The tide indeed is coming back in.

As planning and construction for the Dena’ina Wellness Center progressed, the tribe focused on the concept of Naqantugheduł, the idea that the tide has turned, and with it, a return of the culture that had been eroded over the years.

Friday, July 27 marked a major milestone for the tribe as the Wellness Center construction loan was paid off in full. Tribal Council Chairperson Wayne Wilson Jr. and Treasurer Clinton Lageson signed a check for $9,462,511.19, covering the remaining balance on the $11 million loan.

“It’s an awesome day,” Wilson said after he and Lageson hand-delivered the check to First National Bank Alaska’s Kenai branch.

“I think it’s exciting that we’re paying off something we didn’t even envision being able to do when we started the project,” Wilson said.

Wilson said that when construction of the Wellness Center was under way, some wondered if this day would ever come—never mind that it came just four years in to the 20-year term of the loan.

“We had a strong vision, strong goals and a great plan, but there was still some doubt,” Wilson said.

Wilson emphasized that it has been a group effort for the tribe to be in a position to pay off the loan while still maintaining a healthy savings account. The early payoff will save the tribe $3.8 million in interest.

Wilson said one of the tribe’s concerns is sustaining services at the Wellness Center after the Indian Health Service Joint Venture expires. Joint Venture funding covers staffing costs for the Wellness Center for 20 years. The tribal council has made a motion to put the $834,829 per year that would have gone toward paying the loan into an account to be used for future projects which will continue to fund Wellness Center operations when the time comes.

“We need to be saving it for what happens in the future,” Wilson said.

As part of the Indian Health Service Joint Venture, Kenaitze Indian Tribe is wholly responsible for providing the facility. Because of this, Wilson explained, the Director of Financial Services and the Finance Committee have been exploring ways to manage the tribe’s assets that best maintain programs and services by passing a Treasury Policy, committing to long-term planning goals, and paying off the loan.

A number of factors allowed the tribe to be able to pay off the loan early. The tribe saw savings from careful budgeting, experienced greater-than-anticipated revenue growth, and favorable federal contract negotiations. Other factors include an increase in Medicaid

See LOAN, p. 4
Changes discussed at quarterly meeting

Tribal members received a number of updates during the July 7 quarterly meeting, including progress on the upcoming Secretarial Election and the start of the Health Vision for asserting the tribe’s fishing rights.

The Secretarial Election is an effort to allow the tribe to amend its constitution without needing Department of Interior review. The election was working through the process with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The tribe is responding to a BIA request for the exact language of the amendment to be voted on, and an electronic list of tribal members eligible to vote.

The tribe will appoint two members to an election committee, which will then set an election date. Regarding tribal fishery rights, it was reported that the proposal for a rural determination for the Kenaitze Indian Tribe had been rejected by Federal Subsistence Board staff. The tribe is working on an appeal and will argue that subsistence board staff were in error and should have advanced the proposal to the board.

The tribe is looking at the board’s rural subsistence determination for Saxman, a community, and will be advising the Council on all matters related to the health care services.

Both Executive Director positions are currently vacant. Dawn Nelson has been selected to serve as the Interim Executive Director as the Council pursues the recruitment and hiring process. Dawn has served in the capacity as the Director of Human Resources for the past two years and has extensive experience in the health care field, which the Council feels will assist in this transition.

Recognising the tribal members’ concern about the permanent placement of a physician, the Tribal Council has partnered with a physician recruiting firm to hire a physician who is interested in adult primary care.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Council has developed four long-term visionary statements to guide staff as they develop a detailed strategic and operational plan.

- **Economic Development Vision**: To provide a culturally appropriate home and support throughout the process.
- **Health Vision**: To provide a culturally appropriate education environment that facilitates lifelong learning for the Kenai Peninsula.
- **Traditional Healing Committee**: To provide economic means to ensure self-determination through opportunities for all K’ahl’ähna Dena’ina.
- **Health Vision**: To provide a culturally appropriate, sustainable and accessible health care system that empowers wellness throughout the generations.
- **Economic Development Vision**: To provide economic means to ensure self-determination through opportunities for all K’ahl’ähna Dena’ina.

Through the support of the tribal membership, we have a strong foundation to assure that K’ahl’ähna Dena’ina thrive forever!
The Dena’ina Wellness Center began in the making, with planning and design of the building beginning in earnest in 2009. In 2011, the proposal put forth by the tribe was one of three statewide to receive a highly competitive Indian Health Service Joint Venture Award.

The tribe acquired the necessary parcels in Old Town Kenai, a significant location as it was an original village site of the K’khum’i’na Dena’ina people. Construction on the 52,000-square-foot building began in fiscal 2013. The tribe marked the significant location as it was an original K’khum’i’na village site of the K’khum’i’na Dena’ina people.

Council Vice-Chairperson Bernadine Alchison; Secretary Diana Zirul; Finance Committee member Linda Ross; Accounts Payable Specialist Christine Uribe-Kolivost; Director of Financial Services Michael Dixon; and Finance Committee members Kenneth Oder, Bob Baldwin and Sharon Isakak watch as Council Chairperson Wayne Wilson Jr., and Council Treasurer Clinton Lageson sign the real check.

Enroll Your Child Today! No fees

The Early Childhood Center is currently accepting applications for the 2018-19 school year. The program serves families from many different backdrops, regardless of income, as well as children with disabilities.

• Home-based program for pregnant mothers and children up to age 3
• Classroom program for children age 3 or 4 by Sept. 1

For more information, please call 907-335-7260.

Gathering sparks connections

There is strength in community, and rebuilding those connections is a crucial part of community healing.

That was a clear takeaway for participants in the Gathering of Alaska Native People, hosted at the Dena’ina Wellness Center over three days in early June. “That’s the way we are indigenous people have survived, the interdependence we have with each other,” Estelle Thomson, a Traditional Healer at the Dena’ina Wellness Center, said. “It’s what gives us resilience and keeps our families and communities together.”

Audre Gifford, Project Coordinator in the Behavioral Health program, said it was the first Gathering of Alaska Native People held in this community. The curriculum for the event was adopted from the Gathering of Native Americans curriculum, developed in the early 1990s by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The goal of the program is to encourage community engagement by building on four themes: belonging, mastery, interdependence, and generosity. Discussions serve as a guide for prevention planning and community healing.

“We saw a need for healing in this tribe,” Gifford said of her inspiration to organize the event. Funding for the event came from a Native Connections grant from SAMSHA. The Ninilchik Traditional Council partnered for the event, and people came from Ninilchik to participate.

Gifford said the Alaska Native version of the curriculum includes a greater focus on spirituality, plants and animals. Instead of a medicine wheel, there is a wellness circle more specific to Alaska Native values.

A recurring theme of the gathering was how to repair fractures in families and in the community. “A lot of the focus was on community. Nowadays, that’s one of the fractured pieces. We’re not as interdependent as we used to be,” Gifford said.

Participants spent the first part of the event — Saturday in particular — taking a deep dive into the issues that have led to fractures within families and the community. Sunday was dedicated to pulling the pieces back together.

Gifford described an exercise in which participants laid out a blanket and placed some sage in the middle, representing the community’s ritual. Around it, people were arranged to represent children, parents, and grandparents. The exercise was symbolic of a healthy family, with spirituality at its center, surrounded by family.

Gifford said that’s something that’s become fractured, whether it be from children being sent to boarding school, mothers forced to work outside the home, or fathers lost to alcohol or drug addiction.

“Everybody made a personal commitment to the community to what they believe their responsibility will be. We made personal commitment to help move toward healing,” Gifford said.

Gifford said her goal is to ensure youth are more involved in the community. “My commitment is to bring back the coming-of-age ceremony,” Gifford said. “When youth are supported by Elders, they know their place, they know their role, they have a better foundation to stand on.”

A good foundation, she said, means youth are less likely to engage in other risky behavior. Thomson said she would like to see gatherings on a regular basis, perhaps annually, and would encourage others to attend.

“I think education is really important to help people understand the ramifications of trauma in our lives, how it affects us and changes us, and things we can do to heal our bodies and our spirits,” Thomson said. “I encourage people to attend things like this to learn more about themselves.”

Gary Neumann, facilitator for the Gathering of Alaska Natives, leads participants in an exercise aimed at exploring healthy family structures. The sage in the middle of the blanket represents spirituality, and participants were arranged to represent family and community, and then removed to symbolize loss.

(Nina Weatherly said she wasn’t sure what to expect from the event, but the phrase “gathering of Alaskans” grabbed her attention. She said many of the issues that were discussed, including suicide and substance abuse, touch close to home for her.

“It’s things that we need to know. … Instead of hiding it behind closed doors, and keeping silent, we’re trying to bring it out in the open,” Weatherly said. “I wish there would be more events like this. … The awareness of suicide, drug and alcohol abuse is a big factor, and I think belonging er gathering, Thomson said the group’s size had benefits.

“The intimacy of the event allowed us to get to know one another on a deeper level than a larger gathering,” she said.

Gifford said she was excited to see the group was open to sharing and committed to helping their community. “Everybody made a personal commitment to the community to what they believe their responsibility will be. We made personal commitment to help move toward healing,” Gifford said.

“Even though there were different cultures together, it felt like one big family. I think that’s what everyone should be feeling like.”

— Nina Weatherly
Sometimes digging into the past can give us insight into how we live today. Participants in the recent Susten Archaeology Camp, part of the Yaghanen Youth Program, were able to make that connection as they explored a site near the Swanson River and Rainbow Lake for possible future study.

“It’s definitely an important part of my heritage,” Judah Eason, a camp participant, said. “There’s so little we can find from remnants – (the Dena’ina) were such a clean type of people. It really opens up your eyes to how people need to focus on recycling – don’t pollute our area, don’t leave things behind that are going to be here for hundreds of years.”

Camp participants had just learned about “leave no trace” principles from Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Ranger Amber Krausberger-Linson, including details on how long it takes for everyday items, from banana peels to aluminum cans, to decompose. But for prehistoric Dena’ina people, of whom camp participants were trying to find evidence, it was a very different story. “Their possessions, their things, when they were done with them, they would burn them or put them back in the ground or the water,” Kya Ahlers, another camp participant, said. Under the direction of archaeologist Debbie Corbett, camp participants spent part of their week mapping and recording in an area she thinks has a high probability of Dena’ina habitation. The site is on a knoll about 4,000 feet from the Swanson River and just above Rainbow Lake.

“Basically the whole area around the Swanson River was heavily utilized by the Dena’ina, but the area has not received as much attention from researchers as the larger settlements along the Kenai River corridor. As such, research contributed by camp participants is all new.”

“It’s interesting; it’s a new site we’re looking at, so it’s never been done before,” said Hanna Wilson, a camp participant. Prior to looking for a new site, campers visited a known site to get a feel for what to look for.

“It was hard to identify some of the cache pits because there was so much vegetation,” Ahlers said. Their work mapping and recording the new site will give future Susten camp participants a good idea of where to start excavating. “We’re taking the long view,” Corbett said of the year-to-year nature of the camp. “We do this every year, but we really only have three days for the field work and research.”

Corbett said five known habitation sites have been located in the Swanson River area. She theorizes that Dena’ina in the area lived on small homesteads with extended family groups, differing from the large villages located along the Kenai River.

“We’re putting together a picture of prehistoric use of this area – very, very slowly,” Corbett said. In addition to mapping potential cache pits or dwellings, camp participants identified the plants found around the site. When people inhabit a site, Corbett said, they alter the soil. “By identifying the plants, and identifying their Dena’ina names, they can look into traditional uses of those plants,” Corbett said.

Campers spent one morning studying soil samples taken during a previous Susten camp. Samples revealed fragments of charcoal, part of an insect, other yet to be identified substances, and as Eason put it, “more dirt.” The camp schedule included planned presentations on Dena’ina culture, but camp participants were just as engaged in the informal discussions during and between activities. “I think we had more of that this year,” Corbett said of the campers’ questions about Dena’ina and other Alaska Native cultures. “Being able to sit down with the kids, and the people running Yaghanen, talking about what we do – that informal discussion is really important.”

Other camp highlights included a seminar on bear safety, an exercise in predicting wildland fire behavior, and a canoe trip across Dolly Varden Lake.

Ahlers said she appreciated the presentation on bear safety because it went beyond the basics. Krausberger-Linson delved into bear behavior and tactics for brown bear and black bear encounters.

“We learned how you can tell what a bear might do by its body language,” Ahlers said. Camp wrapped up with a trip to the K’beq’ Interpretive Site in Cooper Landing. The archaeological site there includes a house pit and a couple of cache pits.

Krausberger-Linson, who grew up on the Kenai Peninsula, said her time at the Susten camp provided depth to her knowledge of the area’s past. “It brings the whole area to life,” she said. “This is much more than a tourist destination. It’s home, and it’s been home for thousands of years and supported people. … We’re very fortunate to live here.”
New scholarship available for Kenaitze youth

Just ask any parent of a middle-school or high-school student: the costs associated with school activities, cocurricular, field trips and other opportunities can really add up.

To prevent those costs from becoming a barrier to participation, the tribe’s Education and Career Development Department has developed a new Education Scholarship Program.

“It opens up opportunities for educational experiences that are really pertinent to a young person’s development, how they set their path, who they meet along the way,” said David Knight, Education and Career Development Administrator. “…That’s what we’re trying to promote.”

The scholarship is available to Kenaitze Indian Tribe members enrolled in grades seven through 12. Education Enrichment Scholarship funds may be used for academic tutoring; fees; extracurricular enrichment programs; and travel for activities related to educational experiences.

“Fees can vary on the programs and the tribe itself,” said Knight. “Many- times they’re provided for free, and sometimes there are fees associated with them.”

The tribe owns and operates two schools: Nazini Community School for students in preschool through sixth grades and Na’ini Community School for grades seven through 12. Education Enrichment Scholarship funds may be used for academic tutoring, extracurricular enrichment programs, and travel for educational experiences.

In its second year, the program is expected to benefit more than 25 students, said Knight.

“We’re very proud of what we’ve been able to do,” he said. “It’s a great opportunity for our students.”

Campers go Squiggly, Wiggly and green

The Daggeyi program talked about the importance of knowing your tribe and Native corporation affiliations. She conducted a quick survey before her presentation, and found just a handful knew their tribe.

“We’re providing mentorship and support, whether the path is higher education or career training,” Klodt said.

Among the many things she said her interns learned were “how to make a résumé and apply for jobs, how to present yourself, what clothes to wear, how to talk and act during an interview or talking to your supervisor…. I had a lot of fun, but I learned a lot too.”

Spinka said he’d like to land an internship with the Daggeyi Internship Program next summer.

“The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program. "In addition to providing mentorship and support, whether the path is higher education or career training," Klodt said.

Last summer, Walluk participated in a nursing camp at the University of Alaska Southeast and was able to connect Walluk with Alaska’s Youth Olympics Program. She’s also participated in “all the camps” Yaghanen offers, and has been involved in the Yaghanetani program. She’s a member of the Youth Council, and is headed to San Diego in July for the National University Leadership Conference.

She said she had a bit of trepidation about her future plans, but was looking forward to attending classes in the fall.

“We can’t even imagine what a program like this can do for a youth who might be facing some obstacles. Interns also gain experience that can be put on a résumé or added to a portfolio. By being part of the Jabi-Wey program, Walluk made her decision. It was her first time growing potatoes, and others.

Trefon said, "The Yaghanen program can also be financial. The program can help with expenses such as books, participation in a summer camp or training, transportation, even clothing or equipment an intern might need. The idea is to provide as many solid opportunities as possible to help young people succeed from as early as they can and beyond. We want to make sure they have the tools, but also the resources” to be successful, David Knight, Education and Career Development Administrator, said.

With Walluk, Klodt said they meet regularly to set goals, and to identify opportunities – such as the Yaghanen camp – to build on her skills. “Every step she’s taken has led to her experience at Heritage Place, and her decision to attend Montana State University in Bozeman in the fall,” Knight said. Walluk was able to connect with Montana State through the tribe’s Office of Program Opportunity (OPO), a student support program for Native American and Alaska Native nursing students, an opportunity that helped Walluk make her decision.

“The Jabi-Wey program was designed to help students build skills and career experiences. We’re trying to give them the tools they need to be successful,” Knight said. "A lot of kids think science is boring, but once you get into it, there’s so much you can do with it. Science is really important. As they planted potatoes, participants learned techniques for managing their plants, such as watering techniques to encourage roots to grow in the right direction. They dirtied up the maro over the summer. Trefon said, "They like to grow in little hills," Trefon told campers.

Klodt also asked campers who would they share the potatoes with after they’re picked – grandparents and elders was the answer. "(Internships) provide exposure to different areas, whether it be health care or education, or even equipment or clothing an intern might need. That’s the idea to provide as many solid opportunities as possible to help young people succeed from as early as they can and beyond. We want to make sure they have the tools, but also the resources” to be successful, David Knight, Education and Career Development Administrator, said.

With Walluk, Klodt said they meet regularly to set goals, and to identify opportunities – such as the Yaghanen camp – to build on her skills. “Every step she’s taken has led to her experience at Heritage Place, and her decision to attend Montana State University in Bozeman in the fall,” Knight said. Walluk was able to connect with Montana State through the tribe’s Office of Program Opportunity (OPO), a student support program for Native American and Alaska Native nursing students, an opportunity that helped Walluk make her decision.

“The Yaghanen program can also be financial. The program can help with expenses such as books, participation in a summer camp or training, transportation, even clothing or equipment an intern might need. The idea is to provide as many solid opportunities as possible to help young people succeed from as early as they can and beyond. We want to make sure they have the tools, but also the resources.”

New scholarship available for Kenaitze youth

Campers go Squiggly, Wiggly and green

Klodt has regular check-ins with interns to discuss the progress of their research and the next steps. She has been able to connect with the intern, Nadia Walluk, who is now attending Montana State University in Bozeman.

Nadia Walluk takes Heritage Place resident Laura Lee Curl for a stroll through Soldotna in June.

“We’re teaching about sustaina- 

Klodt and Walluk said that Walluk’s mother, Jennifer Trefon, provides some input as well.

Support from the Daggeyi pro- gram can also be financial. The program can help with expenses such as books, participation in a summer camp or training, transportation, even clothing or equipment an intern might need. The idea is to provide as many solid opportunities as possible to help young people succeed from as early as they can and beyond. We want to make sure they have the tools, but also the resources.”

New scholarship available for Kenaitze youth

Just ask any parent of a middle-

discussion about the importance of health and mental health and self-care with camp participants.

Nadia Walluk is headed to college to pursue a degree in nursing.

“Among the things he said learned were “how to make a résumé and apply for jobs, how to present yourself, what clothes to wear, how to talk and act during an interview or talking to your supervisor…. I had a lot of fun, but I learned a lot too.”

Spinka said he’d like to land an internship with the Daggeyi Internship Program next summer.

The Daggeyi program is about two years old, said Misty Klodt, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.

The internship program is about two years old, said Misty Klod, Daggeyi Internship Supervisor, and Nadia was the second intern in the program.
Good to grow: Tribal greenhouse opens

The grand opening of the new greenhouse on the Den’ina Wellness Center campus was just last month, but fresh produce harvested from the facility already is finding its way into Tyotkas Elders Center meals.

“It’s exciting to see the fruits of our labor being used,” said Levi Sutton, a Wellness Consultant at DWC.

In fact, as of the June 20 grand opening and blessing, sweet basil, cilantro and kale had been harvested from the greenhouse.

A stroll around the greenhouse reveals a smorgasbord of growing produce: onions, peppers, carrots, beets, squash, tomatoes, potatoes, snap peas and more.

“This is the perfect growing environment,” Keri Stout, an Elder Advocate at Tyotkas Elders Center, said as she tended to one of the planters. “There’s no bugs, no nothing – you just pull it and eat it.”

Stout said she is particularly intrigued by some purple cauliflower she’s growing for the first time – the color will provide some visual appeal for salads and other dishes.

Named Ch’k’denłyah yuyeh, meaning “we grow something inside,” the new greenhouse builds on past efforts. A pair of smaller greenhouses previously supplied Tyotkas with fresh produce but were removed to make way for DWC construction. Prior to that, the tribe operated a commercial greenhouse at its Ames Road location.

Sutton said that it’s been exciting to watch the greenhouse take shape, from the initial construction last fall to watching seeds sprout in recent weeks. He said he’s been able to watch the blank canvas gradually become full. Some traditionally used plants were planted during a winter workshop, and some herbs. Planter boxes were constructed in the spring, and then soil was delivered and the planters filled.

“It’s a calming space,” John Willis, who works with the Elders program, said as he watered a planter.

“You get to grow vegetables for Elders, and get Elders to come over and have their own garden spot.”

Maddy Morris said she comes to work in the greenhouse twice a week, but that’s not always enough.

“I come and look in the window every day,” she said.

Morris said she’s amazed at how fast plants are growing. Peas that were “just this big last week” she said, gesturing to indicate seedlings just a few inches tall, are now almost 2 feet tall and may be in need of a little more support.

Sutton’s duties include designating plants for different programs’ use, and monitoring the greenhouse temperature, what’s planted and what’s harvested. Produce from the greenhouse will go to Tyotkas and other tribal programs.

Sutton is learning about greenhouse gardening alongside the facility’s other users.

“I got to plant my first garden – I’ve never done that before,” he said.

Greenhouse visitors have been incorporated into other programs. For example, Sutton brings participants in tobacco support or diabetes prevention programs in to the green space. The greenhouse also will host the Den’ina Wellness Center’s tea time, serving iced tea when the weather gets warm.

The greenhouse is open twice a week for anyone to come visit: Tuesday from 1 to 2:30 p.m., and Friday from 10 a.m. to noon. Tyotkas has greenhouse time scheduled Tuesday from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. and Friday from 10 to 11 a.m.

“They can help us weed, water, or just give us advice,” Sutton said.

Sutton also appreciates the visitors from Tyotkas.

“It’s exciting to see our Elders come out here, help water the plants and share their stories about how they gardened or how they grew up,” Sutton said.

For thousands of years, Den’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 Den’ina life.

Cooking with Kenaitze highlights ingredients and recipes relevant to Den’ina culture. This time we focus on fireweed recipes.

Fireweed (nëldhëphilu) flowers and leaves are used in salads, soups, casseroles, teas, jams and honey. Stems and shoots can be boiled, steamed, and covered with a cream sauce similar to asparagus. Fireweed shoots can be bundled and hung to dry for a few days. Wilted fireweed can be preserved in salt or oil.

Fireweed is an excellent source of vitamins A and C, and a good source of fiber.

Harvest fireweed shoots in early spring, leaves in late spring, buds and flowers in summer and root stalks in the fall.

Learn more about cooking with fireweed on Aug. 15 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Den’ina Wellness Center’s Skilak Lake Kitchen.

At top, George Holley performs during the opening ceremony for the tribe’s new greenhouse held in June. Above, Wellness Director Deb Nyquist talks about how the facility will be utilized.

For the brine:
- 1 tablespoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon pepperocorns
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons sea salt (or canning or pickling salt)

Directions
- In a saucepan, combine all brine ingredients and bring to a boil. Then remove from heat.
- Rinse fireweed shoots well. Sterilize your jars, either one quart jar, two pint jars, or four half pint jars.
- Pack your jars tightly with the fireweed shoots and cover with brine to 1/2 inch from the top of jar. As you add the brine, you might be able to fill in more fireweed. Cover and cool in the refrigerator.
- Serve pickles with cheese and crackers, or salmon and cream cheese, or add to an omelet. Store jars in the refrigerator, and use within one month for best quality.

Recipe courtesy of ediblealaska.ediblecommunities.com/recipes/fireweed-pickles

Good to grow: Tribal greenhouse opens

Yaghali Nusdlan
He or she got well.
The Big Picture

Children from the tribe’s Yaghanen Youth Program drum and sing from Kenaitze’s float during Kenai’s Fourth of July Parade. Little people from the Early Childhood Center walked alongside the float on the sun-filled holiday.

Our Mission
To assure Kahtnuht’ana Dena’ina thrive forever.

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

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

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

- Working toward united effort with Native organizations and other governments that impact our people.
- Developing and implementing a tribal education system.
- Living our traditional values and practices.
- Empowering our sovereignty.
- Continuing to demonstrate resiliency.
- Striving for excellence in all of our programs.
- Elevating the wellness of our people.
- Using our talents and resources to ensure we are able to take care of ourselves and share with others.

Addresses and phone numbers

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

- **Early Childhood Center**
  130 N. Willow St., Kenai, AK 99611
  907-335-7260

- **Tyotkas Elder Center**
  1000 Mission Ave., Kenai, AK 99611
  907-335-7280

- **Yaghanen Youth Program, Education and Career Development**
  35105 K-B Dr., Soldotna, AK 99669
  907-335-7290

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

- **Na’ini Family and Social Services**
  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