

Kikinaw: Our Home

Exciting news towards equity and excellence

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Kikinaw Newsletter (pronounced kee-kee-now). In this newsletter we share reflections from cultural activities around SSCY Centre, let you know about upcoming events, and share quality and equity initiatives. In each edition we share reflections on teachings from our Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the previous season as well as resources that may be helpful in your work and personal lives.

We would love your input on content for the newsletter. If you have ideas to share or a reflection or photos to submit, please get in touch:
kikinaw@rccinc.ca.

Learning with Wisdom Keeper Mary Wilson

Each month, Wisdom Keeper Mary Wilson leads a webinar for SSCY staff and clients.

They occur on the second Thursday of every month, from 12-1pm. [Click here](#) to join the webinar or email rcantalejo@rccinc.ca to receive a calendar invitation.



We offer smudge ceremonies in front of SSCY Centre (1155 Notre Dame Ave.) every weekday: Monday to Thursday at 12PM & Friday at 8:45AM.

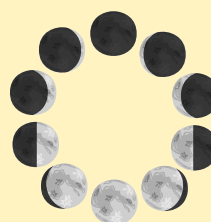
Contact rcantalejo@rccinc.ca for the calendar invite.

Daily
Smudging at
SSCY

Full Moon Ceremony

Full moon ceremonies are a monthly time of strength when women and two spirit individuals gather outdoors to celebrate the feminine energy of grandmother moon in ceremony. If you are interested in learning more please connect with Knowledge Keeper Mary at mwilson@rccinc.ca.

Upcoming full moon dates



September 26: Harvest Moon
October 26: Hunter's Moon
November 24: Beaver Moon
December 23: Cold Moon

sweetgrass:

THE SACRED MEDICINE OF NEW BEGINNINGS

Sweetgrass is the sacred medicine that carries the energy of new beginnings. It is known as the hair of Mother Earth, and when we braid it, we honour her teachings and our own healing journey.

A Sweetgrass braid is made of three sections, each holding the Seven Sacred Teachings. Together, these teachings form a way of life that sustains us in a good way. When we braid Sweetgrass, we braid mind, body, and spirit - bringing them into alignment so we can walk forward with balance. When your braid is neat, you are in a good space of healing. . When your braid is messy, it shows you that there is still inner work to do.

Sweetgrass invites you to look deeply within, to be honest with yourself, and to face the things that hold you back from your healing.

The Structure of the Sweetgrass Braid

Sweetgrass is braided with 21 strands, divided into three equal sections. Each section carries the Seven Sacred Teachings, giving us a total of 21 teachings woven into the braid.

At the base of the braid lies the 22nd strand - the strand that binds everything together. This strand represents your foundation, the core of who you are. It is your grounding, your truth, and the part of you that holds your teachings, your identity, and your journey together. Without this strand, the braid cannot hold. Without your base, your teachings cannot stay connected.

Walking Into New Beginnings

This medicine supports you through every new beginning - even the quiet, personal ones like self-discovery, learning how to care for yourself, honouring your needs, and loving who you are becoming.

Your spirit is your connection to your belief system and your higher power. Your mind is how you think, reflect, and process your experiences. Your body is how you walk your truth in the world.

Sweetgrass helps you bring these three parts of yourself together so you can move forward in a good way. Please honour yourself, and honour the people around you. New beginnings are sacred - and so are you.

By Knowledge Keeper Mary Wilson

REFLECTION FROM THE SWEETGRASS BRAIDING WORKSHOP AUGUST 6, 2026

BY NICOLE LECLAIR



Participating in the Sweetgrass Braiding event was a memorable experience. Learning that sweetgrass is one of the sacred medicines and hearing the teachings behind it gave the activity a deeper meaning. As we braided the sweetgrass, we reflected on how the strands can symbolize the different parts of our lives, woven together through our experiences, relationships, and journeys. The scent of the sweetgrass, combined with the laughter, stories, and connections shared throughout the event, created a sense of community and belonging that has stayed with me. Even now, as the braid in my office slowly dries, its fragrance serves as a daily reminder of the teachings that came with it.



Would you like to be involved in planning or facilitating events here at SSCY? The Indigenous Events Planning Committee (Wolf Pack) is always looking for volunteers!

Contact Rowelie at rcantalejo@rccinc.ca to find out what you can do to help.

RCC HONOURS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHERYL SUSINSKI

On June 18th, RCC colleagues, friends and family gathered to celebrate Cheryl Susinski's retirement and honour her many contributions to RCC. The afternoon was filled with stories, appreciation, and warm wishes as Cheryl begins her next chapter. A special highlight was a beautiful tribute from Knowledge Keeper Mary Wilson and Grandmother Helen Robinson-Settee, RCC Board member and chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Jordan's Principle Advisory Committee, who presented Cheryl with a star blanket in recognition of her service and lasting impact. Cheryl expressed her profound gratitude for this important and moving gift.

BY BARB BORTON



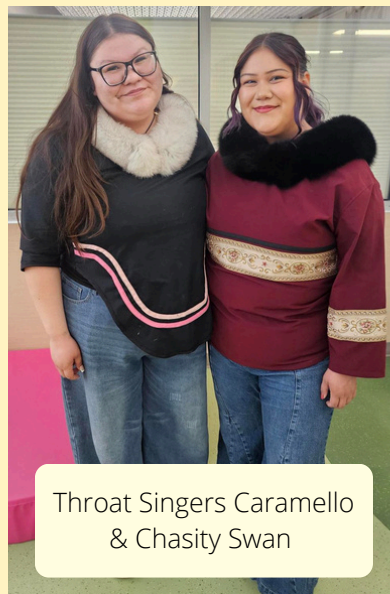
NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY 2026

On June 19th, SSCY Centre staff, families, community members, and children from the daycare gathered to acknowledge National Indigenous People's Day. An opening prayer was offered by Wisdom Keeper Mary Wilson.

Elder Martha Peet shared teachings and stories about lighting the Qulliq (traditional oil lamp used by Inuit) while the children passed around arctic cotton, which is used as a wick for the Qulliq. Chasity Swan and Caramello Swan demonstrated throat singing, performing several songs and explained the tradition of signing, standing face to face until the first singer laughs.



After the program, we shared a small feast of yogurt and berries while those gathered had opportunities to ask questions and speak individually with Elder Martha. This gathering helped staff and families learn about Inuit cultural traditions and make personal connections with a local community elder.



Throat Singers Caramello & Chasity Swan



Elder Martha Peet

ORANGE SHIRT DAY

occurs on September 30th each year.

We will be honouring Orange Shirt Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Tuesday, September 29th at 10:00 am in the West Parking Lot of SSCY Centre.

Everyone is welcome to join us in this opportunity to reflect, learn and continue to work on our commitment to truth, reconciliation, and the recognition of the lasting impacts of residential schools.



Lavallee Tradition was founded by Red River Métis Elder Dave Lavallee in 2001. This family-based musical group celebrates and shares Métis culture through music. Rooted in generations of family tradition, Elder Dave uses music and song, including Michif French, as a way to preserve language, share culture, and bring people together.

We encourage all participants to wear orange.

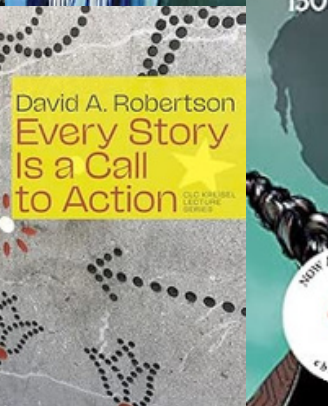
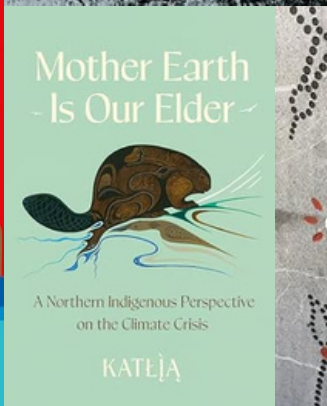
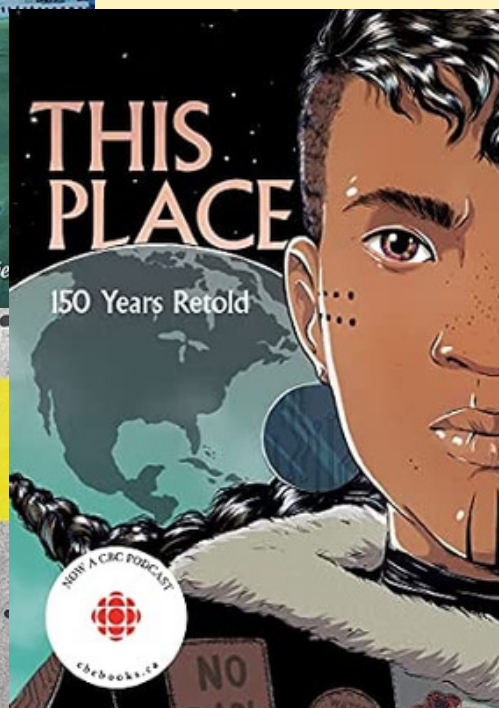
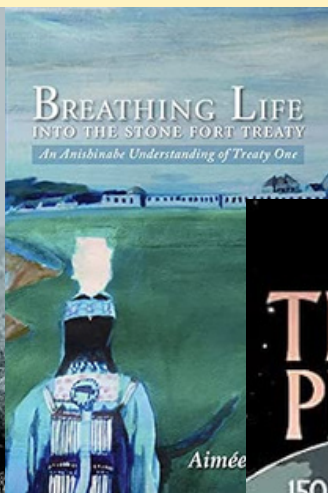
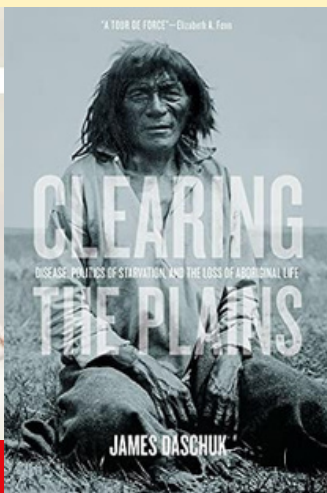
Everyone is welcome!

FOOD VENDORS at 11:15am

Attendees will receive ONE \$10 meal voucher to use toward their meal purchase with a choice between one of the two vendors!

If you require any accommodations to participate, please reach out to Rowelie at rcantalejo@rccinc.ca.

**Indigenous Interest
Resource Library
New Books!**



These books, and many others, can be borrowed from the SSCY Family Resource Centre, located behind the tipi in the SSCY Centre lobby. Contact resource@rccinc.ca for more information.

FALL BOOK CLUB PICK:

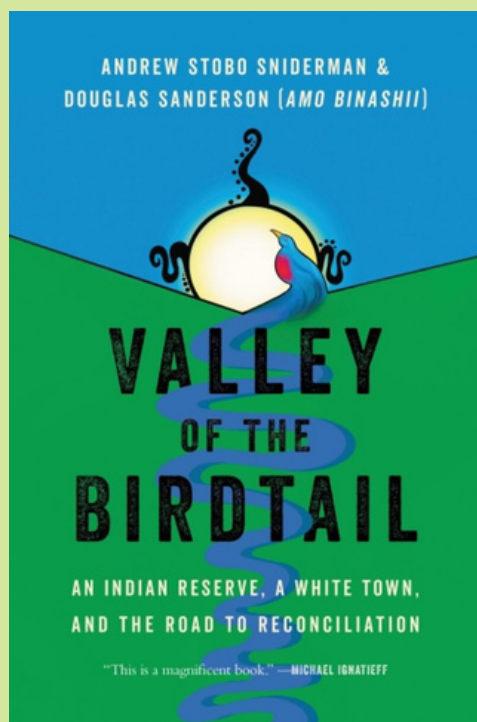
Valley of the Birdtail

An Indian Reserve, a White Town, and the Road to Reconciliation

"Divided by a beautiful valley and 150 years of racism, the town of Rosburn and the Waywayseecappo Indian reserve have been neighbours nearly as long as Canada has been a country. Their story reflects much of what has gone wrong in relations between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians. It also offers, in the end, an uncommon measure of hope."

The SSCY Family Resource Centre fall book club will take place in November 2026. For more information, or to join the mailing list, reach out to Elliot at resource@rccinc.ca.

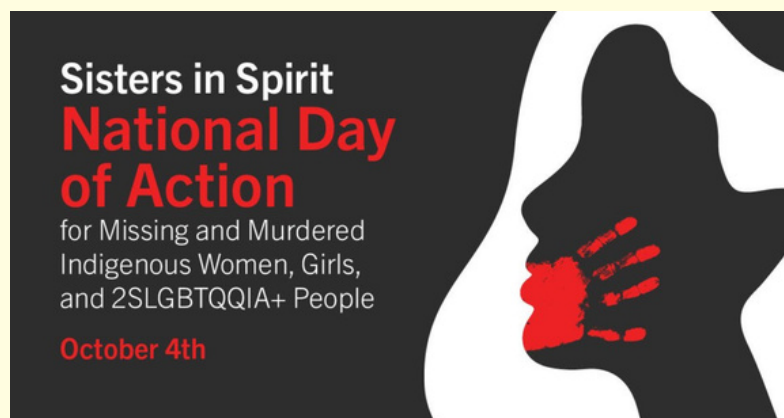
Looking forward to our discussion!



Important Dates in the Fall & Winter

September 22: Fall Equinox - First Day of Autumn

October 4: National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit and gender diverse people



In memory of Jordan River Anderson



October 22: Jordan River Anderson's Birthday

November: Indigenous Disability Awareness Month

November 7: International Inuit Day

SSCY Film Screening:
Jordan River Anderson:
The Messenger
October 22, 2026
Details TBA



November 8: National Indigenous Veterans Day

November 8-14: Rock your Mocs Week

December 21: Winter Solstice - First Day of Winter



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2019, the Jordan's Principle team at RCC created a quilt inspired by a poem shared about reflections on how our work can extend beyond our original expectations, the learning found along the journey, and the role of compassion in supporting growth and understanding. Each quilt square represents an individual's unique experiences and insights, woven together to create a lasting symbol of connection, shared learning, and the collective impact of the team's work.

The quilt is hanging near Knowledge Keeper Mary's office on the first floor of SSCY Centre.



The Kikinaw Newsletter is put together by a small group from the Jordan's Principle / Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee. If you are interested in contributing to this publication, please email us at kikinaw@rccinc.ca.

Our winter newsletter deadline is November 1st!

We always welcome feedback, so please contact us with any questions or concerns.

Jordan's Principle / Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Jordan's Principle / Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee is to ensure that Rehabilitation Centre for Children (RCC) is providing culturally safe and culturally appropriate services with and for Indigenous clients and families and is facilitating the ongoing movement towards First Nations-led health services. The Committee was formed in 2018 and since then has spearheaded many initiatives across the SSCY Centre and beyond, including education, outreach and special events.

Committee Members:

Grandmother Helen Robinson-Settee (chair), Josh Ahmo, Pam Becker, Barb Borton, Krista Buchanan, Rowelie Cantalejo, Jeanette Edwards, Chris Froese, Nicole Leclair, Diana Renaud, Melanie Sheldon, Heather Skelton, Grandmother Mary Wilson, Tara Zimmermann (admin).