The play’s the thing

Tribal Members contribute to story’s evolution

“The Ballad of Kenai” tells a story – actually, several stories – about the impact of change on a community.

But the production itself also has a story, one to which several Tribal Members contributed during a 50th anniversary performance in November.

“The Ballad of Kenai” interweaves the story of a growing city of Kenai with the changes that come to the Dena’ina community with first contact from Russian January-February 2019 KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE NEWSLETTER

All fun and games

Yaghanen NYO team jumps into another season

The Native Youth Olympics are unlike other sporting events. Competitors demonstrate impressive strength, agility and skill. But while athletes strive to jump higher and farther, they are also just as likely to help their fellow competitors do the same.

“NYO is different,” Doug Gates, a Yaghanen Youth Program Youth Advocate, explained in a pep talk prior to a recent practice session. “NYO is about cooperation. There will be cooperation between teams. You might see an athlete from one team go up to an athlete from another team, and tell them how they can jump farther, or kick higher. So athletes will help each other.”

The reason for cooperation, even in a competitive environment? Gates said he thinks it’s because cooperation is crucial to the Native cultures from which the games have been passed down over generations.

“We want you to go out there, have a good time in the events, try your best, if you win a medal, awesome, we’ll be proud of you. If you do not win a medal, well, if you tried your best, that’s all we really want,” Gates said.

The current NYO format includes 11

See MEETING p. 2
See SEALS, p. 5

Joseph Whittom competes for Kenaitze’s Salamatof team in the one-hand reach during the Tribe’s invitational in January.

See NYO, p. 6

Kenaitze Indian Tribal Members and employees will soon have a new Tribal seal and updated logo adorning their correspondence and clothing.

Tribal Council Members recently unveiled the new seal. The most significant change is the addition of the Kenai River and Cook Inlet to the design. Tribal Council Chairperson Wayne D. Wilson Jr. said that is important for the Kahtnuht’ana Dena’ina.

“That’s the biggest thing – because we’re the River People,” Wilson said.

The current seal came into use in 2008 and was based on the Tribal Court seal, which was first used after the court was established in 1986. The seal was inspired by the Tribe’s original flag, which was designed by Tribal Member Elsie Maliele in 1972.

See SEAL, p. 5

A new Tribal seal features Kahtnu – the Kenai River.

Secretarial election delayed by shutdown

Tribal Members updated at Quarterly Meeting

Much of the discussion at the Jan. 12 Quarterly Meeting revolved around the Secretarial election, which had been on hold due to the federal government shutdown.

Council Member Liisia Blizzard, who is also a member of the Secretarial Election Committee, said the process had been going well up until the shutdown.

“Our next step was to mail out the ballots,” Blizzard said. “Then we had the government shutdown, so right now, we’re in a holding pattern.”

Under the initial election timeline, a notice of election was sent to Tribal Members on Nov. 26, 2018. Voter registrations were to have been returned by Dec. 17, 2018. Ballots were to have been mailed to voters on Jan. 3, to be returned and counted on Jan. 24.

However, the shutdown began Dec. 22, 2018. Because the Secretarial election is under BIA oversight, work on the election has been halted.

See BALLAD, p. 4

Seal makeover

Tribe’s emblem gets an update

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See YORK, p. 6

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Mills named to Alaska Native Elders Council at APU

Tribal Council Member Mary Ann Mills was recently invited to join the Alaska Native Elders Council at Alaska Pacific University.

Alaska Pacific, located in Anchorage, is working to become a Tribal University, and is involving Elders from across the state in the process. The Alaska Native Elders Council will use their collective wisdom and knowledge to reinforce and exemplify the vision and mission of Alaska Pacific.

According to its strategic plan, Alaska Pacific’s mission is to provide world-class, hands-on, culturally responsive educational experience in collaboration with its students, communities and Tribal partners. The school’s vision is to honor Alaska’s indigenous heritage, exemplify excellence and prepare paths. Learn more about Alaska Pacific University at www.alaskapacific.edu.

Moving soon? Please keep in touch

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

Send updates to:
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From the editor’s desk

The Counting Cord is a publication for members of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and the Tribe’s customers.

Find more information on the Tribe’s website at kenai.net. Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/kenai.net. For story suggestions or questions about content, contact editor M. Scott Moon at 907-335-7204 or email mmills423@alaska.net.

Land a great job

Apply now for the Tribal Fishery Education Assistant, Russian River Fish Technician, or other great positions at the Tribe.

Go to www.kenai.net/jobs for more information and to apply.

MEETING FROM P.1

Among the concerns voiced at the meeting were voting rights for Tribal Members living outside Alaska; differences in voter eligibility between the Tribe’s constitution and BIA regulations; and challenges to the list of eligible voters.

Council Members shared some of their own concerns, but noted that none of them could be addressed until BIA staff return to work.

On the ballot, voters will be asked to remove the requirement that elections to amend the Tribe’s constitution be overseen by the Secretary of the Interior.

One of the concerns is that a Secretarial election is open to all Tribal Members 18 and older per federal regulations, while Tribal elections are restricted to Tribal Members 18 and older living in Alaska.

“They are our Tribal Members, they are our family,” Ziral said.

Council Treasurer Clinton Lageson said he trusts “that Tribal Members will make the right choice at the right time” on changes to the constitution, and will correct any issues that may arise.

“I trust that process more than I trust the federal government,” Lageson said. Council Member Mary Ann Mills suggested a Tribal bill of rights.

“If we remove the Secretary of the Interior, I think it would be a good idea to have a bill of rights that would protect our people,” Mills said.

During the meeting, Council Vice Chairperson Bernadine Atchison provided an update on negotiations with the state on Office of Children’s Services Child Welfare Compact, and federal Title IV-E funding for a foster care program.

Atchison said that funding under the OCS compact is uncertain due to the change in state administration. She said that the message relayed to the Tribe is that Gov. Mike Dunleavy is in favor of the compact and would like tribes to take on more services. The state also wants to work with tribes to identify other sources of funding. Title IV-E may be another good source of funding, and the Council is moving forward with an application for a $300,000 planning grant. The two-year grant would allow the Tribe to ensure that the necessary infrastructure, court case updates and implementation plans are in place before a foster care program is launched.

Royal Brown, who was introduced as the new Tribal Designated Housing Entity/Facilities Director, provided an update on the new harvest shop under construction at the Tribe’s fishery site. The foundation work has been completed, and funding has been secured to build a weather-proof structure that will be usuable for the upcoming season.

Brown said finishing the interior will be funding-dependent, but plans include stainless steel counters and sink and a walk-in cooler and freezer, amenities that will help not just with processing the fish harvest, but also with the moose salvage program. Hot running water and a “real bathroom” also are part of the plans.

In response to a question, Brown said a grant application has been submitted to the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust to improve other facilities at the fishery site, including a new pavilion, larger smokehouse, and bigger storage shed.

Lageson reported that the Tribal Equal Rights Ordinance Commission had revised the job requirements for the Tribal Fishery Education Assistant positions, and is hoping to see Tribal Members interested in filling them. The job is posted on the Tribe’s website at www.kenai.net.

Wilson encouraged Tribal Members to apply for the positions and is hoping to see them filled by April.

The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for April 13.

From the Council’s Chairperson

Happy New Year. I hope everyone had an excellent Christmas and happy New Year. 2018 has come and gone. There were many exciting changes that took place this past year that will help the Tribe continue to grow in the future. I’d like to recap some of the accomplishments over the past 12 months.

The Council started 2018 off with a very successful strategic planning session that will help the Tribe move forward in a positive manner. We implemented a new Tribal-wide organizational chart that added several new director positions. The newly established Kannah’atana Denaina Health Board will allow us to become more effective and efficient as a Tribe.

One of the more noticeable changes was that we split the Executive Director role into two positions, Executive Director of Tribal Administration and Executive Director of Health Systems. Both positions were filled in the fall by Dawn Nelson and Julia Polinski, respectively.

We continue to make progress in filling other key positions. The Human Resources Director position has been filled by Geoff Miller, and the TDHE Facilities and Housing Director position has been filled by Royal Brown. New Finance Director Ed Keough and Education Director Rachel Gilbert will be coming in early February.

We also signed a letter of intent with a permanent physician for the Denaina Wellness Center, with plans to start in July.

The Council has been working hard on honoring our past Tribal Members who have been influential in our growth and success. TERO is presently working on creating five intern positions with the Council’s commitment to succession and leadership planning. It is our hope that the future leaders of the Tribe will come from this program.

At the national level, Clinton Lageson, Tribal Council Treasurer and Alaska Area Vice President Alternate to the National Congress of American Indians, attended the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Save Our Sovereignty Walk in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 14, 2018 at the National Museum of the American Indian. Clinton gave a speech in support of tribal sovereignty and calling attention to the dangers facing our tribal homeland.

I’d like to thank all of our staff for the hard work and dedication you have shown in the past year. The Employee Christmas party also had a record turnout with great food. I appreciate the time and effort that went into planning those events.

I also want to congratulate some of the Tribe’s longtime employees, who were recognized at the recent Years of Service celebration. We have three employees who have reached 15 years of service this past year: Brenda Trefren in Environmental Protection; Archie Minkler in Housing; and Michael Bernard in Youth Programs. Dental Supervisor Kris Smith is our first employee to hit 20 continuous years of employment at the Tribe.

We accomplished a lot in 2018, and I’m looking forward to being able to share even more accomplishments in 2019.

Sincerely,

Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Tribal Council Chairperson
Jeff Swan, Hanna Wilson and Savanna Wilson rehearse a scene from "The Ballad of the Kenai." The distant past is past in the distance, and he wanted the middle ground to be a dark and vague transition area.

"I wanted to represent the gap, the struggle I see in the Dena'ina dealing with the last few years and last few decades," Morin said. "There's that gap between the old ways and the new ways, which is sort of a universal theme. So I wanted the three levels, and distances, to emphasize time, and yet also represent the cultural struggles and vagaries. Robert was the Native narrator, voicing the thoughts and concerns and uncertainties of how was it, how did we get here and what's going on now?"

Morin said that during his research, he found 11 versions of the script, written by Lance Peterson with original music by Robert C. Richardson. He said as the script evolved, the Dena'ina scenes became more predominant. He also discovered that in 1992 or 1993, Peterson wrote a play dedicated to the Native narrative, called "Raven's Place."

Bunny recruited her brother Jeff Swan to play Kazage, a Dena'ina leader from the past. Kazage has one of the most powerful moments in the production, when he lamented the loss of his people due to the introduction of disease from contact with Europeans.

Jeff Swan said it was an emotional performance for him.

"When we listen to a song, either the emotion comes through, or not," Jeff Swan said. "In this case, reading it, memorizing the lines and singing it, it was hard not to get a little choked up. I had to process it mentally. It is a pretty sad thing. The way I dealt with it was to say, OK, if you are a person who has lost your entire family and population, one of the things you might ask yourself is, how do I carry on? What do you do? Do you give up the entire memory of your civilization, or do you carry on? And I think the answer would have to be, you can carry on if you could."

For Bunny, singing songs in Dena'ina was especially powerful.

"We always had words, but now, there is great support, through people like Jon Ross, Sondra (Shajinnof-Stuart) and others who are inspired to perpetuate the language," Bunny Swan said. "I think it really has given me that support. When I think of it, when I think about the strength, endurance and steadfastness of the Kenaitze people. When we have the strength, it acts like a drug, it made me feel that it was back then, and real, and I actually was a part of it."

Wilson said that she learned about Dena'ina history, too.

"I learned a lot of little nails, things I didn't know about my history," Wilson said.

Adding to the story

"This version of "The Ballad of Kenai" also included Bunny Swan's song "Where Are the Drums," which she wrote for Tyonek in 1984, a time when that community was struggling with change. Morin explained that in his research, he found that "Kazage's Lament" and Kalifornsky's "Song of the Lonely Man" appeared in different sequences in various scripts, and in some cases, even in different acts. However, he said that in working with Bunny and Jeff, he detected a greater sense of optimism about where the Tribe is now and wanted the ending of the play to be more uplifting.

"I wanted to end the show with Peter's being the last voice, but I needed something else to go with "Kazage's Lament,"" Morin said. "And Bunny says, 'Well, I have a song I did for the Tyonek folks.'"

See BALLAD, P. 9

SEAL, FROM P. 1

The new Tribal seal maintains the elements from the previous version. It depicts Yahgkan Island, the Good Land. Mount Redoubt represents the strength, endurance and steadfastness of the Kenaitze people. The salmon represents the spirit of the Kenaitze people. The snowshoes show that the Kenaitze people continue to walk with surety on the Earth.

The river means forever, and its representation is enhanced in the new design. Also in the new design is Kalgin Island, and the seal gives the impression that it is springtime, with green in the landscape but some snow still keeping the seal from melting. The seal was designed by Jeff Swan, who has made a living as a graphic designer, and the tribal logo was designed by Tribal Council Member Steve Miller.

The Tribe's original flag was designed by tribal Elder Elsie Maillelle in 1972. When you look toward Mount Redoubt from the bluff in Kenai, you can see the salmon. The number of different logos currently being used was brought to the Council's attention, and a decision was made to make things uniform across the Tribe. The seal is meant to reflect the vision of a unified, strong and proud people, the Kenaitze.

The new Tribal seal was designed by graphic designer Steve Miller. The Tribal Council approved the new standard logo design for all of its operations. The new format for this publication has been well received and is a perfect fit.
Balance, or let go of the stick, that's how said Corbin Stuive. "If you lose your signal, competitors try to wrest the stick directions. They each grab an end of a stand next to each other, facing opposite with your arms.

"You need to have pretty good leg strength to kick yourself up, and good arm strength so you can pull your other leg up and kick higher," Vaudrin said.

Arm Pull

Samuel Wilson said the Arm Pull was his favorite event as a junior competitor, because he was able to use his strength and leverage to his advantage.

In the Arm Pull, competitors sit on the floor facing each other, with one leg over and one leg under the opponent's legs. Competitors lock arms at the elbow, placing their free hand on the opponent's legs. Competitors lock arms at the elbow, placing their free hand on the opponent's legs. Competitors lock arms at the elbow, placing their free hand on the opponent's legs. Competitors lock arms at the elbow, placing their free hand on the opponent's legs.

Competitors sit on the floor facing each other with their feet touching and knees at a 45-degree angle. They grip a stick placed over their toes, and when a signal is given the opportunity to use his grip, they lose the pull.

Eskimo Stick Pull

In the Eskimo Stick Pull is his favorite event, because it gives him the opportunity to use his strength and leverage. "You have to push with your legs, too, and keep a straight back," Wilson said.

Indian Stick Pull

In the Indian Stick Pull, competitors stand next to each other, facing opposite directions. They reach grab an end of a foot-long dowel, tapered at each end. The dowel is greased with Crisco-type lard, simulating the slippery skin of a salmon. When the official gives the signal, competitors try to wrest the stick from their opponent's hand by pushing, pulling, twisting and jerking the stick. Intentional body contact is not allowed.

"You want to have a good grip," said Corbin Stuive. "If you lose your balance, or let go of the stick, that's how you lose.

"You need to have pretty good leg strength to kick yourself up, and good arm strength so you can pull your other leg up and kick higher," Vaudrin said.

Knee Jump

Kya Ahlers is a fan of the Knee Jump – scraped up feet and all.

"I have scars on my feet from rubbing on the wood floor. But once you’re doing it, you don’t really think about that. You just think about doing your best and having fun," Ahlers said.

In the Kneel Jump, competitors start in a kneeling position, with the tops of their feet flat on the floor. From there, they jump up and forward, landing on both feet.

The event tests an athlete's leg strength and balance. Abby Semaken explained that to do it well, you have to really swing your arms and get your upper body into it. "And when you jump, you have to stick the landing," Semaken said.

One-Foot High Kick

In the One-Foot High Kick, competitors launch themselves off both feet, kick a suspended ball with one foot, and land on the kicking foot without losing their balance.

"I had to bend down and swing my arms," she said.

Doug Gates, Yaghanen Youth Advocate, has one other piece of advice: "Always stick the landing. Competitors sometimes think they’ve missed the ball while they may have just brushed it, but if they put their other foot down, it won’t count.

"Always stick your landing – even if you think you’ve missed," Gates said.

One-Hand Reach

The One-Hand Reach requires athletes to balance their body weight on one hand and reach with their free hand to touch a suspended ball. Athletes must then place their free hand back on the floor while keeping the rest of their body off of it.

"I think it’s a lot fun," Kya Ahlers said. "You don’t have to do much for it but you need strength and a lot of core and balance to do it.

Ahlers said the One-Hand Reach is something you can do at home with friends. In fact, she got a ball at the Alaska Federation of Natives convention and has it hanging from a stair railing.

"All it takes is a ball and a string," Ahlers said.

Scissor Broad Jump

The Scissor Broad Jump simulates the balance and technique necessary to jump from ice floe to ice floe – a skill William Vaudrin said he has put to use in Chevak. Athletes start standing on both feet. They leap forward onto one foot, swinging the other leg behind their landing leg, shift their weight to that foot, and jump forward again, landing on both feet. Athletes compete to see who can jump the furthest.

"We have to get a little bit of a head start, lying on the floor facing each other. With a signal from the opponent's arm straightens or they pull the competitor toward them with a pull. The opponent's foot. With a signal from the opponent's arm straightens or they pull the competitor toward them with a pull.

The event is a test of strength and balance. "You need to have pretty good leg strength to kick yourself up, and good arm strength so you can pull your other leg up and kick higher," Vaudrin said.

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"If the river is frozen but breaks apart, you have to jump on ice floes to get home," Vaudrin said.

Vaudrin said he was able to pick up the motion fairly easily, but it takes beginners some practice to get the technique down.

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Seal Hop

Emiliee Wilson shared the key to being good at the Seal Hop: "Ah!"

In the Seal Hop, competitors assume a push-up position and hop like a seal on their hands and toes. The goal is for competitors to go as far as they can without stopping or touching the floor with their knees or stomachs. Junior competitors and senior girls keep their arms straight and palms flat; the senior boys competitors use a lowered push-up position and support their weight on the heel of their hands and their knuckles. "I like that it makes me tough, and I like what the backstory is," Wilson said.

"Our ancestors would hop so the seals wouldn’t be startled when we hunted them.”

The reason boys hop on their knuckles is to simulate stalking a seal while hunted them.”

At top, Eli Gordon (Homer Halibuts), Joseph Whittom and Judah Eason (Yaghanen Youth Program’s Salamatof team) and Porter Rockwell (Team Seward) celebrate their accomplishments in the one-hand reach from atop the winner’s podium during the Kenaitze’s Indian Tribe’s Native Youth Olympics Invitational. Center, Kenaitze’s William Wilson competes in the wrist carry event. Bottom, children from several different teams bond during a break in the competition. Native Youth Olympic events stress sportsmanship.
Learning starts in the home
Tribe launches Early Head Start program

Samuel Semaken is a bundle of energy.

On this particular Wednesday morning, that energy is focused on applying paint to paper. The lesson had started with painting ice cubes before moving to painting paper, and Samuel is loading his canvas with color. Throughout the lesson, Samuel's sing-song “ha-ha” fills the room.

Samuel, age 2, and his family are participants in the Tribe’s new Early Head Start program. Working with Samuel are Abby Hanna and Vicky Glick. Early Head Start helps parents who can’t get any better with children than to start them early with early education. This is such a positive program.

A closer connection
Semaken said she noticed the change in Samuel just in the four months since home visits started in September. For starters, he’s exci- ted to see Hanna and Glick, instead of hiding around the corner.

“Now we see him glued to the window when we pull up,” Hanna said.

Samuel’s home visitors say that the home-based aspect of the program has allowed them to get to know the family in a way that isn’t possible at the classroom setting, and to tailor an individualized learning plan that fits his specific needs.

“We have a philosophy that parents are a child’s first teacher, and we support them with tools to do their best,” said Hanna. “With home visits we are able to have a deeper relationship with parents themselves, and when that trust relationship is built, then you can individualize even more.”

Sandy Semaken laughters as Abby Hanna and Vicky Glick of the Tribe’s Early Head Start program help her son Samuel paint during a home visit.

Event celebrates indigenous culture

Like the people who wear them, no two pairs of moccasins are the same.

“Each pair is custom not only to the person who is wearing them, but also to the person who constructed them,” explained Estelle Thomason, a Traditional Healer with the Tribe.

Thomason said that traditionally, a tape measure was never used in making a pair of moccasins. There are some people so skilled, they can make a perfectly sized pair just by sight.

“For those of us who do need a little extra help, we do use our hands,” she said. “It’s a very personal art form.”

The uniqueness of traditional footwear, from moccasins to mukluks, has made it an important part of the culture of indigenous peoples. The Tribe celebrated that culture with a Rock Your Mocs event on Nov. 16. Participants gathered at the Denai’a Wellness Center for drumming, and a group photo opportunity. Those who received moccasins as a gift in the past were encouraged to post photos of their traditional footwear on social media.

In fact, Rock Your Mocs has its roots as a social media event, founded in 2011 by Atsye, then 19 years old, of the La- guna Pueblo in New Mexico. Atsye had just attended a ceremo- ny with her family, and asked her brother why they didn’t wear their moccasins more often than just for ceremonial days.

Atsye launched Rock Your Mocs to provide American Indian and Alaska Native people an opportu- nity to celebrate their culture. Par- ticipants were encouraged to share pictures on social media using the hashtags #ROCKYOURMOCS or #RYMD2018.

According to the Rock Your Mocs Facebook page, “By doing so, participants create an online photo album for the world to see and others to enjoy.”

Bessie Phillips, a Wellness Assistant at the Denai’a Wellness Center, said traditional foot- wear patterns have been shared for generations.

“There’s families that have patterns coming from their ances- tors and have been handed down,” Phillips said.

That tradition has made mocca- sins and other types of footwear an important and identifiable part of Alaska Native culture.

“Depending on which culture, you can tell by the style,” Thomason said. “Typically, with villages and families, we have our own patterns. If you’re familiar with different villages, you can identify which culture, which village, even which family you come from. Some of the patterns you see on footwear are thousands of years old.”

Virginia Wolf said her mocca- sin date from 1982, when she was commercial fishing in Unalakleet and the tribe wanted her to stay permanently. A lady made them – even after she knew Wolf wouldn’t be staying. Wolf’s mocs were made with moose hide, seal skin and mouton, and crafted entirely by hand.

“I did acquire a moose hide, so my granddaughter and I am going to see if we can replicate it,” Wolf said.

Sassa Peterson’s mukluks were made by her mother, with a little help from a neighbor, when Peterson was in high school. Because they are so soft, Peterson says she keeps them for special occasions. Peterson said she was actually talking with someone on the phone before heading over to the Rock Your Mocs event.

“I said, ‘Guess what I’m looking for?’ And she said, ‘That’s the mukluks you made for me. I’m going to show them off at the clinic,’” Peterson said.

Atsye Montana said she doesn’t know the origin of her moccasins – she found them at a local second-hand store. She said she wishes she knew who made them, but enjoys the opportunity to wear them.

“It just makes me feel like I’m a part of being here,” Anowic said.

“I wear them at Tiyoks in the winter. Just to be able to wear something made by somebody, likely a Native person here in Alaska, is amazing.”

The Washington, D.C. rally also attracted support from some other prominent Alaska Native cultural figures. A student from the band Portugal. The Mun were there as well. The band has provided a platform for Alaska Native and American Indian issues, frequently inviting leaders from local or- ganizations on stage during conc- erts.

Several of the band’s members, including lead singer John Baldwin Gourley, grew up in Alaska, an experience that gave him an appreci- ation for his Native heritage.

“In talking with John, he said that growing up in Alaska, you have to support the culture around you,” Lageson said. “We had an opportunity to use the band’s platform to discuss Alaska issues, such as sover- eignty and suicide.”

Lageson also hopes to continue to partner with other tribes across the country, and to see the results of that cooperation.

“I’m looking forward to see if the work with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe comes to fruition,” Lageson said.
No slowing them down

On a recent Wednesday morning, Michael Dotomain, a Personal Trainer at the Dena’ina Wellness Center, was across campus at Tytokas Elder Center to lead a “Move with Michael” exercise class.

On this particular day, a half-dozen people participated in the class, which involved some gentle movement combined with easy stretching. This group was on the smaller side, Dotomain said he’s had as many as 20 people take part.

The program promotes wellness by providing an opportunity and motivation for Elders to keep moving, especially during a time of year when many people are sedentary.

Dotomain said that when planning the workout, he focuses on exercises to improve mobility and flexibility.

“The people come with arthritis, or they may have shoulder pain, so we’re trying to get them to move in a safe way,” Dotomain said.

Laura Hobson said she enjoys regular exercise, though she said she “did it with a group.”

“And you do a better job when you do it,” she said.

“Group helps,” Hobson said.

Dotomain said creating a challenge is a good way to get people moving, especially over the winter.

“Having the challenge helps,” Dotomain said. “A lot of their health care providers will tell them they need to walk more. The challenge helps to hold them accountable.”

Hobson said that before the challenge, she didn’t realize how much she was moving.

“You don’t think you take that many steps in a week,” Hobson said.

Elders interested in participating in the Step-Up Challenge can contact Dotomain at 907-335-7588. The contest includes prizes for reaching goals.

Lost and found at DWC

As the temperature drops outside, there’s nothing better than warming up inside with a hot, hearty meal. On this page, find a tasty way to serve up moose meat, a recipe to add a rich boost to ramen noodles, and an easy prep recipe for stew.

What’s cooking in your kitchen? Do you have a favorite recipe to share? We’d love to hear from you! Email hottopics@kenaitze.org. You can also use the “Contact Us” button on the Tribe’s web page, www.kenaitze.org.

Watch the Tribe’s Facebook page for announcements for upcoming cooking workshops at the Dena’ina Wellness Center. Visit facebook.com/kenaitze.

CARBONARARA RAMEN PASTA

In January, Dena’ina Wellness Center Registered Dietician Caroline Tompkins conducted a workshop on “Ramen with a Boost.” Here’s one of the recipes she prepared.

Ingredients

4 slices bacon, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
2 tablespoons salted butter
1 1/2 cups half-and-half
2 (3-ounce) packages ramen
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan
1 egg, beaten
1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Directions

1. In a skillet on medium heat, add bacon. Cook until crispy, about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove and set aside. 2. Add butter and half-and-half. Whisk until butter is melted. 3. Gently break ramen into a single layer and add to milk mixture. Turn heat to medium-high and let milk boil, gently stirring the ramen to break it up. If milk evaporates too quickly and ramen is not cooked, add 2 to 3 tablespoons of water at a time. Sprinkle with cheese. Turn off heat, add egg and stir quickly until cooked. 4. Stir in cooked bacon and parsley. 5. Divide between two plates. Sprinkle with more Parmesan to serve.

MOOSE MEAT, GRAVY AND RICE

Ingredients

1 pound moose meat
1 tsp garlic powder
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
3 to 4 cups water
1 1/2 cups water
1 small can mushrooms
1 bunch broccoli
1 bunch carrots
1/2 cup water

Directions

1. Cut meat into bite size pieces and brown in large fry pan. Add salt, pepper, garlic powder. When meat is well done and brown, add water and soy sauce, bring to a boil, let simmer for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Cut vegetables into bite size pieces and add to meat. Let simmer for 15 minutes. Mix cornstarch into 1/2 cup water. Mix very well and add to meat, and vegetables, stirring constantly until desired thickness. Cook for about 5 minutes or until gravy is done. Serve over steamed rice.

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WINTER STEW

Eat your vegetables in this delicious chunky stew. Serve it by itself or with cooked rice, mashed potatoes, or macaroni. Serves 6.

Ingredients

1/4 cup (about 2 ounces) canned apricots, drained and diced
1 1/2 cups low-sodium tomato juice
2 cups water
1 1/2 cups half-and-half
2 tablespoons salted butter
1/2 pound winter squash, diced (or 1/2 can, about 8 ounces, low-sodium sweet potatoes, drained)
2 tablespoons paprika (if you have it)
1/2 cup onions, diced
1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup chopped broccoli
1/2 cup chopped carrots
1/4 cup chopped parsley

Directions

1. In a large pot, combine squash, turnips, onions, tomato juice, and pepper. Cut meat into bite size pieces and brown in large fry pan. Add salt, pepper, garlic powder. When meat is well done and brown, add water and soy sauce, bring to a boil, let simmer for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Cut vegetables into bite size pieces and add to meat. Let simmer for 15 minutes. Mix cornstarch into 1/2 cup water. Mix very well and add to meat, and vegetables, stirring constantly until desired thickness. Cook for about 5 minutes or until gravy is done. Serve over steamed rice.

This recipe is from the "Traditional Food Guide for the Alaska Native People," published by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. The guide contains nutritional information and preparation tips for wild Alaskan meats, fish, seafood and plants that are part of our Alaska Native cultures across the state. To order a copy, email cancer@anfhc.org.
The Big Picture

Participants in this year's Rock Your Mocs event show off their footwear at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. See story, p. 9.

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 Elders 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

- **Environmental Program**
  1106 Mission Ave., Kenai, AK 99611
  907-396-7933

- **Dena’ina Wellness Center**
  508 Upland St., Kenai, AK 99611
  907-335-7500

- **Na’ini Family and Social Services**
  510 Upland St., 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