



The Counting Cord

'Thrive forever'

Three volcanoes logo a powerful symbol

'Successes big and small'

*TERO program helps people
improve their lives*

Tribe celebrates new Harvest Pavilion

Summer 2023

FREE!

Contents

Henu | *Work, Job, Task*

Yaghali du?

**Kenaitze Indian Tribe applauds
Supreme Court ruling**

Hands-on learning
*Maintenance staff
boost their skills*

**'Thrive forever':
Volcanoes logo a
powerful symbol**

**Tribe celebrates
Opening of the Net, new
Harvest Pavilion**

Improving lives
*Tribal Court focuses on best
resolutions for all involved*

**Housing program
ready to help**

**Positive Indian Parenting
class provides support, hope**

**The
Continuing
Story**

04
06

07

0

2

**'Successes big and small'
TERO helps people improve their lives**

Bequsilna, 'those who are gone'

News from Tribal Members

Cooking with Kenaitze

Dena'ina naqenaga

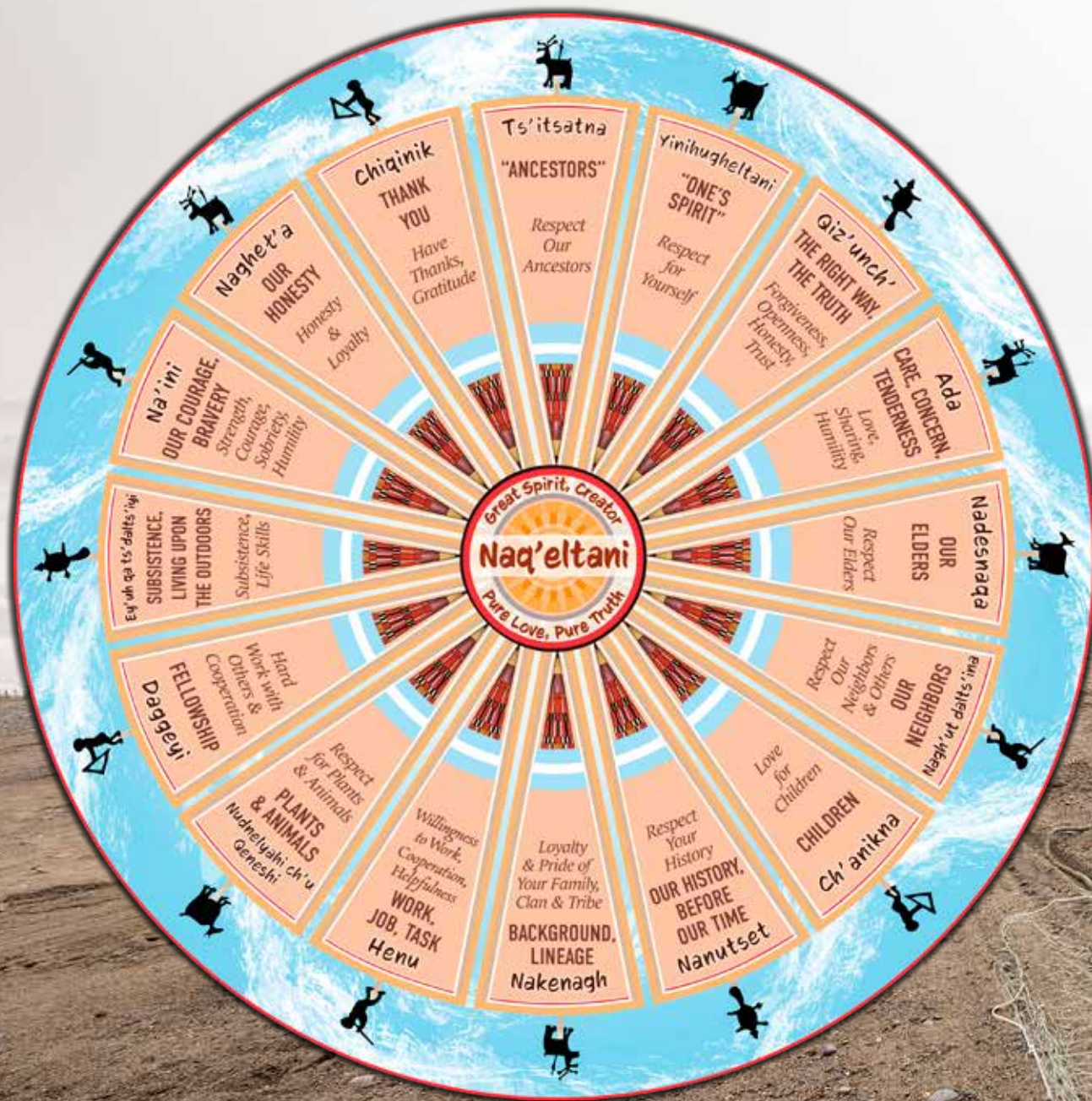


Marking the days with a counting cord

A counting cord, niłnuqeyishi, "the thing that is knotted," is a traditional Dena'ina string calendar. Knots or beads or feathers are tied into the cord to mark the days or record special events.

The Counting Cord publication is the newsletter of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe. It is published quarterly to mark the days and record the special events of Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina, "the Kenai River People."

Henu | Work, Job, Task





Henu is the Dena'ina word for work, job, or task. As one of our traditional values, it signifies our willingness to work, cooperation, and helpfulness. By working together, we help individuals and families overcome barriers, and our Tribe to thrive.



Yaghalí du?

As we continue our journey towards fulfilling our vision of “To assure Kahtnuht’ana Dena’ina thrive forever,” we acknowledge that there are challenges to overcome. These barriers, ranging from housing and employment opportunities to food security and parenting techniques, directly impact the well-being of each individual within our Tribe and, consequently, affect the strength of our entire community.

In our pursuit of prosperity for all, we understand that thriving as a Tribe requires supporting every individual’s thriving. Together, as a united Tribe, we can provide the essential support needed for each member to flourish.

We are committed to expanding our services to better serve the needs of our Tribal Members and the larger community. In this edition of “The Counting Cord” we highlight some of these important services, including:

1. Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance Job Pool Coordinator: Assisting Tribal Members, Alaska Native, and American Indian individuals in not just finding jobs, but also providing access to education and training, empowering them to pursue fulfilling careers.

2. Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity: Ensuring that every member has access to adequate housing, recognizing the importance of a safe and stable living environment.

3. The Opening of the Net: Embracing the tradition of providing healthy, traditional food sources to Tribal families, fostering a strong connection to our heritage and well-being.

4. Qiz’unch’ Tribal Court: Safeguarding our most vulnerable members and striving for the best possible outcomes for those facing legal challenges.

5. Na’ini Family and Social Services: Offering both emergency support and valuable tools to empower families in enhancing their lives and fostering a stronger community.

We acknowledge that these services intersect and complement each other, creating a holistic approach to well-being. A stable home environment, access to training and education, and a supportive community are essential components for personal growth and success.

As a Tribe, we take immense pride in exercising our sovereignty to promote health and well-being, enhance self-sufficiency, and preserve our cultural strength. Our commitment to empowering each individual is central to the collective thriving of our Tribe.

We encourage you to explore the various opportunities and resources available within our Tribe. Together, we can overcome challenges and build a stronger, more vibrant community.

Thank you,

Ronette Stanton

Tribal Council Chair



Ronette Stanton

Chair

ronette.stanton@kenaitze.org



Wayne D. Wilson Jr.

Vice Chair

wwilsonjr3@gmail.com



Brenda Smith

Secretary

bsmith@kenaitze.org



Gabe Juliussen Jr.

Treasurer

gabriel.juliussen@kenaitze.org



Bernadine Atchison

Council Member

batchison@kenaitze.org



Liisia Blizzard

Council Member

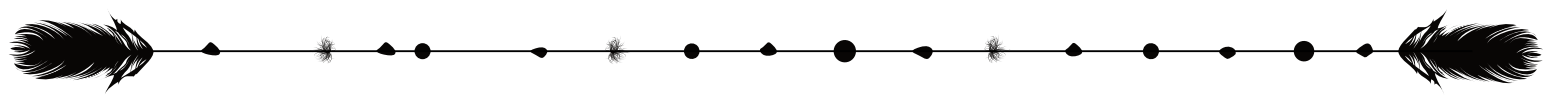
lblizzard@kenaitze.org



Mary Ann Mills

Council Member

mmills42346@gmail.com



Kenaitze Indian Tribe applauds Supreme Court ruling

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court reaffirmed the sovereignty of Alaska Native and American Indian tribes with its ruling in *Haaland v. Brackeen*.

In a 7-2 ruling, the court rejected challenges to the Indian Child Welfare Act and upheld the law's preferences for Alaska Native and American Indian children to be placed in Native foster and adoptive homes. Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas dissented in the case.

"We are so happy because the case had everything to do with our sovereignty. This will prevent mass removals of our children from their homes and their loved ones. This actually recognizes that tribes are sovereign entities, sovereign governments and political entities, not racial groups," said Mary Ann Mills, Tribal Council Member.

Last year, the Kenaitze Indian Tribe joined with more than 500 other tribes and tribal organizations around the country in an amicus brief in support of the Indian Child Welfare Act and the law's focus on the best interests of American Indian and Alaska Native children.

"It is imperative to keep tribal children in tribal court systems," said Ronette Stanton, Tribal Council Chair. "At Kenaitze Indian Tribe, our Tribal Court makes decisions in the best interest of our children. Our Na'ini Family and Social Services employees work closely with children and families as they oversee our ICWA cases."

The plaintiffs in the case challenged requirements in the Indian Child Welfare Act that in any



*ICWA supporters demonstrate outside the U. S. Supreme Court as justices heard arguments in *Haaland v. Brackeen* in November 2022. Kenaitze Tribal Council Chair Ronette Stanton and Kenaitze Tribal Member Sam Schimmel hold a Kenaitze flag during the event.*

custody proceeding involving an "Indian child," preference be given to placing the child with a member of the child's extended family, other members of the child's tribe, or with other Indian families, rather than with non-Indian adoptive parents. They argued that the law violates the U.S. Constitution by discriminating on the basis of race.

Defendants in the lawsuit were the Cherokee Nation and Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. Defendants argued that Congress was well within its authority to enact the Indian Child Welfare Act, and that the law supports tribal sovereignty, self-government, and the best interests of Alaska Native and American Indian children.

'This actually recognizes that tribes are sovereign entities, sovereign governments and political entities, not racial groups.'

Mary Ann Mills, Tribal Council Member



Hands-on learning

Maintenance staff boost their skills



Darin Williams of Reliable Appliance explains how to diagnose a washing machine problem to Victor Evan Jr., Seth Segura and other students in the Alaska Vocational Technical Center class he was teaching.

This spring, members of the Tribe's Facilities and Maintenance crew spent six weeks learning at the Alaska Vocational Technical Center in Seward.

On their first day back on the job, they were already putting their new skills to work.

"It was definitely an experience I wouldn't pass up," said Seth Segura

while working on the remodeling project at the Tribe's 130 North Willow Street location. "I definitely learned a lot, and I would definitely go back again."

Segura is a Maintenance Technician and has been working for the Tribe for almost two years. Fellow Maintenance Technician Victor Evan Jr. has been working for the

Tribe for two years, starting as a summer hire and working in the Custodial department before joining the Maintenance staff. He also attended the AVTEC training.

"It was a very good experience for me, and a good opportunity for me to learn more," Evan Jr. said.

Vernon Stanford, the Tribe's Facilities and Maintenance Man-



Facilities and Maintenance workers Victor Evan Jr. and Seth Segura listen to an instructor in an AVTEC class in Seward in June. They attended classes at AVTEC for several weeks to bring additional skills back to the workplace.

ager, said having more staff with additional skills and training is a win-win for the employees and the Tribe.

"It's really nice to have a couple more hands who can do the work without having to be closely supervised," Stanford said. "... It's highly beneficial for the Tribe, and if they ever move on to another job, they can take those skills with them."

The opportunity to provide skills training came through a Housing program grant, Stanford said.

Evan Jr. said training at AVTEC included electrical, drywall, plumbing, appliances, and doors and hinges.

"It was very hands-on, and our instructors explained things really

well," Evan Jr. said.

Segura said they were up early every morning for a full day of learning in the classroom and shop at the AVTEC campus.

Both Segura and Evan Jr. said the training has made them more confident in their skills and able to do more as employees.

"We're certified to do things now," Segura said.

Evan Jr. said he now has the skills to figure out what needs to be done when he's sent out on a maintenance call.

Both said they're interested in continuing to grow their skills. Evan Jr. said he enjoys working in Maintenance because every day brings something different to do.

Segura said he appreciates always having something to work on.

"There's always something that needs to be fixed," Segura said.

Segura and Evan Jr. said they are grateful for the opportunity.

"It's good to have that training under our belts," Evan Jr. said.

Stanford said the goal is to provide more training for all of the Tribe's Maintenance staff. The Tribe would like to send some more employees back to AVTEC next year.

The department is also looking at other courses offered by AVTEC that would provide an opportunity for more experienced employees to fine-tune their skills.

'Thrive forever'





Tribe's three volcanoes logo a powerful symbol

If you stand on the second-floor track and look down at the Gathering Space at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus, you will notice that grain pattern in the flooring runs in three different directions.

In fact, the grain patterns are aligned with the three volcanoes that have become representative of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe. Iliamna, Redoubt and Spurr are depicted in the logo that also includes the Tribe's vision, "To assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever." Blue lines in the logo represent Tikahtnu, or Cook Inlet.

"If you see the three volcanoes, you know you're from this area," said Sandy K Wilson, a Tribal Member.

Wilson said the three volcanoes have been used on the back of the Tribe's dance group regalia. She was inspired to get it as a tattoo.

"The three volcanoes, that's specific to here. It's my culture. I'm proud to be a Kenaitze Indian. I'm here with my people," Wilson said.

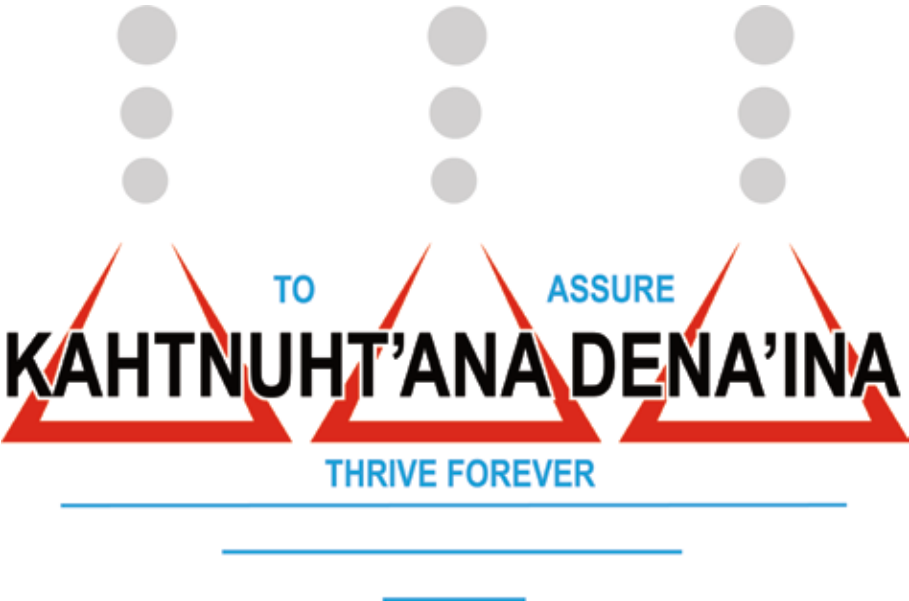
Audré Hickey, also a Tribal Member, said the logo resonates deeply with her, so much so that she got two tattoos of the three volcanoes in 2016, when she was serving as a Tribal Council Member.

"My grandfather had a setnet site, which is still in the family. I grew up as a young girl, fishing and playing on the beach. (The three volcanoes) have always had a place in my life, and remind me of my grandpa and my Tribe," Hickey said.

While the Tribe has been using versions of the three volcanoes logo for a num-



Above, Audré Hickey has the three volcanoes tattooed on her wrist. Opposite page, Sandy K Wilson is proud to display the three-volcano design. Below, the logo was updated in 2019.



ber of years, the motif is much older. The pattern that served as the inspiration for the Tribe's logo comes from a Dena'ina quiver that is housed in a museum in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The quiver has a depiction of hunters taking a caribou, as well as other animals. The edge of the quiver features a repeating pattern that looks very similar to the Tribe's logo.

Hickey said she appreciates the long history behind the volcanoes logo, but also that it has been modernized.

"When I stand on the beach, when I see the volcanoes, it invokes a sense of home to me. Our people have been here for thousands of years. My ancestors stood on the same beach and saw the same thing," Hickey said.

She said that people often ask her about the tattoo, which gives her an opportunity to talk about her Tribe and her home.

Wilson said she also is happy to talk about the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina when people ask her about her tattoo.

"I'm always happy to share. I'm really proud, that's who I am," Wilson said.

In an email, Aaron Leggett, Senior Curator, Alaska History and Indigenous Cultures at the Anchorage Museum, said the quiver appeared in a 1991 exhibition called "Crossroads of Continents" and may have inspired similar use of the symbols on the entrance of the Kenai Visitor Center, which began construction that year.

Leggett said he traveled to St. Petersburg in 2007 and had an up-close view of the quiver. He shared



Above, this Dena'ina quiver was displayed at the "Crossroads of Continents" exhibition at the Anchorage Museum in 1991. Below, Ransom Hayes, also pictured on the cover, has the three-volcano design on his thigh.

photos of the quiver when he returned home. Leggett said the Anchorage Museum had hoped to include the quiver in its 2013 exhibition "Dena'inaq' Huch'ulyeshi: The Dena'ina Way of Living," but geopolitical circumstances prevented it. However, photos were included in the exhibition catalogue.

Leggett noted that it while is speculated that the symbols on the quiver represent volcanoes, the motif is repeated all the way across the bottom of the quiver, and might not specifically reference the volcanoes visible from Kenai.

The Dena'ina name for Mount Iliamna is Ch'naqa't'in, meaning "one that stands above." The name for Mount Redoubt is Bentug-



gezh K'enulgheli, "one that has a notched forehead," and the name for Mount Spurr is K'idazq'eni, "one burning inside."



At the Dena'ina Wellness Center, you have access to valuable resources for your health and well-being.



Please promptly let us know if you can't make your appointment so we can share the resource with another.

Call 907-335-7500

Tribe celebrates Opening of the Net, new Harvest Pavilion



The net preserves our culture and traditions, and brings us together with our children and our Elders, creating a sense of unity, and represents resiliency of our people.

Ronette Stanton, Tribal Council Chair

Tribal Members were ready to set the net during the Opening of the Net celebration on June 1. The eagles were ready, too.

"I like to see the eagles out," said Chris Ross, pointing to eagles perched along the shore and on a rock a little ways out into Cook Inlet. "They know, once we get a fish, we'll toss them a carcass. Maybe they'll leave a feather behind. My grandmother always said if you want an eagle feather, you've got to give them something, too."

Kenaitze and Salamatof Tribal Members celebrated fishing the first tide of the season, and also cut the ribbon on the new Kaht-nuht'ana Dena'ina Community



Hall and Harvest Pavilion at the Tribe's Waterfront.

"It's beautiful," said Anne Meyer of the new pavilion. "I like that it's big. We can fit so many people in here to gather."

Many Tribal Members have memories of fishing from the beach when the only amenities were a campfire and whatever they brought with them.

"We did this all the time as kids. It's a little weird to see it so modernized, but it's nice," said Susanne Barbour. "Probably the only thing I didn't like as a kid was when it got cold and rainy, but we have shelter here now."

The recently completed pavilion
Summer 2023

is 3,453 square feet, with room to gather for 299 people. Features include a central raised hearth, meant to evoke a traditional De-na'ina dwelling. The pavilion incorporates natural looking materials and colors, such as stone accents on the exterior and cedar throughout the interior.

In her opening remarks, Tribal Council Chair Ronette Stanton noted the importance of the fishery, which the Tribe has operated since 1989.

"The net preserves our culture and traditions, and brings us together with our children and our Elders, creating a sense of unity, and represents resiliency of our

people," Stanton said.

Stanton also thanked the organizations that contributed to construction of the pavilion. The Tribe received a \$300,000 grant from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust that came with a requirement that the Tribe raise an additional \$150,000 from other donors. Contributors include: Cook Inlet Tribal Council; Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority; Rasmuson Foundation; Peninsula Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic, Inc.; Marathon Petroleum Corporation; Salamatof Tribal Council; Kenai Natives Association; Cook Inlet Region, Inc.; Chugach Electric; Chugach Electric Cooper Lake; and Southcentral Foundation.



The Tribal Council cuts the ribbon for the new Kahtnuht'ana Community Hall and Harvest Pavilion during the Opening of the Net. Pictured are Council Members Bernadine Atchison and Mary Ann Mills; Treasurer Gabe Juliussen Jr., Council Chair Ronette Stanton, Secretary Brenda Smith, Council Member Liisia Blizzard and Vice Chair Wayne D. Wilson Jr.

Leslie Hemphill said that when she was growing up, coming to fish the net with her family "was always a big production."

"My aunties and uncles and cousins would come down. It was an all-day thing," Hemphill said.

After picking the fish from the net, the work continued with processing and canning, which also involved the whole family.

Hemphill said seeing the fish come to the net was always a

thrill.

"It's always exciting when you see that first fish hit the net. It's really hard not to pull it in right away," Hemphill said.

Ross said his family would enjoy the first fish almost as soon as it came out of the water.

"We would dig a hole in the sand (for a fire). When we got the first fish, we would wrap it in tinfoil, cook it, and eat it right there on the beach," Ross said.

Ross said he is grateful to have

learned the techniques for picking fish from the net as a youth, and looks forward to teaching the next generation when his family fishes the net in August.

While the modern facilities are appreciated, Ross said he also remembers having to fish in different locations as a child, and appreciates the permanence of the Waterfront location.

"One thing that's really nice about this, it's the final spot," Ross said. "We're not going to move around anymore."



Desmeranda Napoka and Sarah Rigsby talk to visitors to the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity booth.



Above left: Drummers from Salamatof Tribe's Duhdeldiht Drum Group perform. Above right: Eliza Coveyou-Saldivar uses the breeze to help with a bubble maker. On the following pages, the Heartbeat of Mother Earth Drum group performs as Tribal Members line up for lunch in the new pavilion, at top left.





Improving lives

Tribal Court focuses on best resolutions for all involved



Cheers erupt as the ribbon flies during the grand opening celebration for the Kenaitze Tribal Court expansion. Pictured from left, Chief Tribal Court Judge Evelyn Dolchok, Council Member Mary Ann Mills, Council Vice Chair Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Council Member Bernadine Atchison, Council Chair Ronette Stanton, Council Member Liisia Blizzard and Council Treasurer Gabe Juliussen Jr.

In June, the Tribe celebrated the renovation and expansion of the Qiz'unch' Tribal Courthouse with a ribbon cutting and open house.

Chief Judge Evelyn Dolchok said Tribal Court participants have appreciated the extra space in the two new courtrooms. At 700 square feet, the two new courtrooms are more than double the size of the old, single courtroom. It gives everyone some elbow room as they work toward resolutions, Dolchok said.

Dolchok also appreciates the separation of her office, admin-

istrative staff offices, and judges' workspace from other parts of the building. It allows her, for example, to avoid overhearing conversations between participants in Tribal Court programs that, as Chief Judge, aren't meant for her ears.

"I like the courtrooms, and all the natural light in the hallway," said Tribal Court Administrator Audrey Strickland.

A wide range of civil case are handled by the Qiz'unch' Tribal Court. Child in Need of Aid cases are a priority. Those typically involve a child that needs to go live

with a relative for a period of time because the child's parents are struggling with substance use or other issues.

"We have to ensure the safety of the child," Dolchok said. "Sometimes, it takes a while to get parents to a place where they're willing and ready to have their child back. Our goal is family reunification, but it doesn't always happen."

The Tribal Court also handles guardianship cases, when foster care moves to a more permanent situation, or if a parent has died.



Above: Those attending the open house had the opportunity to see the court's two expanded court rooms and two new Ts'ilq'u Circle rooms. Right: Kenaitze Chief Judge Evelyn Dolchok reads a letter from a Henu Community Wellness Court graduate during the open house. The Henu Community Wellness Court is a joint-jurisdictional therapeutic court operated by the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and Alaska Court System, one of only a few joint-jurisdiction courts in the nation.

Termination of parental rights and adoption cases also fall under the Tribal Court's purview.

Dolchok said Tribal Court staff work closely with Na'ini Family Services staff.

"They're usually the case workers, so they report to us what's happening, and if they're following the court's orders," Dolchok said.

Summer 2023





Council Member Mary Ann Mills acknowledges the people, past and present, who have contributed to Kenaitze Tribal Court's success. Mary Ann chairs the Tribe's Court Code Committee.

The Tribal Court has an Elders code to protect Elders, and administers the Henu Community Wellness Court, a joint-jurisdictional therapeutic court operated by the Tribe and the Alaska State Court System.

The Ts'itq'u Circle is also a Tribal Court service. "Ts'itq'u" means "coming together as one," and the Circle provides a place to have difficult conversations in a good way.

The Ts'itq'u Circle can serve as a diversion program for charges such as a minor consuming alcohol. It also serves the Tribe's employees, and is part of the Tribe's grievance resolution process. Parents have also used the Ts'itq'u Circle to resolve custody issues.

"Conflict resolution is the biggest part," said Tribal Court Administrator Audrey Strickland..

Strickland said that any case in state court can be brought to the Circle.

"If we come up with a resolution that's accepted by the district attorney, it can result in reduced charges," Strickland said. "Anyone who wants to can use the Circle. It has to be approved by the district attorney, and it's voluntary – they can't order someone to go to the Circle."

Qiz'unch' Tribal Court operates differently than state court. The Tribal Court has the same standards for due process, but can take a different path to find a resolution.

"We generally do not have attorneys. So each person, they come in and speak for themselves," Dolchok said. "... We hear the facts, and we base everything on that."

Dolchok said the Tribal Court does not face the same time constraints as state court. The Tribal Court tries to work with participants to get them the help they need, which can sometimes take two or even three years.

In Tribal Court, all participants, including Judges, sit together at a conference table.

"We don't wear robes, we don't sit higher than anyone else," Dolchok said. "We want to be able to talk with people, and focus on improving their lives, not on everything they've done wrong."

While the Tribal Court's goal is to work toward the best resolution for all involved, those conversations can be difficult. Dolchok recalls one case in which a participant was angry and outspoken. Months went by, and she was on edge for the next hearing. However, when the hearing began, Dolchok saw that the participant had made a "complete 180" in their behavior.

"They were apologetic, and grateful to the Court for helping them get their child back into their life," Dolchok said. "When these things happen, they are the things that keep you going, to see someone really change."

Tribal Court seeks items for display

The expanded courtrooms in the Qiz'unch' Tribal Courthouse each have display cases, and Chief Judge Evelyn Dolchok is seeking the loan or gifting of artwork, crafts, and cultural items from Yaghanen, the Kenai Peninsula, to fill them.

Those interested may contact the Tribal Court at 907-335-7219.



Chris Ross poses in the living room of his home shortly before moving back in after a remodel completed through the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity's SafeHome and Healthy Homes programs.

The goal of the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity is to alleviate the burden of not having suitable housing for Alaska Native and Native American families. Based on the number of households applying for assistance each month, the need is significant.

"Housing is such a need, and our department does all it can to eliminate barriers," said Housing Representative Shayna Lazaros.

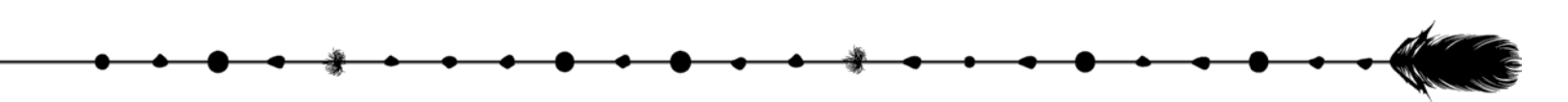
In fact, in June, the Housing program assisted approximately 140 households with home repairs or financial assistance for that month's expenses. While there may be some duplication with households receiving assistance through more than one program, that number does not include the number of incomplete or pending applications.

The Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity's mission is "to assist our un'ina in achieving an elevated standard of living." The program seeks to do this through home improvement, home ownership and rental opportunities. It also seeks to break down cultural housing barriers experienced by Alaska Native and Native American people, and empower Native families to achieve financial self-sustainability.

The Housing program serves Kenaitze and Salamatof Tribal Member households, and Alaska Native and American Indian households in the TDHE's service area, which includes Kenai, Soldotna, Sterling, Nikiski, Salamatof, Ridgeway, Kasilof, Funny River and Cooper Landing. Income qualifications apply.

Chris Ross, who lives in Nikiski, recently received assistance with repairs to his home. Repairs were made throughout his home, which at 47 years old, was showing its age. Bathroom tiling was redone, as was flooring in many areas of the home. Workers repaired the leaky kitchen sink and counter that was falling off the wall. Several walls also were redone, and the roof was repaired.

Ross said he heard about the Housing program through a family member. There were some challenges along the way, such as trying to move stuff around to make room for the contractor to work. Eventually, Ross said, the Housing department sent some "young guys" to help him pack and store his family's belongings so work could be completed.



Ross shares his home with his son and daughter, and said that with the repairs complete, he plans to stay for the foreseeable future.

"It's definitely a major improvement," Ross said. "After all of this work, I'm going to enjoy it for a little while."

There are a number of programs available to assist with home repairs, as well as things like rent or mortgage payments, and utility bills. Some programs, such as Sanding and Snowplowing and Fire Safety, are specifically for Elders or disabled households.

Lazaros said that if you are in need of assistance, the best way to find out if you're eligible is to apply.

"The application is the best place to start," Lazaros said. "We will do whatever we can to get people qualified if they meet the basic requirements of the program."

Lazaros said people can make an appointment, walk in to the Housing office, or start the process over the phone. Over the past several months, the application has been streamlined, so that one application is good for most programs.

Once all the required documentation is submitted, the Housing staff tries to have the application processed within 30 days. Depending on a variety of factors, some applications require more documentation and may take longer to complete.

For home repairs, the Safe-Home and Healthy Homes Project Manager will coordinate with the homeowner for a home inspection.

Lazaros said that if the Housing program isn't able to help, staff will try to connect people with other programs that may be able to provide assistance. That can include other Tribal programs, as well as outside organizations, such as Love INC.

The Housing staff is here to help, Lazaros said, and not to judge anyone's situation.

"It can be really hard to ask for help, but that's what we're here for," Lazaros said. "We're here to alleviate the burden of not having suitable housing."

The Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity has a number of programs available to help people facing homelessness, in need of home repairs, or in need of assistance with rent, mortgage and utility payments.

Homeless Placement and Prevention:

Provides individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness with assistance for expenses to prevent eviction or foreclosure, or to place a household into affordable housing.

Homeless Supportive Services: Provides personal hygiene kits, outdoor shelter and equipment, and cold-weather clothing and gear for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Student Housing: For full-time students pursuing a degree or certificate and attending an accredited college, university or trade school.

Sanding and Snow Plowing: For income-eligible Elders and disabled individuals.

Healthy Homes: Assists homeowners in need of environmental health and safety repairs.

Urgent Home Repair: Provides assistance to homeowners with qualifying urgent home repairs.

Fire Safety: Assists Elders and disabled households with inspection and replacement of carbon monoxide detectors, smoke detectors, and residential fire extinguishers.

SafeHome: Assists homeowners with rehabilitation and repairs for issues that threaten the health and safety of the family or property.

If you are in need of assistance, Housing Representative Shayna Lazaros said the best way to find out if you're eligible is to contact the Housing staff and start an application.

"The best way to figure out if you're eligible is to talk to us," Lazaros said.

Reach the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity at 907-335-7228, email housing@kenaitze.org, visit www.kenaitze.org/services/housing/, or stop by their office in the Toyon building, 1001 Mission Ave. in Kenai.



Sydney Abplanalp, Mary Hobbs and Shawnda Cutcher-Griechen laugh as they role-play a parenting skill in a Positive Indian Parenting class at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus.

A different approach

Positive Indian Parenting embraces traditional values

On a Monday evening in June, a group of people met at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus to talk about parenting.

They practiced giving and receiving praise – which can be more difficult than it sounds. They shared their highs and lows of the past week, and talked about some

of their parenting challenges. And they heard from others who had taken part in the same class and applied the lessons to their day-to-day parenting lives.

The Tribe's Positive Indian Parenting class isn't about lecturing people on parenting techniques. Instead, it's a give and take with a

focus on traditional and culturally specific practices and values.

"A lot of people hear 'parenting class' and think of someone coming to dictate to them," said Sydney Abplanalp, a Family Services Preservation Worker for the Tribe's Na'ini Family and Social Services, and a Positive Indian Parenting



class facilitator.

"As facilitators, we're able to give part of ourselves. We emphasize that we're not perfect parents, that we're all human, and we all need support systems. We're not dictating, it's a give and take."

Positive Indian Parenting is an eight-week course offered through Na'ini Family and Social Services. The curriculum was developed by the National Indian Child Welfare Association, and draws on Indigenous cultural traditions from across the United States. Class participants explore traditional child-rearing techniques and learn how to apply them to modern parenting. The class is open to the community, even those who don't have children at home.

"Some people just want to improve, and parent differently than they were parented. Some are court-ordered, or referred from the Office of Children's Services," said Na'ini Family Services Supervisor Shawnda Cutcher-Griechen, who is also a class facilitator.

"This is about relating, developing a healthy relationship, and building a support network. This particular parenting class has the potential to change a person's life profoundly."

Jennifer Flores, a graduate of the class, said with her Alaska Native heritage, Positive Indian Parenting felt like home.

"I've done other parenting classes," Flores said. "One of the greatest things when you're in this class, it's engaging, and you realize that you're not alone."

Flores said the class has something to offer for parents of chil-

dren of all ages.

The class covers a wide range of parenting topics. Participants talk about what a child is learning at different ages and stages of development, the importance of male and female influences, and the value of extended relatives in supporting parenting decisions.

Another part of the curriculum explores the lessons that can be learned from traditional storytelling. It provides an opportunity for Elders to share their knowledge.

Participants also discuss inter-generational trauma and their own personal trauma, and learn how to balance that with their parenting.

Cutcher-Griechen said Positive Indian Parenting provides a foundation on which participants can build.

Donna Hembroff, a Tribal Member and class graduate, said she was looking for a different approach to parenting when she took the class.

"It helped me build a better foundation with my daughter. It gives me direction," Hembroff said.

**We emphasize that we're not perfect
parents, that we're all human,
and we all need support systems.
We're not dictating, it's a give and take.**

Sydney Abplanalp, Positive Indian Parenting Facilitator

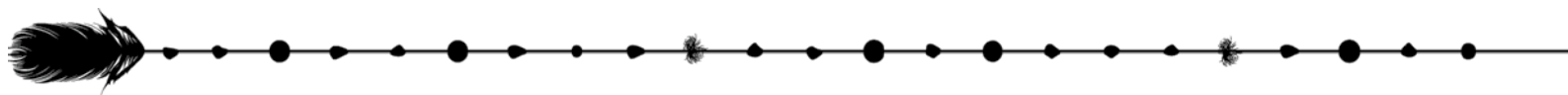
Nathan Conner, a parent of a Tribal Member, said his child was already eight months old when he found out he was a father. He said the Positive Indian Parenting class gave him hope as he works toward custody of his child.

"It gave me a sense of purpose, something to focus on," Conner said. "When I started the program, I had hope that I would see my son. Taking the class, having that hope, helped me focus on a purpose. The class helps make sure your thinking is correct. It gave me a path."

Cutcher-Griechen said she has had the opportunity to work with all types of families. Some participants aren't even parents – they're planning on it in the future, or they might have nieces and nephews and want to help. Some participants are potential foster parents.

"Whether you have kids or not, it doesn't matter," Cutcher-Griechen said.

Those interested in the Positive Indian Parenting class can call Na'ini Family and Social Services at 907-335-7600.



'Successes big and small'



Amanda Stroman, the Tribe's TERO Pool Coordinator, helps Jordan Rodgers with a scholarship application.

TERO helps people improve their lives

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe's TERO department does more than help Tribal Members, Alaska Native and American Indian people find a job. It helps them improve their lives.

"My goal is to get people into employment, schooling, or getting certified in the field they want to pursue. I try to provide a helping hand with any of it," said Amanda Stroman, the Tribe's TERO Job Pool Coordinator. "I want people to be in a career they enjoy, not

just a job that's barely paying the bills."

TERO stands for the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance. The ordinance provides a way for the Tribe to exercise its sovereignty and give preference to Tribal Members, spouses of Tribal Members, and Alaska Native and American Indian people in employment, contracting and other business activities.

The Tribe is currently working

with a consultant, Curtis Wildcat, to evaluate the ordinance and ensure it is meeting the needs of the Tribe.

One of the goals for the TERO department has been to establish a pool of candidates. As of July, there are 422 candidates in the pool, including 119 Tribal Members. From the pool, Stroman can identify candidates who are qualified for job openings with the Tribe. She can also help candidates find training and education op-

portunities, so that candidates are qualified for even more jobs.

Stroman said she keeps in touch with hiring managers across the Tribe, and networks with area employers who may be looking to hire. She keeps up-to-date on training opportunities, such as Commercial Driver's License courses and welding certifications. She also attends job fairs to network with people there, as well as with other tribes and tribal organizations.

People with a broad range of backgrounds and experience access the TERO department. Stroman said she works with each individual to help them overcome barriers to employment or advancement in the preferred field.

"I have people who come in looking to further their schooling, people just trying to find employment, and people in sobriety just trying to keep on a better path," Stroman said. "I try to make sure everyone who comes in doesn't leave empty-handed, whether it's a job lead, a resume, or just advice."

Stroman said that every person in the job pool measures success differently.

"Sometimes success is just being employed. Sometimes, it's being accepted into college, or finishing a college degree, or being able to step up in the job they're in," Stroman said. "I'll take successes big and small."

For Jordan Rodgers, success is going to Kenai Peninsula College to study business with a minor in communications this fall.

Rodgers said he's "surviving" in his current job as a manager at a

Sometimes success is just being employed.

Sometimes, it's being accepted into college, or finishing a college degree, or being able to step up in the job they're in.

I'll take successes big and small.

Amanda Stroman, TERO Pool Coordinator

Soldotna fast-food restaurant, but has bigger goals for himself.

"Most of the jobs I've had, I've worked in the restaurant industry. I've worked up to management, but with corporate jobs, you can only get so far," Rodgers said.

With a business degree, Rodgers said, he hopes to eventually own his own franchise.

"Keeping it local is important to me. I want to be able to employ other Tribal Members," Rodgers said.

Rodgers said the TERO office helped him find scholarships to help pay for college and walked him through all the paperwork involved.

"I would have been pretty lost on my own," Rodgers said.

Rodgers said the TERO office has been a great resource.

"If you're stuck in a rut or you don't know what's next, go ask," Rodgers said. "There's so many avenues and opportunities waiting. Take the time and stop in there and ask."

Katherine Bliss has been working as a Purchasing Agent in the Tribe's Procurement department since February. She also worked in the Custodial department a few years ago. She loves her current position, and said the TERO office is helping her with her goal of "climbing the ladder" with the Tribe.

Bliss said that she had started college after high school, but ended up dropping out. After paying off her student loans last year, she started thinking about going back to school to earn a degree, but she "never made it through all the hoops."

Bliss said Stroman approached her about college when the two started working in the same building. This fall, she'll start working toward a business administration degree through Alaska Pacific University.

The TERO office helped with scholarships and the application process. Bliss will attend classes online, and said the APU program



Katherine Bliss, currently a Purchasing Agent at the Tribe, has received help from the TERO office with both career advancement and education opportunities.

"seems doable for a regular, everyday person."

Bliss said she has overcome personal challenges in recent years. Now, she said, she loves her life, including her career path.

"I love my current job. I love it all the way around," Bliss said. "A dream of mine is to move up in Kenaitze – it's my Tribe. I enjoy the things I do, and I love learning."

She appreciates having the resources of the TERO office available.

"I know if I need help, I can go to

How to contact TERO

The TERO office serves Kenaitze Tribal Members, spouses of Tribal Members, and Alaska Native and American Indian people.

Contact the TERO office by calling 907-335-7247, emailing alstroman@kenaitze.org, or visiting www.kenaitze.org/tribal-member-services/tribal-employment-rights-ordinance/.

TERO and get directed on the right path," Bliss said.

Stroman said that when someone takes steps to improve their life, it also improves the lives of those around them.

"We have resources people can utilize to better their life, and their family's life," Stroman said. "Having someone in a career they want to be in is going to ensure that generation is better off than the one before."

Bequsilna, 'those who are gone'

Holli Anne Blohm Kozlowski



Holli Anne Blohm Kozlowski, age 34, of Freeland, Michigan, was called to eternal rest on Thursday, June 15, 2023, surrounded by her loving family.

Holli was born on May 6, 1989, at Saginaw General Hospital. Her

parents are Lori Sullivan Ricklefs and Chuck Ricklefs and Kevin Blohm and Julie Blohm-Nunnari. Holli grew up with her siblings, Gary Yuill, Taylor Blohm and Meghan Blohm.

Holli was a beautiful and dedicated wife, loving and nurturing mother, daughter, niece, aunt, and cousin. She graduated from Heritage High School in 2007. She received her Bachelor's in nursing from Davenport University in 2015.

Her boys remember their mom working multiple jobs as an RN at Covenant Hospital's Emergency Room and St. Mary's Intensive Care Unit. Holli left her position as a RN and devoted her life to raising her children.

In 2016, Holli was expecting an estimate to install a water pipe at her house, but instead she met her

future husband, Thomas Kozlowski. Holli and Thomas were married on Feb. 20, 2019. She was a devoted wife to her husband Tommy and a loving mom to her three beautiful children, Kamden (12), Kaleb (11) and Karlie (2).

Holli was also known as "Duchess" to her family and friends in Alaska. She spent many summers as a commercial fisherwoman set-netting along the beaches of Cook Inlet with her cousins and friends. Holli was a Kenaitze Tribal Member, and a descendant of Cook Inlet Region, Inc. and Kenai Natives Association. She was proud of her Alaska Native heritage and passed her traditional values of love, honor and truth onto her children.

Read her full obituary at <https://bit.ly/3PB2XaA>.

Chiqinik gheli,

thank you very much, to the organizations that contributed to the construction of the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Community Hall and Harvest Pavilion. Your donations help to provide a beautiful place for the Tribe and Tribal Members to gather and celebrate our culture and traditions for many years to come.

M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust
Cook Inlet Tribal Council
Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
Rasmuson Foundation
Peninsula Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic, Inc.
Marathon Petroleum Corporation
Salamatof Tribal Council
Kenai Natives Association
Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
Chugach Electric
Chugach Electric Cooper Lake
Southcentral Foundation



Church named Presidential Scholar



Jackson Powell Church, a Kenaitze Tribal Member, has been selected as a U.S. Presidential Scholar.

Two Presidential Scholars, one male and one female, are selected from each state. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 to recognize and honor the nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors.

Students are selected based on college admission test scores, as well as essays, self-assessments, secondary school reports, and transcripts. Finalists for the award are evaluated on their academic achievement, personal characteristics, leadership and service activities, and an analysis of their essay.

Church is a recent graduate of Bettye Davis East Anchorage High School. He plans to attend Dartmouth College in the fall. This summer, he will intern for U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski in Washington, D.C.

In addition to excelling in the classroom, Church has overcome

challenges posed by cerebral palsy to excel as a runner, Nordic skier and soccer player at East. Church was a team captain in each sport during his high school career.

Church is the son of Rob and Jana Church.

Jackson graduates with honors from Colorado Mesa



Mazzy Jackson, a Tribal Member, recently graduated from Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, Colorado. Mazzy earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design. She graduated summa cum laude, and also received Department of Art and Design honors.

Share your news!

Do you have any news you'd like to share? Graduations, marriages, or births? Any other personal milestones? Email news@kenaitze.org to be included in a future edition of Counting Cord.



Smith sings her way to national karaoke competition

Brenda Smith, a Tribal Member and current Tribal Council Secretary, recently qualified for the U.S. National Finals of the 2023 Karaoke World Championships.

Smith advanced to the national competition with her performance at the Alaska State Finals in July. For the Alaska competition, she performed "If I Ain't Got You" by Alicia Keys, and "(You Make Me Feel Like) a Natural Woman" by Aretha Franklin.

Competitors are judged on voice, technique, artistry and stage presence.

You can view the Alaska State Finals on the Karaoke World Championships USA Facebook page, <https://bit.ly/KWCAAlaska2023>. Smith's performances begin at the 2:03:00 mark, and at 5:20:22.

The National Finals are scheduled for Aug. 21-23 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Top performers there will advance to the Karaoke World Championships 2023 World Finals in Panama in November.



Cooking with Kenaitze





Barley Salad with Grouse, Mushrooms, Brussels Sprouts, and Spruce Tips

The flavor from spruce tips harvested in the spring mingles with mushrooms and Brussels sprouts, enhancing this dish made with grouse or chicken. Served over a barley salad, this dish uses ingredients you can easily find in your local grocery store, or harvest from your own backyard.

Yields: 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 60 minutes

Ready in: 1 hour 15 minutes

Calories: 370 per serving

Ingredients:

- ½ cup barley
- 1 ¾ cup low sodium chicken broth
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 pound skinless, boneless grouse or chicken tenders
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon rosemary
- 1 teaspoon spruce tips
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup Brussels sprouts, halved
- 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 4 ounces shiitake mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons water, divided
- 1 ½ tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 cups spring mix greens

Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan, bring the barley and chicken broth to a boil. Lower the heat to medium low and simmer, covered, until the barley is tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed, 40 minutes. Set aside to cool.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large sauce pan over medium heat. When the oil is

shimmering add the garlic and cook until it is fragrant, about 30 seconds to a minute. Add the grouse and sprinkle with the rosemary, salt, and spruce tips. Cook the grouse for 4 minutes on each side until the internal temperature reaches 165 degrees F. Remove the grouse to a clean mixing bowl.

3. In the same pan, heat the remaining oil over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and cook until browned, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove the mushrooms and place with the grouse in the mixing bowl.
4. Add the Brussels sprouts into the hot pan and toss in the juices for 1 minute. Add 2 tablespoons of water and cover the pan. Cook the Brussels sprouts until softened, about 5 minutes, then remove the lid. Add the balsamic vinegar to the pan and toss to combine. Add the mushrooms and grouse to the pan and toss. Remove the pan from the heat.
5. Place the mixed greens in a large salad bowl, top with barley, and spoon over the grouse and mushroom mixture.

Tips: To save time, money, and reduce prep work, you can substitute fresh Brussels sprouts with frozen Brussels sprouts; fresh mushrooms with frozen mushrooms; and regular barley with quick barley. Follow the box directions for quick barley. You can also substitute chicken broth with vegetable broth.

Registered Dietician Stephen Kronlage assists un'ina at the Dena'ina Wellness Center with medical nutrition therapy, which includes managing weight loss, diabetes, IBS, weight gain, Celiac disease, and other conditions through an individualized nutrition plan. To make an appointment, call 907-335-7500.



Dena'ina naqenaga



Yagheli ey jani qilan *Today is a good day*

Dena'ina naqenaga is "our Dena'ina language." Find more Dena'ina language resources online at <https://bit.ly/KITAudioDictionary> including an interactive audio dictionary with this and many more Dena'ina words and phrases.





Addresses and Phone Numbers



Administration Building
150 N. Willow St., Kenai
907-335-7200



Na'ini Family and Social Services
1001 Mission Ave., Kenai
907-335-7600



Dena'ina Wellness Center
508 Upland St., Kenai
907-335-7500



Tyotkas Elder Center
1000 Mission Ave., Kenai
907-335-7280



Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus
12271 Kenai Spur Highway, Kenai
907-335-7667



Qiz'unch' Tribal Court
508 Upland St., Kenai
907-335-7219



**Chuq'eya Qenq'a
Birch Tree House –Behavioral Health**
510 Upland St., Kenai
907-335-7300



**Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally
Designated Housing**
1001 Mission Ave., Kenai
907-335-7228



KENAITZE
INDIAN
TRIBE

150 N. Willow St.

Kenai, AK 99611

www.kenaitze.org

907-335-7200



Kenaitze Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 988
Kenai, AK 99611



TO

ASSURE

KAHTNUHT'ANA DENA'INA

THRIVE FOREVER
