



# AKTÁ LAKOTA

## Museum & Cultural Center

- an outreach of St. Joseph's Indian School -



**NATIONALLY RENOWNED CENTER OF AMERICAN INDIAN ART**

## EXPLORE SOUTH DAKOTA'S NATIVE CULTURES

South Dakota is rooted in Native culture. More than 71,000 individuals of American Indian descent call the state home — including members of the Lakota tribe, who trace their nation's birth to the Black Hills. One of the best places to dive into the past and present of South Dakota's tribal nations is at [Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center](#). The museum tells the history of the Northern Plains people through its exhibits and programs. More than just a museum, it's a journey through time and tradition, a celebration of American Indian heritage that beckons explorers from around the globe to South Dakota.

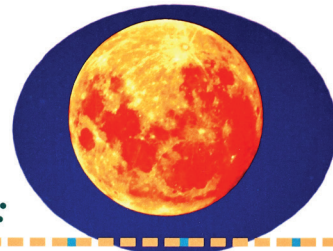


# LAKOTA MOON CALENDAR - *WÍYAWAPI WÓWAPI HANWÍ*

## Blokétu: *The Warm Moons (Summer)*

Throughout the summer, the camp moved often to follow the migrating buffalo. Packing, transporting, and unpacking the family's belongings were the responsibility of the women. They were also busy preparing food, making, and setting up the tipis. The girls received instruction in quillwork and helped prepare food by gathering firewood and water. Boys began honing their hunting skills while hunting small game. The men spent their time making weapons, hunting for wild game, and defending the camp. The summer months were also the time for ceremonies and celebrations.

**Wípazuka Wasté Win** — Moon of the Juneberries  
**Canpásapa Wi** — Moon When the Chokecherries  
Are Ripe  
**Wasúton Wi** — Moon of the Harvest



## *Blokétu:*

### *The Warm Moons (Summer)*

**Wípazuka Wasté Win** Moon of the June Berries  
**Canpásapa Wi** Moon When the Chokecherries Are Ripe  
**Wasúton Wi** Moon of the Harvest

The Lakóta year is divided into 13 moons. Each moon is 28 days long, and every day represents something sacred:

- Two days for the Great Spirit
- Two days for the Mother Earth
- Four days for the Four Winds
- One day for the Spotted Eagle
- One day for the Sun
- One day for the Moon
- One day for the Morning Star
- Four days for the Four Ages
- Seven days for the Seven Rites of the Sacred Pine
- One day for the Buffalo
- One day for the Fire
- One day for the Water
- One day for the Rock
- One day for the Two-legged People

## WANDERING WANDA RETURNS FOR A THIRD SEASON

Wandering Wanda is a fun interactive program that takes you on an adventure around St. Joseph's Indian School Campus, introducing you to some of the dynamic programs and services available to the children and families served by St. Joseph's Indian School.

Wandering Wanda airs every Wednesday June-August at 10:00 AM on our [YouTube Channel](#). In addition to fun-filled, informative tours of our campus, we also encourage visitors to download and take Wandering Wanda with them on their own adventures and share your travels with us at: **Instagram:** use hashtag **#aktalakotamuseum** and tag us **@akta\_lakota** or email us at [aktalakota@stjo.org](mailto:aktalakota@stjo.org)

Download your [Wandering Wanda Activity Page](#) now and start your new adventure!



# MUST-SEE EXHIBITS

## THINGS TO SEE & DO



Aktá Lakota, which means “to honor the people” in Lakota, reflects the museum’s mission to preserve and share the rich heritage of the Northern Plains people. Inside, visitors can view well-preserved clothing, accessories, tipis, utensils, weapons and other objects made from materials such as beads, feathers and animal hides. Many of the artifacts are from the early reservation period between 1800 and 1930. There are also many pieces of fine and contemporary art on display.



No More Painted Robes  
©1988, Roger Broer



When All You Have is the  
Warmth of a Woodstove  
© 2010, Keith BraveHeart



The Human Element  
© 2011, Angela Babby

**ON EXHIBIT NOW**

**Wóyake: Language in Lakota Art**

Wóyake is a Lakota verb signifying the act of storytelling, relating, speaking, or expressing through words. Drawn from the Museum’s permanent collection, the artworks presented in this exhibition delve into the intersection of visual imagery and the written word in Lakota art.

Call 800-798-3469 or email [aktalakota@stjosephs.org](mailto:aktalakota@stjosephs.org) to schedule a tour.

Located on the campus of St. Joseph’s Indian School  
1301 N. Main St. Chamberlain, SD

**Museum Hours**  
Monday - Saturday  
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
Sunday  
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

**aktalakota.org • 800-798-3462 • FREE ADMISSION**

The museum hosts rotating [exhibits](#), such as **Wóyake: Language in Lakota Art**, which features paintings and other works that honor storytelling through the written word and the versatility of the Lakota language (on display through October 31, 2024). Look for masterpieces by artists such as [Keith BraveHeart](#), [Dyani White Hawk](#) and [Nathaniel Ruleaux](#).

Don't miss a visit to the on-site **Medicine Wheel Garden**, home to native plants and a water feature that honors the resource's healing power and importance to the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota tribes.



The gift shop — which has a bounty of items produced by local artisans, including jewelry, quilts and ornaments — is also a must-stop.



## CAMPUS HAPPENINGS

### AMERICAN INDIAN DAY WACÍPI — SEPTEMBER 20 & 21

Join us as we celebrate our 48th annual powwow - [Gathering of the Wakányeja](#) - children. This is an enjoyable and anticipated event on our campus. It is a day set aside to honor and appreciate the rich and beautiful heritage of all American Indian people, especially the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota tribes of the Great Plains.



Events begin on Thursday with a welcome from St. Joseph's Indian School President in the Rec Center; followed by registration on Friday with cultural activities taking place at the Museum, an open house of our new Equine Therapy Complex, and tours of the school and health care center, the day will end with a relaxing reception and Tiyóšpaye (extended family) dinner at Arrowwood Resort.

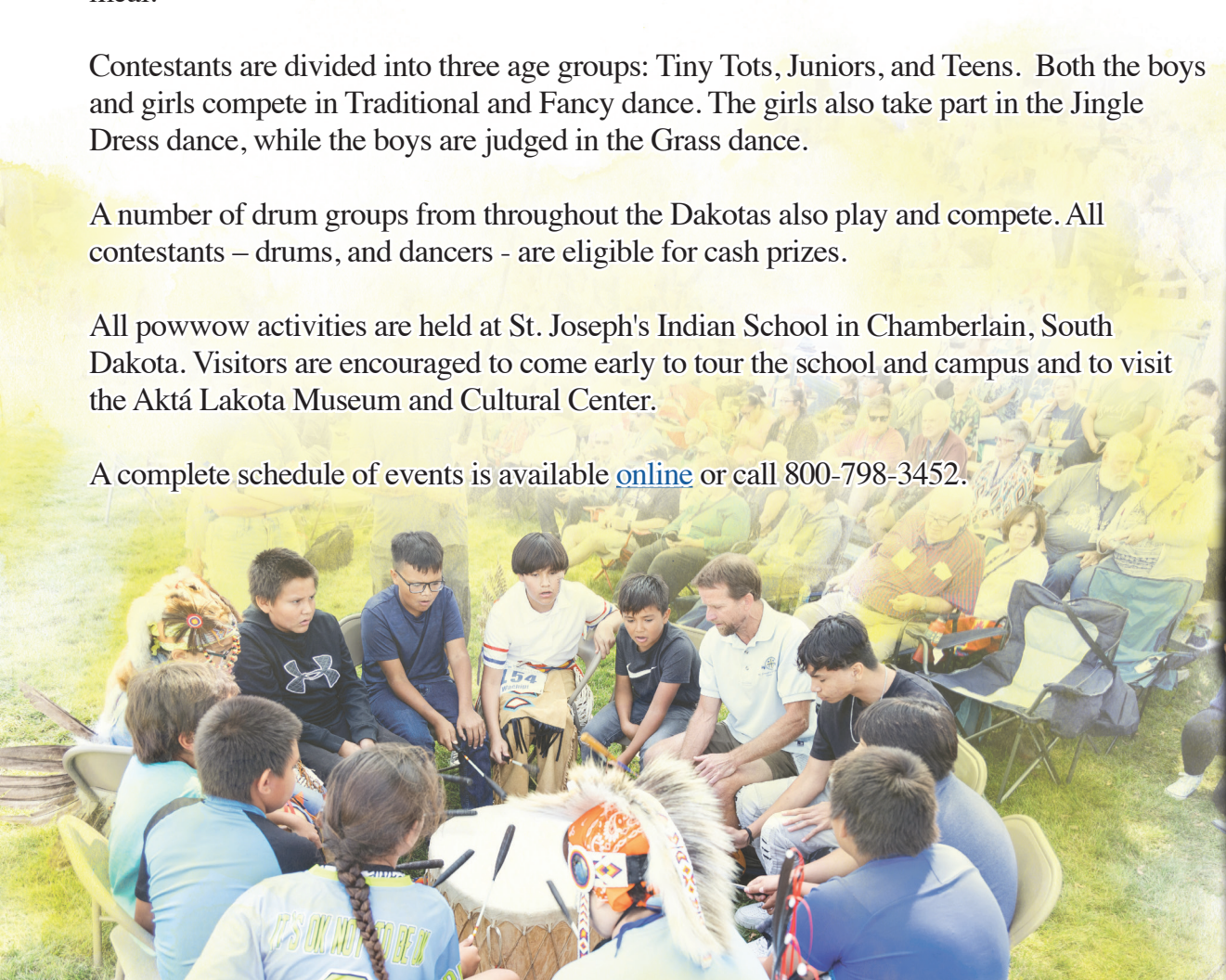
On Saturday, join our staff and students for tours of St. Joseph's campus, chapel, and homes; the blessing of the powwow grounds will be held at 11:30 a.m. with Grand Entry beginning at noon. We will wrap up our weekend of celebration Saturday evening, with mass at our Lady of the Sioux Chapel followed by the awarding of prizes and an evening meal.

Contestants are divided into three age groups: Tiny Tots, Juniors, and Teens. Both the boys and girls compete in Traditional and Fancy dance. The girls also take part in the Jingle Dress dance, while the boys are judged in the Grass dance.

A number of drum groups from throughout the Dakotas also play and compete. All contestants – drums, and dancers - are eligible for cash prizes.

All powwow activities are held at St. Joseph's Indian School in Chamberlain, South Dakota. Visitors are encouraged to come early to tour the school and campus and to visit the Aktá Lakota Museum and Cultural Center.

A complete schedule of events is available [online](#) or call 800-798-3452.



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## ST. JOSEPH'S INDIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS RAISE AWARENESS FOR MMIR

In early May, students in first through twelfth grades and staff gathered on the lawn of the Wisdom Circle on the campus of St. Joseph's Indian School for a solemn event. The gathering was a ceremony to pray, raise awareness and request healing and resolution around the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives.

Why? For Native women on reservations alone, not only is the murder rate ten times higher than the national average, but also murder is the [third leading cause of death](#). Men and children also experience higher rates of disappearance and murder. The school's [Counseling Services Department](#) that organized the event understands that many students know these realities firsthand. The MMIR ceremony provided the opportunity to acknowledge loss as well as educate about protective factors.

[Allison Morrisette](#), MMIP Coordinator for the South Dakota Division of Criminal Justice, addressed the students, noting the importance of raising awareness and educating at-risk students.

*"It would be good to have more events like this around the entire state South Dakota and not just in Chamberlain. I think you guys are setting a good precedent for the state to follow," she said.*

Expressions of grief and healing included a round dance with prayer and healing songs by the school's Pahá Makhásan Lowáŋpi (Chalk Hills Singers drum group). Participants moved through a red hand-print station where they could imprint themselves or one of the school's therapy horses as a sign of solidarity and prayer for the missing. They made prayer ties, as well.

Sixth-grader Say'Dee said, "I think MMIR is important because when a relative goes missing in our thiošpaye (extended family) circle, it creates a ripple effect."



Seventh-grader Rayne added, “It’s about my culture and about our missing indigenous relatives and their whereabouts. We are praying for them and hope they find their way back home.”

The event culminated with a walk to American Creek Park to build community awareness. Students proudly wore t-shirts for the event designed by fifth-grader Gabrielle, whose artwork was the winning submission. The [South Dakota Humanities Council](#) funded the t-shirts.



## ST. JOSEPH’S INDIAN SCHOOL STUDENT CULTURAL TRIP

On May 16, the 21 seventh-grade students of St. Joseph’s Indian School prayed and smudged before embarking on the trip that has become a rite of passage.

The journey, which comprises five days of traveling to important cultural sites and reflecting upon the lives of their ancestors, prepares them to become leaders at school and in life. On Tuesday, May 21, they worked on presentations about their experience to share their learning with younger students and step into their leadership roles for the coming year.

Months of preparation included learning about the cultural, spiritual and historical significance of their Lakota ancestors’ sacred sites on the trip:

- **Mathó Pahá** — Bear Butte
- **Phešlá** — Bald Area
- **Heháka Sapa He** — Black Elk Peak
- **Thášúnke Witkó** — Crazy Horse Memorial
- **Mathó Thípila** — Bear’s Lodge
- **Wašún Wičhóniya Wakhán** — Wind Cave
- **Pheži Slá Okíčhize Owánka** — Battle of Greasy Grass/Little Big Horn
- **Čhanpké Ópi** — Wounded Knee



Following the path of their ancestors and cultural icons, the trip’s goal is the spiritual, physical and emotional growth that forms them young people into tomorrow’s leaders.

Mykah, a student, said she especially enjoyed Black Elk Peak. “To be where my ancestors were” felt special to her.

For James, climbing around and exploring the Badlands was the best part. Cell phones were left behind for the trip. When asked how he felt about that, James said, “It was better without phones,” acknowledging they can be distracting.

The Crazy Horse Memorial moved Tristine. Of Korczak Ziolkowski and the others who have worked on and continue the monument’s construction, she noted how they have “dedicated their lives to show our history.”

Ponting to the Crocs on his feet, Brayden said proudly, “These are the very Crocs I wore when I climbed Bear Butte and Black Elk Peak.” For him, the hikes were the best part of the trip.

There were many highlights for Braxton – Sunday at Crazy Horse, learning about the Battle of Little Big Horn and the Native sharpshooter – but he kept going back to Evan’s Plunge as his favorite. “Except, maybe, when we all sang to the music on the bus on the way back from Mathó Thípila,” he said.

The groups travel separately as boys and girls. This split is in keeping with the traditional instruction in ways of maturing. On this seventeenth anniversary trip, each day concluded by gathering in a circle, where students reflected on the day’s experiences and their implications for their understanding of leadership.



## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

### FIELD TRIPS WELCOME!

The Aktá Lakota Museum promotes learning for children of all ages and abilities through interactive, informal, hands-on exhibits and programming.



The museum is a welcoming, fun, and enjoyable environment that honors the rich, beautiful history of the Lakota people. Exhibits, both inside and outside, are designed to include subjects in art, literature, culture, and history. The Aktá Lakota Museum is a place that provides children and adults a living lesson on the American Indian way of life — both past and present. Admission is Free! [Plan your visit today!](#)

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# CAMPUS TOURS

## STOP BY AND SEE US!

The St. Joseph's Indian School welcomes visitors and group tours. Guided campus tours are available upon request at the receptionist's desk. For more information, call 800.798.3452 or email us at [aktalakota@stjo.org](mailto:aktalakota@stjo.org).

To schedule an appointment for a guided tour or request transportation for a tour email [aktalakota@stjo.org](mailto:aktalakota@stjo.org).



## GENERAL MUSEUM INFORMATION

### Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center

St. Joseph's Indian School  
1301 North Main Street  
Chamberlain, SD 57325  
Phone: 1-605-234-3452  
Toll Free: 1-800-798-3452

E-Mail: [aktalakota@stjo.org](mailto:aktalakota@stjo.org)

Online: <http://www.aktalakota.stjo.org/>

### Memberships and Affiliations

ABA – American Bus Association  
NTA – National Tour Association  
ASDM – Association of South Dakota Museums  
SDSHS – South Dakota State Historical Society  
AAM – American Association of Museums  
IACA – Indian Arts & Crafts Association  
MPMA – Mountain Plains Museum Association  
AASLH – American Assoc. for State & Local History

### Summer Hours

May – October  
8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Monday - Saturday  
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; Sunday

### Winter Hours

November – April  
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.; Monday - Friday  
*Closed weekends and National Holidays*

- Interactive Displays
- Medicine Wheel Garden
- After Hours Tours by Appointment
- Bus/RV Parking
- Handicap-Accessible
- Guided Tours Available Upon Request

### **FREE ADMISSION**

Donations Welcome



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