

MAY 2025
Whidbey Native Connections Initiative
Brief Newsletter

Reminder: We are not gathering on Zoom this month. But we DO want to highlight some things happening this month. We are grateful to the Quaker-led organization, *Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples* for their newsletter that sent some of the resources below. Refer to our [April NCI Newsletter](#) for many events happening throughout the summer.

Monday, May 5: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Day

One of the first acts of Trump's Department of Justice was to remove the bipartisan report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women from its website. Without recourse to federal support during this administration, it is very important to take actions at the municipal and state and local levels. **On May 5, wear red and talk about why you are doing that in honor of the missing and murdered Indigenous persons.**

According to [Native News Online in March 2024](#), "Native women living on reservations are murdered at a rate ten times higher than the national average. Advocates say layered jurisdiction, lack of collaboration between law enforcement bodies, and systemic apathy have led to thousands of unsolved cases in Indian Country."

For background: <https://www.nlc.org/article/2024/05/03/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-persons-awareness-day/>

Washington state's resolution: <https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2025-26/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Resolutions/8648-Indigenous%20women.pdf>

Reminder about the Coast Salish Youth Camas Bake, May 8 and 9

The Coast Salish Youth Coalition, led by Sam Barr (Samish), has invited NCI to prepare and serve two dinners during their ceremonial time at PRI. If you have signed up with [Sarah Schmidt](#) to help with a meal, you are welcome to engage with the tribal people during the meals.

*****We are NOT invited to participate in the event, nor to be observers.**
Please respect their privacy.

Reminder: The Blue Heron Canoe Family arrives June 20-22

The Blue Heron Canoe Family will camp at the County Fairgrounds in Langley, again at the Fiddle Faddle Farm area. For the past three years, we have provided support that they have requested. It is a rare chance to mingle with the canoe family, learn crafts, and make friendships that last year to year.

Some of the canoe family will arrive Friday night to set up the camp, then the canoe will arrive Saturday, June 21, about 12:00 noon, at the Langley Marina. Mike Evans (waqúsqidəb) will be on hand to welcome the canoe and the pullers. You are invited to be there as well, but the current plan is to do a formal welcome at the Fairgrounds. (NOTE: *The Pride parade will be happening in Langley at 11:30, so the streets will be closed and you will need to walk down to the Marina, and back up too.*)

On Saturday, the BHC family will be offering classes again in traditional crafts and maybe a plant walk. Stay tuned for a schedule!

There will be a **community potluck on Saturday night, 6:00pm**. Clancy and the Open Table will provide his famous soup, and the Blue Heron Canoe family are planning to make fry bread tacos. **Please bring salads and desserts.**

We need volunteers to help set up and take down tables and chairs for the potluck meal, post flyers about the events, and generally be available to help as needed. The canoe family would love to have someone take photographs and videos, and pass them on to the canoe family. Marcia Dunigan has generously stepped forward to be volunteer coordinator. Email her at mdunigan7@gmail.com

Impacts of Federal Funding Cuts on Native People and Tribes: NPR [Podcast](#)

We can't keep up with breaking news every day on the federal funding cuts for programs that Native people rely on for basic human needs. Native leaders are meeting with cabinet secretaries and department heads, attempting to educate them about the government's treaty and trust obligations.

Listen to the recording or read the transcript of this excellent [On Point](#) program, on National Public Radio. Two very well-informed speakers discuss the meaning of sovereignty in light of the Trump budget cuts.

- Mary Annette Pember, national correspondent for ICT News, is an enrolled member of the Red Cliff of Wisconsin Ojibwe tribe. Her new book is *Medicine River: A Story of Survival and the Legacy of Indian Boarding Schools*.
- Aaron Payment serves on the Tribal Council of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He is a former chairperson of the Tribe and a former First Vice President of the National Congress of American Indians.

April 21- May 5: United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Learn about the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, where Indigenous people from all around the world are meeting this week. See the [official website](#) and also the [Cultural Survival website](#) for background on the Permanent Forum, documents under discussion, and descriptions of some of the sessions and speakers. [This article](#) reports both progress and challenges for Indigenous women worldwide.

Save the date for Indigenous Peoples Day, October 13, 2025

Why? Because Trump just axed it as a national holiday. So let's be sure that we in the Coast Salish lands have a loud and proud celebration of Native American sovereignty and cultures on October 13. See [this article](#) in Native News Online.

INDIGENOUS NEWS SOURCES and Resources for Action:

If you'd like to stay current on the news from Indigenous people and their communities, here are some excellent sources:

[Native News Online](#)

[Indian Country Today](#)

[High Country News, Indigenous Affairs](#)

[Seattle Crosscut, Indigenous Affairs](#)

[The Friends Committee on National Legislation](#) (FCNL) advocates for legislation that will protect tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. You can sign up for monthly updates. This group makes it easy to take appropriate action.