

Tribe signs historic compact



Kenaitze Tribal Council Vice-Chairperson Bernadine Atchison and Gov. Bill Walker, fourth from left, sign the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact during a ceremony at the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in Anchorage. Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner Valerie Davidson and Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott celebrate the moment.

Kenaitze Indian Tribe, State of Alaska sign historic child welfare agreement

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe has signed an agreement with the State of Alaska that establishes a framework for the tribe to provide additional child welfare programs across its service area on behalf of the Alaska Office of Children’s

Services.

Kenaitze was among 18 Alaska tribes and tribal organizations that signed the agreement during the 2017 Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in Anchorage, the largest annual gathering of Native

peoples in the United States.

Under the agreement, called the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact, the tribe will provide child welfare services that would otherwise be provided by the Alaska Office of Children’s Services. The

compact gives the tribe greater local control and oversight of family services while incorporating the values, culture and traditions of its people.

It is the first agreement of its

See **WELFARE AGREEMENT**, p.3

Tribe hosts annual meeting

Four incumbent candidates re-elected to Tribal Council

With four Tribal Council seats up for grabs at the Annual General Membership Meeting in October, incumbent candidates carried the day.

Tribal members re-elected Wayne Wilson, Clinton Lageson, Liisia Blizzard and Bernadine Atchison to the seven-member Tribal Council. Each will serve two-year terms. They join Jennifer Showalter Yeoman, James O. Segura and Diana Zirul, whose positions were not up for election.

Lageson received 89 votes, Wilson 88, Blizzard 86 and Atchison 83. Also on the ballot were Elsie Maillette (62), Audre Gifford (61), Doug Boling (48), Bonnie Juliussen Gibbs (42) René Edelman Azzara (40), Emerline Showalter (36) and Paul Lorenzo (34).

After the meeting, held at the Dena’ina Wellness Center, the Council elected its officers as follows:

- Wayne Wilson, Chairperson
- Bernadine Atchison, Vice-Chairperson
- Clinton Lageson, Treasurer
- Diana Zirul, Secretary

See **ANNUAL MEETING**, p. 5



Clare Swan, at right, reaches to cast her ballot at the Annual General Membership Meeting as Council member James O. Segura points the way.

NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Yaghal du!

It's been a month ... two council meetings, an annual meeting, the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention, and a slew of employee and director work groups. In between, I have met many tribal members, new acquaintances and old friends. All the while discovering how the organization works. What I have found are caring, capable people at every turn. To be sure, we can use some alignment of our near term goals and we need to lay out a plan to achieve those further down the path, but the Mission and Vision of the tribe remain focused to assure that Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever.

Each area of the tribe is doing their part. The Tribal Council has spent the last few months reviewing the process for amending the tribe's Constitution and updating fundamental ordinances and tribe-wide policies. This preparation will allow the Council to focus on long term goals – solicitations have been sent out for proposals or qualifications related to a strategic plan, a permanent tribal fishery, and the next round of planning for expanded tribal program facilities.

Tribal Council committees are gearing up for new members in the coming year and developing recommendations for the Council on a tribal conservation district, improved and expanded options for enrollment services and Elder care.

One of the most vital initiatives is a recent directive by the Council to work cooperatively with the Kenaitze Tribal Court and tribal members to establish an independent judicial review board that would oversee the recruitment, review and recommendation of judicial candidates to the Council for appointment. The Council also tasked the Court Code Committee and administration to develop a process to address tribal member requests for information and complaints when the immunity of the tribe might otherwise prevent access to a court.

Program directors and staff are busy updating reporting dashboards, laying out a plan to improve leadership skills and communications as well as preparing for Dena'ina Wellness Center reaccreditations in the new year. All this effort, together with new hires and on-going training, seek to increase and improve tribal member services and experiences at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.

We are celebrating the strides the tribe has made in the recent Tribal Child Welfare Compact and an evolving compact on education. These agreements acknowledge the rightful place of the tribe in promoting the welfare and everyday lives of our members. They offer a multitude of possibilities as well as pitfalls. We are confident that they will, in the end, assure that our People thrive forever.

Bart Garber

Bart Garber
Executive Director



Bart Garber



Kenaitze Tribal Court Chief Judge Kim Sweet speaks during the signing ceremony. Judge Sweet was one of three co-negotiators who worked eight months with negotiators with the State of Alaska to put together the historic agreement.

WELFARE AGREEMENT, from p. 1
kind in the U.S.

“This moment has been a long time in the making,” said Kimberley Sweet, Chief Judge for the Kenaitze Tribal Court and a co-lead negotiator on the project. “We as tribal caucus are dedicated to moving forward with an open heart, with the knowledge that this historical government-to-government agreement will provide healing for our children and our communities.”

The tribe will sign a Service and Support Funding Agreement by Dec. 15, outlining the specific programs it will deliver and who will be eligible to receive those services. The state will manage the contract similar to the way other contracts and grantees are administered. The state will be pay the tribe as part of the agreement.

Alaska Gov. Bill Walker attended the signing and praised participating tribes and tribal organizations for working together to better the lives of children across the state.

“I just want to say that I am so proud of what has been accomplished,” Walker said.

“It’s a recipe of what more we can do, so let’s begin with this and celebrate this and let’s look for other ways we can use the same concept to make Alaska a better Alaska.”

Studies show that Alaska Native children have been disproportionately represented in the state’s foster system for many years.

According to the Alaska Federation of Natives, 22 percent of the state’s children are Alaska Native yet Alaska Native children account for 57 percent of the foster population. Additionally, 29 percent of Alaska Native children in foster care are placed in non-Native, non-relative families. A shortage of licensed Alaska Native foster homes compounds the issue.

Project leaders believe the new agreement will help keep Alaska Native children in their communities, which is important to health and happiness.

“We recognize today that Alaska Native culture keeps Alaska Native kids safe,” said Valerie Davidson, Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

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 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.



NOTE FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

Hello,
Thank you to all the tribal citizens and family for your support during the Annual General Membership Meeting in October.

As Tribal Council Chairperson, I would like to highlight the Council's election of officers:

- Bernadine Atchison, Vice-Chairperson
- Diana Zirul, Secretary
- Clinton Lageson, Treasurer

I would also like to thank Jennifer Showalter Yeoman for her service and dedication as Tribal Council Chairperson last year.

At the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in Anchorage this year, Bernadine Atchison, Vice-Chairperson, signed an historical agreement with the State of Alaska. Under the agreement, Kenaitze will deliver additional child welfare programs across our service area. An article about this agreement is



Wayne Wilson Jr.

included on the front page of this issue of the Counting Cord.

Clinton Lageson, Tribal Council Treasurer, was recently named Alternate Vice President for the Alaska area of the National Congress of American Indians. In this role, Clinton will work closely with NCAI and represent Alaska tribes on important issues affecting our people. This is a great achievement for our tribe.

A permanent tribal fishery is at the top of the Council's agenda in the coming year. We will keep you updated on our progress. The Tribal Council looks forward to the months ahead and will continue to work to ensure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever.

Sincerely,

Wayne Wilson Jr.

Wayne Wilson Jr.
Tribal Council Chairperson

Meet the Tribal Council

Bernadine Atchison and her husband James have three sons, three daughters, 10 grandchildren and another granddaughter on the way. Her mother



is Virginia Hunter, Nulchina (Sky or North Star Clan). Her father Jerome Atchison is from Michigan. Her grandmother was Rika Murphy, Nulchina (Sky or North Star Clan). Her great-grandmother Eva Hunter (Backoff), Fishtail Clan, is from Kustatan.

She has served on the Council from 1985 to 1987, and was elected again in 2015. She was reelected to a two-year term in October and is the Council Vice-Chairperson.

Atchison graduated from Kenai Central High School in 1978. She has pursued opportunities for continuing education, earning a Certificate of Training from the Indian Action Program for Clerical Training, and certifications in Medical Office Pharmacology, Coding, Claims Processing, and Terminology. She also earned certifications for Administrative Assistant and Medical Office Assistant roles. She has studied at Muskegon Community College in Muskegon, Mich.

She is a past Cultural Heritage Director for the tribe, where she received the U. S. Forest Service's National Award For Excellence "Windows on the Past" for work at K'Beq' Interpretive Site and Susten Camp. She is a former program coordinator and director of RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), overseeing 800+ volunteers. She served as the coordinator for the Alaska statewide event "Peace and Dignity Journeys 1992," a relay run starting in Anchorage at one end and Argentina at the other end with runners meeting in Mexico City to commemorate 500 years of heroic survival of Native People and an alternative way to promote physical and mental health recreation.

She was appointed in 1990 to the Indigenous Alaskan Human Rights Tribunal to research the experimental Hepatitis B immunization that was being conducted on Alaskan Native people and other minority groups. The blood-based vaccine was purported to immunize against Hepatitis B, but had a deleterious and fatal effect on some people by triggering the development of the AIDS virus. Due to research for the tribunal and others

a synthetic vaccine was developed. Atchison has been a Community Emergency Response Team member since February 2015.

Atchison wrote that she wants to make a difference and use her work experience to serve tribal citizens and the tribe as a sovereign government. "I want to contribute to our growth and strengthen our self-governance through self-determination," she wrote. "I want to continue to build on what our tribe has accomplished to make a better future for our children, grandchildren, and future generations in jobs, cultural/language preservation, protecting our environment, subsistence rights, and Native knowledge."

Belonging to the tribe "means I know who I am and I respect myself and all human beings. It means we all have a path to walk and each of ours is different but just as important in contributing to our environment and world. It means I follow our Traditional Values and use them as a guide to keep me on the high road and know that what I say or do will impact our tribe and future generations. Being a tribal member means I have an obligation to follow our Traditional Values and to ensure that our culture and human rights are in place for future generations.

In her spare time she enjoys beading, jewelry making, sewing, crafts with grandchildren, fusing glass, flower gardening, agate hunting, beach combing and reading.

Liisia K. Blizzard and her husband William have four children and eight grandchildren. Her parents were Alexander and Georgia Johansen.



Blizzard has served on the Tribal Council since 2011. She was reelected to a two-year term in October and is the Council Secretary.

She studied at the Medical-Secretarial School at Careers Inc. in Tacoma, Wash. She has also attended trainings for tribal court judges and Court Appointed Special Advocates, and studies the Dena'ina language at Kenai Peninsula College.

She is a member of Cook Inlet Region Inc. and Kenai Natives Association Inc.

"I worked for the tribe during the early years

TRIBAL COUNCIL



Wayne Wilson
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Bernadine Atchison
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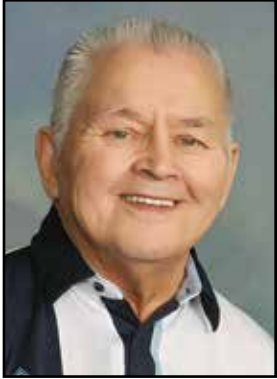
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Jennifer Showalter
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of developing programs, establishing financial stability and the critical need for health, dental health, and behavioral health programs and services for our tribal members,” she wrote. “I am committed to ensuring that our children and future generations have access to good education, learn to speak the Dena’ina language, know who they are and know their cultural and traditional ways of living. I believe that the journey of knowing who you are may be the key to finding a solution to drug and alcohol addiction, suicide and generational trauma. I advocate for the reunification of our families who have been separated due to addiction and other interrelated issues facing our community.”

“I am proud to be a member of Kenaitze Indian Tribe. The tribe is my family. The drumming and the songs are healing to me. My father instilled pride in my heritage and taught me the Dena’ina Way of Living. It is important to me that our tribal people flourish, are healthy and productive.”

In her spare time, she enjoys fishing, berry picking, gardening, reading jam and jelly making and cooking.

Clinton Ray Lageson was born in Anchorage in 1984. He and his wife Jessica are raising two sons. Ryder is 9 and Rylynd is 4.



Lageson has served on the Tribal Council since 2015. He was reelected to a two-year term in October and has been the Council Treasurer since 2015.

He has vocational education in cooking, pipe welding and oil spill response. He has journeyman experience in iron work, structural welding, and carpentry, as well as experience with business and construction management. He wants to pursue a degree in business administration.

He serves on the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity and was recently designated the National Congress of American Indians Alaska area alternate Vice President. He represents the tribe on Cook Inlet Region Incorporated’s Tikatnu Forum.

“I volunteer in our community to give what I can to help others that need positive reinforcement,” Lageson wrote. “Doing positive work in the community is a huge part of my life. I want others to have opportunities afforded to them that otherwise would not be.”

In his spare time, Lageson enjoys riding bikes, winter sports, arts and crafts, and fishing. “I enjoy spending time with my family and learning traditions from Elders and community leaders,” he wrote.

“I first got involved with the tribe because I felt that we had areas in the tribe that needed assistance and I wanted to ensure that future generations have all the tools necessary to thrive. I always knew that if I wanted to see change through I would have to be a part of our tribe. I want all of our people to have equal opportunities at our tribe.”

Lageson values his membership in Kenaitze Indian Tribe. “It means that

we have a distinct set of traditions and inherent cultural knowledge that is handed down to us,” he wrote.

James O. Segura has many grandchildren and great grandchildren.



He has years of experience as a Tribal Council member and currently chairs both the Hunting, Fishing and Gathering Commission and the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity.

He has been the Chairperson of Southcentral Foundation’s Board of Directors since 2004. As a founding member, he has been on the SCF board since 1982. He managed Salamatof Native Association Inc. for about 30 years.

Segura completed high school and has attended many seminars and training courses to support his leadership positions.

“I feel I can contribute to the tribe with my experience,” Segura wrote. “I have many grandchildren and want to assure they have opportunities and good health care.”

“I am proud to be a member of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and it is important to me to be a member and to help out in preserving the history and traditions.”

Wayne D. Wilson Jr. is married to Roseanne Wilson. His grandparents are Phillip and Fiocla Wilson. His



parents are Coby and Connie Wilson. His children are Dominic Plasencia, Chad Moore, Gerica Moore, Darby Bowen, Dest’yne Wilson, Roman

Wilson, Cheyenne Wilson, Ransom Hayes, Robert Hayes and Blaze Wilson. He has three grandchildren: Emily Moore, Charlotte Moore and Henry Moore.

He served on the Tribal Council from 1999 to 2001, from 2006 to 2013 and was elected to Council again in 2015. He was reelected in October to a two-year term.

Wilson graduated from Kenai Central High School in 1990. He has a Small Business degree from Kenai Peninsula College, and has accumulated at least 60 additional credits in various subjects. He has an Equipment Operator School certificate and an American Diesel Automotive College Certificate.

He is a lifetime Cook Inlet commercial drift fisherman and has worked as an equipment operator, in asbestos removal and owned Zippity Janitorial from 2004 to 2012.

His professional affiliations include Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Kenai Natives Association Inc. and Kahtnuht’ana Development Corporation.

He has volunteered at Boys & Girls club as coach for basketball and soccer and has also helped coach Pop Warner football.

In his spare time, Wilson likes to camp, hike, ride bike, sport fish, and just about any other outdoor activity.

Wilson was concise when asked why he wanted to serve on Tribal Council. “It’s simple,” he wrote. “I want to be a voice for our people.”

For Wilson, tribal membership comes down to two words: “Pride and Honor.”

Jennifer Showalter Yeoman is married to Jason Yeoman. Her five living children are Amber, Gracie, Nadia, Jalyn, and Jenna. She has two grandchildren, Mylee and Dawson. Her paternal grandparents are Nadia and Ward Showalter. Her parents are James and Mary Showalter James Showalter is her brother.



Showalter Yeoman has been on the Council since 2012, most recently reelected in October to a two-year term.

She has a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Social Work and a Master of Social Work.

She worked more than 20 combined years for the tribe, serving as an ICWA worker, a Behavioral Health Clinician, and as Behavioral Health Director. She has also worked for Alaska Children’s Services and Central Peninsula Hospital. She has owned Yeoman Rentals since 2006.

She has served on the Alaska Native Health Board, the National Tribal Advisory Committee for the Indian Health Service, the Village Service Management Team for Southcentral Foundation, on the alternate Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration seat for ANHB and on the Board of Directors for Frontier Community Services.

At the tribe, she serves on the Education and Health committees and the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity.

Showalter Yeoman volunteers at the Boys & Girls club, Girls Scouts, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District and at the tribe. She is a foster parent through the Office of Children’s Services, a member of the National Association of Social Workers, and belongs to the Soldotna Chamber of Commerce and the Kenai Chamber of Commerce.

“Ever since I can remember, participating in tribal activities were an important part of our family,” Showalter Yeoman wrote. “I remember my dad working hard for the Tribal Council and his biggest achievement was getting the tribal fishery and waterfront. As a college student I became extremely interested in my culture and ended up with a degree in anthropology as a result of it. Through that process I knew that I would eventually want to be a leader for my people. I started this journey by working for the tribe in various fashions and eventually was elected by the people to continue serving. I enjoy serving our people and making decisions that can have a positive impact on others.”

“Being a member of Kenaitze is being part of something that is bigger than each of us individually. I also get the privilege of learning my culture on a daily basis and am blessed to teach

my children our culture and what it means to serve others.”

In her spare time she enjoys learning about Dena’ina and other Alaska Native cultures, photography, exercise, cooking, traveling Alaska and other places, and caring for the family’s guinea pigs, bearded dragon, teddy bear hamster, chickens, and dog.

Diana L. Zirul is married to James Zirul. Her mother is Leona Blohm and she has three siblings: Lori Nelkie,



Patti Satkowiak and Kevin Blohm.

She was elected to a two-year term on the Tribal Council in October. She currently serves as the Tribal Council

Secretary. She chairs the Health Committee, Court Code Committee, and the Policy, Ordinance and Procedure Committee.

Zirul has a Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management from Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Mich. She also has a Master of Public Administration from the University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor.

She is the Practice Administrator at Peninsula Ear, Nose & Throat Clinic Inc. in Kenai and owns Clinical Management Consulting Services.

Zirul is certified as a Registered Health Information Administrator by the American Health Information Managers Association and belongs to the Alaska Health Information Managers Association.

She is the Vice President of the Board of Directors for Kenai Natives Association Inc. and serves on the Board of Directors for the Kenai Peninsula United Way. She is a past President of the Central Peninsula Hospital Board of Directors.

In her spare time, she enjoys camping and fishing. She also enjoys smoking and canning fish.

“My interest in serving on the Council is to ensure that the programs and services provided by the tribe are both fair and equitable to all tribal members, and that policies and processes are in place to make this happen,” Zirul wrote. “I firmly believe that the best interest of the tribe must be sustained and that the rights of all tribal members must be protected, and view my roll on the Council as a means to ensure that their voices are heard during the Council’s decision-making process.”

“Through my parents Leona and Alan Blohm and my grandparents Pauline and Clarence March, I gained an appreciation for my Alaska Native heritage and culture. Each of these individuals instilled in me the desire to learn as much as I could about our history and encouraged me to pass on this knowledge to others to ensure that our heritage and culture are not forgotten. I enjoy spending time with my Elders and the youth to share in our stories, heritage and culture, and strive to represent this as I serve on the Council.”

ANNUAL MEETING, from p. 1

- Jennifer Showalter Yeoman, Council member
- James O. Segura, Council member
- Liisia Blizzard, Council member

An open comment period created discussion around numerous topics before ballots were cast.

Questions focused on Tribal Council pay, legal expenses incurred by the tribe over the past year, the Educational Fishery, tribal values, the Dena'ina Wellness Center, and more.

Tribal Council also introduced Bart Garber as the tribe's new Executive Director. Garber, who began the position in September, replaces Jaylene Peterson-Nyren.

Program booths were displayed during the meeting's morning session, giving tribal members a chance to meet staff members and learn about the tribe's many services.

The day also included singing and drumming, food and prize giveaways.

Twenty-eight new members were officially enrolled, bringing total tribal membership to 1,658.



During the meeting, Council Vice Chairperson Bernadine Atchison unveils a mockup of a recognition panel to honor original tribal leaders of 1962. Rika Murphy, Harry Mann, Emil Dolchok, Mary Nissen and Alexander Wilson are named.

Tribe hires new Executive Director

‘It is a real privilege to return home and work for Kenaitze’

Bart Garber, an experienced business leader and legal professional with lifelong ties to the Alaska Native community, has been hired as Executive Director of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe. Garber joined the tribe in September, replacing Jaylene Peterson-Nyren, who served as Executive Director for eight years.

“It is a real privilege to return home and work for Kenaitze, the largest tribe in the region,” Garber said. “I can’t imagine a better opportunity to use my experience and skills to promote and carry out the tribe’s mission and vision,” Garber said.

Garber has spent the past two decades in business management, executive leadership, and tribal and commercial law positions.

His management experience includes stints as Chief Executive Officer of Tyonek Native Corporation and as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Toghotthele Corporation based in Nenana. In law, Garber has worked as a staff attorney with the Native American Rights Fund and private practices

in Anchorage and Fairbanks, representing tribal governments, Native corporations and organizations. He also served on an array of boards and committees across

Alaska and the United States.

Garber earned a Juris Doctorate degree from the National Law Center at George Washington University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Washington. He completed undergraduate work at the University of Oregon.

He met many tribal members at the Annual General Membership Meeting in October and is excited to work issues important to the tribe.

“It will take the efforts of us all and I am happy to do my part,” Garber said.

Garber, who was born in Anchorage, is a member of the Native Village of Tyonek. He spent summers commercial fishing with uncles on Three Mile Beach north of the Chuit River. His grandmother was born in Kenai.

In his free time, Garber – a

Tebughna – enjoys the beach, boats and the water.

He is excited to be living in the Kenai area.

“I look forward to meeting our employees and tribal members and keeping in touch on a regular basis,” Garber said.



Bart Garber

Tribe seeks committee, commission members

Are you interested in getting more involved with the tribe? The tribe is accepting applications for vacancies on tribal committees and commissions. These groups help inform and guide decision made by the Tribal Council. Committee and commission members receive meeting stipends. For an application or more information, contact the Tribal Government Office at 907-335-7200.

Kenaitze Indian Tribe Committees and Commissions

- Finance Committee
- Constitution Committee
- Court Code Committee
- Education Committee
- Elders Committee
- Election Board
- TERO Commission
- Enrollment Committee
- Health Committee
- Hunting, Fishing and Gathering Commission
- Land Committee
- Traditional Healing Committee
- Policy, Ordinances and Procedures Committee
- Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity
- Kenaitze Early Childhood Center/Head Start Policy Council

Yaghali Nusdlan

He or she got well



‘Nudnelyahi quudulyi’

Conference promotes ‘That which grows medicine’

Did you know that the vitamin-rich northern yarrow plant, translated to “bask’ilt’uts’i” in the Dena’ina language, can be used in tea to treat colds and fevers? Or that the stinging nettle, “qilch’exa,” can be used to treat allergies? What about that Kenai birch, “beluta kenaica,” can alleviate headaches and stomach pain?

Those were just a few of the lessons shared during the 2017 Dena’ina Plants as Food and Medicine Conference at the Dena’ina Wellness Center in September. The tribe hosted the two-day event to promote traditional plant knowledge and the ethical use of plants as food and medicine. More than 100 people attended.

“It was a beautiful opportunity to learn together,” said Deb Nyquist, the tribe’s Director of Wellness.

The event featured a mix of panel discussions, presentations and demonstrations led by Dena’ina culture and language bearers, tribal Elders and plant medicine experts.

Participants were treated to foods made from wild plants, including birch shortbread, and sipped medicinal teas between learning sessions. Facts sheets were distributed featuring tea recipes, medical information and the history of numerous plants important to the Dena’ina people.

There were panel discussions on traditional Dena’ina lifestyles in the 21st century, the future of the Dena’ina people, and ethical land use. Panel members included Kenaitze employees, tribal members, Elders, and special guests.

During the land use discussion,



Tia Holley, center, holds the microphone for Helen Dick and Priscilla Russell as they participate in a workshop during the Dena’ina Plants as Food and Medicine Conference in September.



Locally sourced food is showcased during the two-day event, which was held at the Dena’ina Wellness Center.

Matt Bowser of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service discussed wild harvesting opportunities in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. He overviewed rules and regulations relating to harvesting wild plants in the refuge, and offered examples of edible plants available for harvest in the refuge.

Bowser emphasized education and sustainability.

“A lot of good things are happening,” Bowser said.

Additional highlights included a

yarow salve-making demonstration, and presentations on botanical approaches to diabetes and safe plant preservation techniques.

There also was a presentation co-hosted by author Priscilla Russell and Dena’ina language expert Helen Dick.

Russell, an ethnobotanist, has spent much of her life documenting and sharing Alaska Native traditions. She published Tanaina Plantlore, a study of Dena’ina Athabascan ethnobotany, as well

as numerous other works. Dick is a fluent Dena’ina speaker who has been instrumental in promoting and preserve the language, teaching courses at Kenai Peninsula College, the Alaska Native Language Center and Alaska Native Heritage Center.

The duo discussed life in rural Alaska and the many ways plants are incorporated into nutrition and healing. Russell shared a slide show of photos she took during her travels to villages across the state.

Dick, who was born near Lime Village, fielded questions about her experiences and plant knowledge.

Speaking softly, the Elder offered a piece of advice:

“Teach the kids and be good to other people,” she said.

Chiqinik, thank you

The tribe offers a chiqinik, thank you, to those who supported the event, including The CIRI Foundation, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Alaska Humanities Forum

Cooking with Kenaitze: Harvest Season



Many different foods can be preserved with proper canning.

For thousands of years, Dena’ina people have hunted and gathered food across Yaghanen, the good land. From moose to salmon to wild berries, food harvested from the land is important to Dena’ina life. Cooking with Kenaitze highlights ingredients and recipes relevant to Dena’ina culture. This time we focus on dishes to serve with foods that have been canned at home.

SUBMIT YOUR FAVORITE RECIPE
Have a recipe to share? Email it to M. Scott Moon at smoon@kenaitze.org.

<p>MOM’S DAY OFF</p> <p>Ingredients ¾ pound macaroni 1 can cream soup 1 cup milk 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat ¼ pound grated cheese</p> <p>Directions Cook macaroni according to package directions. Drain. Mix macaroni with cream soup and milk in a casserole dish. Stir in cut-up canned meat and grated cheese. Bake at 350 degrees until bubbly (about 15 minutes). Serve hot.</p>	<p>MEAT STEW</p> <p>Ingredients 6 hot cooked vegetables of your choice ¼ cup flour 1 cup cold water or milk 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat Dash of salt and pepper</p> <p>Directions Place vegetables and meat in a large pot with enough water, meat juice or vegetable juice to cover. Boil at least 10 minutes. Thicken with flour mixed with cold water or milk. Add leftover gravy if available. Season to taste. Serve hot.</p>	<p>MACARONI AND BEEF BAKE</p> <p>Ingredients ½ cup chopped onions ½ cup chopped celery 2 tablespoons fat 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned tomatoes Dash of salt Dash of pepper 1 cup cooked macaroni</p> <p>Directions Cook onion and celery in fat. Add meat and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper. Combine mixture with cooked macaroni in a casserole dish. Top with grated cheese, or bread crumbs if desired. Bake for 15 minutes at 350 degrees. Serve hot.</p>	<p>QUICK STEW</p> <p>Ingredients 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned potatoes 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned carrots 1 pint jar (2 cups) canned tomatoes 1 chopped onion 1 tablespoon fat Salt to taste ¼ cup flour ¼ cup water</p> <p>Directions Melt fat in a 4-quart saucepan. Add onion and cook until soft. Add meat, potatoes, carrots and tomatoes. Combine flour in water. After the water mixture boils for at least ten minutes, add the flour and water mixture and cook until thickened. Season to taste.</p>
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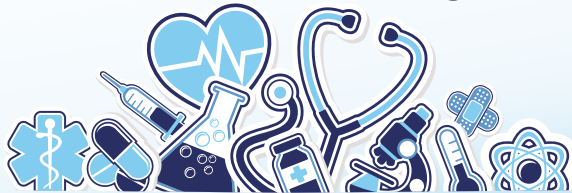
A guide to Purchased and Referred Care

Purchased and Referred Care is a benefit to eligible un’ina, those who come to us, that provides funding for referred or emergency health services provided by non-tribal medical providers and facilities. However, it is not an entitlement or insurance program. Eligibility requirements apply. The Dena’ina Wellness Center is happy to answer questions and assist un’ina through the Purchased and Referred Care process.

Contacts:

Craig Culver, 907-335-7574 cculver@kenaitze.org

Tracey Hedlund-Smith, 907-335-7537 or thedlund-smith@kenaitze.org



Dena’ina Wellness Center announces twice-monthly afternoon openings

Beginning Nov. 8, the Dena’ina Wellness Center will open at 1 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. The morning closures will be used for staff planning, building maintenance and other administrative duties. The center will continue to operate at regular hours all other times. Please contact the center at 907-335-7500 for additional information.

Dena’ina Wellness Center hours of operation

Regular program hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Saturday
Building hours: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Saturday
Upcoming 1 p.m. openings:
Wednesday, Nov. 22; Wednesday, Dec. 13; Wednesday, Dec. 27

Insurance enrollment underway

The Dena’ina Wellness Center is offering open enrollment for the Tribally-Sponsored Health Insurance Program (T-SHIP) through Dec. 15. The program provides medical insurance at no cost to eligible Alaska Native and American Indian people. Recipients must be Alaska residents, be eligible for Indian Health Services, and meet income guidelines, among other requirements. To enroll, visit the Dena’ina Wellness Center in person or contact Jo-anne Shepard at 907-335-7562 or Annette Schultz at 907-335-7563

The tribe is currently accepting volunteers for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. The program offers free tax-preparation service to Alaska Native and American Indian people by IRS-certified volunteers at the tribe’s administrative offices in Kenai. For more information, contact DeeDee Fowler at 335-7622 or at dfowler@kenaitze.org.



What qualifies as an emergency?

Purchased and Referred Care defines an emergency as any medical condition for which immediate medical attention is necessary to prevent the death or serious impairment of an individual’s health. Examples include, among others:

- Heart attack
- Poisoning
- Gunshot wound
- Severe burn
- Head injury/concussion

For non-emergencies, if the Dena’ina Wellness Center is open and available to provide the needed care, Purchased and Referred Care will not pay for services rendered elsewhere. For care that does not require immediate medical attention to prevent death or serious impairment when the Dena’ina Wellness Center is open and available to provide needed care, Purchased and Referred Care will not pay for services rendered in Central Peninsula Hospital’s emergency department.



Who is eligible?

Purchased and Referred Care has a number of eligibility requirements. The program is open to:

- Alaska Native and American Indian people
- Non-Native or American Indian women pregnant with an eligible person’s child
- Children of an eligible person, including foster children, adopted children, stepchildren, legal wards or orphans, up to the age of 19
- Alaska residents who have lived in the state for 180 days and reside in the tribe’s service delivery area with intent to stay indefinitely, and who use the Dena’ina Wellness Center as their primary care provider
- Those who meet notification requirements
- Those who meet alternate resource requirements



What if I’m traveling in Alaska?

If you fall ill or get injured while traveling, Purchased and Referred Care can cover the costs of your treatment under certain circumstances. Generally, travelers must meet the following requirements to be eligible:

- Establish proof of Alaska residency
- Utilize an Indian Health Care facility when available
- Have a Certificate of Indian Blood or tribal enrollment card on file
- Report any emergency medical treatment to the Dena’ina Wellness Center within 72 hours

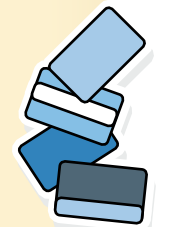


What if I’m traveling outside Alaska?

If you require care outside Alaska, the Alaska Native Medical Center Purchased and Referred Care Program can cover your treatment under certain circumstances. In addition to meeting the requirements for in-state travel, travelers also must:

- Report any emergency medical treatment to the Alaska Native Medical Center within 72 hours at 1-800-478-1636
- Provide medical records of out-of-state travel within 30 days
- Pay for medical services upfront if traveling outside the United States

Students attending school outside Alaska may be eligible for Purchased and Referred Care. Please contact the Alaska Native Medical Center Purchased and Referred Care at 800-478-1636 for more information.



What is an alternate resource?

An alternate resource is insurance that may cover medical expenses. If available, these resources are used before Purchased and Referred Care to pay for treatment. Additionally, you may be asked to be screened for alternate resource eligibility before Purchased and Referred Care will cover your treatment. Not getting screened for alternate resources can lead to denial of Purchased and Referred Care reimbursement. These resources include:

- Medicare A and B
- Alaska Medicaid
- Private insurance
- Workers’ compensation
- Auto insurance
- Homeowner’s insurance
- Veterans Administration

Seasonal flu shots available now

Stay healthy this winter

Arrange travel. Plan feast. Shop for gifts.

Get flu shot?

Yes, the holidays are coming. But so is the flu.

Check that to-do list twice.

With seasonal flu cases being reported across Alaska, the Dena’ina Wellness Center is currently offering vaccines at no cost to registered un’ina, those who come to us. Appointments can be made in advance and, when availability allows, on a same-day basis.

“It’s very quick and easy,” said Christine Malone, the tribe’s infection control specialist.

As of October, nearly 500 flu cases had been reported in Alaska, according to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. That figure is on par with years past, Malone said, though she added the state is beginning to see

an uptick.

This year’s seasonal flu vaccine covers four different flu strains – two types of Influenza A and two types of Influenza B.

Flu is unpredictable by nature, Malone added, but can be particularly difficult to forecast in Alaska because of the state’s influx of tourists. Last year, Alaska’s flu season peaked in late spring.

The Southern Hemisphere has already experienced a severe flu season, especially in Australia, and experts wonder if the Northern Hemisphere will see a similar trend.

“We are just issuing a word of caution for everyone to get vaccinated,” Malone said.

The flu, which is contagious, is caused by the influenza virus. It can affect the nose, throat and lungs, causing mild to severe symptoms.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, symptoms typically appear suddenly, not gradually. Symptoms vary but include fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, muscle

aches, headaches and fatigue, among others.

In addition to getting vaccinated, people can take other precautions.

Living a healthy lifestyle is a good first step. Malone recommended getting plenty of rest, managing stress, exercising, eating nutrient-rich foods, drinking plenty of fluids, and taking a multivitamin.

It’s also important to practice good respiratory and hygiene etiquette so germs don’t spread. Cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands and stay home if you’re sick, Malone suggested.

“I like to have that dialogue with folks to show them that there are other ways, but getting a flu shot is also very important because it’s been proven to help reduce the incidence of flu throughout the year,” Malone said.

Some people might experience minor discomfort after they get the vaccine, which is applied by needle, but Malone said the benefits outweigh the drawbacks. Post-vaccine discomforts can include soreness, redness and

swelling around the injection site.

According to CDC, recent studies show that flu vaccines reduce the risk of illness by between 40 and 60 percent among the general population. Flu is especially dangerous for people with compromised immune systems, the elderly and the young.

When in doubt, Malone recommended that people discuss flu vaccines with their primary care provider.

“Getting a flu shot is good idea for most people,” Malone said. “It’s a remarkable public health benefit.”

Make an appointment today

To schedule an appointment for a seasonal flu vaccine, contact the Dena’ina Wellness Center at 907-335-7500. There is no cost to un’ina, those who come to us, and appointments take only a few minutes.

Flu Season Is Here, Be Prepared and get a shot!

To schedule an
appointment
Call 335-7500

Flu shots
available at the
Dena’ina
Wellness
Center



A labor of love, and tradition

Tribe hosts moosehide tanning workshop

With the hide stretched toward the edges of a wood frame, rope pulling it taut, Joel Isaak grabbed a piece of slate. He knelt down, on top of the canvas, and began scraping the flat rock back and forth with both hands.

Swoosh. Swoosh. Swoosh.

“What we’re trying to do is squeegee out the water,” Isaak said.

This fall, Isaak led a traditional moosehide tanning workshop at the Dena’ina Wellness Center. The tribe hosted the event in partnership with the Smithsonian Institute’s Arctic Studies Center and the Anchorage Museum. A Smithsonian curator documented the event, which was open to the public. The aim was to promote Dena’ina tradition, culture and language.

Isaak, a tribal member, has spent the past year working as a consultant on the tribe’s Dena’ina Language and Culture Revitalization Project.

For the workshop, participants took the hide of a recently skinned moose and went through the labor-intensive process of preparing it for use as traditional regalia or other clothing.

The effort began in September and culminated in late October. When it was ready, the hide was transported from Kenai to Anchorage for use in an artist residency hosted by the Smithsonian.

To start the process, Isaak and a small team spent consecutive days scraping flesh and fur off the fresh hide. They used an array of tools and periodically rinsed the hide in



Helen Dick, second from left, and Joel Isaak, right, scrape a moosehide during a workshop at the Dena’ina Wellness Center. Sassa Peterson, left, and Jasmine Koster, third from left, watch.

a large tub of water. The goal was to rid the hide – which Isaak estimated weighed about 100 pounds at the time – of all hair



The September workshop was one of a series that will conclude when the hide has been crafted into clothing items.

and flesh.

A few weeks later – Isaak preserved the hide by freezing it – the team returned to work.

Isaak, two language apprentices and two conservators from the Anchorage Museum spent a week stretching and squeegeeing water out of the hide. They tied the hide to a wood frame that laid on the ground and push out water using tools made of slate, wood and bone.

Late on the fourth day of scraping, after the group had worked both the flesh and fur sides of the hide, Isaak said it was almost ready for the smoker. The hide would go into a cold smoke, a process that can take days.

“You have to keep a close eye on it,” Isaak said.

At this stage, Isaak estimated the hide weighed 25 or 30 pounds – significantly less than when the team received it. Although the team poked a few holes in the hide,

Isaak was happy with it.

“We’ll see what it looks like in the morning,” he said. “The hide looks a lot less stretchy now and that’s a good sign for the dryness. Once the hide stops stretching, you want to get it off the frame.”

The Smithsonian curator who attended, Dawn Biddison, said the Smithsonian would create learning resources from material gathered during the workshop. The materials will include instructional videos and classroom curriculum, which will be available at no charge to Alaska heritage organizations, schools, libraries, artists, and others.

Biddison said she hopes the project helps generate interest around Dena’ina traditions.

“When you see a finished piece, it’s just the tip of the iceberg,” Biddison said. “It’s the harvesting, the processing of materials. It’s a lot of work, a lot of cultural knowledge learned over generations and passed over hundreds of years.”

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Gloria Wik and Diane Roach concentrate on their circuit training as Michael Dotomain, a personal trainer at the Dena’ina Wellness Center, monitors their progress in the center’s activity area.

A dynamic duo

Workout partners combine fun and fitness to achieve health goals

Workout partners combine fun and fitness to achieve health goals

The last time Diane Roach visited the heart doctor, a formal stress test revealed glowing results – better than any the doctor had seen for someone her age. The last time Gloria Wik stepped on a scale, the numbers revealed glowing results – forty pounds lighter.

Roach, 73, and Wik, 71, are workout partners at the Dena’ina Wellness Center activities area. They visit the gym a few times a week, every week, to participate in fitness classes and work with the tribe’s personal trainers.

They attribute their health success to the support and services they receive at the center. And, even if it comes with a little ribbing, they both appreciate having a workout pal who is willing to hold them accountable.

“She calls me a lazy bum when I don’t show up,” Roach said.

A lazy bum?
“Well, yeah, and she is. She stays up too late and watches movies, and then she doesn’t want to come and work out,” Wik said.

It’s all in good nature, of course, because to Roach and Wik the social aspect of exercising is as appealing as the health component.

The duo met and started training together nearly two years ago.

Wik had been coming to the gym a couple times a week, off and on, before Roach began showing up. They often walked next to each other on their own

treadmills.

“She always wore ear buds,” Roach said. “But I made her take them off.”

Soon they noticed Michael Dotomain, one of the tribe’s personal trainers, working with others on individualized workouts. They approached him, asking if he would be willing to work with them, too.

“And he graciously took us under his big wing,” Roach said.

Fast forward to August, almost two years later, and Roach and Wik are close friends and regulars in the gym. Both have enjoyed significant health benefits thanks to their time with Dotomain and other staff members.

For Roach, who is Yupik, the exercise has improved her balance and endurance. She feels better on the days she works out and has no problem keeping up with her golden retriever on brisk walks around the neighborhood.

The stress test at the heart doctor’s office validated her hard work.

“Thanks to these guys here, I had the best test in the whole system for a 73-year-old,” she said.

Meanwhile, Wik, a tribal member, also has made great progress.

She began coming to the gym when she was enrolled in the tribe’s diabetes prevention program. The program helped her make healthy diet changes, and when she began working out with Roach and the fitness staff, her progress only quickened.

Down 40 pounds, even her

children are amazed.

“I can kick their butts on many levels,” Wik said.

But their workouts aren’t all fun and games.

Roach dreads an exercise called “superwoman,” where she lies flat on her back and points both her legs and arms toward the ceiling, holding the position. For a time, she also struggled with walls sits. Wik loathes a few exercises as well, especially the “grasshopper” and “mountain climber.”

But from a personal trainer’s perspective, the ladies are the perfect clients. They work hard, have a good attitude and support each other.

“We all want to be just like them when we’re in our 70s,” Dotomain said.

Roach and Wik attribute their success to Dotomain and the tribe’s other personal trainers – Levi Sutton and Kristi Lightfoot. They appreciate how the trainers shape workouts to meet their needs and that no two workouts are the same.

Above all, Roach and Wik feel supported each time they walk through the door.

“I think they really want us to succeed. That comes across,” Roach said. “It’s not like, ‘Oh, god, here they come.’”

Neither Roach nor Wik plan on stopping anytime soon.

And they hope others are encouraged by their story.

“Come and join the fun,” Wik said.



Tribal member earns annual youth recognition award

Cook Inlet Region Incorporated recently named tribal member Julianne Wilson the winner of its 2017 Youth Recognition Award.

In a letter announcing the decision, the CIRI Board of Directors commended Wilson for her academic achievement, leadership, dedication to Alaska Native culture and heritage, and community involvement. The award is open to CIRI descendants between the ages of 12 and 17.

Wilson, who currently attends Valley State University in North Dakota, has participated in the tribe’s Yaghanen Youth Program since second grade. Through Yaghanen, she participated in the Native Youth Olympics and was a member of the Del Dum Drum Group and Jabila’ina Dance Group, among other activities.

When Wilson was in fifth grade, she served as a representative for a youth leadership conference in Washington D.C.

Michael Bernard, who administers the tribe’s Yaghanen program and has known Wilson most of her life, said it was a well-deserved award and that it’s been an honor watching her grow up.

“She’s one of our shining stars,” Bernard said. “She’s got the motivation and determination and will do great things.”

Tribe earns four PR awards

The Alaska chapter of the Public Relations Society of America recognized the tribe with four Awards of Excellence at its annual Aurora Awards banquet in September. The tribe earned first place in the Annual Report category, second place in the Writing Portfolio and Website categories, and third place in the Video category. Award submissions were judged by members of a California chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. The awards recognize outstanding contributions to the public relations profession.

The Big Picture



Danielle Self, an education and employment specialist at Na’ini Social Services, dresses as a clumsy angler at Yaghanen Youth Program’s Fall Harvest Carnival in October. The event featured games and activities for children and raised funds for the program.

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

Environmental Program
1106 Mission Ave., Kenai, AK 99611
907-398-7933

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

Na’ini Family and Social Services, Education and Career Development
510 Upland St., Kenai, AK 99611
907-335-7600

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

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