

# TANGIRNAQ TIMES

## FALL 2023



### TNV & PNWACC CONTINUE BUILDING SHARED CONNECTIONS



Attendees of the in-person camp learned several Alutiiq/Sugpiaq dances from Loren S. Anderson and then shared them with the attendees at the community lunch to honor Elders.

The Tangirnaq Native Village (TNV) is proud of its longstanding partnership with the Pacific Northwest Alutiiq Culture Camp (PNWACC). This partnership has built a shared foundation that connects Tribal Citizens who reside outside of their traditional homelands, providing meaningful cultural connections. Together, TNV and PNWACC work to share the richness of culture, weaving the Alutiiq language into the daily lives of community members, and providing events and learning opportunities to further our shared arts, culture, and traditions.

March-August of 2023, PNWACC offered the following workshops:

- Online Alutiiq Dance taught by Loren S. Anderson
- Online Naniq Carving taught by Jessica Towns-Camara and Heather Metrokin Cannon

- A four-day in-person culture camp

All of the events were well attended. Participants provided heartwarming feedback that included:

*"I enjoyed connecting with fellow Tribal Citizens. I also enjoyed the time and attention from PNWACC staff who gave plenty of examples and history."*

*"There was something about working with my hands after spending time with other Alutiit that made me feel culturally connected."*

*"I enjoyed cocnnecting with my people."*

"This partnership is both informative and inspirational. It has reignited cultural pride and strengthened community bonds. We're thrilled to announce the continuation of our partnership with PNWACC for 2024,"

said TNV Executive Director Gwen Sargent. "New and exciting workshops that will be led again this coming year by PNWACC. Get ready for a year filled with even more connection as we share our Alutiiq culture!"



TNV Tribal Citizen Amy Chabitnoy working on her Sugpiaq drum during a class taught by Andrew Abyo.

#### CORE VALUES:

- Adaptability
- Spiritual connection to place
- Unity and respect
- Strength through consensus
- Our Heritage, Our Families, Our Future

#### PURPOSE

The core purpose of Tangirnaq Native Village (aka Woody Island) is to enhance the lives of our Tribal citizens by providing programs and services while preserving and promoting our culture and traditions.

# Letter From **THE PRESIDENT**



*Cama'i,*

I hope this letter finds you all doing well and in good spirits. The regular sounds of geese heading south remind us that the seasons are turning and we are heading into fall. If you've been able to get out to go fishing or berry picking, I hope that your efforts have been fruitful!

The summer has been a flurry of activities and I wish to highlight two recent events that embody our core values that include our connection to our homeland, respect, and our unity.

First, we converged at the Alaska Army National Guard Kodiak Readiness Center to commemorate Specialist Daniel Lee Harmon, a genuine hero of the Vietnam War. In a significant

tribute, the center has been memorialized in Danny's memory. I am grateful that we were able to fulfill the long-standing wish of Margaret Roberts by renaming and honoring Danny in this meaningful way.

Second, our community rallied together for a service project on Woody Island. Many volunteers from Koniag, Lesnoi, and Tangirnaq Native Village joined together to restore the island's beauty. Together, we cleaned up the area, constructed steps, and installed informative signs. We were able to remove four tons of trash. This project is a testament to the unity that characterizes our region and the spirit of service that defines us.

Many hands do make light work, however, our own Gwen Sargent, and Alexandria Troxell from Koniag deserve special recognition for their contributions to these endeavors.

These events serve as a reminder of our profound connection to Kodiak, the importance of respecting our heroes, and the spirit of unity that defines our region. These values also guide our work as a tribal council and will continue to serve our people well. *Quyanaasinaq.*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Cleghorn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Alex Cleghorn  
TNV President



April Laktonen  
Counciller, the Alutiiq  
Museum's Executive  
Director viewing the  
interpretive signs after  
they were delivered.



TNV Historical sign  
on Woody Island



# OUTDOOR INTERPRETIVE SIGNS INSTALLED ON WOODY ISLAND

Last fall, TNV partnered with the Alutiiq Museum to create four historical outdoor interpretive signs designed to share the Alutiiq heritage of Woody Island. In late July, the signs were completed and installed outdoors on Woody Island.

## Tangirarmiut — People of Tangirnaq

Alutiiq/Sugpiaq ancestors settled Chiniak Bay more than 7,500 years ago. The remains of houses, meals, and tools reveal their daily lives. People built warm, weather-proof homes from wood and sod. They fished for cod, hunted seals from skin-covered kayaks, and preserved their catch over smoky fires. They raised children, made artwork, and celebrated life. For generations, Alutiiq ancestors thrived on Tangirnaq.

### Tangirnaq

Tangirnaq means “spit of land” in the Kodiak Alutiiq language. It may refer to Icehouse Point, the location of the historic Alutiiq village.

*“Cultures, unlike fish, trees, and people, do not naturally die. Rather they persist with amazing resilience, making few changes here and there consistent with underlying values.”*

NANCY YAW DAVIS, Anthropologist, 1970

### Colonial Forces

Life on Tangirnaq changed dramatically when Russian traders arrived in the late 1700s. Russian officials forced villagers to hunt sea otters, produce lumber, salt, and ice, and make bricks. Many people died from disease and starvation, yet the Tangirnaq community persisted and adapted. Alutiiq, Russian, and Creole families coexisted. In the 20th century, the construction of a Baptist mission and military installations continued to transform life on the island.

### Moving Away

Alutiiq families began moving away from Tangirnaq in the 1960s after the public school closed and ferry service to Kodiak ended. Today, Tangirarmiut families visit the island to harvest wild foods, attend camps and retreats, and enjoy their homeland.



Chipped stone point and net sinker, ca. 3,000 years old. Kodiak Island Borough Collection, Alutiiq Museum, AM560.



Neighbour homesite, Sawmill Point, Tangirnaq, with a sod house and a cabin, ca. 1900. Courtesy of the Kodiak History Museum, Sifer Collection, 701671729.



## Wooded Island

Today, Tangirnaq is often called Woody Island. This term comes from the Russian name *Ostrov Leisnoi* — Wooded Island — as it was often referred to in the 19th century.



A woman collects spruce roots, Kodiak Island, 2006. Photograph courtesy of Sven Hoekanson Jr., Alutiiq Museum Library.

### Napaq — Sitka Spruce

*Picea sitchensis* (Bang.) Carrière  
Kodiak lies at the western edge of Alaska’s coastal rainforests. Spruce is its only evergreen tree. For most of its history, Tangirnaq did not have spruce trees. The forest began growing about 600 years ago, as trees colonized Kodiak from the north.

*“Looking down the bay, we observe a thickly timbered and a somewhat more level island than usual—it is the famous Wood Island, where the largest spruce trees in all this section grow; upon it is a small village of one hundred and fifty-six souls, living in thirteen log houses, thickly clustered together; they are all sea-otter hunters during the summer.”*

HENRY WOOD ELLIOTT, *Environmentalist*, 1886

### A Valuable Tree

Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people use every part of the spruce. The trees provide lumber for houses, boats, and fish racks, material for making tools, and roots for weaving. In spring, craftspeople dig small roots from the forest floor and then cook them to remove a dark outer covering. Then, they split the pale inner core and use it to make baskets, hats, and mats.

Spruce is an abundant, reliable source of firewood. Spruce twigs and pitch are excellent tinder and people use spruce branches to heat their homes and steam baths.

Elders report that spruce pitch or a powder made from rotten spruce wood can promote healing if you have a cut or burn. If you have a cough, the tender spring spruce needles can be soaked in hot water to brew a soothing tea.



Spruce Root Basket, 19th century, Johnstone Collection, Alutiiq Museum, AM512-9



# VOLUNTEERS COME TOGETHER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

On July 27, approximately 70 volunteers came together to participate in the Woody Island Clean-Up Community Service Project. The occasion was sponsored by Koniag Inc.

Special quyanna to Tyler Randolph with Kodiak Water Taxi and Transport, Alex Amox, Sunaq Tribe of Kodiak, Kodiak Baptist Mission, and the Kodiak National Guard for helping to finish our Woody Island Community Service Project.

The service project also included the beautification of Daniel’s grave and the installation of four historical signs.

“Quyanaa to those agencies that joined the efforts to ensure the success of these two important projects,” said Vice President Sargent. “The Woody Island Tribal Council was honored to meet some of Danny’s family, and comrades—many that traveled far to help honor Danny.”



Nearly 70 volunteers participated in the Woody Island Community Service Project.



The clean-up resulted in approximately four tons of trash was collected and hauled off Woody Island.

# DANIEL LEE HARMON

## Kodiak Readiness Center Ceremony

On Thursday, July 27, 2023, after more than a decade's long effort that was initially launched by late Tribal Council member Margaret Roberts, TNV and the Alaska National Guard hosted a ceremony memorializing the Kodiak Readiness Center in memory of Daniel Lee Harmon, a young Alutiiq soldier who died in Vietnam while valiantly saving the lives of his fellow soldiers. At the event, it was standing room only as more than 100 family, friends, fellow soldiers, and community members came to celebrate the Alutiiq hero.

The ceremony included the lighting of an Alutiiq lamp and Margaret's granddaughter Samantha-Lynn Heglin danced and welcomed attendees. Several speakers shared moving stories about Daniel's courage and the District Kodiak Coast Guard Color Guard presented the colors.

"It's a beacon of inspiration and sacrifice, his memory resonates within the hearts of our people we remember him as Kodiak's hero. He optimized that true essence of selflessness and devotion to his fellow man," Said TNV President Alex Cleghorn during the ceremony. "In honoring Danny tonight let's also remember all of those who have served and continue to serve with courage and distinction, that valor and sacrifice wave within our tribe and our country and our history, and remind us all of the indomitable spirit that connects us to each other and to this land."

The new signage that now stands outside the Kodiak Readiness Center bearing Daniel Lee Harmon's name was unveiled during the ceremony. "Danny brought us together today. His legacy is living, his legacy is

freedom," said Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe, the Adjutant General for the Alaska National Guard who spoke at the event. "I am grateful for what he has done in going before me and going before us — he has provided that freedom for all of us."

Quyanaa, to the Alutiiq Museum, the Alaska National Guard, the Kodiak Area Native Association, Koniag, and Leisnoi for their efforts in supporting these efforts.



Six of seven Tribal Council members standing with the new signage. (From right) Chrislyn Hoen, Gordon Pullar Jr., Alex Cleghorn, Samantha-Lynn Heglin, Gwen Sargent, and Germaine Salmine.

## TRIBUTE TO DANNY

Daniel Lee Harmon's memory will be cherished by his ilat-family, angayut-friends, and suuget-community for generations. He was a saltaataq-soldier, who gave his last full measure of devotion for his fellow man and his country. He will always be remembered as Kodiak's hero—an Alutiiq man who represented the very best of our community and Sugpiaq values.

The official party at the ceremony included: Major General Torrence Saxe, Adjunct General, BG James



Palmbas, Assistant Adjunct General Army, TNV President Cleghorn.

Others in attendance were Senator Gary Stevens, many local Kodiak family members, Danny's family that

included Tess Thompson, Daniel Nelson, Loren Harmon Castillo, Lisa Monroe, Ben Monroe, and Seth Fletcher. Army comrades LRRP Ranger, Captain Mike Lapola and LRRP Ranger Robert Crawford, and the son of LRRP Ranger Mike Coon, the Ranger Danny saved.

Many thanks to CPT Andrew Viray, Azara Mohammadi, Vanette Tyson, Adam Tucker, along with TNV staff, Kodiak National Guard and many others that worked together to make this a successful event.

# DANIEL HARMON EVENT

## Photos



The Alutiq Lamp "Naniq" was lit as part of the ceremony.



A remembrance put together in honor of Daniel's service.



(From left) Mike Lapolla, Daniel Nelson, Mike Cook, and Bob Crawford who served with Daniel visit his grave.



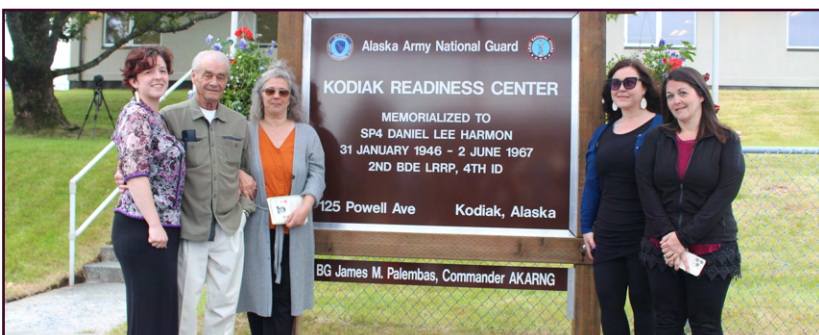
Maj. Gen. Torrence W. Saxe is the Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard and Woody Island Tribal Council President Alex Cleghorn unveiling of the new sign.



TNV President Alex Cleghorn welcoming guests.



More than 100 people attended the event.



Danny's extended Kodiak family (from left) Samantha-Lynn Heglin, Gary Roberts, Leslie Ann Heglin, Lacey Roberts, and Shelly Peterson.



Local Elders enjoying dinner at the reception following the ceremony.

# AFN POSTHUMOUSLY NAMES MARGARET ROBERTS AS AFN'S 2023 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

This past spring, TNV submitted a nomination to the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) for the late Margaret "Agnguarta" Roberts to be awarded 2023 Citizen of the Year Award. While eligibility requirements stipulated that candidates must be living, in the application TNV requested special consideration to accept a nomination for Margaret posthumously.

"Margaret's contributions have demonstrated life-long dedication and legacy building for the Alaska Native Community and to Rural Alaska. Her tireless contributions improved the lives of Alaska Native people," TNV wrote in the nomination. "Margaret's lifetime

advocacy for Native people will live on and will help to guide future generations. Without her dedication many of the programs, services, and policy changes would not have been made possible. We are honored to have benefitted from Margaret's wisdom, kindness, and steadfast commitment."

TNV was later notified by AFN that Roberts had been selected for the award. "This award recognizes the contributions of a native person who has demonstrated strong commitment, dedication, and service to the Alaska Native Community and to Rural Alaska. The Award is bestowed annually on an individual selected by the AFN Board of



Directors for exemplary work that has improved the lives of Alaska Native people."

The award will be presented at the 2023 AFN Convention on October 19th in Anchorage. Margaret's husband, Gary, and family will be present to accept the award.

## INSTITUTE FOR MUSEUMS AND LIBRARY SERVICES GRANT AWARD



TNV was recently awarded a \$150,000 Native American Library Services: Enhancement Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The grant will provide funding for the Tangirarmiut & Sugpiaq Language & Cultural Enhancement Project. This project, will support the following components:

- 1) Expansion of and development of relevant cultural materials that includes growing TNV's library collection of culturally relevant literature through acquiring, developing, and distributing Native literacy materials;
- 2) Deployment of an outreach campaign to strengthen community engagement locally and to Tribal citizens residing outside Kodiak to increase usage of TNV's library, website, and to use multimedia as a way to share the newly developed cultural and educational materials; and
- 3) Building and stewarding new collections that will be shared with the Alutiiq Museum, and Kodiak History Museum, and will be housed in TNV's Tribal library and

archives as well as shared with vast audiences through multimedia.

"The funding from this grant will help TNV further engage in cultural initiatives that will lay the groundwork for current and future cultural preservation initiatives," said TNV Executive Director Gwen Sargent. "This project will include traditional experts, archeologists, scholars, cultural bearers, and other key constituencies who will be part of the research, key informant interviews, and editing of cultural and educational materials produced."

In addition to the materials being housed at TNV's library, a digital collection will also be available through various electronic multimedia platforms and virtual education sessions. According to IMLS, "These efforts continue to support the Alutiiq language and Tangirarmiut cultural revitalization movement which includes cultural activities, education, and initiatives, as well as the revitalization of arts and Alutiiq language on Kodiak Island."



# TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP Update

Last spring, TNV announced that the TNV Tribal Scholarship was being renamed to the Margaret “Anuarata” Roberts Memorial Scholarship in honor of the Tribe’s late leader. “This renaming was to recognize and memorialize Margaret’s tireless efforts to showcase Alutiiq culture through language, dance, and wellness initiatives, as well as her advocacy in promoting education, vocational, and career enhancements of our Tribal citizens,” said TNV Executive Director Gwen Sargent. “Margaret’s lifetime advocacy for the Alutiiq people will live on and help to guide future generations.”

In addition to this change, TNV also announced that beginning with the 2023-24 academic year, the Koniag Education Foundation (KEF) would begin administering the scholarship on behalf of TNV. KEF accepts applications March 1-June 1, for awards up to \$4,000 per year. This academic year, nine scholarships were awarded. Recipients included:

- Tia Diamond, Junior  
Central Michigan University  
Major: English Language, Literature, & Writing
- Anna Robertson, Sophomore  
Salish Kootenai College  
Major: Life Sciences
- Kainu’u Gavin, Senior  
Endicott College  
Major: Sport Management
- Josh Schwartzenburg,  
Graduate Student  
Louisiana State University  
Major: Medicine & Biochemistry
- Austin Homolka, Senior  
Montana State University  
Major: Finance
- Noah Schwartzenburg, Junior  
Southeastern Louisiana University  
Major: Business Administration
- Savannah Lail, Junior  
North Carolina State University  
Major: Human Biology
- Tia Turvey, Junior  
Texas Tech University  
Major: Architecture
- Jenny Roberts, Senior  
Chemeketa Community College  
Major: Nursing



Kainu’u C. Gavin

## SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT Spotlight

Kainu’u C. Gavin has been awarded a TNV scholarship recipient for the past two years. He recently began his senior year at Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts, where he is majoring in Sports Management. Kainu’u is from Watsonville, California, but maintains deep roots in Woody Island.

“My ancestry of being a member of the tribe comes from my father’s side of the family. When my great-grandfather was serving his time in the military, he was fortunate to meet my great-grandmother. She was a member of the Tangirnaq Native Village on Woody Island at the time. Her membership with the village has since been passed down from my grandfather, father, and down to me,” Kainu’u shared in his scholarship essay.

At Endicott, Kainu’u is an active member of the Asian American Pacific Island Community Club. As a part of his studies, he has also taken the opportunity to study abroad in both Ireland and Japan. “My time being a member of the AAPI Community Club and studying abroad has not just helped me overcome some major challenges in college but helped me in establishing some of my long-term goals,” shared Kainu’u. “I am open to pursuing a master’s degree in Sport Leadership at Endicott College, with the possibility of a doctorate in International Affairs.”

At his home in Watsonville, in the summers Kainu’u also volunteers to help coordinate classes at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple Kokoro no Gakko and works with fifth and sixth grade youth interested in learning more about the Temple and Japan.

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## What Next? ?

Tangirnaq Native Village's Annual Meeting and Elections is scheduled for May 18, 2024, in Anchorage Alaska. The meeting will be jointly held with Leisnoi, Inc. Two seats will be up for election. Meeting Notice and Solicitation of Candidates Notice will be distributed in February 2024.

Stay tuned for upcoming information about virtual cultural activities hosted by our partner Pacific Northwest Alutiiq Culture Camp that will be posted on TNV's Facebook page and website.



## COUNCIL MEMBERS & STAFF

### COUNCIL

Alex Cleghorn – President  
Gwen Sargent – Vice President  
Chrislyn Hoen – Secretary/Treasurer  
Debbie Lukin – Council Member  
Samantha Heglin – Council Member  
Gordon Pullar, Jr. – Council Member  
Germaine Salmine – Council Member

### STAFF

Gwen Sargent – Executive Director  
Danielle Christiansen – Project Support Specialist  
Samuel Booch – Executive Business Associate

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