6.5 miles of fish passage and long stood as a barrier to ecological restoration. Its removal was a crucial step in revitalizing the natural environment and waterways that hold immense historical and cultural significance for the Cowlitz people. Led by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe Natural Resources Department and Columbia Land Trust, this project exemplified the power of collaboration and a commitment to responsible stewardship of aboriginal land that will have a lasting impact.

Now, a year after that celebration, the dam has been fully removed, steelhead have already found the newly restored habitat and laid their eggs in the clean gravels. These are the first fish to recolonize this site in over 60 years, and more will surely make the journey.

While the celebration of Kwoneesum Dam's removal was a highlight of the year, it is only one example of the incredible work being carried out by the Tribal Government. There are countless more examples that you will read about in the coming pages of this magazine.

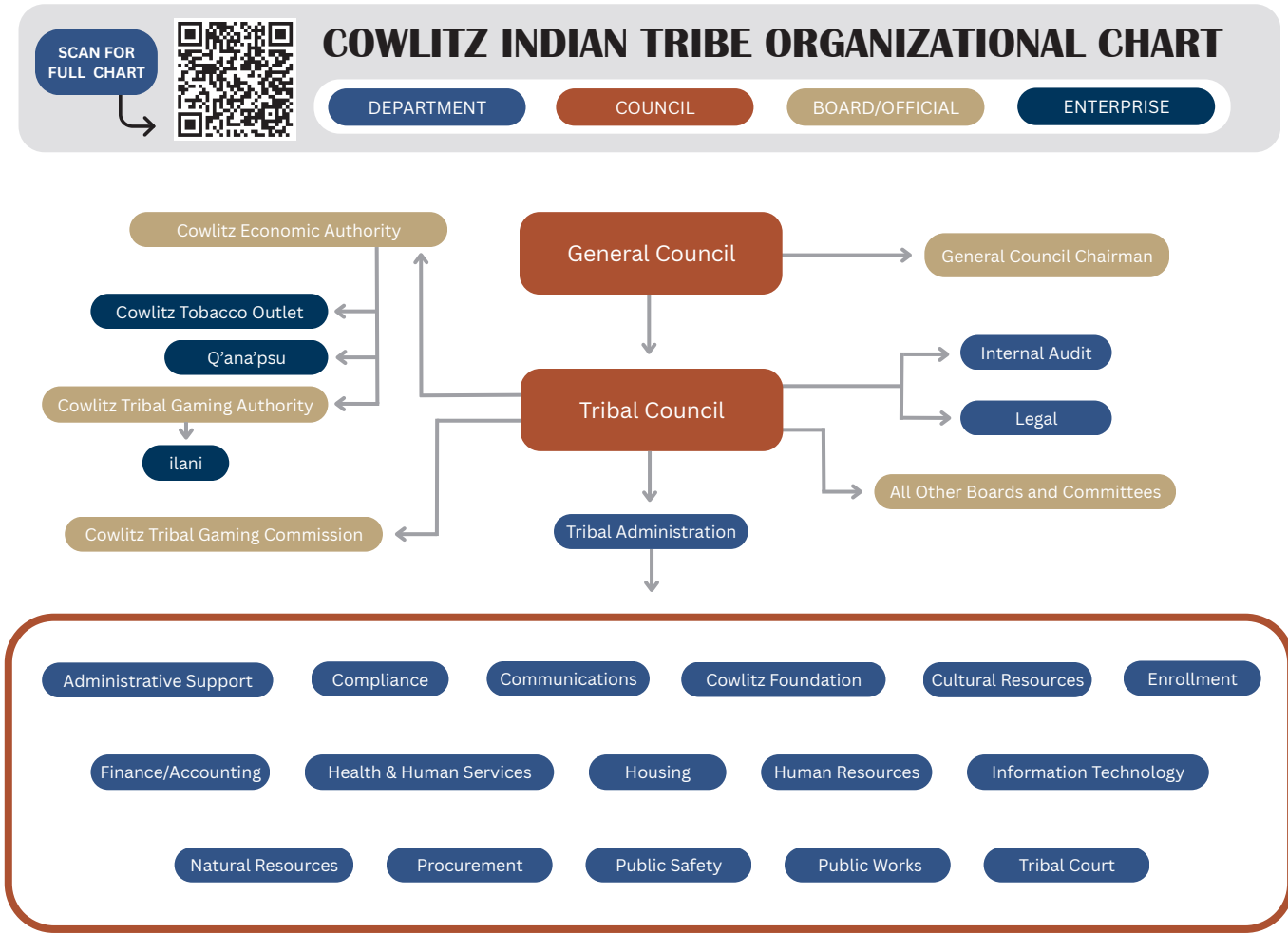


Taken at Kwoneesum Dam in May 2024.
Photo by Derick Wright.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the employees of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe for the work they do. These accomplishments remind us that there is always more to achieve, and together, we will continue to build upon this foundation for the benefit of generations to come.

— Tribal Manager
Michael Watkins

COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE ORG CHART



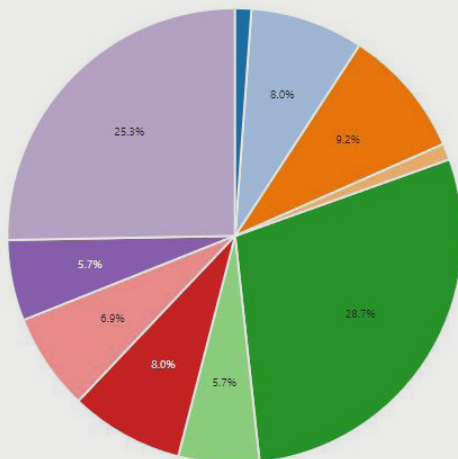
COWLITZ TRIBAL FOUNDATION 2024 AWARDEES

Akin
 AMVETS Post 16
 Ballet Northwest
 Battle Ground HealthCare
 Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County
 Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Washington
 Cascade Forest Conservancy
 Cascades Camp and Conference Center
 Children Of The Setting Sun Productions
 Clark College Foundation
 Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program
 Columbia Play Project
 Columbia Riverkeeper
 Community Foundation for Southwest Washington
 Community Foundation of South Puget Sound
 Compassion 360

Council for the Homeless
 Cowlitz Wahkiakum Legal Aid
 Educational Opportunities for Children & Families
 Evergreen State College Foundation
 FISH of Vancouver
 Fosterful
 Friends of the Children Southwest Washington
 Friends of the Columbia Gorge
 Garden Raised Bounty (GRuB)
 Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest
 Good Roots
 Greentrike
 Hands on Children's Museum
 HeartStrides Therapeutic Riding & Horsemanship
 Hope for Heroes Horsemanship Center
 iUrban Teen

Justice and Soul Foundation
 Kindness 911
 Kitsap Humane Society
 La Center United
 Latino Leadership NW
 Leadership Clark County
 Leimomiwainue Canoe Family
 Lighthouse Financial Foundation
 Lion Speaks
 Lions Hearing and Speech*
 Lions Sight Foundation*
 Live Love Outreach
 Local Media Foundation
 Lower Columbia College Foundation
 Make-A-Wish Foundation*
 Making a Difference Foundation

THE COWLITZ TRIBAL FOUNDATION



- Animal Related
- Arts, Culture & Humanities
- Civil Rights & Advocacy
- Economic
- Education
- Environment
- Food & Nutrition
- Health
- Law & Safety
- Social Services

ORGANIZATION AREA OF FOCUS

What does “giving back” mean? For the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, it’s about strengthening communities for future generations. Through the work of the Cowlitz Tribal Foundation, in 2024 the Tribe supported over 94 organizations with nearly \$5.3M in funding for vital services across Washington State. From life-saving equipment for first responders to basic care items like toothbrushes and diapers, the Foundation expands the meaning of philanthropy to fit the needs of our region’s most vital nonprofit organizations. Take a look at some of the highlights from this past year of the Foundation’s work:

- **27% of awards were granted to organizations without previous funding** from the Cowlitz Tribal Foundation, with the remaining 73% dedicated to continuing partnership and sustainable programming throughout the State.
- **57% of awardees were provided with proactive funding**, reducing hurdles involved in the application process for 55 organizations.
- **29% of the total organizations provide Education**, while **25% of the total organizations provide Social Services including wraparound care**. These two sectors lead the Foundation’s award distribution year over year.

The Cowlitz Tribal Foundation follows trust-based practices, collaborating with nonprofits to address urgent needs. This year, funding will prioritize direct services like food, shelter, and well-being programs, meeting growing demands across Washington State. By giving back, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe ensures a stronger future for all.

Meals on Wheels People
Mount St. Helens Institute
MPowered Living Ministries
NAMI Southwest Washington
Northwest Association for Blind Athletes
Northwest Justice Project
Northwest Wine & Food Society
Oly Camp Kitties
Oregon Chamber Players
Pax Learning Center
Peacehealth Southwest Medical
Center Foundation
Pinchot Partners
Pink Lemonade Project
Pizza Klatch
Rainbow Community Arts Olympia

Raising Girls
Ridgefield Public Schools Foundation
Ridgefield Raptors
Rocksolid Community Teen Center
Rotary Club of Yelm
Santa’s Posse
South Puget Sound Community
College Foundation
South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity
Stolen Youth
Thrive2 Survive
Thurston County K-9 Unit Foundation
Thurston County Youth Football League
Truly Motivated Transitional Living
Vancouver Farmers Market
Veterans Motorcycle Outreach

Washington Hospitality Association Education
Foundation
Washington Indian Gaming Association
Washington State University Foundation
Woodland Action Center
YWCA Clark County

*Clark County specific chapters.

THANK YOU

Additionally, to the Foundation’s in-kind community partners, ilani’s Events and Hospitality teams and the Clark County and Statewide Board Members: Dan, David, Jennifer, Lindsay, Matt, Melissa, Nancy, Racheal, and Teri.

THE COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE'S COMMUNITY GARDEN



The annual Cowlitz Elders Luncheon at ilani Casino & Resort.

THE ELDERS PROGRAM

2024 was another great year of taking care of our Elders and community. The Elders Program saw increased attendance, with new tenants at the Cowlitz Village (also known as St. Mary's) bringing more Cowlitz and friends into our dining room. Weekly classes included Tai Chi, Yoga, and a book club. Our LFPA+ collaborative food pantry, "Grandma's Kitchen," supported our Cowlitz community and local Tribal businesses through the purchase of whole foods that nourish the body and spirit.

In March, we held an Elders Olympic event with games and prizes, followed by an outdoor game day in the summer. In October, the Elders enjoyed their day attending Harvest Fest, our annual partnered event with the Community Garden and friends. We attended the Blue Lake picnic for Native Elders, where our Elders shared stories, listened to live music, and enjoyed lunch. We joined the Cow Creek Natives at Papa Pete's in Ridgefield for pizza and conversation. We were also able to take a day trip to the beach where we enjoyed ice cream in the sun, taking our time to explore the shops.

Our Friendsgiving event featured delicious home-cooked dishes for over 90 attendees. This year, we held our annual Cowlitz Elders Luncheon at ilani, with over 20 different Tribes, Nations, and Bands in attendance. We ended the year with sugar cookie decorating, a cake walk, and a secret Santa gift exchange.

Thank you to everyone who supported our program this last year. We look forward to what the upcoming year has to offer for our program and Elders!

We remember those who are no longer with us, wishing them a peaceful journey. **náxw'q'wul'as**.

In 2024, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe (CIT) Health Services Program's Community Garden grew over 7,900 pounds of produce, which was distributed to 35 pickup sites along the I-5 corridor from Federal Way to Vancouver, WA, as well as to Elders at St. Mary's in Toledo, WA. Additionally, the Garden team harvested and distributed 54 medicinal herbs through teas, salves, and whole plants, combining garden-grown and foraged resources.

The Garden staff also coordinated a youth summer internship program, offering interns resources and knowledge to grow their own gardens at home. Interns gained valuable skills in traditional plant foods and medicines, gardening techniques, and food preservation.

Over the past year, the Garden hosted over 70 events, including traditional medicine and gardening classes, foraging events, and garden work parties. In partnership with the CIT Natural Resources Department (NRD) and the Cultural Resources Department, the Community Garden Program facilitated cultural events such as cedar weaving, a discussion on the Kwoneesum Dam removal and Salmon run restoration, Huckleberry foraging, and an annual **qáwm'** (Camas) planting.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue these cultural trips, including foraging for traditional foods and medicines in the foothills of **lawilátla** (Mt. St. Helens), touring a Washington State salmon hatchery, learning how to fillet salmon, and participating in the construction of a traditional earth oven to bake **qáwm'** (Camas). We look forward to seeing our Tribal members and community partners at these upcoming events.



Huckleberry picking south of Randle, WA. Photo taken by Kaitlynn Durr.



Above: Volunteers holding Camas bulbs to be planted at the annual Camas planting in Dec 2024. Photo taken by Shalese Jorgenson.



Left: Tanna Engdahl, CIT Spiritual Leader, speaking about the Kwoneesum Dam removal project and restoring the Salmon runs. Photo taken by Shalese Jorgenson.

COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBAL HOUSING PROGRAM

Cowlitz Tribal Housing spent the three remaining Pandemic grants at the end of 2024 and was able to assist hundreds of low-income members with a variety of their housing needs over the last few years with that additional funding.

Aging in Place has been a huge success with our Tribal members! We had more applicants last year than ever before and were able to provide a variety of assistance to our Elders to help keep them in their homes.

St. Mary's continues to be occupied by members of our community, and last year the gymnasium was used by other departments for holiday parties and cultural events. We look forward to helping bring more of our community together.

Housing assisted 22 Cowlitz members last year with down payments on new homes and 85 students with rental assistance while they attended school. We were able to exceed our budget in mortgage and rental assistance due to the additional funding we had available.

We look forward to providing continued service to our Cowlitz Tribal members!

Pathways to Healing Program

Order your "Thinking about our Relatives" MMIW shirt today!
Scan the QR code or you can go to
www.bonfire.com/store/cowlitz-indian-tribe---pathways-to-healing/





If you know of a missing or murdered Cowlitz Tribal member,
please contact Amanda Workman at 360-397-8228

HUNTING, FISHING, AND GATHERING COMMITTEE



The Kalama Falls Fish Hatchery in March 2025.
Photo taken by Hayley Walkinshaw.

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe (CIT) has teamed up with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to offer Tribal members access to WDFW licenses! This initiative aims to make it easier for Tribal members to obtain necessary licenses for fishing and hunting.

Tribal members can request their licenses by completing a form available through this QR Code. Once the form is submitted, please allow up to three weeks for the license to arrive by mail. For those who prefer to pick up their licenses in person, appointments can be made at the Longview CIT Admin office.

For Tribal members residing outside of Washington State, certain licenses can be reimbursed by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe for their resident state. Details on eligible licenses for reimbursement are available on the Tribe's website.

For any questions regarding licensing, members can email Enrollment@cowlitz.org or by calling (360) 577-8140.

AVAILABLE LICENSES AND TAGS IN WASHINGTON:

Fishing:

- Catch Record Cards (Youth Only)
- Annual Combo Fishing/Shellfish, Freshwater, Saltwater, Razor Clam Licenses
- 1-Day, 2-Day, 3-Day Combo Fishing Licenses

Hunting:

- Youth Licenses (under 16)
- Small Game, Deer, Elk Licenses
- Deer + Elk (optional discounted Small Game)
- Deer + Elk + Bear + Cougar (with discounted Small Game)

To obtain a hunting license, members must have a Wild ID and complete a hunter safety class. The Tribe plans to offer a hunter safety class for Youth this summer, with details to be provided in the Tribal newsletter. When filling out the form or emailing enrollment, members should indicate whether they are a Senior, Youth, or Disabled.

Summer Horse Camps:

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe is also organizing two horse camps this July! The youth camp will take place from July 11th to 13th, while the adult camp is scheduled for July 18th to 20th.



Scan this QR Code with your mobile device to learn more about the licensing process.

Participants are required to bring their own sleeping gear, such as tents and sleeping bags or blankets. Additionally, riders are asked to wear jeans and boots for safety.

For more information or to register for the camps, Tribal members can contact Vanessa Robertson at Vrobertson@tc.cowlitz.org or HFG-Rights@cowlitz.org.



The Tribe's newly completed fish processing facility at the Cornelius property.



Sealed fish distribution box ready for shipment. Photos credit: Tom Scanlan.

NATURAL RESOURCES

FISH DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Fish Distribution Program partners with area hatcheries to collect surplus returning salmon and steelhead and process them for Tribal member consumption. We distribute fish from four pickup locations in Southwest Washington, supply fish for cultural events, and ship frozen filets across the continental U.S. Our program is part of broader Tribal food sovereignty efforts that seek to revitalize traditional and cultural food practices, reduce food insecurity, promote health and well-being, encourage transfer of intergenerational knowledge, and build community.

Last year brought unprecedented growth to the Fish Distribution Program. In 2024, staff and volunteers distributed a record 114,254 pounds of fish to 1,113 Tribal members in 37 different states! Fundamental to this effort was the opening of a brand-new fish processing facility at the Cornelius property where we process, pack,

label, freeze, and ship fish. To meet the growing demand for fish, we've hired Tom Scanlan as Fish Distribution Program Manager and Ashley Studer as Fish Cutter, and upgraded our freezer storage.

In March 2025, we began accepting eulachon (smelt) donations from Columbia River test fishing sites and will make them available as the limited supply allows. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife directs eulachon test fishing to assess run timing and abundance; eulachon caught during test fishing are retained for research or donated to local Tribes, food banks, and wildlife rehabilitation centers.

For questions about the Fish Distribution Program or to sign up to receive fish, please contact (360) 206-0972 or FishDistribution@cowlitz.org.



Natural Resources Department staff and volunteers unloading surplus hatchery fish at the fish processing facility. Photo credit: Tom Scanlan.

SAVE THE DATE

COWLITZ ELDERS



RODEO LUNCHEON

★ OCT. 07 2025 10AM-2PM ★

1 COWLITZ WAY, RIDGEFIELD, WA 98642

JOIN US IN THE JUNIOR BALLROOM FOR RAFFLES, NATIVE VENDORS, LUNCH AND ENTERTAINMENT!

**ILANI GROUP RATE
USING CODE ELIT1025**

SCAN TO BOOK! →



THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO ELDERS 60+, THEIR SPOUSES, AND CAREGIVERS.

PATHWAYS TO HEALING

Pathways to Healing is celebrating 20 years! Pathways received our first grant in 2005 for \$8,000 from the Washington State Office of Crime Victim Advocacy (OCVA) after Cowlitz Tribal Member, Debbie Hassler, identified a need for victim services within our community. The funding was enough to support a part-time advocate in Longview to provide culturally responsive sexual assault advocacy services. In 2007, the funding from OCVA increased to \$100,000 and the Department of Justice awarded us \$400,000 adding domestic violence advocacy service and additional staff.

In July of 2010, a naming ceremony for the program was held and the Cowlitz Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (DVSA) Program became Pathways to Healing. The name was gifted by the Cowlitz Elders intentionally to reflect the program's philosophy and values.

Through the years we have continued to be awarded funds to sustain and expand services and locations. We have added stalking, sex-trafficking, and Elder abuse to our service types, and support families who have a missing or murdered member. Staffing has grown to meet the needs of our community, providing services at the Tribe's Vancouver, Longview, DuPont and Tukwila office locations. To meet the needs of our dispersed population, Pathways provides services to Cowlitz Tribal members no matter where they live virtually or over the phone.

With immense gratitude, we honor Debbie for her grassroots work in developing the program to what we are today and the many people we have been able to help. We are looking forward to many more years!

Cowlitz Indian Tribe Pathways to Healing

sk'wínwasmitstawt † tit snxmántnk†

(we are thinking about our relatives)

With the guidance of our Elders and Ancestors and when we have the opportunity to say their names and honor their lives in a good way without interrupting their spiritual journey, it is Pathways' commitment to do so. Their names are:

Bryn Hartman (48, murdered August 2019)

Misty Copsey (14, missing September 1992)

Tina Phillips (18, murdered 2007)

Ryan Mayer (33, missing 2013, remains identified 2021)

Gina Purdey (42, murdered 2007)

Clarence "Gene" Koch (18, murdered 1974)

Zackary G. Brown (19, murdered February 2009)



THE COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBAL PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

The Cowlitz Indian Tribal Public Safety Department (CITPSD) demonstrated excellence in public safety through community policing efforts in 2024. CITPSD secured grants totaling \$353,500, ordered new patrol vehicles, hired three new officers, and added three drones with four trained pilots. We updated our police boat with GPS and radios, acquired a new all-terrain vehicle, and recognized three officers with Life Saving Awards. CITPSD responded to over 4,302 calls for service in 2024. Looking ahead in 2025, we plan to implement a Community Outreach Officer role, train a new officer in the academy, explore new outreach programs with our Emergency Manager, and launch a 24/7 HITS Program with the Clark County Sheriff's Office. We will also partner with the Huckleberry and Youth Programs to provide services. As of February 2025, we have already responded to over 1,000 calls this year. Our motto remains: "To provide excellence in Public Safety through partnerships and problem solving."



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



Solar array on Transit Building in Longview, WA. Photo provided by Cari Clizbe, Project Coordinator – Building and Planning, Cowlitz Indian Tribe Public Works.

The Public Works Department (PWD) has had an exceptional year, securing 12 grants totaling an impressive \$22,378,111. One of the most significant achievements is the \$15 million Clean Fuels Infrastructure (CFI) grant, the largest award to date. This grant will fund the installation of electric vehicle (EV) chargers along the I-5 corridor, in partnership with multiple Tribes, reflecting our commitment to sustainable energy.

Our focus remains on clean energy, highlighted by the installation of the first power grid in Cowlitz County at our transit facility. PWD worked with the Department of Commerce on a government-to-government agreement, streamlining the contracting process and allowing projects to progress faster. PWD successfully completed the solar array installation at the clinic. Later this year, we will install several EV chargers at various CIT locations, all funded by grants from the Department of Commerce.

This year, we also launched the Tukwila Elevator project, and we are excited to see its completion in 2025. Additionally, Public Works secured funding for an elevator installation at the 900 Fir Building, providing essential ADA access to the second floor. The Public Works Department continues to collaborate with the Washington State Department of Transportation to improve safety around the Longview Campus. This initiative includes enhanced crosswalks and lighting, creating a safer environment for both employees and visitors.

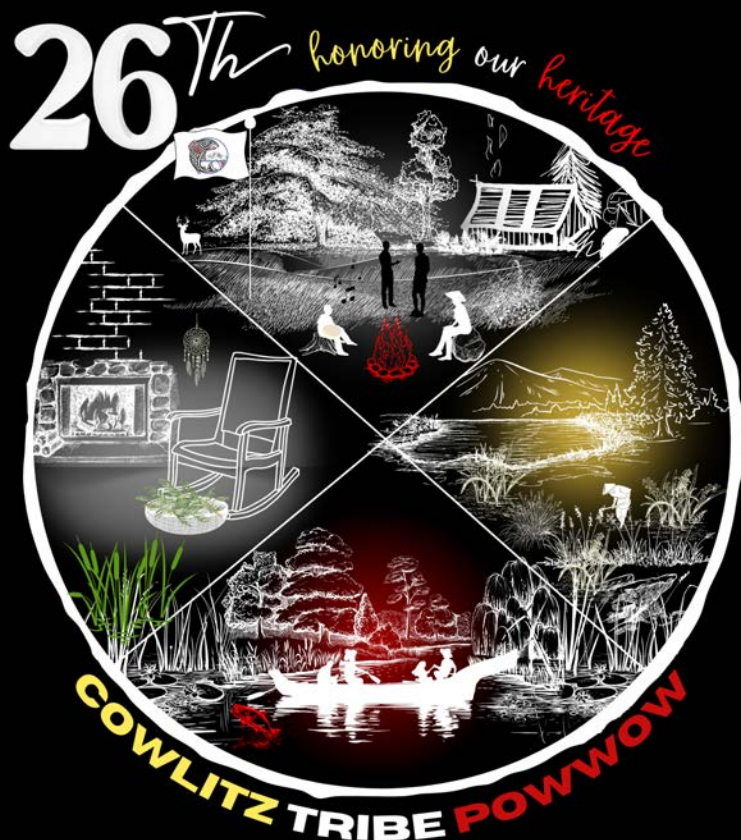
Looking ahead, we are excited for the opportunities and projects this year will bring. We remain committed to serving our Tribe and ensuring continued progress toward a sustainable, thriving future.

THE COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE POWWOW COMMITTEE

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe Powwow Committee is excited to invite you to the upcoming Powwow on Saturday, September 27! It will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate culture, connect with community, and enjoy some great dancing, singing and a free catered dinner. Feel free to bring your friends and family along. It would mean a lot to us to have you there as we honor our heritage. Please check the Tribe's newsletter and website for more information!

WINNING DESIGN SPOTLIGHT: FRANCHESKA HELTON

"With my submission this year, I wanted to find a way to combine the medicine wheel with our traditional, cultural practices. After doing a lot of thinking, I figured why not put the practices into the wheel? So, I did. On the right corner we have a Cowlitz woman harvesting camas, on the left corner we have the scene of basket weaving with freshly gathered cedar by the fireplace. At the top, we have the scene of members around the fire, drumming, singing, and hanging outside their house. And at the bottom, of course we have the canoe on the river to show our salmon fishing, which we also see jumping out of the water."



LANGUAGE PROGRAM

The Language Program is dedicated to teaching Cowlitz languages, beginning with Cowlitz Coast Salish (Lower Cowlitz). In 2025, four 6-week virtual courses will be offered. The first course was held in January, and the next course will be in April. The remaining two courses are tentatively scheduled for July and October. Additionally, virtual weekly tutoring is available throughout the year for those who sign up for a course, regardless of their participation in the course.

The Cowlitz Online Dictionary website and app will receive updates approximately every three months, with the first update of 2025 released in January.

While language-focused events are being planned, we will continue to support other departments and events with relevant language resources in the meantime.

A POEM BY HALEY BYRD

wá t'ím ʔ'áqʔ ?
ʔénca t'ím ʔ'áqʔ kn !

ʔénca t'ím ʔ'áqʔ kn tl ʔaʔ tit swáwaʔ.
ʔénca t'ím ʔ'áqʔ kn tl ʔaʔ tit sk'áak'aʔ.

ʔénca t'ím ʔ'áqʔ kn tl ʔaʔ tit síʔmx
kl cic kéwʔ
kl tit q'wáyʔ.
ʔénca t'ím ʔ'áqʔ kn tl ʔaʔ tit wənáyx
kl tit k'ííhan'ʔ
kl tit q'wál'x'wan'ʔ.

ʔac'í ʔ'áqʔ k na ?

ʔénca t'ím ʔ'áqʔ kn tl ʔáʔnawi ! Who is the tallest?
səncáyaʔ nskwáʔ catáwiʔ ! I am the tallest!

I am taller than the cougar.
I am taller than the crow.

I am taller than the man
and the woman
and the child.
I am taller than the huckleberry
and the salal bush
and the raspberry bush.

How tall are you?

I am taller than you!
My name is Cedar!



Cowlitz Employment Support Services

Eligibility

- Enrolled Cowlitz Tribal Member within the U.S
- At least 16 years old
- Unemployed or underemployed & seeking employment.
- Client will benefit from CESS services
- Client requires CESS services in order to achieve an employment outcome

Services Provided

- Career and Education Guidance
- Self-Employment Guidance
- Assistance Creating Resumes
- Job Readiness Skills
- Job Search Skills
- Work Clothing & Supplies
- Certification/Training Opportunities
- Paid/Unpaid Work Experience
- Five Feathers Employment Training for clients in Longview area

Call us today for an orientation!
(360) 575-3318, CESS@cowlitz.org

THE COWLITZ TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Tuition Assistance Program continues to grow and provide Cowlitz Tribal members, who have graduated high school or obtained a GED, assistance to help fulfill their dreams of obtaining a vocational/professional certificate and or college/university degree.

289 Tribal members were awarded tuition assistance for the 2024-25 academic year. Our students are studying in the fields of accounting, aeronautical science, aerospace, architecture, art and digital media, biology, business administration, chemistry, chiropractic medicine, commercial truck driving, computer science, cosmetology, criminal justice, cyber security, dental assisting, divinity, education, emergency medical technology, engineering, environmental science, fashion design, fire science, forestry management, mathematics, medical assisting, Native American studies, nursing, organizational leadership, psychology, public health, social work, psychology, software development, Tribal governance, welding fabrication and zoology.

Students must be enrolled in a course of study leading to a certificate or degree from an accredited/licensed vocational school or an accredited college or university. Tuition payments are made directly to the school. GWE Educational Costs benefits are made directly to the student.

Student funding is year-to-year and is dependent on Tribal Council's approval of our budget and Policies and Procedures. The Education Committee and staff work tirelessly to steward this amazing Tribal benefit.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

Vocational Certificate Funding up to \$12,000

Associate Degree Funding up to \$6,500

Bachelor Degree Funding up to \$13,000

Graduate Degree Funding up to \$19,500

Vocational and College /University students \$2,500

High School/College Dual Enrollment and Dual Credit students \$500

NEW IN 2024-25 – GED General Education Diploma students \$400 testing costs

NEW IN 2025-26 – Continuing Education Credentials Up to \$3,000

We would also like to welcome two new staff to the Tuition Assistance Team, Melanie Mariano, and Amanda Fitzpatrick.

For more information, check the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's website and contact the Tuition Assistance Office at tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org or call, Melanie Mariano at (360) 353-9497, Amanda Fitzpatrick at 360-575-6224 or Carol Burnison at (360) 353-9588.

Respectfully,
Carol Burnison, Manager, Tuition Assistance
Gregg Ford, Educational Committee Chair

COWLITZ TUITION ASSISTANCE AWARD GRADUATES - JULY 2024 TO JUNE 2025

ASSOCIATE DEGREES - 7

Alexia Cooper Liberal Arts

Stacy Ditch Education

Elaina Goodnough General Studies

Kylee Lancaster SUD Professional

Carson McKee Liberal Arts

Curtis Powell Gunsmithing

Kambriah Taylor Nursing

BACHELOR DEGREES - 18

Nigel Barnett Aerospace Engineering

Kylie Borchert Biology

Sophia Brousseau Arts and Letters

Britta Bundy Wildlife Biology, Minor in Fire Science

Kathryn Hulsman Sociology with focus on Criminal Justice

Tiara Jinka Psychology

Gillian Lane Management with focus on Human Resources

Joseph Lindholm Finance

Scott Lundberg Marketing and Real Estate

Elizabeth Marshall Psychology, minor in Spanish

Lacey Nesser Elementary Education

Adrian Otten Information Technology

Miranda Porter Digital Photography

Stacie Spahr Mathematics and Computer Science

Tyler Swain Computer Science

Andrew Swanson History

Zack Swanson Finance

Taylor Warriner Management



COWLITZ EMPLOYMENT
SUPPORT SERVICES

CHRISTMAS IN JULY SELF-EMPLOYMENT FAIR

AT MCCLELLAND ARTS
CENTER IN LONGVIEW, WA

SAVE THE DATE!
FRIDAY, JULY 18TH

*Get into the holiday spirit and find the perfect gifts for
everyone at our Self-Employment Craft Fair!*

*Admission is
free, and
everyone is
welcome!*

WHAT TO
EXPECT

- Local Artisans & Crafters
- Delicious Baked Goods

*For more details, please call (360) 575-3318
or email us at CESS@cowlitz.org*

MASTER DEGREES - 9

Andrew Barnett Taxation
Laura Bowman Teaching
Jacqueline Crane Architecture, Sustainable
Systems and Design emphasis
Teri Graves Public Administration
Mackenzie Kutz Business Administration
Christopher Maine Curriculum and Instruction
Annie Parrish-Matson Physician's Assistant
Danielle Resendez Family Nurse Practitioner
Peggy Sherbon Public Administration

VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATES - 13

Jay Bruckner CDL
Karen Citron CNA
Ryan Day Home Inspector
Kourtanee DuRussell Esthetician
Brooke Lamberson Health and Physical
Education
Caroline Lombard Digital Forensics
Pam Nelson Substance Use Counselor
Lucas Pete Electrical Technology
Gage Pittman CDL

Shawn Reinmann CDL
Chayci Russell Massage Therapy
Steven Sund EMT
Malaki Wetzel Tattoo Artist



WEAVERS COMMITTEE

The Tribe decided to start a Weavers Committee in April of 2024 to operate the Weavers Program under the direction of our Cultural Resources Department Director. The committee is composed of nine active weavers and teachers.

Since the committee's creation, we have been hosting harvesting classes, processing classes, and weaving classes taught by Cowlitz Tribal members. We continue to support Tribal members with registration costs, teacher funds of \$300, and hotel accommodation for those living over 50 miles from an event. These events include two Hazel Pete Institute of Chehalis Basketry events each year (February and May), the Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association (NNABA) weaving event in October, and last year we sent members to the Winter Wool and Cedar Weaving event at Evergreen State College in November of last year.

We have seen a lot of new weavers and increased interest over the past year and are excited to see more of you this year! If you are interested in attending an event, advertisements and registration links are shared in the email newsletter from the Tribe. You can find more information and registration about our events on the Tribe's website.

For any questions, please email Kyle Folden, Committee Chair, at krfolden@gmail.com

Current Weavers Committee Members:

Kyle Folden - Chair
Melody Millner - Vice-Chair
Sheryl Whitlinger - Secretary
Christine Hawkins - Treasurer
Cheryl Wilcox
Sahra Orozco
Teri Wright
Kris Dillehay
Ariel Rayfield

Left: First time cedar bark harvesters relishing in the moment featuring Cowlitz Elder Dawna Richardet and Dylan Arnold. Photo taken by Kyle Folden.

MEMBER PORTAL COMING SOON!

In summer 2025, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe plans to launch the new online Member Portal, an initiative funded by the Tribal Broadband Grant. This portal has been in development for some time, and we are delighted to finally share it with you!

The Member Portal is a secure and user-friendly online platform designed to strengthen communication and streamline services for Tribal members. This portal is being built to provide direct access to essential resources, applications, and updates, ensuring that members stay informed and connected with their Tribal government.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE TRIBAL MEMBER PORTAL:

- **Personalized Member Dashboard** – Members will be able to view and update personal information, keeping their records accurate for Tribal services.
- **Service Applications & Assistance Requests** – The portal will simplify access to services by allowing members to apply for programs, submit documents, and track application statuses online.
- **Tribal Events & Announcements** – Calendars and other communication tools will keep members informed about upcoming cultural events, Tribal Council meetings, and important deadlines.
- **Resource Library** – Key documents, forms, and historical archives will be easily accessible in one centralized location.

The Member Portal is being designed with the Cowlitz community. By transitioning to a digital-first approach, the Tribe aims to:

- **Enhance Accessibility** – Members can engage with the Tribe from any location at any time, removing obstacles related to distance or time constraints.
- **Boost Efficiency** – Minimizing paperwork and automating processes will improve response times.
- **Ensure Security & Privacy** – Protecting member data is a top priority, and security measures are built into this platform.

As development continues, Cowlitz members will have opportunities to provide input, making sure the portal meets the community's needs. We look forward to sharing the Member Portal with you soon!

LETTER FROM THE SPIRITUAL LEADER

By Tanna Engdahl, Spiritual Leader & Cowlitz Historian

At whatever season we have congregated at any of our aboriginal rivers, or driven into our high mountains, or stood to look over seasonal prairies, our ancestral bloodlines remind us that our vision is a gift of people whose spirit prints on the earth are in the millions.

Spring is a powerful time bomb. The life force quickens with birthing events of every species in the known world. It is a good time to whisper thank you into the air upon waking and traversing the day's challenges. There are always challenges, if not today, then tomorrow, perhaps even hangovers from yesterday.

Standing upon the graves of centuries, it is good to remember that Spring is a forgiveness season, starting with new suns and fresh moons. Quietly, we can hold our own hand, embrace ourselves in our own friendship. Upon the breath of Spring breezes, we can experience our own pledge to hold ourselves dear, let go of our baggage, and dance into the future with a lighter step.

Challenges will always be with us. Carrying them is staggering under the weight of a rockslide. In hardship, we experience resilience. In struggles, we exercise mental muscles... Tough and tender, resolute and kind, brave and vulnerable. This is the inheritance from those who lived such lives before we came to walk in their steps.

How one experiences Spring is a choice. Let us sense the knowledge of the ancestors and celebrate with them as our minds comprehend the songs and dances of the earth they left in the vaults of memory. Let us gather the traits of our evolutionary strength and listen to the songs of our people who still lift resolute voices in the joy of life, however we choose to hear them.

Spiritual Leader Tanna Engdahl. Photo by Derick Wright.



SOUND CONFOUND AND A SHADOW-MIST TREATY COUNCIL

The Cowlitz are perhaps the most mysterious of Tribes in Washington State, often misidentified, misunderstood and mislocated. The Cowlitz recognition era was fraught with decades of unraveling the mistakes of early documents and records.

Strangely, it was the pervasive multilingual capability of Cowlitz people that brought confusion into encounters with the new people. The ease of switching languages lent an air of shapeshifting by Cowlitz people who tried to experiment with any language that might be understood at chance encounters with unknown persons. The Cowlitz had three languages, Athabascan from the Mountain Cowlitz, Salish from the Lower Cowlitz and Sahaptin from both the Upper Cowlitz and Lewis River Cowlitz. The Upper Cowlitz was also known as Taidnapam.

Most of the Cowlitz river traders could alternate as needed between Coast Salish, Sahaptin, Athabascan and even Klickitat in their travels. If there was a snag, they could rely on the limited trade jargon, which contained enough words to exact commerce (It's believed that strong marriage customs preserved language diversity between the villages).

Language agility served to identify the Cowlitz erroneously as: Klickitat, Cascade, Chinook, and other lower Columbia Tribes as well as Tribes south of the Columbia River. One Cowlitz group identified in early encounters as 'Hul-lu-et-tel' may be a word transliterated over time into 'Toutle'. A small village called Skilloots (Skillutes) was located on early maps to be south of Cathlapotle. Lewis & Clark journals identify Skilloots as being on both sides of the Columbia (The S'Cowlitz in British Columbia jokingly claim to be 'cousins').

The word 'Cowlitz' itself was spelled so differently in a wide assortment of records that it took dogged research of locations and related events to determine the recorder meant Cowlitz. Foreign language speakers — French, Russian, English, Spanish — heard Salish and Sahaptin sounds through the bias of their own languages, later translated into English.

Federal recognition documentation was conducted through decades by determined Cowlitz researchers. Interestingly, Cowlitz references were found in 'footnotes' of early books and records. The footnotes were tracked to the source and coherently packaged to establish records that could not be disputed in the enormity of the recognition documents.

A historic event for the Cowlitz was attendance at the 1885 Chehalis River Treaty Council. This was an attempt by Territorial

Governor Isaac Stevens to gain treaty acceptance by all Tribes in Southwest Washington Territory who were not included in Treaties around Puget Sound. Stevens proposed a reserve of land for the Cowlitz if its people would move to coastal land adjacent to the Quinault.

Attending Tribes declined Stevens' proposals, and he angrily left the Council. Nevertheless, the following year on August 14, 1856, Stevens made a follow-up attempt to negotiate with native groups scattered along the Lewis River drainage systems, the Columbia River and with those living at the Vancouver site.

This meeting, nearly untraceable, became known as the "Vancouver Treaty Council."

Sadly, Native families had just been released from nearly a year's incarceration at Fort Vancouver, where they had been guarded 'for their protection.' The internment was the result of fear among the military and white encroachers, caused by Indian "hostilities" on the east side of the Cascades. While confined, many Indian homes were burned, and tools, stored food, and livestock were stolen. Cowlitz Chief Umtuch was murdered under circumstances that still cause debate among historians.

It was noted that the Chief Umtuch and his group were living at Cathlapotle Village at the time they were incarcerated, a site now within the confines of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The Natives were exhausted and terrified when called upon by Governor Stevens. In long speeches through interpreters, Stevens encouraged Native families to move to Yakima where a revved-up military would safeguard their settlements. Resources would be available for start-up provisions toward a better life (mostly agriculture). The men were even promised arms to shoot game.

Here was the kicker: Stevens hawked the idea that within a year's time, those families who were uncomfortable with the new environment could return to their own lands in the Vancouver area. Stevens assured the families that he would hold their lands in safekeeping.

Many of the families agreed to 'try it' based on the fallback reliance of continued land ownership west of the Cascades. Stevens succeeded by persuasion rather than by a ratified treaty.

Oddly, Stevens did not inform the Director of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. about his relocation scheme until October, over two months after the August parlay. Since the relocation was voluntary, there were no official treaty documents that needed ratification by Congress. The event was dangerously close to being forever buried on dusty shelves or forgotten microfiche.

Most of the families living within the reach of Vancouver were eventually identified as Cowlitz, certainly most of those

who were fraudulently encouraged to move to Yakima were Cowlitz. Many of those Cowlitz descendants, now enrolled at Yakima, still keep in contact with their Cowlitz cousins. In 1856-1857, other family groups most likely returned to Tribally related lands in Oregon or other parts of Washington State.

In modern times, while serving as Cowlitz Vice-Chairman, Bill Iyall came across the Vancouver treaty attempt in a footnote while reading a history chronicle. Nathan Reynolds, Ethno-Ecologist, under the advice of his supervisor, Mike Iyall, Cowlitz Natural Resources Director, traced the footnote, and pieced together the event from letters, not only by Stevens but from reports by Indian Agents.

Reynolds even found a written statement by the Cowlitz leader, Spencer, who took over the leadership of Umtuch's Band. He was a nephew of Umtuch and many years later, Spencer told his version of the Vancouver Treaty Council to historian Lucellus McWhorter. Reynolds eventually wrote about the whole episode as a potential publication (N. Reynolds, "Try it for one year": *The Indian Treaty Council at Vancouver, Washington*, personal communication, June 19, 2010).

IN SUMMARY

- Indian agents claimed that no money was ever provided to re-establish Cowlitz families at Yakima.
- The Cowlitz were not mentioned in the Yakima Treaty provisions because no members were present at the negotiations or signing, a Treaty requirement.
- Stevens did not return after a year's time and left the territory soon afterward, after being selected as territorial delegate to Congress.
- The Cowlitz at Yakima had no lands to return to, should they so desire.
- None of the lands owned by the home residents were protected, ceded, or compensated for.
- The Vancouver Treaty Council notes were collected and processed in time to be presented at a trial whereby the Department of the Interior (DOI) was being sued to prevent it from taking Cowlitz reservation land into trust. The Treaty Notes document was another undeniable proof of Cowlitz occupancy of its aboriginal land area. The Appellate Court decided in favor of the DOI, thus the Cowlitz has protected land status.
- Another unusual document was the Restored Lands paper researched by the National Indian Gaming Commission, which definitively placed the Cowlitz within the reach of Vancouver and definitely along the Lewis River.
- The Cowlitz saga continues.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROY WILSON

by Marsha Williams

Photo of Roy Wilson, taken
by Sharleen Stroyan.

A distinguished member of the Cowlitz Tribal family, Roy I. Wilson, passed to the spirit world on February 11, 2025.

Roy was born on the Yakama Reservation on July 17, 1927. His dad was Native, carrying Cowlitz and Chinook blood, and his mom was English. The family moved to California for his dad's work when Roy was quite young. After high school, he was ready to start college in engineering but received a call to study theology, which he followed to ordination as a minister.

Roy came from a devoutly Christian family and carried on that tradition, leading churches throughout the Northwest. While Roy served as a Protestant minister, he was also devoted to his Native spiritual heritage. He eventually made it his life's work to show the overlap between the two. Over time, he developed his own approach based on Native spirituality called the Medicine Wheel teachings, wrote a detailed guidebook, and led study groups around Western Washington.

Roy served as General Council Chairman from 1973 to 1982 during the time when the Docket No. 218 Land Claim Agreement was reached between the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and the United States. Also, during his tenure, the Tribe began its quest for federal acknowledgment. That effort culminated in the recognition of the Tribe in February 2000.

When Roy was succeeded by John Barnett as Tribal Chair in 1982, he became the official Spiritual Leader of the Tribe and remained in that capacity until 2018, officiating at many Tribal events such as the annual First Salmon Ceremony and the Dedication of the Reservation. Roy also served as head of the Cultural Resources Board, always striving to rekindle the cultural knowledge and practices that he had learned from the Elders as he grew up in the 1930s and 40s. Many Cowlitz who attended General Council over the last 50 years recall with fondness the stories and legends that he told at the meetings. In 2002, Roy was named lifetime Honorary Chief of the Tribe.

In support of his cross-cultural religious teachings, Roy wrote prolifically. He was still writing up to the time of his death, authoring nearly sixty books in all despite being nearly blind in his final years. Titles include his autobiography, *Legends of the Cowlitz Indians*, *History of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe*, and many others. He edited *The Dispossessed*, a history of the Cowlitz Tribe compiled by Judith Irwin, a long-time friend of the Tribe who left an

unfinished manuscript when she passed away. Roy undertook to complete and publish that book.

Among Roy's great achievements was the compilation of a comprehensive dictionary of Chinook Wawa, the inter-Tribal jargon that he heard spoken at Tribal meetings when he was a youth. Roy collected every jargon dictionary he could find, twenty-three in all, and combined them into a book of approximately 1500-word entries that included pronunciations, sample usage, and even the history of the words. Along with that, he founded a jargon study group that continues to this day.

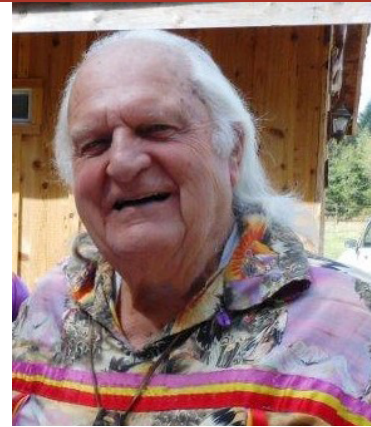
With the help of devoted friends, Roy fulfilled a long-held vision of building a longhouse on his property in Winlock. The completed longhouse seated around 60 people for ceremonies and monthly Sunday services, which he led through Fall 2024. The project was expanded with wings devoted to a museum, art gallery, craft space, and a full Native library.

No matter what walk of life Roy was operating in, his goal was to inspire harmony and a sense of connection among people. His name in jargon was Itswoot Wawa Hyiu, Bear Who Talks Much, reflecting his warm and enthusiastic personality.

Roy's last appearance at a large Tribal event was in November 2024, when he spoke before the General Council. He stayed through the meeting into the evening to deliver his remarks, which was quite a feat of stamina for a 97-year-old.

Roy is survived by his wife, Cherilyn Wilson, brother George of Texas, and three children: Winston, Stephen, and Roxene (Emmel), all of Washington state, and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and even great-great-grandchildren. He was a member of the Skloutwout family, the second largest family group in the Cowlitz Tribe.

Roy's children and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe held a joint memorial in his honor on February 22, 2025, at the ilani Ballroom.



Scan this QR code with your mobile device to watch a video by Photojournalist Mark Anderson created for Roy Wilson's Celebration of Life on February 22, 2025.

MEMBER UPDATES

BIRTHS



Addison was born in July 2024 to parents **Zachary Reynolds and Marjorie Ganos.**



Autumn Nicole was born in February 2025. She is the daughter of **Kelsey and Justine Clason.** The Great Granddaughter of **Donald and Kathy Marcus** and the Granddaughter of **Jamie Marcus.**

Mairin Hiroko was born in January 2025 to Tribal member **Allison Ford Holub** and her husband **Seth Jiro Holub.**



BIRTHS



Caleb was born in July 2023. He is the son of Tribal member **Erik Aalvik** and the grandson of **Ronald "Sonny" Aalvik**.



Asher Jay

Asher Jay was born in October 2024 to Tribal member **Sierra Ozier**.



Kalliah was born in December 2023 to parents **Alissa and Bearomen**.



Xayley was born on November 2024.



Clark was born in April 2024 to Tribal member **Amanda Moyer and Bob Moyer**. He is the grandson of **Holly Lindsey** and great-grandson of **Dixie Anderson**.



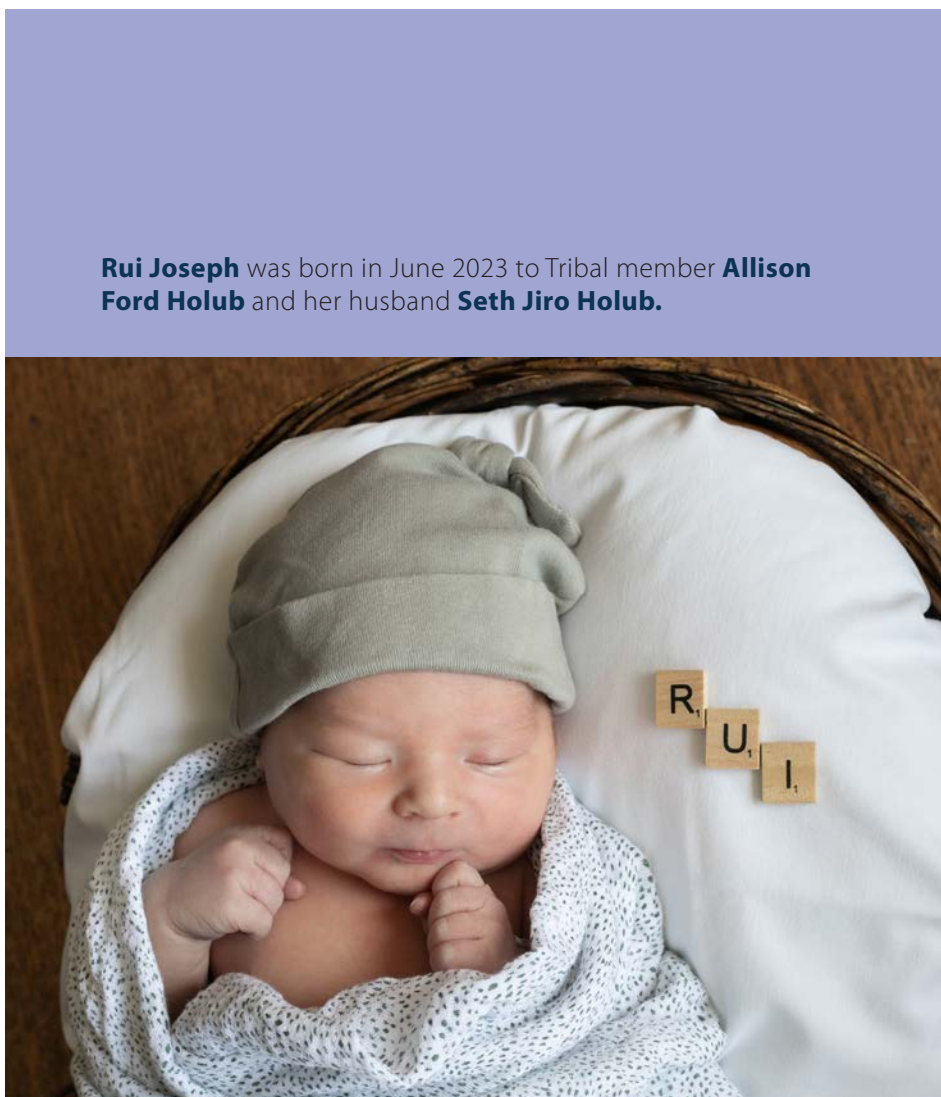
Knox was born in June 2024 to parents **Julia Masson & Will McSwain**.



Emma was born in January 2024 to Tribal member **Evelyn** and her husband **Jason**. She is the granddaughter of **Leah Clark** and the great-granddaughter of **Dixie Anderson**.



Amelia was born in January 2025 to Cowlitz member **Jayden Madrigal** and his fiancée **Katherine Cambre**.



Rui Joseph was born in June 2023 to Tribal member **Allison Ford Holub** and her husband **Seth Jiro Holub**.

MARRIAGES



Shelby Dresen & Esekia Ve'e

Cowlitz Tribal member **Shelby Dresen** got engaged to **Esekia Ve'e** at Disneyland on June 17, 2024.



Linsey Sturdivant & Jesus Mejia

Congratulations to **Linsey and Jesus** who were married on February 24, 2024.

Maximus Werner & Mackenzi Young

Congratulations to **Maximus and Mackenzi** who got engaged on February 23, 2025 at Promised Land Winery.



Congratulations to **Charisma and Austin** who were married on February 14, 2024, at Sherman Creek Hatchery.



Congratulations to **Melanie and Abram** who were married on February 16, 2024, in the Valley of Fire, Nevada.



Zachary Werner & Emilia Sullivan

Congratulations to **Zachary and Emilia** who were married on May 18, 2024 at Zachary's parents' farm near Hopkinton, Iowa.



Payton & Mariah Comstock

Congratulations to **Payton and Mariah** who were married on November 16, 2024 in Pensacola, Florida.



Jayden Madrigal & Katherine Cambre

Congratulations to **Jayden** and **Katherine** on their engagement and baby girl, born in January 2025.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Our current total enrolled population is 4,972.

ENROLLMENT CRITERIA

1. Applicant must be a direct lineal descendant of a Cowlitz Indian
2. Applicant must have a parent (mother/father) living or deceased on the Cowlitz Tribal Roll.
3. Applicants must be between the age of 0-18 years old (must apply before your 19th birthday)

All Cowlitz Indian Enrollment Applicants must meet all the criteria above to request an enrollment application. You can request an enrollment application by calling 360-577-8140 option 3, or email your request with full name, date of birth, Tribal parent name, and address to enrollment@cowlitz.org.

WE REMEMBER OUR TRIBAL MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED:

Neal Jay Smith	Jesse William Groll
Keith Allen Maine	Bernard Raymond Steffen
Donald Wayne Marcus	Richard Ray Byrd
Dereld Eugene Borth	Richard Thomas Wheeler
Rylee Werner Campbell	Brian Lee Anderson
Jesse Lewis Cornett	Ted Allen Bottorff
Alice Jo Eisenberg	Pamela Jean Wick
Bryan Charles Ballantyne	Terry Gordon Steensen
Laurette Anna Parker	William Eldon Viggers
Dennis Lloyd Knowles	Cheryl Rae Krueger
Barbara Jean Rice	Suzanne Lorraine Chappell
James R Smith	William Nathan Hawn
Shirley Rae Shoblom	Tammy Marie Stanton
Padin Aaron Duvall	Bobi Jo Hubbs-Rouille
Eleanor Joyce Rabbie	Diana Lynn Daily
Virginia Lucille Lawson	Jimmie Byron McGlothlin
Norma Mae Taylor	Cherie Doreen Nebgen
Jacques Bevis Chappell Jr	Roy Irwin Wilson
Ronald Eugene Mahar	Marie Jeanne Sareault
Kenneth Walton Burchett	Gwendolan Drummond
Phyllis Marie Koch-Troncale	Ronald Ray Smith
Denise Renae Braley	Danny Ryan Baker

GRADUATIONS

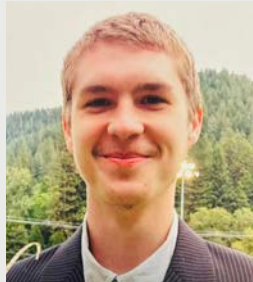
HIGH SCHOOL



Sabree Braley



Carter Graham



Nicholas Hodges



Hudson Lamberson



Serenity Lamberson



Austin Madrigal



Braeden McCauley



India Nelson

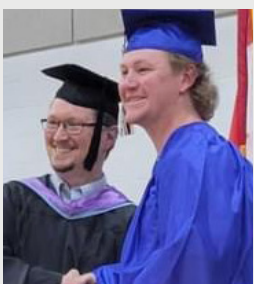


Hunter Williams



Alexander Werner

ASSOCIATE DEGREES



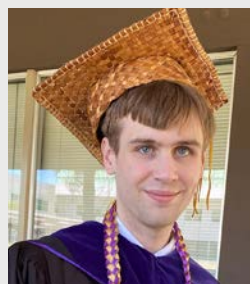
Jaden Anderson
Business and Management



Sabrina Boyer



Alexia Cooper
Liberal Arts



Andrew Barnett
Master of Laws



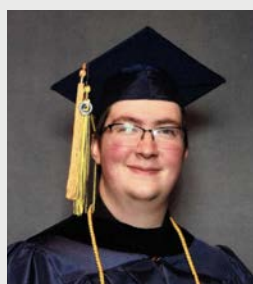
Jackie Crane
Master of Architecture



Stacy Ditch
Education



Carson McKee
General Studies



Devin Werner
*Industrial Maintenance
Technology*



Max King
Master of Arts in Political Science

Not pictured:
Kayci Guzman –
*Master of Science in IT
Management*

MASTER'S DEGREES

BACHELOR'S DEGREES



Brenden Cottenior
Psychology and Sociology



Miranda Finch
Digital Photography



Logann Golden
Sports Management



Scott Lundberg
Marketing and Real Estate



William Hooton
Health Sciences



Joseph Lindholm
Business Administration and Finance



Lacey Mae Nesser
Elementary Education



Stacie Spahr
Mathematics and Computer Science



Taylor Warriner
Management



Andrew Swanson
History

Zack Swanson
Finance

CERTIFICATES



Kourtanee DuRussell
Esthetician



ḡaləw 'ḡaləw ' Caroline Lombard
Digital Forensics



Jayden Madrigal
Department of Corrections



Pam Nelson
Substance Use Disorder Counseling



Lucas Pete
Electrical Technology



Sierra Seward
Washington State Fire Training Academy



Malaki Wetzel
Tattooing

NICK RUEMKER'S COMMITMENT TO HURRICANE RELIEF: A STORY OF RESILIENCE AND SERVICE



Nick Ruemker

When hurricanes strike, they leave behind a trail of devastation — destroyed homes, displaced families, and communities struggling to recover. For Nick Ruemker, a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, responding to these natural disasters has become a meaningful mission. Through his work in hurricane relief, Ruemker has not only provided essential emergency services but also brought compassion, dedication, and the values of his Tribal heritage to the frontlines of disaster recovery.

ON THE FRONTLINES OF DESTRUCTION

Ruemker's journey into emergency response began with damage assessment following Hurricane Debby in South Carolina. Assigned to survey the aftermath, he recalled the initial shock of seeing entire neighborhoods leveled. "You read about it and see it on the news, but walking through it was surreal," he shared. The task was emotionally daunting — documenting the destruction of people's homes and livelihoods — but he recognized the importance of his role in helping direct aid where it was needed most.

His experience in Tampa during Hurricane Helene offered a contrasting challenge. This time, he was directly involved in restoring essential services, working with teams on emergency generators for AT&T towers in North Carolina. With communication lines down, ensuring cell service was critical. "In disasters, cell service is a lifeline — for emergency responders

Nick reporting onsite where power lines were down on September 29, 2024. Photo provided by Nick Ruemker.



Line trucks stationed at Charlotte Motor Speedway yard ready to restore power after Hurricane Helene. Photo provided by Nick Ruemker.



and families trying to find each other," Ruemker explained. However, keeping the generators running was no easy feat. Crews battled flooded roads, downed power lines, and unpredictable weather conditions.

MOMENTS THAT LEAVE A LASTING IMPACT

Among the countless experiences, Ruemker recalls one particular moment in Tampa that profoundly impacted him. While delivering supplies, he encountered a family who had lost everything. Despite their hardships, they offered the crew bottled water and expressed heartfelt gratitude. "They had nothing left, yet they were still so giving," he recalled. It was a humbling reminder of human resilience and the power of community, reinforcing his commitment to helping those in need.

THE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL TOLL

Moving between disaster zones came with significant physical and emotional challenges. Long hours, limited sleep, and constant exposure to scenes of destruction took a toll. Yet, Ruemker leaned on his training, mental resilience, and the support of his colleagues. The camaraderie among the response teams became a source of strength. "We were in it together — it became like family," he said.

At home, Ruemker found stability and

PASSINGS



encouragement from his support system. Whether through calls from loved ones or simply knowing he had a community waiting for him, it fueled his determination to keep going.

BRINGING COWLITZ VALUES TO THE FIELD

As a Cowlitz Tribal member, Ruemker drew strength from his heritage. The Tribe's emphasis on community, service, and respect influenced his approach. "Our values teach us to take care of one another," he noted. Whether providing relief to strangers or working alongside fellow responders, he carried these principles with him, creating meaningful connections with the people he served.

LOOKING AHEAD

Reflecting on the 2024 hurricane season, Ruemker emphasized the importance of preparation. From enhancing generator maintenance to refining logistical coordination, he remains committed to continuous improvement. As future storms loom, Ruemker stands ready — driven by the same dedication that has guided him through every disaster.

Nick Ruemker's hurricane relief work is more than a job — it is a testament to resilience, compassion, and the enduring spirit of the Cowlitz people. Through his tireless service, he not only restores power and infrastructure but also offers hope to those facing some of life's darkest moments.



In loving memory of Cherie Nebgen,

November 10, 1932 – February 10, 2024.

Heaven welcomed the most beautiful angel on February 10, 2025. **Cherie** was the proud descendant of her Great-Great-Great-Grandfather **Chief Sinnaywah**

(Scenewah), her Great-Great-Grandmother **Mary (Clalquadate) Sinnaywah McLeod**, and Great-Grandmother **Catherine McLeod Mounts**. She was so proud of all of her children and their spouses, her grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

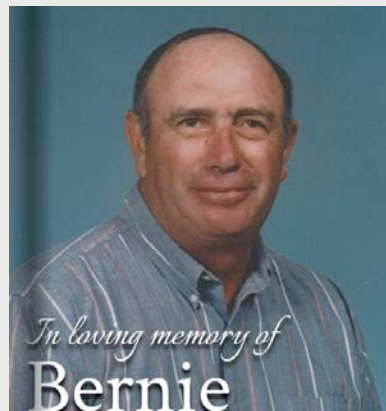


In loving memory of Lauri Parker,

September 23, 1957 – January 2024.

The family is deeply saddened to announce the passing of **Lauri Parker**, a cherished resident of Humptulips, Washington State.

Lauri had a profound love for the river, fishing, storytelling, her pets, and Native beading. Her passions and warmth will be deeply missed by her family and all who knew her.



In loving memory of Bernie Raymond Steffen, May 15, 1942 – August 2, 2024.

Bernie Steffen, 82, passed away August 2, 2024, at the Majestic Bluffs Hospice House in Yankton, South Dakota, with his wife by his side. Bernie will be missed by his wife

of 60 years, his family, his many friends, and all who knew him.



ROBIN FLOYD TORNER: A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR THE COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE

Written By: Suzanne Donaldson

Robin Floyd Torner has spent much of his life working to secure recognition, rights, and a stronger future for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. A man of deep commitment and quiet determination, his journey from Olympia and Lacey in Washington State, to a key figure in Tribal governance and advocacy is one of resilience and service.

ROOTS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Born into a family with a strong connection to the Cowlitz River, Robin's lineage traces back to his great-grandmother, Louise Simmons Putnam, and his grandmother, Mabel Simmons Torner, who was born in Olympia. His father, Floyd Percy Torner, and mother, of Irish and German descent, raised Robin and his four brothers in an urban setting. While their heritage was ever-present, active participation in Tribal culture was not a central part of their upbringing.

"We fished, dug clams, and hunted deer and elk, but we never really called it culture," Robin recalls. "It was just what our family did."



In the early 90s, during a visit to his father's house, his Aunt Peggy told him that the Tribe and "the allottees" could use his help. That conversation would spark his decades-long commitment to the Cowlitz people.

A CAREER IN SERVICE

Robin's professional life spanned various fields, from manual labor in construction, logging, and remodeling to serving in the U.S. Army. After college, he transitioned into writing, public relations consulting, and lobbying at the state capitol. Eventually, he took a position with DSHS as a Tribal liaison, where he worked until retiring in 2016 under Washington State Public Employees' Retirement (PERS).

His deep involvement with the Tribe began in earnest in 1993 when he was asked to run for the Tribal Council. Serving until 2006, he was instrumental in helping the Cowlitz Indian Tribe gain federal recognition in 2000, a milestone that fundamentally changed its trajectory.

"Before we were federally recognized, nobody paid attention to us. I knew we qualified, so we put together a package and won," Robin said. "That recognition transformed us from a non-governmental organization with no legal standing into a sovereign entity. Without it, our sovereignty would never have been respected."

FIGHTING FOR TRIBAL RIGHTS

Throughout his tenure, Robin was deeply involved in efforts to secure hunting, fishing, and gathering rights for the Cowlitz people. When the Quinault Nation denied non-Tribal members the right to dig clams, Robin and others fought to challenge the decision, a battle that, unfortunately, remains unresolved in 2025.

Although he never worked directly for the Tribe in an official capacity, he dedicated himself as a volunteer

consultant to elected officials and paid staff, particularly in matters concerning natural resource access.

"The Tribal natural resource access rights erroneously lost by previous generations under unjust laws can only be restored by another Tribal generation willing to work toward a truly just and fair wildlife use law," Robin stated. "With several others committed to that end, I continue to participate in the Cowlitz hunting, fishing, and gathering committee."

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

When reflecting on his proudest achievements, Robin emphasizes the importance of establishing the Tribe as a recognized government.

"Good government is the hope for our Tribe's future. Before federal recognition, we had little future and little hope. Now, we must continue building an efficient Tribal government that helps people do what they cannot do for themselves."

He acknowledges the challenges that come with governance, particularly disputes over money and programs, but he remains firm in his belief that politics should be guided by democratic principles.

"If you don't like the laws and rules, it's up to you to make a change. Those who complain but don't do the work make me tired."

After years of dedication, Robin has decided not to run for office again, confident that the next generation will continue the work he helped start.

"I've spent many years contributing to different aspects of our Tribal government. Now, I hope our people choose good leaders who represent the entire Tribe."

Though he is officially retired, Robin remains active in writing projects, including efforts to document Cowlitz history from a Tribal member's perspective. He draws



inspiration from works like Dr. Chris Dupre's dissertation and books by Roy Wilson.

A LASTING IMPACT

Robin Floyd Torner's legacy is one of perseverance, dedication, and vision. His work has shaped the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's present and laid the foundation for its future. From securing federal recognition to advocating for Tribal rights, his contributions ensure that the Cowlitz people will continue to thrive for generations to come.

Thank you, Robin, for all your dedication and service to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe!



Orange blossom buds begin to express themselves after much good rain. Fresno, California. Photo credits: Richard D. Iyall, Cowlitz elder

A POEM

WRITTEN BY: RICHARD D. IYALL

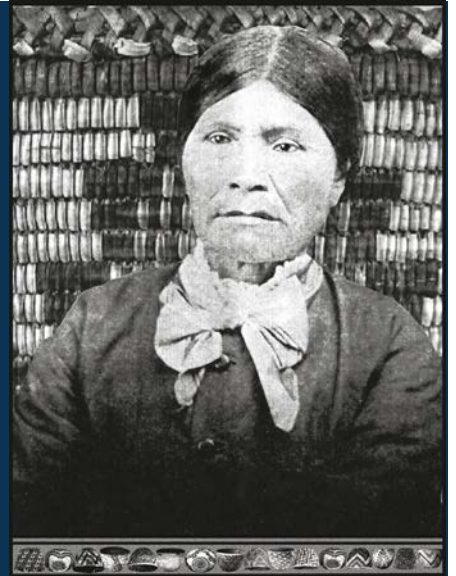
Three quarters of a century have passed beneath my bridge.
Though faced with many challenges, I'm on the cutting edge.
The sun was in the sign of Pisces on the day that I was born.
To balance vital energies my moon was Capricorn.
With love and help from ancestors, my family, and my Tribe,
I've lived with energetic DNA. I have indeed survived.
I've learned to let my mind be still and follow nature's way.
I've broken out of given molds, expanding as I play.

A century of life is possible. I will not rule that out.
By being flexible to change, some dreams have come about.

I am a Cowlitz Indian. I know about our tragic past.
Yet, just like green obsidian, our heritage can last.

I'm grateful to have come this far through time and even space.
A century is calling me. I've made it to third base.

2025 SKLOUTWOUT FAMILY REUNION



“Skloutwout” is the Indian name of Lucy Gerand/Weiser of Cowlitz heritage. Please join us and other Skloutwout relatives for this annual extended family reunion not limited to Cowlitz Tribal members. Bring your genealogy knowledge, family pictures, written family history, and memories to share. Also, please bring a potluck dish and beverages to share as well as a chair if you are not comfortable with the picnic table benches provided by the park.

WHEN: SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2025 - 11 A.M. UNTIL MID-AFTERNOON

(Please note: This is being held on a Saturday this year.)

**WHERE: LEWIS AND CLARK STATE PARK, KITCHEN SHELTER 1, 4583
JACKSON HWY, WINLOCK, WA 98596**

Parking is limited, carpooling is encouraged.

A Washington State Discover Pass is required (or a day pass costing \$10) per vehicle. Cowlitz Tribal members may obtain a lifetime Discover Pass in advance by contacting the Cowlitz Tribal Enrollment Department.

Please pass this information on to all Skloutwout relatives, of whom there are many!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Linda Foley
206-276-6010 (cell)
email: foley.LS@gmail.com

Marsha Williams
253-857-8832 (home) or 253-355-0368 (cell)
email: marshajwms@outlook.com



JOURNEY OF A BUTTERFLY

By Laura Medley



Butterfly (English)
 ḫaləw' - ḫaləw' - (Cowliiz)
 פֶּרְפֶּר - ParPar (Hebrew)
 Beaiveloddi (Sàmi)



The butterfly has been a significant symbol in my life, representing the transformation from caterpillar to cocoon, ultimately emerging and spreading wings to fly. In my earlier article submitted prior to October 7, 2023, I emphasized the importance of rising and shining, referencing Crazy Horse's seventh-generation prophecy. My life experiences since then affirm the truth of this prophecy, as I observe Indigenous people worldwide who are rising and shining.

In this article published in Yooyoolah, titled "Arise and Shine," Winter 2023 edition, I expressed my hope to participate in the parade of nations at Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) in Israel during the fall of 2023 as a member of the Cowliiz Indian Tribe. In that article, I mentioned a passage from Psalms 122, which speaks to the joy of being invited to go up to Jerusalem, where the Tribes ascend to the testimony of Israel.

It indeed was a joy, and my hope was fulfilled as I was blessed to participate in the parade in Jerusalem on October 5, 2023. This event occurred just two days before the onset of the war in Israel on October 7, 2023. I returned home on October 17, 2023, only to return to Israel a few months later in February 2024, upon being invited to attend the grand opening of the First Indigenous Embassy in Jerusalem. This historic event brought together Jewish and Indigenous leaders and other participants to celebrate their common indigeneity and solidarity in a joyous celebration. It marked the opening of the 100th Embassy in Israel and the fifth in Jerusalem.

Upon returning home to Washington State, I was invited to pray and play my drum at a National Day of Prayer gathering at the Historic

“While the butterflies seem to be just flitting around, having a good time and sipping nectar, they are actually fulfilling an important task: they are spreading pollen and helping the flowers reproduce.

“The footsteps of man are directed by G-d” (Psalms 37:23). Wherever we go, we have a mission to accomplish. Like butterflies, we can help others and accomplish good things everywhere we go, even when we are having fun.” [1]



Jackson House in May 2024 as a member of the Indigenous people of this land. My drum, made and given to me by hereditary Chief Clay Koch, is adorned with a beautiful butterfly and silver wings painted by my cousin Melody Millner. In September 2024, before returning to Israel for upcoming Indigenous events, I had the honor of visiting Sweden and meeting with the Indigenous Sàmi people. During this visit, I also was asked to play my Native butterfly drum alongside the Sàmi women's choir, singing their Sàmi National Anthem in the mountains of northern Sweden.

I returned again to Israel in October 2024 to help organize and participate in a Solidarity March with the Jewish people and approximately 60 Indigenous delegates from around the world. We also met with Israel's President Isaac Herzog and attended

a symposium hosted by the Indigenous Embassy Jerusalem regarding “Indigenous Perspectives.”

At the time of publishing this article, I will once again be traveling to Israel to work on behalf of the Indigenous Embassy Jerusalem as their Executive Assistant, coordinating events for Indigenous Peoples globally to strengthen connections with the land of Israel and its Indigenous inhabitants. During this next visit I also aim to connect with the Kings Harpists Symphony in Jerusalem, playing my drum, as they have now incorporated several Native drums playing in symphony with the harps.

For additional information regarding my butterfly journey, please feel free to contact me at llmedley2023@gmail.com.



THANKS AND GRATITUDE

BY PHILIP KENNEDY

MY NAME IS PHILIP KENNEDY, I AM A TRIBAL ELDER, AND I LIVE IN PORT ANGELES.

It has been my heart's desire to submit this letter for a long time. This letter will still fall short of expressing, in mere words, my gratitude and appreciation.

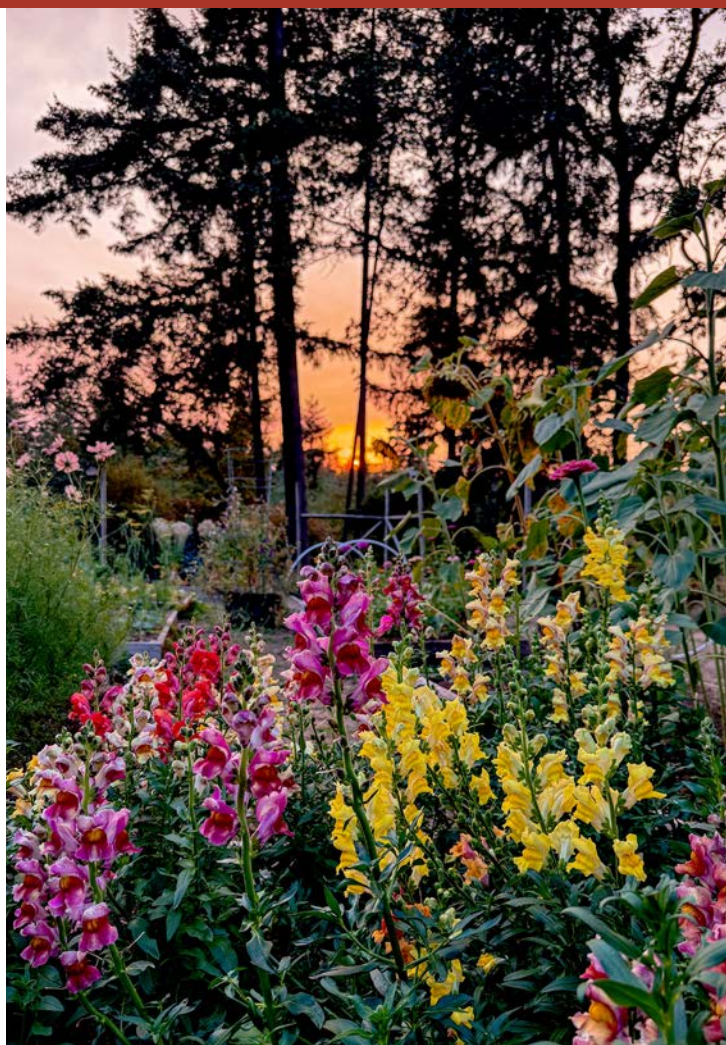
When I was a little boy, I remember enjoying popsicles with my grandfather on a hot day. He would carve miniature totems from the popsicle sticks that we had just enjoyed together. He would say how it was "important to carve them while they were still wet" so that they would not split. As he was carving, he would talk about the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. That one day the Cowlitz people would get what they were due...

Fast forward to the early meetings at the Grange. Even though I was very young, what I heard from Tribal leadership and the vision that has now been revealed, was directly related to my grandfather's prophetic statement.

I am so blessed to have the Forever People as my inheritance, I am so proud to be Cowlitz! I am, and we all should be, grateful first and foremost to our creator God for the blessing of our inheritance.

Now the hard part...That is, to adequately express my gratitude for our Tribal leadership, Tribal Council, and the Tribal staff and services that have made all the difference in my life. The integrity of it all is second to none! I would actually like to recall all the names of so many kind, and sincerely caring brothers and sisters who have answered my calls, questions, and needs. Even up to this day! The list would exceed my space...Especially the Housing and Aging in Place Program for Elders. I don't know where I would be without them. Also, the hard-working fish distribution folks, who even delivered fish to me once here in Port Angeles! I hope they all will read this and receive my heartfelt gratitude.

Sincerely,
Philip Kennedy



Cowlitz Tribal Member Ilesha Molnes launched **BRAVE BLOOMS FLOWER FARM** earlier this year in Thurston County, WA. Rooted in Indigenous values, sustainability, and stewardship, the Native-owned farm proudly grows seasonal, pesticide-free flowers and offers premium flower seeds and dahlia tubers. Brave Blooms is committed to increasing Native representation in agriculture. To learn more about Ilesha's story and the farm, visit www.bravebloomsflowerfarm.com.



THE WINGS OF EAGLES

BY ROBIN A. LADUE, PHD, COWLITZ TRIBAL ELDER

We, my family, come from warriors— my father, great uncle, uncles, cousin, and sister— all served our PEOPLE. We value and venerate our warriors as we value and venerate the white-headed Eagles who bless our worlds, surviving when all odds were against their existence. And how true of a story is that for our PEOPLE?

If you've ever danced in a circle of swirling color, with dignified women in traditional regalia and magnificent men in bustles and cuffs, and suddenly seen the dancers halt and the drums stop, it's likely an Eagle Feather has dropped to the ground. In many cases, it is a warrior's duty and honor to retrieve it. In other cases, an Elder retrieves it, prays over it, and then passes it on to a warrior.

But why are the feathers of our white-headed brothers and sisters so important to us? What role in our lives, spirits, and worlds do our sharp-eyed relations play? Across OUR lands, Eagles are seen as the PEOPLE'S connection to our Creator.

They are the highest of the flying relations, with amazing hunting prowess and great strength. They are revered for these characteristics and for the spiritual connections they are between the Earth and the Spirit realm.

Among many of our PEOPLE, Eagle Feathers must be earned through acts of bravery. At times, if a person has succeeded in achieving a difficult goal or reached an important milestone in their life, Eagle Feathers may be given to mark that event. People who positively support their communities, show strength by putting others first, or make the lives of their PEOPLE better, may be gifted Eagle Feathers to honor such contributions.

Our RELATIONS of the wild world, all creatures, had value and respect in our PEOPLE'S lives. However, with colonization, entire species were hunted and exploited into extinction. This was nearly the case with our white-headed relations—our connection between the Earth and the Spirit World.

Loss of habitat, lead shot, poison, and disregard, caused the numbers of our Eagle relations to plummet. And so, the fierce riders of the high winds were given protection and seen as sacred, rather than being exploited or having their feathers sold.

Eagle Feathers regained their place in our spiritual practices, practices which were denied to US by law until 1978. Protection of the Eagle, ironically, the symbol of the United States of America, became enacted in 1940, well before the 1978 Indian Religious Freedom Act.

As the years have passed, our PEOPLE'S struggles to survive, decolonize and freely dance is the same struggle our EAGLES have had to survive, regain strength in numbers and to once more be the owners of the high realms of the sky.

If you've ever watched an Eagle watching you, seen two Eagles hopping in a field, fighting over a tasty bit of food, as my sister and I did on a chilly February morning in 2022, watched them congregate in trees, or seen them fly over you, it's impossible not to see and comprehend their majesty, personalities, and power.

When this happens to you, stop and remember that we almost lost their beauty and Spirit as we almost lost ours. And we have returned together. If the day comes when an Eagle Feather finds its way to you, remember you have been graced and it will forever be your obligation to honor that gift, the Spirit it carries, and the PEOPLE whose blood you carry.

These things were almost lost to US. So, learn the story of Eagle, the connection to Spirit that they are, and why they, the fiercest of our winged relations, are as venerated as our WARRIORS. For in that story are the tools for survival, strength, a return to hope, and the passing of our WORLD to the next generation on the wings of Eagles.

SUMMER 2025 CULTURE EVENTS

MAY 23-26

MEMORIAL DAY CAMPOUT

Sweat Lodge Property

JUNE 8

FIRST SALMON CEREMONY

Sweat Lodge Property

JULY 20

CANOE JOURNEY

Fort Vancouver

JULY 25-31

CANOE JOURNEY

Puyallup to Lower Elwha

AUGUST 1-5

CANOE JOURNEY

Protocol

AUGUST 22-25

HUCKLEBERRY CAMP

Swift Schoolhouse

SEPTEMBER 27

2025 POWWOW

Cowlitz County Event Center



Scan this QR code with your mobile device to stay updated on upcoming events!

ILANI DISCOUNTS FOR COWLITZ TRIBAL MEMBERS

As of March 2025

Bamboo 8: 25% off
(Tribal Member + up to 7 guests)

Bella Vista: 25% off
(Tribal Member + up to 3 guests)

Chef Jet: 20% off

Cowlitz Trading Post: 15% off

i.talia Pizzeria: 20% off

Line & Lure: 15% off
(Tribal Member + up to 7 guests)

Lobby Cafe: 25% off
(Tribal Member + up to 3 guests)

Longhouse: 25% off food
(Tribal Member + up to 3 guests)

Marshall Rousso/Ruby Blue: Elders 15% off,
All other Tribal Members 10% off

Michael Jordan's Steak House: 15% off
(Tribal Member + up to 7 guests)

Rock and Brews: 25% off
(Tribal Member + up to 7 guests)

Smashburger: 20% off

Starbucks: 20% off

The Stadium: 25% off
(Tribal Member + up to 7 guests)

Taco Cantina: 20% off

Tom's Urban: 15% off (Tribal Member + up to 3 guests), Complimentary valet parking for all Tribal Members

OTHER DISCOUNTS:

Cowlitz Crossing Store: 15% off
Fuel: \$1.00 off/gallon

Q'anápsu Full Price Products: 25% off

Cowlitz Tobacco Outlet: 30% off cigarettes and chewing tobacco

Note: Discounts do not include tobacco, alcohol, gift cards, or currently discounted items. Tribal discount cannot be stacked or combined with other discounts.

FOOD	ENROLLMENT	HOUSING
<p>FOOD VOUCHERS (LOW-INCOME MEMBERS ONLY) (360) 577-8140 Email: enrollment@cowlitz.org</p> <p>PRODUCE BOXES/GARDEN PROGRAM Medicinal Tea (360) 295-1570 Email: garden@cowlitz.org</p> <p>COMMODITIES (INCOME-BASED) (360) 577-8140 Email: enrollment@cowlitz.org</p> <p>FISH/FILLETS (360) 772-9935 / (360) 864-7006 DuPont pickup: (360)-946-2455 Email: fishdistribution@cowlitz.org</p>	<p>ENROLLMENT (360) 577-8140 Email: enrollment@cowlitz.org</p> <p>LIHEAP (LOW INCOME HOUSING ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM) - INCOME BASED (360) 577-8140 Email: enrollment@cowlitz.org</p>	<p>HOUSING <i>Housing programs are subject to funding and each grant may serve a specific demographic or geographical area.</i></p> <p>Down Payment Assistance Student Rental Assistance Rental & Mortgage Assistance Elder Housing & Aging in Place Emergency Housing - \$5k Well & Sewer Repair BPA Weatherization Emergency Medical Hotel Assistance</p> <p>(360) 864-8720 Email: housing@cowlitz.org</p>
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES		
<p>BEHAVIORAL HEALTH Counseling & Medication Management: Assessments & Intakes, Intensive Outpatient Services & Referrals Substance Use Disorder Services, Mental Health Services, Medically Assisted Treatment Services</p> <p>Longview Substance Use: (360) 575-3316 Mental Health: (360) 353-9422</p> <p>Vancouver Substance Use: (360) 947-2247 Mental Health: (360) 397-8228</p> <p>Tukwila Substance Use: (206) 466-5122 Mental Health: (206) 721-5170 Medically Assisted Treatment: (206) 466-5410</p> <p>DuPont (360) 946-2455</p> <p>COWLITZ YOUTH PROGRAM Tutoring, Learning and online interactions, Language, and Culture Connection (360) 946-2455 Email: Youth@cowlitz.org</p>	<p>PURCHASE REFERRED CARE Phone: (360) 575-8275 Opt. 2 Email: Chs-prc@cowlitz.org</p> <p>MEDICAL CLINIC (LONGVIEW) (360) 575-8275</p> <p>ELDERS PROGRAM Home-cooked freezer meals, Salmon (for enrolled Cowlitz Elders only), Prescription pick-up, Rides to medical appointments & grocery stores Phone: (360) 506-1260 <i>*Some services are limited to Lewis, Clark, and Cowlitz Counties</i></p> <p>INDIAN CHILD WELFARE (ICW) Child and Family Welfare Services Vancouver: (360) 577-8140 DuPont: (360) 946-2455</p> <p>24/7 SUPPORT HOTLINES Child and Family Welfare Services Vancouver: (360) 577-8140 DuPont: (360) 946-2455</p>	<p>PATHWAYS TO HEALING Advocacy & Therapy Services: Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, Elder Abuse, Sex Trafficking Longview: (360) 575-6239 Vancouver: (360) 397-8228 Tukwila: (206) 721-5170 DuPont: (360) 946- 2455 Email: Pathwaystohealing@cowlitz.org</p> <p>COWLITZ EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES Career guidance, Self-employment guidance, Education guidance</p> <p>Locations: Longview, Vancouver (360) 575-3318 Email: Cess@cowlitz.org</p> <p>RESOURCE ASSISTANCE Cowlitz Tribal Member Services (CTMS) offers support in accessing programs, services, and resources for Cowlitz Tribal members Phone: 1-877-COWLITZ (5489) Email: Memberservices@cowlitz.org</p>
VETERANS	EDUCATION	CHILD CARE
<p>(360) 946- 2423 Ext. 2408 Email: Veterans@cowlitz.org</p>	<p>TUITION ASSISTANCE (360) 353-9588 Email: education@cowlitz.org</p>	<p>Serving all federally recognized Tribal members residing in our service area of Lewis, Cowlitz, Clark, Columbia and Skamania Counties (360) 353- 9909 Email: Ccdp@cowlitz.org</p>
TRANSIT	CULTURAL	OTHER
<p>MEDICAL & MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION AND RURAL TRANSIT SERVICES (360) 232-8585 Email: transit@cowlitz.org</p>	<p>COWLITZ ART/CULTURAL CLASSES & EVENTS (360) 353-9997 Email: Culture@cowlitz.org</p>	<p>Medical & Medicaid support, Prescription benefits coverage, COVID testing kits, Traditional medicine, Culture kits, CIT History & Language books, Free Amazon Prime Business, Gym membership reimbursement 1-877-COWLITZ (5489) Email: Memberservices@cowlitz.org</p>



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