

While this record-low snow year might make foraging easier for sheep now, it will likely have repercussions later in the spring when the snow melt disappears sooner. This, in turn, will result in less moisture for their much-needed forage to grow.



At the end of each day, we spin the blood samples we collected in a centrifuge. This separates components of the blood to determine things like pregnancy.



Though horn annuli are a great way to age sheep, the amount of wear on their incisor teeth can also give us an indication of their age. The ewe on the left was aged at 12+ years old, with her teeth nearing the gumline, while the ewe in the upper right was aged at 6 years old.



# Kwadacha Fire Starter

Volume 11, March Issue, 2024



## Exciting Progress: New Triplexes Completed and Framework Agreement Signed

We are pleased to announce significant milestones in our ongoing efforts to enhance our community and secure a brighter future for Kwadacha Nation members. Over the past few months, Chief and Council have been working towards meaningful progress, and we are pleased to share some exciting developments.

First and foremost, the new triplexes have been successfully completed, providing much-needed housing options for our members. These new accommodations represent a step forward in addressing the housing challenges faced by many in our Nation.

In addition to this milestone, we are excited to announce the signing of the framework agreement, the important first step towards a reconciliation agreement with the Province of British Columbia. This achievement is the result of many hours of meetings and discussions that have taken place since November. The dedication and hard work of our negotiating team, Maya Stano, Terry Kuzma and Dennis Sterritt, alongside Chief and Council, have brought us to this important stage.

The next phase of this process will involve developing the term sheet, laying the foundation for a Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement that will pave the way for better supports in our community, particularly for housing and other essential infrastructure. This agreement will play a crucial role in shaping our future and ensuring the well-being and prosperity of our community and members.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has been involved in this process, from community members to external partners and the negotiating team. Your dedication, input, and collaboration have been invaluable in reaching this point. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation for their support and assistance throughout this journey.

As we continue to work towards finalizing the Reconciliation Agreement, we look forward to the positive impact it will have on our community and the opportunities it will create for our members. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient Kwadacha Nation.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Chief and Council



**What's next?**  
With this new information on early winter fat reserves, we can start looking into why fat levels may vary between individuals. To do this, we'll be examining factors such as age, pregnancy, lamb at-heel status, movement, and range position. Stay tuned for another update in March when we'll be measuring fat levels in late winter to better understand these changes in relation to seasonal ranges.

For more information on the project, please contact Morgan or Landon at:  
[Mogan.Anderson@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Mogan.Anderson@gov.bc.ca) 250-649-4392, [ljbich@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:ljbich@mail.ubc.ca)

MARCH 6 & 7TH 2024

MEDICINE

KEEPER

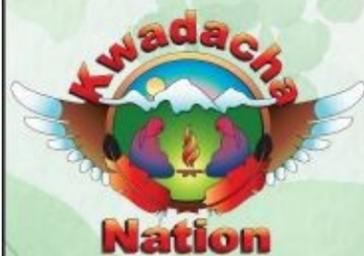
WORKSHOP

WITH MELANIE LANSALL MSW,  
RSW. & MONTANNA ROHRBACH  
BSW (CAND)

LOCATION: ELDERS CENTRE

TIME: 10AM - 2PM

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED +  
PRIZES



Sponsored by  
Kwadacha Health  
Department



Hosted by Zunza  
Wellness

The Nation will no longer be accepting cash to issue cheques on members' behalf for personal means. Should you need to send cash to have a cheque issued to pay a bill, The Nation will still provide this support.

## Finlay-Russel Sheep Project January 2024 Update



In early January, the team set out for another field session. The main goals of this session were to redeploy collars on new animals and to measure rump fat on our collared animals to document early winter fat reserves.

As shown here, we used ultrasonography to measure fat on each sheep, primarily stored on the rump. On average, ewes had 11mm of rump fat this session, but fat measurements ranged from as little as 7mm to as much as 22mm. In February 2022, ewes averaged only 2mm. These changes are exactly what the project team set out to investigate. In this session we successfully captured 13 sheep.



Upon reaching Fort Ware, Jenna Hourie kindly introduced me to the town and shared some captivating stories, which I deeply appreciated. On the same day, the school organized a march for women, where I had the privilege of voting for the most appealing poster, displayed in the administration office.

At the heart of the community stands the Community Store, a retail establishment that, in my opinion rivals many others across Canada. Offering a diverse range of products and boasting fully stocked shelves, the store owes its success to the dedication and perseverance of Michelle McCook and Jenna Hourie. Remarkably, Michelle McCook, with no prior retail experience, has adeptly managed the store, ensuring efficient shelf stocking and forging beneficial supplier relationships, all in service of providing the community with the finest deals.

My purpose at the store is to support Michelle, the store, and its employees in overcoming specific supply chain challenges.

By combining Michelle's expertise with mine, I am confident that we can leverage various resources to elevate the store to greater heights. Challenges, such as refrigeration issues, have prompted Michelle to tirelessly transfer products between freezers to prolong their shelf life. Together, we have initiated a tender to procure brand-new freezers and refrigeration units from companies across Canada to meet the community's needs. Additionally, we will facilitate the installation of cutting-edge CCTV cameras through Starlink, further enhancing the store's operations and security measures.



Once these initiatives are implemented, our focus will shift towards optimizing our stock on hand, enhancing inventory management practices, refining pricing strategies to benefit the community, and ensuring a consistent supply of goods to the store. Additionally, we are committed to sourcing the freshest possible produce, including fruits and vegetables, within the constraints of our resources.

My responsibilities extend to engaging with various suppliers within the Prince George community and nationwide. I am dedicated to securing the best possible deals for the community and its people.

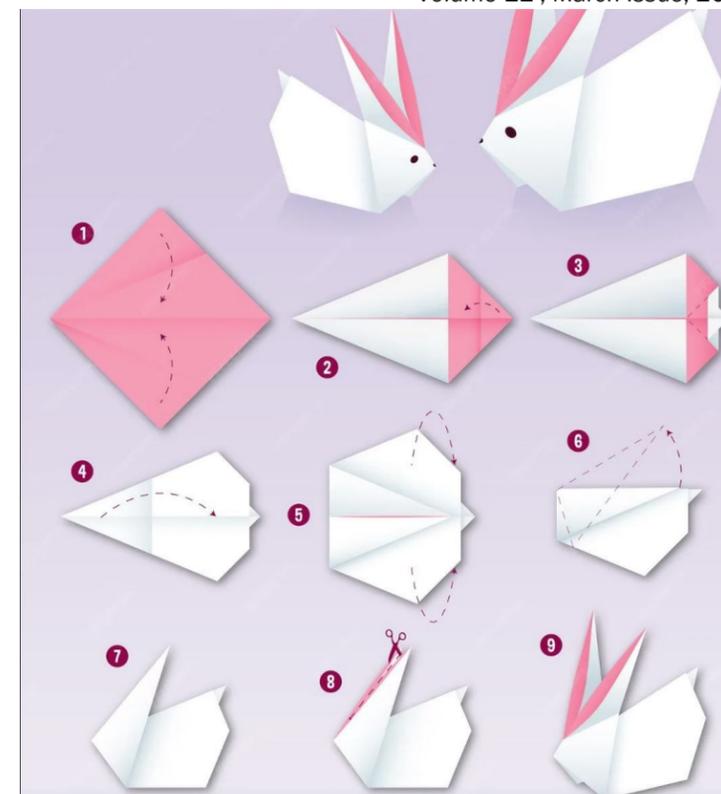
I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Chase Sharpe for welcoming me into the Prince George office and offering assistance whenever needed. Chase's support, along with the collaborative efforts of others under the leadership of Dennis Sterritt, exemplifies the power of teamwork. As the adage goes, "teamwork makes the dream work," and our collective goal is to empower the Nation to embrace ancestral teachings, maintain resource - community balance, foster resilience, and overcome challenges.

Alexander Muller

IF WE CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE AS A UNIFIED TEAM WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY, COMPROMISING MORE THAN 400 INDIVIDUALS, WE POSSESS THE COLLECTIVE STRENGTH TO LEARN FROM EACH OTHER AND CONQUER ANY OBSTACLE. TOGETHER, AS COMMUNITY MEMBERS, BAND MEMBERS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL, WE CAN HARNESS OUR COLLECTIVE IDEAS, EXPERTISE, AND EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES IN CANADA.

## Health and Wellness Department Upcoming Events/Save the Date!

- **March 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Medicine Keeper Self-Care Workshop hosted by Zunza Wellness**
- **March 11-13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Dr. Beselt in community**
- **March 11-15<sup>th</sup>**  
**Naomi Lapan (Nurse Practitioner) in community**
- **March 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Dental Clinic**  
Contact the [Kwadacha Clinic](#) to book appointments!



### Kwadacha Education Society **POST-SECONDARY**

The Kwadacha Education Society Post-Secondary department is responsible for the annual delivery of the Indigenous Services Canada Post-Secondary student support program and University and College entrance preparation program: National Guidelines. The post-secondary student support program provides non-repayable financial support to Registered band members to advance towards a recognized post-secondary education credential as prioritized and directed by Kwadacha Nation. The program's objectives are to improve the socio-economic outcomes for First Nations by supporting and providing eligible students by application with funding to access education opportunities at the post-secondary level, consistent with the principle of First Nations control of First Nations education.

If you have any questions or inquiries about Kwadacha Education Society Post-Secondary student support program, contact Cathy Warren at [cathy.warren@kwadacha.com](mailto:cathy.warren@kwadacha.com).

Applications are due annually April 15th.





Movie night/Sliding Feb 17, 2024.



hosted by Jenna and Farrah Feb 10, 2024



Hello all,  
 First, we would like to thank everyone that came out to enjoy a little fun and pampering in community. Would also like to give a big thank you to Farrah for helping host Girl's night and Sliding/Movie Night, we all had a great time, most definitely kept Farrah and I on our toes and we look forward to hosting more activities for the community. The community office would also like to welcome Vincent Jr to the team as the new office janitor and would like to thank him for keeping the office clean and tidy.

## HELIX OF RESILLIENCE



### KWADACHA NATION

My name is Alexander Muller, and I come from the multicultural nation of South Africa, nestled at the southern tip of the African continent. South Africa is renowned for its rich tapestry of diverse cultures and religions, boasting 11 official languages and a vibrant blend of traditions. From birth, I've been instilled with the ethos of embracing all cultures and religions, fostering a deep understanding and appreciation for different ways of life.

The year 1920 marks a significant juncture in history, notably with the establishment of a trading post at Fort Ware, a momentous event in Kwadacha's narrative that symbolizes resilience and adaptability amidst changing times. Throughout the centuries, the people of Kwadacha have coexisted harmoniously with their environment, guided by ancestral teachings to maintain a delicate equilibrium between resources and communal needs.

Despite the challenges presented by its remote location, the community's resilient spirit perseveres, transcending physical boundaries and reflecting a profound connection to the land and its resources.

I am particularly drawn to Kwadacha Nation and its people. As Kwadacha navigates the intricate balance between tradition and modernity, it serves as a testament to the enduring spirit and timeless wisdom passed down through generations. Coming from South Africa, I find a deep resonance and an opportunity to contribute meaningfully.

As a professional in Supply Chain Management, my core values revolve around integrity, adaptability, and continuous improvement.

In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, supply chain management emerges as a beacon of resilience, enabling communities, individuals, and organizations to overcome challenges and seize opportunities with unwavering determination. My current focus and contribution lie in procurement, assisting Kwadacha Nation and its people with innovative supply solutions.



On my third attempt to visit Fort Ware, I was able to land in the community on February 14, 2024. I was greeted by an awe-inspiring natural beauty unlike any I had ever encountered. The pristine surroundings, the warmth of the people, and their way of life made for an unforgettable experience.

Fort Ware, with its abundant opportunities, revealed itself as a picturesque town.

A helicopter was needed. But that would push the costs of the expedition much higher than usual. Luckily Teck stepped up and offered to contribute \$10,000 toward the \$19,000 cost for a helicopter to drop the canoes where Ludwig Creek entered the upper Kechika River. Instead of having to pack or drag the canoes for 22 kms from Ludwig Lake, the participants could hike to the river, and have the canoes waiting for them.

### 225 Kilometers of “Beautiful”

It was an extraordinary trip, with a combined total of 225 kilometers of hiking and paddling over 12 days.

There were many powerful conversations around the fire, or while paddling, or while sitting quietly on the gravel bars. Some people who were feeling their lives pulled by negative forces were given the opportunity to refocus on their own core values. Some were doing the trip in memory of loved ones lost. Others were deeply appreciative to be able to walk and paddle and explore in the footsteps of their ancestors.

At the end of the journey, some participants were asked for their words to describe the trip:

“It was an honour”

“Teamwork makes the dream work” “Powerful, challenging, amazing”

“Opportunity of a lifetime” “We were blessed”

“Where are we going next year?”

Thank you to each one of you who worked very hard to make the 2023 Kechika River Rediscovery an outstanding journey. In alphabetical order, a huge shout out deserves to go out to Aaron Charlie, Aiden Seymour, Angus McCook, AJ Porter, Andreas Rohrbach, Caity-Rose Gordon, Carolyn Boya, Cathy Warren, Cora Boya, Craig McCook, Decland Seymour, Dionne Izony, Donald Gordon, Hayden Trapp, Jadon Seymour, Leanne Sweeney, Nick Tam, Onadee McKenna, Ryland Massettoe, Sasa Izony, and Susie Tomah.

### A Few Final Words about Rediscovery

Many communities across North America and overseas have run Rediscovery Camps that last for a few years. But there are only two communities in the world that have had Rediscovery camps as long as Fort Ware. And no other Rediscovery camp does trips like ours.

It takes a certain type of community and people to make Rediscovery Camps last for 26 years, and still going strong.

So ALSO THANK YOU TO EACH OF YOU, including Tommy Poole, Glenn Charlie, Bradley Seymour, Loretta Pierre, and so **many more** who worked hard, walked long, and paddled hard to make so many Rediscoverys happen all the way back to 1997. The full list of people is too long for this newsletter, but you each know who you are.

With Respect to you all, Donald Gordon

# Kwadacha girls



12-18yrs ongoing support group

Starting: March 26 @ 6-8pm  
Where: Elders Centre

Come talk, connect and participate in fun activities

Lets talk:

- 01** Healthy relationships
- consent
  - identifying red flags
  - safe sex & respect

- 02** Self esteem
- social media
  - body image

- 03** Mental Health
- building resiliency
  - self discovery
  - making meaning & finding your place
  - exploring hobbies



Lets have fun:

- painting
- scrapbooking
- spa nights (facials & manicures)
- bring ideas!



Questions? Contact Alexa Dougherty

# Healing Sisters

## Domestic violence workshop



### What is it?

- find community support from other Kwadacha women
- discuss healthy relationship dynamics
- learn how to identify the red flags for abuse and violence
- discover new coping tools for the whole family
- join in on the creation of a bimonthly support group

### WHERE

- Elders centre

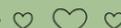
### WHEN

- March 13 @ 1pm

Drinks, snacks and a craft will be included in the afternoon

If you want to join but need childcare, please reach out

Comment or message Alexa privately if you would like to join



Have questions?  
Want more info?  
Contact Alexa

## Kechika River Rediscovery Journey 2023

Fort Ware's Sudze K'anusta Rediscovery expeditions began in 1997, as one way to connect youth to the strength of their traditional Tse'kene culture, and enable participants to Rediscover parts of their own strength that they may have forgotten. These expeditions through the thick bush, along the tough trails, and along rivers of the traditional territory of the northern Tse'kene people are designed push the limits of all participants' personal abilities.

While Rediscovery started by rediscovering ancient pathways and skills, the tough trips of Kwadacha's Rediscovery also lead us all to a rediscovery of our inner strength, our values, and see our potential in new ways.

In each of the previous 23 summer expeditions, we have walked, bushwacked, and paddled an average of 70 kilometers across Tse'kene traditional territory, adding up to over 1500 kilometers by foot and paddle. That is the same distance as walking cross-country from Fort Ware to Vancouver.

Then Covid happened.

For the youth of many communities, whether remote or urban, the changes started by Covid and the personal isolation of life "moving on-line" had a hard impact on the youth. This is the same in Kwadacha. After 23 years of trips, Kwadacha Rediscovery was cancelled due to Covid for two summers. On the third summer it was cancelled due a problem guaranteeing an aircraft due in part to the wildfire situation.

These challenging expeditions, and all the good conversations that can happen, were deeply missed.

**As Montanna recently said: "Lots of my little cousins ask me what Rediscovery is. I tell them: 'I can't tell you what it is, but I can tell you that it is the best time of your life.'"**

Due to the stresses on the community, and particularly on the youth of the community, it was clear in early 2023 that we had to ensure that Rediscovery ran in 2023, no matter what. We also believed that the 2023 Rediscovery expedition had to be longer than ever before.

### The Lure of the Kechika

The Kechika River is one of the most remote rivers in BC but is the much-loved home territory to many people of Kwadacha. Its headwaters lie about 60 kilometers north of the village.

Access by canoe, however, is almost impossible. The river is a tough 22 kilometer bushwack from Ludwig Lake, the nearest lake accessible by floatplane. For this reason, there is no record of any outside paddlers having descended the upper Kechika. If we could do it, this trip would be a "first known descent by canoe" of the upper Kechika. Continue