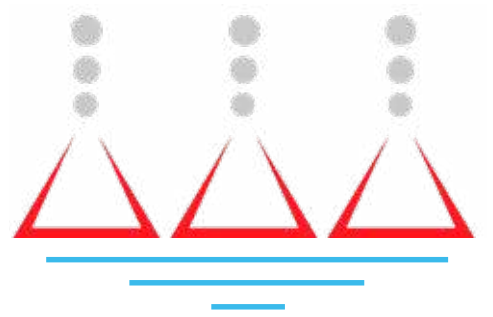




The Counting Cord

Nitnuqeyishi



March–April 2020

KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE NEWSLETTER



Dr. Robert Mitchell, Clinical Medical Director, and Melissa Bobby, a Certified Medical Assistant, demonstrate a telehealth appointment at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. Using any device with a camera and a microphone, providers can often help someone remotely.

Help stop the spread

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has advised that you watch for these coronavirus-related symptoms:

- Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

- These symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure** (based on the incubation period of MERS-CoV viruses).

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Abnormal or sudden loss of taste and smell

If you develop **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19, get **medical attention immediately**. Emergency warning signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability

See **TIPS**, p. 7

Telehealth service available

Dena'ina Wellness Center offers virtual visits

The Dena'ina Wellness Center continues to provide Primary Care, Behavioral Health and Dental services onsite for urgent and emergent services.

In response to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dena'ina Wellness Center is also temporarily provid-

ing an option for telehealth services for both Primary Care and Behavioral Health.

Dr. Robert Mitchell, Clinical Medical Director, and Erica Long, Clinical Behavioral Health Director, have said that beneficiaries (un'ina) may call the front desk at 907-335-7500 in order to determine

if a telehealth visit may meet their needs. Working alongside case managers, the Primary Care and Behavioral Health staff will then determine if telehealth for the service being requested is appropriate.

A “virtual” appointment will be made which will allow the un'ina See **TELEHEALTH**, p. 7

Special deliveries

Tyotkas keeps the meals moving

While access to the Tribe's facilities has been restricted due to concerns about COVID-19, the services provided at those facilities are still essential to many people. That's especially true at Tyotkas Elder Center, where staff have found a way to continue to provide hot meals for Elders.

“We knew our Elders were still going to have a need, especially because they shouldn't be going out to purchase food,” said Chelsea Hendriks, Tribal Program Director.

Instead of serving a daily lunch at Tyotkas, meals are being deliv-

‘It makes me happy knowing this program is helping so many Elders.’

– Roseann Darby,
Elders Center Supervisor

ered to Elders by Tribal staff.

“There was no hesitation. The Tribal Council approved it right away,” Hendriks said.

Meals are being delivered to

See **MEALS**, p. 7



Rheanna Daily delivers a lunch from Tyotkas Elder Center to Max Zharoff's Kenai home on April 6. Kenaitze drivers knock, set the meal down, then step away from the door to honor social distancing mandates.

TRIBAL COUNCIL



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NOTE FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIR

Hello,

I hope everyone is staying safe, healthy, and doing the best given our current circumstances.

I know everywhere we turn there are new reports, new restrictions, and new guidelines to follow, and that can be unnerving and unsettling.

Change is hard, even without a global pandemic, but making these changes in a time of a crisis is significantly more difficult.

The small privileges like spending time with our loved ones or sharing space with others in our community that may have been taken for granted, now suddenly are cherished and missed.

We are all facing significant challenges in our community right now. The Tribal Council and Kenaitze Indian Tribe staff have been working extremely hard to make sure that we can still provide help to our Tribal Members, Elders, staff and the community as a whole. Keeping our community safe and functional is our highest priority.

In this state of isolation and separation, please remember the Tribe has resources available and is ready and willing to serve the needs that may arise in this time of difficulty. Stay connected in creative ways with family and friends. Remind yourself



Wayne D. Wilson Jr.

that we have all been through difficult times and despite feeling like they may not end, we have gotten through them all. There's an end to this, no matter how far away it looks, it will come and when it does we will continue to thrive as a community just like we have since time immemorial. Until then, count on us as much as needed, we are here for you. Stay safe, stay

updated, and stay connected.

This is not the first crisis nor will it be the last. Even though it will be difficult "We" will get through this. Coming together as "one" now has new meaning. We are all in this together and "We" will conquer the virus, the fear and the financial burden that is being put on all of us.

To end on a positive note, summer is just around the corner. Now that the days have gotten longer, the sun is out more and the snow is melting fast. I'm already looking forward to walking on the beach and enjoying the fresh air. I know most of you are already looking forward to the fish coming back so we can fill our homes with fresh fish. Take care everyone.

God bless you all.

Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Chair, Tribal Council

Making connections at NCAI

Tribal Council Chair Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Tribal Council Treasurer Clinton Lageson, Tribal Council Member Mary Ann Mills, and Executive Director of Tribal Administration Dawn Nelson traveled to Washington, D.C., in February to attend the National Congress of American Indians Executive Council Winter Session.

Many topics important to the Tribe were covered during the event, starting with efforts to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, as well as a number of other federal legislative efforts aimed at curbing violence against Alaska Native and American Indian people, and supporting those impacted by violence and abuse.

NCAI attendees heard from members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives as well as officials from a number of federal agencies. Issues covered included sovereignty, resources for education, access to healthy foods, environmental protection, economic development, and the need for tribes to be at the table when these issues are discussed.

The NCAI Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Task Force shared its



Council Member Mary Ann Mills discussed Tribal education with Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos.

work. The task force is a peer-to-peer network that highlights solutions and best practices to overcome barriers in delivery of TANF funds.

At a Federal Communications Commission meeting, attendees learned about the need for digital infrastructure in rural communities, critical for things like education networks and telemedicine delivery.

With the many meetings, presentations and listening sessions, it was a very busy trip. The connections made and the insight gained into ways we can better serve our community will be beneficial in helping to achieve the Tribe's mission, "To assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever."

Health Board encourages you to stop the spread

COVID-19 (coronavirus) has certainly given new meaning to wash your hands regularly, avoid touching your face, social distancing, stay at home, travel quarantines, mandates, etc. Although the challenges presented by these precautions may prove frustrating to each of us as individuals, **adherence by everyone** is a must as we work together to **STOP THE SPREAD** of COVID-19 in our community.

In late March, Dena'ina Wellness Center (DWC) was notified by the Alaska State Public Health Laboratory of its first positive case of COVID-19 for a person who was tested at DWC earlier that week. The Tribal Council and Health Board wish to assure its Tribal Members, Employees and our community that the guidance and mandates of Federal, Tribal, State and public safety agencies are being followed to ensure your health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tribal Council is pleased to announce that, on April 7, DWC was the recipient of Abbott Labs ID NOW™ COVID-19 rapid test equipment. This means that test results will be available within the hour and beneficiaries will receive recommendations regarding treatment, quarantine protocols, etc. shortly thereafter versus having to wait 7-10 days for the results to be returned from the state lab.

The Tribal Council and Tribal Administration are working closely with all of its funding agencies to ensure that the appropriate funding is made available through the Tribe's IHS Annual Funding Agreement and its existing grants. The *Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act* that the President signed on March 27, 2020 provides "critical relief for Indian Country to address the COVID-19 pandemic, including an unprecedented \$8B in funding" to federally recognized Tribes.

The Tribe is currently identifying coronavirus-related expenses that could be considered eligible for financial relief through the CARES Act. In a recent Joint Tribal Consultation with the Department of Interior and the Department of Treasury, Tribes across the Nation

strongly recommended that the current funding methodology provided in the IHS Annual Funding Agreements be followed to ensure that the disbursement of each Tribe's share of the funding meets the April 24 deadline in a transparent and efficient manner.

These are extraordinary times, and the Tribe has been presented with **COVID-19 related** funding opportunities to assist Tribal Members with certain qualifying circumstances. Please contact Chelsea Hendriks, Tribal Programs Director, at 335-7281, to determine if **you qualify for assistance** through the Tribe as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Tribe's best interest, the Tribal Council and Tribal Administration have made decisions regarding suspension and/or limitation of the services at the Dena'ina Wellness Center (DWC) and elsewhere in the Tribe to ensure your health and safety. Following is the status of each of the divisions within DWC:

- **Primary Care** onsite services have been limited to urgent and emergent visits especially as it relates to those patients who present with COVID-19 symptoms. "Routine" visits and prescription refills for established patients are being provided through telemedicine which has been well-received.

- **Dental and Optometry** onsite services have been limited to urgent and emergent visits. Optometry services for contact lens and prescription glasses for established patients are being provided telephonically.

- **Behavioral Health** services including group meetings are currently being provided through telemedicine. There is also one clinician onsite who is providing urgent services as requested by Primary Care.

- **Physical Therapy** is limited to urgent visits as requested by Primary Care.

- **Wellness** services including the use of the gym are suspended until further notice. Greenhouse staff is working onsite as the grow-



Diana L. Zirul

ing season begins.

- **Renovations** including replacement of the gym floor and stairwell treads have been completed as planned. The renovation projects at Toyon Villa, Behavioral Health and DWC are on track. We are making plans for the future and look forward

to returning to full status as soon as reasonably possible

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has advised that you watch for these coronavirus-related symptoms:

- Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

- These symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure** (based on the incubation period of MERS-CoV viruses).

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Abnormal or sudden loss of taste and smell

If you develop **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19, get **medical attention immediately**. Emergency warning signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

Take the following precautions to further **Stop the Spread**:

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds and avoid touching your face. Use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol when hand washing is not possible.

Avoid touching other people and objects as much as possible and apply disinfectant to work and play areas and clean all contact areas on a regular basis.

Stay at home and practice social distancing which means keeping at least six (6) feet of distance to help prevent the spread of germs.

Help regarding questions or concerns is only a phone call away. If you or your family member **develop any of the above symptoms**, please call the Dena'ina Wellness Center at 907-335-7500 before entering DWC. Staff will then work with you to decide the best course of action.

The Tribal Council, Health Board and Tribal Administration wish to commend each and every staff member at the Dena'ina Wellness Center and elsewhere in the Tribe who have worked very hard to ensure that the quality of services you have come to expect continue even during this time. It is through our Tribal values and traditions of taking care of each other that we will persevere and Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Thrive Forever.

Finally, the 2020 Census process began on April 1 and we would again stress the importance of the census data being as complete and accurate as possible whether you live in the Tribe's service area or not. The Tribe's service area includes those beneficiaries (Tribal Members, Alaskan Natives and American Indians) who live on the north side of the Kasilof River to Cooper Landing. The demographics produced from the 2020 Census is what will support the Tribe's requests for funding through IHS and the various grant programs on both a State and National level. Accurate completion of **questions 5 and 9** are critical to support the Tribe's funding and we would recommend the following:

- **Question 5:** List the Alaskan Native/American Indian as "Person 1" if you live in a mixed Native and non-Native household in order that the entire household is counted as one AN/AI head of household.

- **Question 9:** List the name of the federally recognized Tribe that you are enrolled in. (e.g. Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Salamatof Tribal Council, etc.)

Please do not hesitate to contact either myself or another Health Board Member with your questions or suggestions.

Be Safe and Be Healthy!

Diana L. Zirul
Chair, KDHB

Moving soon? Please keep in touch

Please keep your contact information current so you don't miss important mailings from the Tribe.

Email updates to:
jcrump@kenaitze.org

Mail:
Kenaitze Indian Tribe
Attn: Jessica Crump
P.O. Box 988
Kenai, AK 99611

From the editor:

The Counting Cord is a publication for members of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and the people served by the Tribe.

Find more information on the Tribe's website at kenaitze.org and like us on Facebook at

facebook.com/kenaitze.

For story suggestions or questions about content, contact editor M. Scott Moon at 907-335-7237 or by email at smoon@kenaitze.org.



‘It’s all about speaking’

Tribe launches Dena’ina Language Camp

On a day in early March, a group of students gathered in a classroom to learn about vocabulary and grammar. They learned how to string together words and phrases to tell a story.

What made the lesson unique was the language: the students were learning to speak Dena’ina. The three-day spring break language camp is part of a larger Tribal initiative to revive the Dena’ina language.

“We find ourselves in a very unique position in terms of language loss here,” said Rachel Gilbert, the Tribe’s Education and Training Director. “I believe as we lose language, we lose identity, because language and culture are completely connected. ... We have a language that is on the brink of extinction, and in order to bring that back from the brink, we have to act now.”

The long-term goal, Gilbert said, is to inspire a new generation of Dena’ina language speakers.

While Dena’ina culture dates back thousands of years, the Dena’ina lifestyle left very little physical trace due to their customs and beliefs. The culture is reflected in the language, though.

“With the language of the Dena’ina come a way of thinking about the world that is maybe different than most of us are used to,” Gilbert said. “The Dena’ina way of life that comes with that language is about sustainable living for a long time. It’s really important that we don’t let go of all of that cultural learning.”

Leading up to the camp, a group of instructors spent a week learning the techniques to teach the language to students and to themselves. The Tribe is developing a language-learning system, laying the groundwork for dual-language instruction in its education programs. Eventually, students will learn in both English and Dena’ina.

The first step is to ensure that staff have the right training, and then to make sure the curriculum is



Above, Sonya Ivanoff talks to Joel Isaak, Language Institute Coordinator, about the Dena’ina language story she worked on during the camp. Below, students present a Dena’ina language story to the Tribe’s Education Committee at the conclusion of the language camp.



right for students.

“If you feel like you’re going to be tortured in class, you’re not going to want to go back,” Gilbert said. “This is very engaging. It’s all about speaking.”

To learn the language, students start with a list of a dozen words. After learning the pronunciation, they string the words together to make sentences and tell a simple story.

To help with the learning process, a hand gesture is used with each word. For example, to differentiate between *kił gguya*, which means boy, and *degk’isen gguya*, girl, students used the different hand positions in the rules for the Native Youth Olympics seal hop event. Boys curl their fingers as if they’re holding a spear close to their chest, while girls compete with their hands open.

As they learn the story, students illustrate it and act it out. By the end of the three-day camp, students

‘Their energy for learning is inspirational.’

– Joel Isaak

were able to use their new vocabulary to create their own story – creating new learning materials in the process.

“My favorite part of the camp was seeing how excited the kids were to share their stories they wrote in Dena’ina, and seeing our first-language speaker’s face light up hearing the students speak our language,” said Joel Isaak, a Tribal Member and Language Institute Coordinator for the Tribe.

Isaak co-teaches Dena’ina language classes as an adjunct professor at Kenai Peninsula College. He is in the University of Alaska Fairbanks indigenous studies doctoral program, focusing on Dena’ina linguistics. Isaak said he was

impressed with the language camp students.

“The week of working with students was extremely encouraging,” Isaak said. “Seeing how fast they pick up the language and their energy for learning is inspirational.”

Levi Rickard, a camp participant from Ninilchik, said learning Dena’ina was fun but also challenging. Rickard, 16, said he’s learned a little bit of German, but prior to the camp, the extent of his Dena’ina vocabulary was the greeting “yaghali du?”

“It’s a lot harder than I thought it was going to be,” Rickard said. “The pronunciation of words – you have to use different parts of your mouth. It’s hard to get used to.”

The camp culminated with students sharing their stories with members of the Tribe’s Education Committee.

Gilbert said she hopes to see a cohort of 16-, 17- and 18-year-olds take an interest and join the next instructor training.

“We need a lot of young people to get really interested in this. It’s a 10-year task to become fluent in a language, 10,000 hours. Dena’ina is going to take longer. There’s some intricacies and some differences, so we really we really want to bring those 16-, 17- and 18-year-olds in and say, are you interested in teaching? We’re going to help you, we’re going to get you some credit for this while you’re working on your bachelor’s degree, while you’re teaching in our program,” Gilbert said.

Campus planning hits milestones

The Tribe is reaching three important milestones this month as plans for the new education campus move forward.

Items coming up in April include selecting the contractor for the project; receiving the architectural engineering 65 percent plan; and finishing the draft of the contract.

With those steps completed, the Tribe will then be able to submit a “forms and foundation” permit to begin groundwork at the five-acre site on Forest Drive in Kenai. Should the current warming trend continue, that work could start sometime in May.

“It’s a big milestone month,” said Royal Brown, Director of Housing and Facilities. “It’s going to tell us a lot about how this project moves forward.”

The 65,000-square-foot facility will have two wings connected by an annex. The three-story education wing will house classrooms, meeting rooms and administrative offices. Classrooms will be located on the ground floor, with offices on the second floor. The basement



This rendering shows the Tribe's new education campus.

will be available for future growth.

The other wing will house a large multi-purpose room, similar in function to a school gym. In addition to space for indoor recreational opportunities, the facility will have room to host a gathering of up to 300 people.

The annex that will connect the two wings will include a lobby and reception area, a commercial kitchen and a cafeteria.

The Tribe is using a Construction Manager General Contractor for the project. Brown said that allows the contractor to contribute

to the decision-making process.

“The Tribe as the owner, the architectural engineer, and the contractor all work together as a team,” Brown said.

The contractor will be able to help finalize planning, identify materials, and plan construction strategy, Brown said.

Brown said planning delays due to COVID-19 concerns have been minimal as members of the planning team and the engineering firm have been adept at working remotely.

“It’s been a lot of work for staff,

and the team has put together a really good group effort,” Brown said.

Brown said the hope is that COVID-19 concerns won’t impact the start of construction. Many construction activities involve small groups of workers where social distancing isn’t difficult, Brown said. With the campus in a highly visible location, the community will be able to see the project moving forward.

“Hopefully, we can show the community progress, and that things are going to get better,” Brown said.

Youth tobacco prevention work honored

When Pam Howard was named the Volunteer of the Year for the Resilient Alaska Youth AmeriCorps Program, she viewed the honor as recognition for the work of many over the past 13 years.

“I think (the award) was because of all that we’ve done in the last 13 years and keeping this program going,” Howard said. “I think that’s why I was recognized, and for mentoring other AmeriCorps volunteers. I told them that when I accepted the award, I was doing it on behalf of all of them.”

Many on the Kenai Peninsula know Howard for her work with Teens Against Tobacco Use, which has evolved into Youth Encouraging Alaskans’ Health. Howard spent 31 years as a school nurse, and in that role was always doing prevention groups with students.

Even after she retired, she still had a passion for tobacco prevention and working with youth engagement. Over the years, she had built up a network of peer educator groups, and wanted to do what she could to keep the program going.

She worked on youth tobacco prevention efforts for the Peninsula Smoke-Free Partnership. When that organization closed its doors, Howard found that her work fit with the goals of Resilient Alaska Youth, a service of the Rural Alaska Community Action Program.



Pam Howard talks about the risks of nicotine products with a visitor to the Dena’ina Wellness Center’s health fair in March.

The AmeriCorps grant required a host organization, which is where the Kenaitze Indian Tribe came in – tobacco cessation is an important service for the Wellness department at the Dena’ina Wellness Center, and Howard is able to provide the youth outreach component.

Howard said the goals of the RAY program fit well with the Tribe’s values.

“With the RAY program, we encourage youth to preserve their

cultural values. We try to take a traditional value, and plan an activity that will reinforce it,” Howard said.

In addition to tobacco prevention work in area schools, Howard helps with Healthy Choices at the Tribe’s Yaghanen Youth Program. One recent activity was to make a manaq, a traditional ice fishing pole.

In schools, Howard trains students to share tobacco prevention information with their peers. She noted that statistically, tobacco use

on the peninsula had decreased, until the vaping trend hit a few years ago.

“About 13 years ago, I developed a curriculum for peer education. Every year we have to tweak it, because tobacco companies are always changing their products,” Howard said.

In addition to peer education, students do outreach at events such as local parades. They’ve also testified in front of local governing bodies and the Alaska Legislature, helping to get the ball rolling on policy changes.

Howard said many students become involved because of losing a loved one to tobacco use, or, as one participant phrased it, because she’s “been a second-hand smoker for 16 years.”

When students do a class presentation, Alaska Quit Line information is made available to take home. However, Howard said she is careful to explain to students not to be confrontational. Howard said she’ll occasionally hear that a student came back to class and reported that a parent or loved one had called the Quit Line.

“You do it out of love, because you want to have them in your life,” Howard said.

Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line is 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). You can find more information at alaskaquitline.com.

Do you know these Members? Help us update their address

Tribal Member Services is seeking addresses for the following Tribal Members. To update your contact information, please call Chelsea Hendriks at 907-335-7281 or email chendriks@kenaitze.org.

Anderson, Christopher
Arendt, Dianne
Ashton, Lori
Astad, Sonya
Baldwin, Allan
Baldwin, Jonathon
Batt Iii, Raymond
Baty, Maximillian
Bergmann, Madison
Bergmann, Jackson
Blatchford, Joel
Bocatch, Claude
Bocatch, Hilma
Bogard, Joseph
Boling, Autumn
Boulette, Danielle
Boulette, Camryn
Brandt, Jonathan
Brandt, Christopher
Branson, Erica
Brooks, Pamela
Brown, Jordan
Brown, Hunter
Brown, James
Brown, Kendal
Brown, Kesley
Browning, Danielle
Brunni, Richard
Burt, Walter
Busane, Manual
Busane, Mariano
Byron, Margaret
Callender, Christopher
Cameron-Levine, Kayleen
Campbell, Jennifer

Carlough, Michael
Carlough, William
Chaffin, Marie
Chaffin, Tina
Chaffin, Kenneth
Corder, Michael
Costanios, Hazel
Cox, Denise
Cox, Justin
Cronin, Stacy
Cross, Samantha
Cross, James
Cross Jr, James
Cunningham, Megan
Curtis, Jason
Darien, Edward
Darien-Hileman, Lisa
Davis, Katherine
Davis, Rosa
Davis, Rebecca
Davis, Jr., Robert
Davis-Coilton Angela
Dean, Lisa
Dean, Clifford
Deitz, Tracy
Demidoff, Emelie
Denesha, Michele
Dexter, Elsie
Dolchok, Clifford
Dolchok, Mack
Douglas, Mark
Dwight, Darian
Edelman, Christopher
Edelman, Jay
Edelman, Drasanna
Edelman Jr, Edwin
Edwards, Carey
Edwards, Jamie
Edwards, Jarrod
Edwards, Courtney
Engelstad, David
England, Patricia
Faucett, Daniel
Flood, Randon
Flood, Richard
Flood, Robert
Foree, Jolene

Fornia, Sarah
Foster-Perrenoud, Melonie
Frost, Michael
Frost, Ashley
Frost, Gabrielle
Frostad, Christopher
Frostad, Katheryn
Frostad, Brian
Gaines, Vivian
Gardner, Keegen
Geiser, Tanner
Gepner, Robert
Gesh, Elijah
Gibbs, Stacey
Gibson-Rehder, Ameer
Goecke, Andrew
Goecke, Heather
Goecke, Hannah
Gregoire, Mathew
Grothe, Garrett
Grothe, Cameron
Guenthner, Linda
Hallstead, Trevor
Hanna, Jessica
Hansen, Joseph
Harker, Nelson
Harrison, Crystal
Hartnett, Nathaniel
Hartnett, Danielle
Hatfield, Samuel
Hawley, Preston
Hawley, Sentilla
Hawley, Priscilla
Hoak, Virginia
Holzwarth, David
Huf, Casey
Huf, Jessica
Huf, Taylor
Hunter, Neil
Ivanoff, Raymond
Jackinsky, Naomi
Jennings, Jay
Johansen, Tamara
Johnson, Randee
Johnson, Micah
Johnson, Kristin
Johnson, Austin

Jones, Hali
Jones, Neal
Jones, Josephine
Jones, Alison
Juliussen, Michael
Juliussen, Zane
Juliussen, Winter
Kallander, Brooklyn
Kelly, Victoria
Kent, Mary
Ketah, Elizabeth
Kidder, Marshall
Kidder, Travis
Kingman, Norma
Kingman, Daniel
Kniceley, Ashley
Knight, Jonathan
Kolomotsev, Cheryl
Kooly, Corbin
Kooly, Zachary
Kooly, Pamela
Lecceardone, Henry
Lecceardone, Douglas
Lesamiz, Cindy
Levesque, Julie
Lewis, Ryan
Lindstrom, Cherie
Lorenzo, Amber
Lorenzo, Anthony
Lorenzo, Gregory
Lorenzo, Victorio
Lott, Michael
Lott, Roman
Mack, Calvin
Mahle Jr., Gerald
Mahle, Jr., Ronald
Mamaloff, Darla
Marcus, Sandra
Maupin, Nadine
Mccurdy, Shawn
Mccurdy, Lane
Meneal, Marika
Meneal, Freddie
Mesa, Bernadette
Mesa, Violet
Mesa, Anthony
Miller, John

Miller, Melody
Miller, Mikayla
Miller, Natasha
Mitchell, Casey
Moore, Debra
Mueller, Richard
Munson, Karina
Murphy, Brandi
Navarro, Christine
Navarro, Jack
Nevitt, Richard
Norbett, Michael
O'Brien, Angela
Ollestad, Nathan
Oskolkoff, Alexis
Osness, Kayla
Page, Jayna
Page, Debra
Page, Jared
Perata, Kerissa
Petterson, Delores
Pitto, Lucy
Poage, Snowydel
Randall, Roger
Raymond, Arthur
Reams, Enoch
Reed, Brittany
Richardson-Card, Autumn
Rifredi, Christina
Robison, Darick
Rodrigues, Steven
Ross, Lily
Rouse Iii, James
Sacaloff, Nick
Sacaloff, Jon
Sanders, James
Sandoval, Veronica
Sandoval, Alvaro
Scaggs, James
Schaller, Susan
Schimmel, Samuel
Scott, Sarah
Seibert, Michael
Seibert, Carol
Shepherd, Kendra
Showalter, Maryah
Sloan, Lori

Smagge, James
Smith, Erica
Smyth, Winston
Smyth, Eric
Sniff, Connor
Stangarone, Staci
Stevens, Randi
Sutherland, Michelle
Sutherland, Jolene
Swan, Jonathan
Tanner, Emma
Taylor, John
Taylor, Jeffrey
Tilley, Crystal
Toledo – Frostad, Kelli
Tressler, Sarah
Trigg, Logan
Trigg, Taha
Tweedy, Courtney
Vitalis, Tristin
Webb, Megan
Webber, Ragan
Wenzel, Heather
Wessel, Valeria
Wheeler, Norma
White, Myra
Wik, Riley
Wik, Jordan
Williams, Shyanne
Williford, John
Williford, Philip
Wilmot, Brittany
Wilson, Brandon
Wilson, Frances
Wilson, Sarah
Wilson, Stephan
Wilson, Hannah
Wolf, Joshua
Wright, Jesse
Wright, Heidi
Wright, Neshonie
Wright-Nelson, Alyssa
Zajac, Devin

Even if you're stuck inside, just keep moving!

With the community taking precautions to slow the spread of COVID-19, many people are finding themselves at home for extended periods of time. Elders especially may feel isolated as a result of “social distancing.”

While the couch may seem inviting, it's still important to get some exercise every day. Wellness staff members Levi Sutton and Michael Dotomain have some suggestions to help you stay active, even if you have to stay inside.

Sutton, a Wellness Consultant at the Dena'ina Wellness Center, said that while it's easy to get caught up in binge watching TV, it's important to move around, even if it's just walking up and down the stairs or the hallway.

If you're watching TV, get up and move during commercial breaks, or set a timer and get up every 30 minutes.

Sutton also suggests keeping

a routine. Plan a time to exercise each day. Keep track of your workouts in a journal or log. If you've got an old exercise bike or treadmill sitting unused, go ahead and give it a spin.

The benefits of exercise are more than physical; exercise helps your body release endorphins and reduces stress, Sutton said.

For people who live in a neighborhood with the houses spaced out, try going for a walk, even if it's just up and down the driveway. Just be sure to maintain the recommended six feet of “social distancing” if the neighbors are outside too.

Dotomain, a Personal Trainer at the Dena'ina Wellness Center, emphasizes that physical activity keeps your joints loose, while too much sedentary time can lead to muscle imbalances.

Dotomain suggested five simple exercises that can be done at home.

Soup cans or other household items



Maria Sweppy, Michael Dotomain and Levi Sutton snowshoe down the bluff in Kenai during a Dena'ina Wellness Center outing earlier this winter.

can be used as hand weights. Start with a goal of doing five or 10 repetitions at a time, and build up gradually. Exercises to try:

- Squats;
- Overhead presses using cans of

soup as weights;

- Marching in place;
- Counter-top push-ups;
- Wall sits.

“The important thing is: just

See **MOVE**, p. 7

2020 U.S. Census: Everybody counts

In March, households across Alaska received an invitation to participate in the 2020 U.S. Census. The Census, conducted every 10 years, is more than a population count. One use of this information is for the allocation of federal funding.

In the case of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe, the accuracy and completeness of the demographics gathered in the census process will be essential to ensure that the Tribe receives the appropriate share of the funding in our service area. The Tribe's service area includes those beneficiaries (Tribal Members, Alaska Natives and American Indian people) who live on the north side of the Kasilof River to Cooper Landing.

What can you do to help?

The 2020 Census includes 10 questions and can be completed online at www.2020census.gov. You can also respond by phone or by mail. The whole process takes about 10 minutes, but the data will determine funding for the next 10 years.

Whether you live in the Tribe's service area or not, please pay special attention to **questions 5 and 9** as both are critical to support the Tribe's funding and we would recommend the following:

- **Question 5:** List the Alaskan Native/American Indian as "Person 1" if you live in a mixed Native and non-Native household in order that the entire household is counted as one AN/AI head of

household.

- **Question 9:** List the name of the federally recognized Tribe that you are enrolled in. (e.g. Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Salamatof Tribal Council, etc.)

Alaska receives almost \$3.5 billion dollars each year based on census data. If you are an Alaska Native or American Indian person, but don't fill out the form, the community could miss out on almost \$3,500 for Tribal programs such as Head Start. If an Alaska Native or American Indian family of four isn't counted, that could add up to \$14,000 annually.

For more information or to respond, go to www.2020census.gov.

TIPS, FROM P. 1

ty to arouse

- Bluish lips or face
- **This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.**

Take the following precautions to further **Stop the Spread:**

- **Wash your hands** frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds and avoid touching your face. Use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol when hand washing is not possible.
- **Avoid touching** other people and objects as much as possible and apply disinfectant to work and play areas and clean all contact areas on a regular basis.
- **Stay at home** and practice social distancing which means keeping at least six (6) feet of distance to help prevent the spread of germs.
- **Help** regarding questions or concerns is only a phone call away. If you or your family member **develop any of the above symptoms**, please call the Dena'ina Wellness Center at 907-335-7500 before entering DWC. Staff will then work with you to decide the best course of action.

The Tribal Council, Health Board and Tribal Administration wish to commend each and every staff member at the Dena'ina Wellness Center and elsewhere in the Tribe who have worked very hard to ensure that the quality of services you have come to expect continue even during this time. It is through our Tribal values and traditions of taking care of each other that we will persevere and Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Thrive Forever.

MOVE, FROM P. 6

move," Dotomain said. "It doesn't matter what physical activities you do, just get up every once and a while. Enjoy the sun and be safe. Wear ice cleats and use your walker if you need to.

"It's highly encouraged to get up and move around any chance you get."

Dotomain also suggested a series of brain-body healing movements, which can help with stress and anxiety. They can be accessed on the Alaska Resilience Initiative website, akresilience.org/history-and-hope-resources. Look under "Handouts" for "Brain-Body Healing Movements."

"I think this is good to help us relax a bit during challenging times through breathing," Dotomain said.

TELEHEALTH, FROM P. 1

to visit with their provider via video chat or over-the-phone conversations.

- Un'ina will receive a link to follow to a "virtual patient room," and can use a smart phone, tablet or computer with a camera and microphone.

- For care providers, the virtual patient room is accessed through an un'ina's health record, so photos and other information can be uploaded directly to the record.

- For those who might not have a good internet connection or a

We can help

If you find yourself in need of some basic supplies that you are having trouble finding at local stores please contact Na'ini Family and Social Services at 335-7600.

device with video capabilities, the visit can be done over the phone.

Dr. Mitchell said that if any in-person follow-up is needed, an appointment will be made and

un'ina will be able to come into Dena'ina Wellness Center directly without having to go through the waiting area. Most un'ina will be able to see a provider that same day.

Dr. Mitchell encouraged anyone with questions about COVID-19 or any other health issue to give DWC a call.

"We are always available to answer questions," Dr. Mitchell said. "If you are worried about COVID, or you have anything else going on, we are here to answer questions."

MEALS, FROM P. 1

Tribal Members, Alaska Native and American Indian Elders who have registered with Tyotkas. If are eligible and would like to be added to the roster, call Tyotkas at 907-335-7280.

In addition to delivering meals, Elder Advocates are helping with shopping, picking up necessities for Elders who aren't able to get to the store. Advocates also are in regular contact with Elders via phone.

The meal delivery effort has exceeded expectations. On March 13, when Tyotkas restricted public access, 20 people picked up meals to go, and 48 people had meals delivered.

As of April 7, that count was up to 150 meals each day, with the majority of them being delivered. Roseann Darby, Elders Center Supervisor, said Elders are being encouraged to have meals delivered, rather than picking them up, to limit the potential for exposure to COVID-19.

"It makes me happy knowing this program is helping so many Elders," Darby said.

Darby said staff are very careful to follow health guidelines while preparing and delivering meals.

Everyone has their temperature checked each day, and personal protective equipment, such as face-masks and gloves, is used.

When a meal is delivered, it is typically left by the door. Then, the person delivering the meal steps back to talk from a safe distance.

"A lot of Elders are getting lonely. They're starting to feel the effects of isolation," Darby said.

In addition to food, meal deliveries have included health information, the Tyotkas newsletter, and things like word puzzles to keep people engaged.

Darby said even a phone call to just say "hi" and to ask if there's anything they need can brighten someone's day.

"Those daily phone calls mean a lot," Darby said.

In addition to Elders employees, staff from the Tribe's Transportation, Yaghanen and Early Childhood Center programs are helping with deliveries.

Darby said the Tyotkas menu has so far worked well for to-go meals, with very little need to make any changes. She's especially glad to be able to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to Elders.

Hendriks said she was initially surprised by the quick jump in numbers of people requesting meals. However, many of those requests have come from Elders who visited Tyotkas occasionally, but with health mandates and the potential for exposure to the virus, appreciate the opportunity to avoid going out by having a meal delivered.

Elders have been expressing their appreciation for the meal deliveries.

"We enjoyed our first home-delivered meal, it was amazing and appreciated," wrote Juney Mullan on the Tribe's Facebook page. "... The young man doing the delivery was polite and friendly also, and took a couple of minutes to chat and ask about our welfare."

And Carole Johns-Okamoto messaged the Tribe with these words, "A big thank you and 'air hugs' to the Kenaitze Indian Tribe for their generosity and kindness in delivering delicious meals to seniors, it is so very much appreciated! Roseann (Darby) and her crew in the kitchen are making delicious meals and delivering them with a huge smile. Thanks to all of you."

The Big Picture



Kai Owens demonstrates the Dena'ina Wellness Center's new Abbott Labs ID NOW COVID-19 rapid test machine. The device takes 20 minutes to process a COVID-19 test, saving a days-long wait for results to come from the State of Alaska's lab or a commercial lab.

Our Mission

To assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever.

Our Values

These are the beliefs and principles that define our people and will assure our future as a tribe:

- **Family:** Honoring and sustaining health and happiness of family as a first responsibility
- **Stewardship:** Respectful use of land, resources and all creations
- **Spiritual Beliefs:** Acknowledging the existence of a higher power and respecting spiritual beliefs
- **Education:** Passing down cultural knowledge and traditions and supporting formal education

Our Vision

By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and tribe by:

- working toward united effort with Native organizations and other governments that impact our people.
- developing and implementing a tribal education system.
- living our traditional values and practices.
- empowering our sovereignty.
- continuing to demonstrate resiliency.
- striving for excellence in all of our programs.
- elevating the wellness of our people.
- using our talents and resources to ensure we are able to take care of ourselves and share with others.

Addresses and phone numbers

Administration Building

150 N. Willow St., Kenai, AK 99611
907-335-7200
855-335-8865 fax

Early Childhood Center

130 N. Willow St., Kenai, AK 99611
907-335-7260

Tyotkas Elder Center

1000 Mission Ave., Kenai, AK 99611
907-335-7280

Yaghanen Youth Program, Education and Career Development

35105 K-B Dr., Soldotna, AK 99669
907-335-7290

Dena'ina Wellness Center

508 Upland St., Kenai, AK 99611
907-335-7500

Na'ini Family and Social Services Kenaitze/Salamatof Housing

1001 Mission Ave., Kenai, AK 99611
907-335-7600

Tribal Court

508 Upland St., Kenai, AK 99611
907-335-7219

On the Web: kenaitze.org

On Facebook: facebook.com/kenaitze

