



AKTÁ LAKOTA

Museum & Cultural Center

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



NATIONALLY RENOWNED CENTER OF AMERICAN INDIAN ART

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

November is Native American Heritage Month, and here at the Aktá Lakota Museum, we celebrate Native culture and heritage every day. However, this month, we also want to emphasize the importance of honoring our Veterans as part of our heritage.

Veterans Day is November 11th, and we would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to all Veterans for their sacrifices, bravery, and honorable service to their country

and fellow citizens of this great nation. It is these individuals who have made it possible for us civilians to enjoy our freedoms, voice our concerns about injustice, and defend our rights to choose. While words may fall short of conveying our appreciation, **Wópilá táŋka** – *many thanks* – is a meaningful start.

Native Americans have long honored their war heroes through special ceremonies and Pow Wows, which celebrate their service and allow

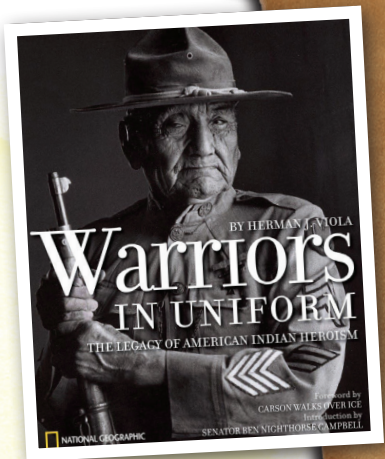


the community to share in both joy and sorrow. Some ceremonies provide returned warriors with a space to discuss their experiences, helping them to release the trauma of past events and reintegrate into community life.

A valuable resource for understanding this topic is the book **Warriors in Uniform: The Legacy of American Indian Heroism**. Through compelling photographs and insightful text, the author chronicles the history of American Indian participation in wars from the 1770s to the present. The

imagery is striking, and the narratives provoke thoughtful reflection.

We offer many more resources in our store and [online](#). We hope that all Veterans have the opportunity to spend quality time with family and friends, and that their communities take a moment to express their gratitude for their service - **Pilámaya** — *thank you!*



LAKOTA MOON CALENDAR - *WÍYAWAPI WÓWAPI HANWÍ*

Ptanyétu: *The Moons of Change (Autumn)*

As summer gave way to fall, the Lakota got ready for winter. Food was gathered to last the winter season. Women prepared meat from the buffalo that the men hunted. Underground storage caches were filled with dried meat and fruit, and large quantities of firewood were stocked.



Ptanyétu:

The Moons of Change (Autumn)

- Canwápeji Wi* Moon When the Leaves Turn Brown
- Canwapekasna Wi* Moon When the Wind Shakes Off Leaves
- Waniyetu Wi* Moon of the Rutting Deer

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 Pipe
- 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

- **Canwápegi Wi** — *Moon When the Leaves Turn Brown*
- **Canwapekasna Wi** — *Moon When the Wind Shakes off Leaves*
- **Waniyetu Wi** — *Moon of the Rutting Deer*

American Indians treasured nature and earth. The people's close connection to nature is seen in their calendars. Based on the moon cycles, the American Indian year was divided in to 13 moons with each [moon being 28 days long](#).

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MUST-SEE EXHIBITS

OPENING IN NOVEMBER



Wóunspe – Education — celebrates the profound relationship between Native American students and their mentors, viewed through an artistic perspective. The exhibition emphasizes an artistic perspective, showcasing pieces past and present of St. Joseph's Indian School alongside the works of established Native American artists. The exhibition emphasizes the sharing of cultural heritage, artistic techniques, and storytelling traditions. Visitors will experience a dynamic blend of voices and styles, reflecting the fresh perspectives of youth and wisdom of experience. The exhibit opens November 22, 2024 and runs through July 2025. [Learn More!](#)

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

- [St. Joseph's Student Art Exhibit](#) – March 2025
- [Itówapi on Paper](#) – August 2025
- [Voices of Resilience](#) – February 2026
- [Americans](#) – Nov. 2026 – Jan. 2027

ST. JOSEPH'S BRAIDS OF STRENGTH: A CORD OF THREE

November is American Indian Heritage Month! Celebrate it by learning about the Lakota tradition of hair braiding!

Imagine in a not-so-distant past the following scene: a young Lakota (Sioux) girl sits unmoving as the women behind her carefully weaves together three sections of hair into a beautiful, intricate braid. As the woman does this, she shares stories of history and tradition with the young girl. The girl breathes in the words and holds them in her heart. The stories provide her with a sense of togetherness with those around her, and those from the past who first shared these stories.

Like a braid, her ancestors, her elders and she create a cord of three — creating something stronger than any one of them alone.

“And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.”
— Ecclesiastes 4:12



Students at St. Joseph's Indian School practice their hair braiding skills on dolls, students and staff members!



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Fast-forward to present day at St. Joseph's Indian School. While the scene may look a little different, there are still so many similarities.

Regularly, St. Joseph's includes hair braiding lessons as part of Native American Studies, a class each student in grades 1-8 must take as part of their curriculum. Students gather to practice various styles of braiding on their friends and classmates, while also getting their hair braided.

“In a world where cultural diversity can be overlooked and disregarded, the preservation of Lakota traditions, like hair braiding, is more important than ever. It serves as a reminder of the resilience and strength of the Lakota people,” said Joe, Mission Integration director.

In the Lakota culture, hair is sacred. Making up a person's cultural identity, hair can represent individuality, family, tribe and community. Each strand carries memories, joy and wisdom. However, hair can also hold depth of meaning in times of grief. When a Lakota family loses a loved one, some surviving family members, both men and women, cut their hair as a visible sign of grief. This act symbolizes the pain of loss and the separation from the departed loved one.

All told, there are many layers to the importance of hair in the Lakota culture. This is why families and children have the final say in how students' hair is cared for at St. Joseph's. We're excited to see more and more students, girls and boys alike, honoring their heritage by growing their hair long.

United in a common purpose to educate and care for Native American children, the generosity from loyal supporters creates opportunities for a brighter future for each child. Together, this strong cord of three is unbreakable.



Students at St. Joseph's Indian School practice their hair braiding skills on dolls, students and staff members!

WÓĤHEYAKA — GIFTS FROM GENEROUS DONORS

Your valued support of the Aktá Lakota Museum connects people to the art and history of the Northern Plains people. Your [wáčhántognaka](#) — *generosity* — and passion make possible the collecting, preservation, exhibition, and interpretation of historical and contemporary exhibits. You provide access and education, and foster appreciation of the rich culture of the Lakota people. **Wópilá táŋka** – *many thanks* — for your support and commitment!



K. Sharon of Colorado gave this cherished doll ca. 1880s.

ARTIST IN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP FELLOW

The Artist in Business Leadership (ABL) Fellowship is a yearlong initiative designed to support independent Native artists in pursuing their art as a means to establish a sustainable business for themselves and their families. This program offers valuable resources, including network-building opportunities, professional development guidance, and funding to meet business needs.



Alfreda Beartrack-Algeo
2024 ABL Fellow

The ABL Fellowship offers a grant of \$10,000 for projects aimed at enriching the contributions of artists or culture bearers to their communities. Applications are encouraged from artists at all career stages. Among the 16 recipients of the ABL Fellowship for 2024 is Alfreda Beartrack-Algeo.

[Beartrack-Algeo](#) is a proud enrolled member of the Kul Wicasa Oyate, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, where she was born and grew up. She is both an accomplished artist and a published author, having written eight novels aimed at children and teenagers. Alfreda is actively involved in the National League of American Pen Women and the Oceti Sakowin Writers Society. Her artwork and videography have garnered numerous awards and are showcased in libraries, museums, galleries, and private collections around the globe, including the Aktá Lakota Museum.

Alfreda holds multiple degrees and certifications, including a Master of Arts from the University of South Dakota and a Doctor of Management from the University of Phoenix. Her diverse professional background includes roles at the Centers for Disease Control and the Indian Health Service, as well as teaching and serving on various federal, state, and tribal boards. Alfreda expresses, “I am a multifaceted artist with a passion for creativity and imagination. I enjoy weaving together history, culture, and contemporary themes into narratives that inspire and enlighten.” Beartrack-Algeo is currently engaged in writing, creating art, and managing her gallery in Palisade, Colorado, while maintaining strong connections with her Kul Wicasa family and tribal community.

THE BEST GIFT SHOP AROUND!

The Museum's Gift Shop proudly supports local and regional American Indian artists. It showcases an array of unique, original artwork, ranging from handcrafted jewelry to vibrant pottery and beyond. With offerings like star quilts, books on American Indian history, greeting cards, and creatively designed t-shirts. . . . all make this a great shopping destination.



[Visit our online store here!](#)



MUSEUM ANNOUNCEMENTS

WINTER HOURS
NOVEMBER thru APRIL
 Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
 Closed weekends & national holidays.
 After hours by appointment.

AKTÁ LAKOTA
 Museum & Cultural Center
 Located on the campus of St. Joseph's Indian School
 1301 N. Main St. Chamberlain, SD
 aktalakota.org • 800-798-3452

WISHING EVERYONE A BLESSED
 AND
Happy Thanksgiving

We will be closed
NOVEMBER 28TH & 29TH, 2024
 so our staff can spend time with their
 friends and families.

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 Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm, Monday - Friday
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 AKTALAKOTA.ORG | (605) 234-3452

Small Business
SATURDAY
30% off Storewide!

OPEN HOUSE
NOVEMBER 30, 2024 • 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

DOOR PRIZES • FREE GIFTS • CRAFTS FOR THE KIDS • REFRESHMENTS

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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.

To schedule an appointment for a guided tour or request transportation for a tour email aktalakota@stjo.org or call 800-798-3452.

Visits are free —with donations encouraged— and the lessons last forever. Learn more about Lakota traditions and more things to do at the museum at AktalLakota.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

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

