

Winter Arrives

Each year, YK Delta residents are involved in accidents while traveling on the ice. Don't forget that traveling on ice can be a dangerous and risky activity. Like any other activity, be aware of your surroundings, including ice conditions. Avoid ice that is slushy, near moving water, layered ice, or ice that has thawed and refrozen. Only go on clear, thick ice! Be sure to gather information about ice thickness before traveling.

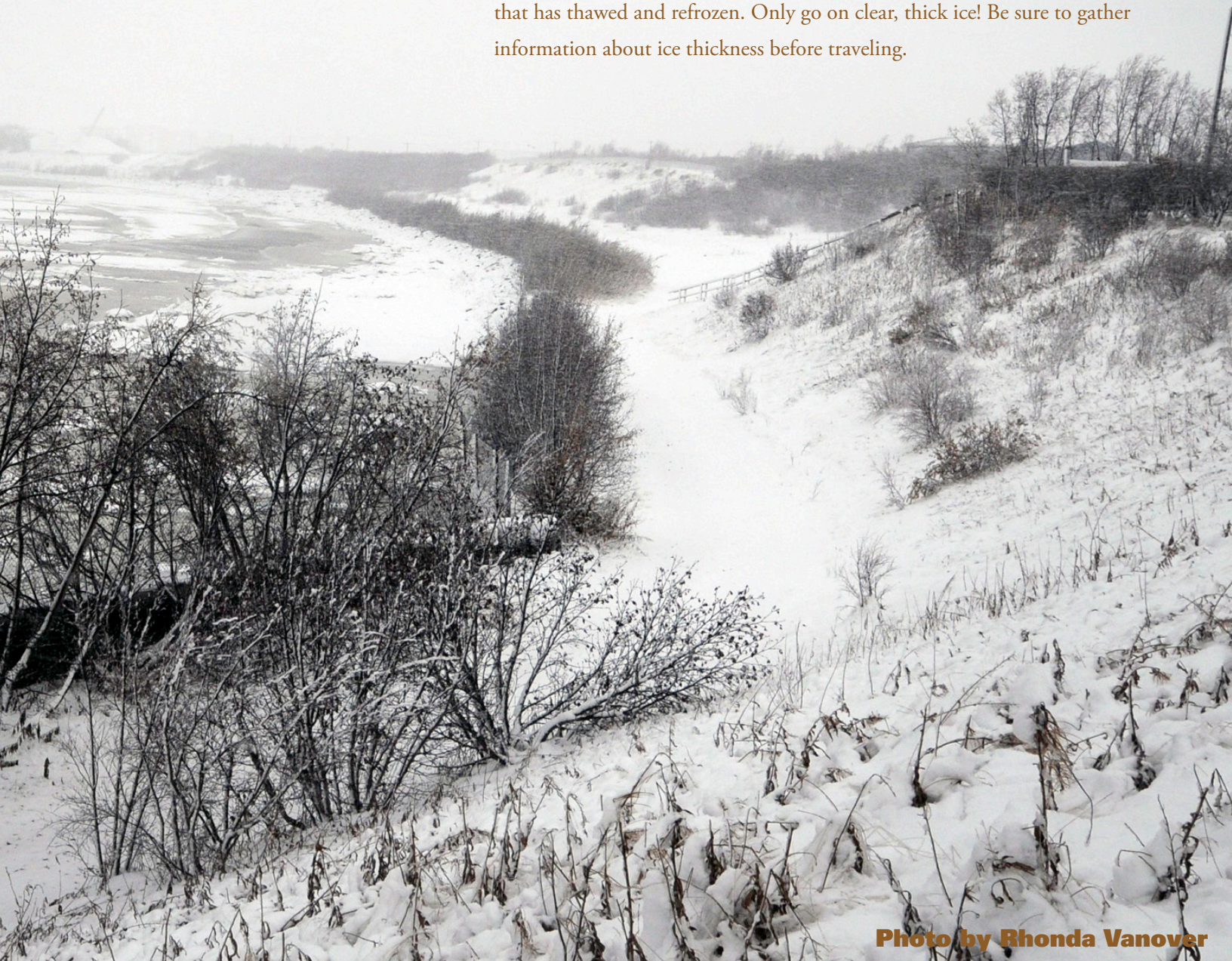


Photo by Rhonda Vanover

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Public Relations.....543-6037

Media Services543-6038

Office of Environmental Health & Engineering543-6420

Technology Help Desk.....543-6070

Human Resources.....543-6060

Administration.....543-6020

Hospital.....543-6300

Emergency Room.....543-6395

Hospital Community Relations543-6350

Social Services543-6225

Family Medicine Clinic Appointments543-6442

1-800-478-3321

Dental Appointments543-6229

Optometry Appointments.....543-6336

Audiology Appointments.....543-6466

Subregional Clinic Appointments

Aniak675-4556

Emmonak.....949-3500

St. Mary's438-3500

Toksook Bay.....427-3500

Public Health Nursing543-2110

Pharmacy543-6382

Travel Management Center543-6360

WIC Program.....543-6459

Health Services543-6024

Village Operations543-6160

CHAP543-6160

ICEMS.....543-6080

Community Health & Wellness543-6190

Behavioral Health Services543-6100

Phillips Ayagnirvik543-6700

Village Services543-6740

Home Care Services543-6170

Outstanding customer service makes employees champions

Members of the Napartet Champions Team held a champion appreciation luncheon on October 27, 2010, for YKHC employees nominated by their supervisors and co-workers for making excellent customer service a top priority.

These champion employees were viewed as continually creating positive and lasting impressions, helping others, and leading by example.



Back row, left to right: Natalia Paul-Brannon, Karen McIntyre, Julia Street, Rebecca Hunter, Arnold Dull, Pete Ebertz, Dane Lenaker. Front row, left to right: John, Mallone, Jimmy Prince, James Marks, Audrey Keezer, Paul Anvil.

Oral health funders meet DHAT students

The Oral Health Funder Policy group under the guidance of the Rasmuson Foundation's Chris Perez and Bethel Community Services Foundation's Jerry Drake made a visit to Bethel in mid-October.



YKHC's Phylicia Wilde shows Dentaquest Foundation Director Marion Kane (left) how far off the road system some Alaska villages are. (Center): Sarah Shoffstall of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

The visiting group consisted of 18 individuals representing several philanthropic foundations and public health affiliates across the nation, here to learn more about Alaska's efforts to educate and train Dental Health Aide Therapists (DHAT) and to observe the models of success being implemented in the YK Delta.

The visiting group of funders, policy experts, and health care representatives from the public health and university sectors

see FUNDERS, p. 12



Support Services Vice President Greg McIntyre (right) presents Facilities Manager John Mallone with a champion award.

YKHC Customer Service Champions

Shea Brumley, Diabetes
Jewel Thompson, Village Ops.
Natalia Paul, Health Services
Stacey Klukluk, T.M.C.
Karen McIntyre, HR
Rebecca Hunter, Admissions
Heather Nicholson, Rev. Ctl.
Arnold Dull, Security
John Malone, Maintenance
Biomed Dept., Biomed
Evelyn Sara, DD Malone Home

James Marks, Revenue Mgmt.
Jeff Black, Housekeeping
Dr. Aliyeva, Health Services
Andrea Ruble, Health Services
Edith Charles, Housekeeping
Jaylene Lincoln, Village Ops.
James Sweeney, Village Ops.
Dane Lenaker, Dental
Spencer Hamons, Technology
Julia Street, Administration
Lannette Forbes, Finance

Congratulations to the 2010-2011 School Physical Activity grantees

Twenty-nine schools from across the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta submitted applications to YKHC's Diabetes Prevention and Control Program in hopes of being awarded up to \$5,000 in school physical activity awards. The diabetes team would like to congratulate the following winning applicants (schools) in helping to prevent diabetes in their communities:

- Tiny tots from **Akiak EHS/HS** will be playing outside with their new junior sleighs, wagons, and sleds as well as indoors with a new balance board, hoop, play kit, tricycles, and a tunnel.
- **Akiak School** will be installing a new treadmill, recumbent bicycle, dumb bell stand, and dumb bells at their school.
- **Emmonak School** will be running to the finish line after practicing on their new treadmills.
- **William Miller Memorial School** in **Napakiak** is "right on target" with their archery set including bows, arrows, protective gear, and curtains.
- Students at **ZJ William Memorial School** in **Napaskiak** will be jumping for joy when they receive their agility ladder, hurdles, tubing with handles, and training box sets, weights, and tether ball.
- Little ones at the **Hooper Bay Head Start** will be strengthening their gross motor muscles with sleds, hoops, a rocking boat along with their exercise mats, tricycles, and their balance beam and stand.
- "It's all down hill" for **Grayling** when they take out their skiing equipment at **David Louis Memorial School**.
- Sleds, activity mats, balance boards, beams, a hop along ball, a mountain climber, and a basketball stand will be fun activities to do for the little ones at the **Alakanuk Head Start**.
- Loud, enthusiastic applause will be heard all the way from the **Hooper Bay School** when they receive their new elliptical and home gym.
- Small athletes from the **Head Starts** at **Pilot Station** and **Marshall** will be climbing hills and not the walls when they receive their snow shoes, sleds, scooters, and wagons, as well as practicing their flips and cartwheels as soon as they master keeping upright on their new balance boards and stands. Teeny boppers will rock and roll on their rocking boat and roller racers.

Congratulations to all the schools that applied and are fighting to win the silent battle of diabetes!

Diabetes Prevention & Control
Direct line 907-543-6133
www.ykhc.org/diabetes



November is Diabetes Awareness Month

The American Diabetes Association uses this month to raise awareness of the seriousness of diabetes and the significance of diabetes prevention and control.

Diabetes is one of our country's leading killers and is the number one cause of heart failure, kidney failure, blindness and more.

Currently a total of 23.6 million children and adults in the United States—7.8 percent of the population—have diabetes. There are 17.9 million people diagnosed with diabetes and 5.7 million people undiagnosed. The number continues to rise with 1.6 million new cases of diabetes being diagnosed in people aged 20 years and older each year.

Don't like these numbers? We don't either.

Join our movement to Stop Diabetes!

You can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes through a healthy lifestyle. Eat good native foods

- Put down the pop, candy, or energy drinks)
- Increase your level of physical activity
- Get off snowmachines and ATVs and walk!
- Maintain a healthy weight

With these positive steps, you can stay healthier longer and reduce your risk of diabetes.

Join YKHC's Diabetes Prevention & Control Program this month for a walk on November 27, 2010, starting at the Cultural Center at 3 p.m. The Diabetes Program will also hold free glucose screenings at the hospital—stop by and get screened today.

Today is the day to take control of your health, prevent diabetes!

The WORD from WIC

WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN

Becoming Breast-Feeding Friendly

The WIC Program celebrated Alaska's World Breastfeeding Week from October 3-9 by recognizing WIC moms who breastfed for more than six months. A certificate was awarded to each mom with a picture of both mom and baby and a touching message about her breastfeeding experience, posted on the WIC office poster board.

The WIC Program is implementing the objective of the 2010 Alaska's World Breastfeeding Week, which is to become a breastfeeding friendly office. Some of the steps are:

- Waiting rooms—Replace posters that show formula or bottles with posters/pictures of breastfeeding or about breastfeeding. Display magazines that promote breastfeeding instead of advertising formula.
- Inform all pregnant women about the risks of formula use. Review information your clinic provides/discusses with mothers and see if it is current and accurate. Use only current and evidence-based materials.
- Don't accept formula advertising items from reps or companies. (Infant formula, rattles, pens, etc.)
- Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from hospital or clinic.
- If needed, offer post partum women an electric breast pump, or refer her to places to get one. (WIC clients may get a pump right after delivery.)

CONGRATULATIONS ...to all breastfeeding moms who received a certificate for breastfeeding for more than six months.

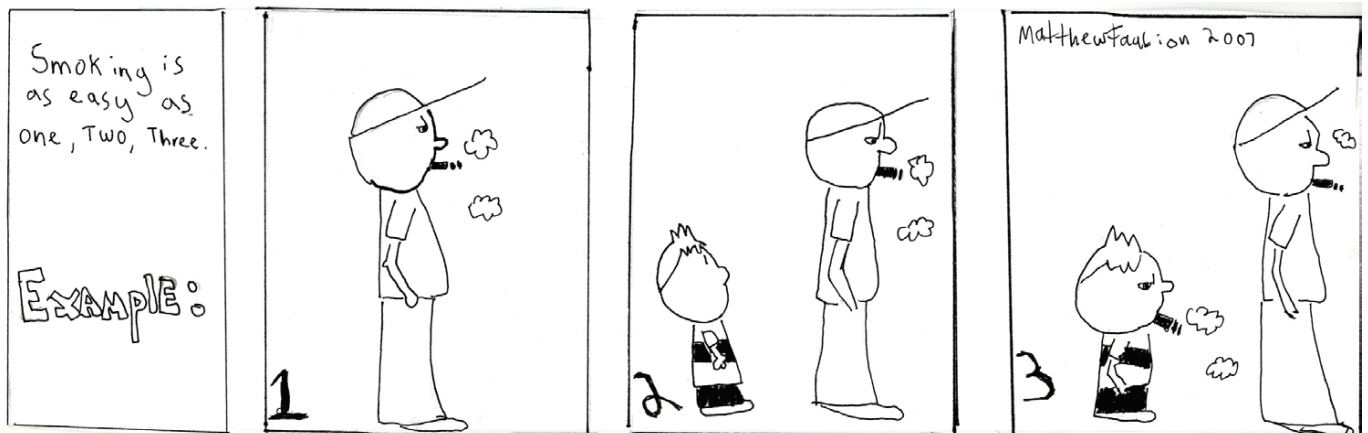


WIC Director Khadija Alharbi presents a certificate to Macrina Nicolai and her breastfed baby Andrea, recognizing more than six months of breastfeeding.

Need Breastfeeding Support?

YKHC provides on-going breastfeeding counseling & information:

WIC Program: 907-543-6459 • OB Department: 907-543-6346
Dr. Kepler & Dr. Roll: 907-543-6442



**Your children learn from watching you.
Quit before they start.**

YKHC Nicotine Control and Research 1-800-478-3321 or 543-6312

by Debbie Michael



Blackfish & Lush Fish

Around this time of year, people from the Kuskokwim Delta start enjoying the tasty morsels of blackfish while some others lick their fingers during meals of heads, livers, and the white flesh of the lush fish.

I've seen and heard of people setting and checking their blackfish traps in small channels all along different parts of Bethel. Daniel sets his at Tundra Ridge and catches quite a bit sometimes. Depending on how strong the "run" is, Daniel catches up to five gallons of blackfish in two to three days. Once he caught about seven gallons of the little fish. We gave most of it away to friends and relatives so they could enjoy some



Daniel Bill harvests a bucketful of blackfish from his trap on Tundra Ridge.

fresh fish. It's such a great feeling to share food with loved ones.

We save a few blackfish to use as bait when we go fishing for another delicious tasting fish—lush fish (burbot). Everyone has their favorite fishing places or secret fishing spots. Daniel has taken me out fishing a few times. Once, he took Lynn and me jigging. This was Lynn's first time, so we had to do some explaining.

Since we were close to the middle of the river, we had to use a lot of fishing line to reach the bottom of the river where the lush fish like to swim. You can tell that you have hit the bottom when you can feel a tapping of your hook and bait at the end of your line. Periodically, we had to feed more fishing line to be able to hit the bottom of the swift moving current. When a lush fish takes the bait and hooks itself, the line gets heavier as you jig and that's how you know when you've caught one. Rarely have I ever felt a jerk on the line when I caught a lush fish, like when I've caught a pike fish, so it's harder for me to know if I've caught a

continued on p. 7

Editor's Note: For the past several issues of the *Messenger*, Diabetes Outreach Coordinator Debbie Michael has been sharing articles about her family's subsistence activities and adventures. The series continues this month with *Fall/Winter fishing*.

—Michael Faubion

BLACKFISH, from p. 6

fish—unless it's a big one. Whether it is a big or little lush fish on the other end of the line, the race is on.

You have to bring in the line quickly and steadily. You can lose the fish if you skip a beat. I've done this quite a few times. It's a good idea to bring in the line completely to check and see if the burbot got away with the bait. Another thing to keep in mind when you're reeling in, especially with the fishing poles made in the traditional way—where the fishing line is wrapped around the length of the small fishing pole—is not to get it tangled on anything in your boat. It's really easy to get tangled when it's very windy, or if your fish does flip-flops on your fishing line, if the line catches on part of your clothing when you reach for the fish to take out the hook. I've done that quite a few times as well.

Another time Daniel and I went fishing, I tangled my line and decided to cast my hook out over the back of the boat and worked on the tangle from both ends. I'd get a little bit of line untangled and let it go—here and there—and the hook went down deeper and deeper into the water, but it still didn't reach the bottom. Periodically, I'd work on the upper part of the line and wrap the slack onto the pole. During one of these times, I was startled when the line started jerking and pulling. I pulled in the line and yelled, "What kind of a fish is that?!" I had never pulled

in a shee fish before. It was the size of a small salmon. Daniel helped me take the fish off the hook so I wouldn't tangle any more of my line. I eventually untangled all of the fishing line. We caught a total of 11 fish that evening.

Preparation of both of these fish dishes can take some getting used to. Blackfish are cooked like lobster and crab, with boiling water. But instead of putting the blackfish in the boiling water, the boiling water is poured over the pot of blackfish—the pot has a smaller lid in it to keep the hot water from splattering you. After everything has quieted in the pot, it is put back on the stove to simmer for a couple of minutes to cook the fish thoroughly. It is usually done when foamy bubbles come up to the surface. Then, it's time to dish up, cool off your meal a little, drizzle some seal oil over it, sprinkle a little salt on top, and enjoy.

Since lush fish can survive out of the water for even more than a few hours, it can make preparation a little more challenging for some of us who are a little squeamish about cutting up squirming things. But once cut up and the slime rinsed off, the pieces are put into a pot of cold water and then are heated and boiled for about 10 minutes. The fish is done when the flesh separates slightly from the bones. You can eat it plain or you can pour some seal oil over it and enjoy.

Fish and Berry Desserts**Akutaq recipes**

—*Minnie Steven*

Tenguggluk: Lush fish liver and eggs.

Boil lush livers and cool off.

Mash about 2 livers. Add the raw eggs sacks from 2 fish, stir, add 1 quart salmon berries and black berries and sugar and not too much seal oil—I use my own measurements.

Qerpertaq

Raw pike fish eggs smashed and take the stringy things off, add cranberry (red berries), add sugar and seal oil—I do my own measuring too.

These are my favorite kind of akutaqs.

Mak'aq with Pike fish roe

—*Debra Samson*

Start with about 2–4 white fish eggs packs, depending on their size. (I freeze my white fish eggs in portion sizes, so the eggs fill about ¼ of a sandwich Ziploc bag.) Mash the eggs as much as possible. I've heard of some ladies who use a high power liquid blender too, but I've never tried it. White fish eggs: My preference is to use pike eggs, because it is easy to get lots.

Keep adding seal oil, a little at a time, and whipping it to mix them up to become a crème. Keep adding seal oil until the mixture becomes very thick like very thick and sticky oatmeal.

Seal oil: This is what fluffs up the fish eggs. It essentially becomes like whipped Crisco. My wild guess is that it takes about 1 cup or to 1½ cup, but I really don't know.

Add 1 gallon of salmon berries (last year's supply work just fine) a little at a time until all creamy, becomes like thin to regular oatmeal.

Add some sugar to sweeten lightly, but not too much. Sugar: I don't know, maybe ½ cup to no more than 1 cup. Mak'aq doesn't need to be very sweet, only flavorful. I've heard of some ladies who don't even add the sugar to the mixture, and it is only done at the table with individual preference. I prefer mine like mom's where she adds the "some sugar" to the whole mixture.

I hope this recipe works. It's hard to put the information into defined measurements. We usually just do it by looks or by taste.

I swear that my mom makes the best mak'aq ever!

Good luck!

Mak'aq with Salmon roe

—*Molly Billy*

Wow! Now I know what this is. I used to watch my mom make it.

She used silver salmon that was half dried (kind of raw in the inside).

She then only took the inner part of the roe and started

see AKUTAQ RECIPES, p. 8

Dental Health Aide students complete training

The Dental Department congratulates their six hard working students who completed training for certification to be a Primary Dental Health Aide.

The YK Delta has a much higher rate of dental decay than the lower 48 states. The YKHC Dental Department held an intensive training for six students from various villages to get their certifications as Primary Dental Health Aides.



Fritz Charles, Darren Hootch, Sharena McKindy, Cheryl Sinka, and Tiara Sage.

A Primary Dental Health Aide (PDHA) is trained to administer fluoride, tooth brush prophyls, give oral hygiene instructions, nutritional counseling relating to oral health, and educate their communities.

The YKHC Dental Department is thrilled to use the PDHA's new skills to improve the overall oral health in the villages. We believe the PDHAs are our first line of defense in the fight against decay.

Kudos to the following PDHAs. Cheryl Sinka of Kotlik, Darren Hootch of Emmonak, Sharena McKindy of Aniak, Tiara Sage of Mtn. Village, Fritz Charles of Tuluksak and Debbie Nevack of Toksook Bay.



Dental Health Aide trainee Tiara Sage with Fritz Charles looking on.

For more information concerning our Dental Health Aide Program, call x6971.

AKUTAK RECIPES, from p. 7

crushing them.

She never used smoked.

I think she used 4 to 5 roes and the quantity varied depending on how much roe there was.

It also depends on how you want the flavor to taste like.

She added sugar for taste; my mom put a lot of sugar for flavoring (compared to the flavor of regular akutaq).

Seal oil for liquid. The seal oil is used to dissolve the sugar. You don't need to put too much (it varies how much roe you have in your bowl). Stir until the sugar is dissolved.

Then she puts the salmon berries in last until she feels the akutaq is perfect— the way she wanted the flavor.



Akutaq using sheefish

—Debbie Michael

I used about one-third of the flesh of the shee fish I caught to

make this dessert. I didn't use any measuring cups, so all measurements are approximate.

After boiling three big pieces of sheefish, cool the pieces. After you remove the bones, take out the excess water from the pieces of fish by squeezing handfuls of the flesh. Crumble the squeezed flesh, set aside for later use. After the water is removed from the pieces of fish you can start on the next part.

I mixed together about 1 to 1¼ cups shortening, ⅔ cups sugar, and up to 1 cup of water. When it was thoroughly mixed together, I started whipping it to make it as fluffy as I could. I added more water and kept whipping until I couldn't feel the sugar between my fingers and when I felt the mixture was fluffy enough. Afterwards, I started adding the fish flesh a few handfuls at a time and continued whipping between handfuls. It started to look like it was the consistency of fish akutaq I had before, so I added the quart and a half of blackberries. When I thought the berries were mixed well in the akutaq, I put the bowl into the refrigerator to chill.

I tried some later and evaluated it. I thought it was a little on the sweet side. Maybe next time I could use half a cup of sugar instead.

Tuluksak health fair a success!

The community of Tuluksak hosted a health fair on Thursday, November 4. Several departments from YKHC traveled to Tuluksak to conduct outreach as part of the community's invitation to participate.

Kathy Stanton, Immunization and Well Child Coordinator, brought 70 flu vaccine doses to the village and dispensed them throughout the day. Many community members visited the village health clinic after the health fair to receive a flu vaccine there. Kusko, the Immunization dog/mascot was a big hit among the children who enjoyed hearing him 'woof' about getting immunized.

Shane Welch and Mary Johnson from YKHC Behavioral Health were on hand to speak with youth and elders about the importance of interaction across generations as a means to heal and address issues the YK Delta village communities are well aware of, namely, alcohol, substance abuse and suicide.

A special group session among the Tuluksak teens took place in a small classroom where the local youth had an opportunity to educate their teachers and adults on methods they would use to heighten awareness of youth at risk or those displaying visible signs of depression, anger, or sadness.

Other popular vendors included Injury Prevention's "Show up" campaign. More than 50 adults and children brought their winter coats and gear in to get reflective tape ironed on so they can be seen in the dark winter months.

Darcy Dixon of the Yupiit School District was instrumental in coordinating the fair along with her co-workers and fellow Tuluksak community members.



Slush, sidekick and special assistant to Kusko the Immunization dog, with a hearty "woof," says, "Stay healthy, stay immunized!" Photo by Bev Hoffman.

Chuathbaluk Healthy Children, Healthy Families, Strong Community Gathering

The village of Chuathbaluk held a community gathering October 26–28, 2010, titled "The Healing Journey Continues," addressing issues related to preventing suicide in their community.

Adults and children met at the Teen Center to learn, share stories, eat and plan for their community.

Guest presenters from YKHC Behavioral Health, ONC Social Services and TWC's TAV program covered such topics as recognizing and overcoming Cultural and Childhood Trauma, Healthy Relationships, Family Tree and the Genealogy of Trauma and staying healthy through positive choices related to diet, tobacco use and sexual activity. Community members and presenters discussed how to become a Suicide Safe Community. Presentations were also done at the school by the TAV Teens and the YKHC Behavioral Health Aide on Wednesday.

Village children provided entertainment with Native Dance and Drumming. On the last night the boys and girls performed a skit called "The Story of the Musk Ox." A child told how musk ox protect their young from danger by gathering the young together then the adults form circles around them—facing outward to face the enemy. The children then gathered in a circle with the babies in the center and called all the adults in Chuathbaluk to be their protectors and keep them safe from their enemies (alcohol, drugs, domestic violence, verbal, physical and sexual abuse and neglect). The adults responded by gathering around the outside of the cluster of children. Everyone was reminded that it is the whole community's responsibility to protect the children.

Chuathbaluk has been participating in a suicide prevention program in partnership with YKHC, funded through a federal Methamphetamine Suicide Prevention Initiative (MSPI) grant. This was the fourth activity in the past year that has brought village members together to learn and plan for what Chuathbaluk can do to become a Suicide Safe Community where all people live, grow and be healthy and safe.

YKHC Health Aide of the Month

**September 2010:
Martha Constantine**



Supervisor Instructor Martha Atti, left and Field Supervisor Coordinator Andrea Thomas congratulate Health Aide of the month Martha Constantine.

Martha was selected for Health Aide of the month for her willingness to cover villages in need of health care.

So far, Martha has doubled her yearly floating goals for 2010 and in the past has exceeded her floating goals.

When asked last minute for emergency coverage Martha is willing to travel to other villages needing assistance during a staffing crisis when she is not on call in Kwethluk. Martha comes from a strong group of Health Aides serving the community of Kwethluk for 11 years. Congratulations Martha for September 2010 Health aide of the Month and thank you for your hard work and dedication.

Take part in the
Diabetes Awareness
Walk!  

Saturday, November 27, 2010 at 3p.m.
Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center



Give THANKS to your health. Get Screened.

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION



They leave their families at
any hour to help you and yours...



Martha Yohak, CHP, Chelmalak, examines young patient. Photo by Janet Erik, CHP.

Health Aides – There for You

*Show you care.
Thank your Health Aide today
for the work they do.*



Working Together to
Achieve Excellent Health

Do you know an outstanding health aide? Contact the YKHC Field Supervision Coordinator at 543-6357 to nominate your health aide for an award!

Taking precautions with winter activities

Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services public service announcement (Anchorage, AK)

With winter underway in Alaska, health officials would like to remind Alaskans that winter activities can be dangerous.

According to the Alaska Trauma Registry, each year between 2004 and 2007, an average of 24 Alaska children under age 15 were admitted to a hospital due to injuries received from

sledding, snowmachining, or skiing. Since January 2004, at least 11 Alaska children under age 18 have died from injuries sustained while sledding or snowmachining.

Sledding injuries most often involve trauma to the head or neck, and serious injuries can occur if a rider collides with an object like a tree or car. Snowmachine-related injuries can be the result of driving out of control or falling through the ice. Helmets are recommended for both activities to reduce the severity of injury if a crash occurs.

"We want to stop a moment and remind everyone to practice safety when out in the snow," said Hillary Strayer, Senior Injury Prevention Specialist with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. "Following some simple guidelines can help avoid trauma and heartache."

Tips for safer snowmachining include: never letting a child drive a snowmachine that is too big for him or her to handle; staying on marked trails and away from areas with open water; not going too fast for conditions; putting reflective tape on jackets or gear to increase visibility to others; and always wearing a helmet.

Tips for safer sledding include: avoiding hills with obstacles, icy conditions, jumps or proximity to roads and parking lots; making sure children will glide to a stop before reaching any hazards; choosing a steerable sled; not sledding when visibility is poor (late afternoon darkness or bad weather conditions); and making sure your child wears a helmet.

To schedule an appointment for immunizations...

In Bethel

YKHC: 543-6442

**Public Health Nursing:
543-2110**

**Bethel Family Clinic:
543-3773**

In the villages:

**Contact your local village
health clinic**

Who do I call ?

911

**State Trooper
1-800-764-5525**

or Village VPSO

Life-threatening emergency...

Active suicide attempt, overdose, incident involving weapons, possible serious harm to somebody, person threatening to kill or seriously hurt themselves or somebody else

543-6300

or 1-800-478-2642

**YKHC Emergency
Services** for Behavioral
Health on-call Clinician

Mental health situation...

Somebody might need to be committed to psychiatric hospital in Bethel or Anchorage—acting bizarre, out of touch with reality, maybe seeing/hearing things that are not there, "talking crazy," maybe talking about suicide

1-866-465-8930

**ComPsych Employee
Assistance Program**

Personal or family problems...

A YKHC employee or family member needs help dealing with an alcohol or drug problem, depression, job stress, marriage or financial problems, grief issues, domestic abuse, or similar problems.

1-800-478-3321

or 543-6093 in Bethel

**Behavioral Health
Critical Incident
Stress Management
Program**

After a disaster or tragedy

There's been a terrible event in my village—a suicide, bad accident with injuries, multiple deaths, etc. and we need help coping with all of this

**YUKON-KUSKOKWIM
HEALTH CORPORATION**

Working Together to Achieve Excellent Health



Many changes in 2011 Medicare drug plan: enrollment open now

Alaska Department of Health and Human Services Press Release

ANCHORAGE - The yearly window to review and join new Medicare prescription drug plans has started. The annual open enrollment period runs from Nov. 15 through Dec. 31. Alaskans who have a plan through Medicare's prescription insurance program, Part D, can change to a new plan for 2011 during this time. People who have not enrolled can join.

Insurance companies are offering fewer plans in Alaska next year: 26, down from 41—so Medicare recipients and any family or friends who help them are encouraged to carefully review their Part D Annual Notice of Change letters, which were mailed in October.

Alaskans should review their options every year. Their medication needs may have changed and be better met by a different plan. Plans change as well. Some 2011 Alaska plans have stopped covering certain drugs, changed their deductibles or raised premiums, for example.

Another factor to consider is that new federal law lowers the cost of prescriptions in the "doughnut hole," a gap in Part D coverage.

Medicare recipients are charged permanent late-enrollment

fees if they do not sign up the first time they are eligible. The exception is if they already have coverage—under Medicaid or a health care insurance plan such as the military's TriCare or most employer-provided plans.

For help comparing the plans available in Alaska, call the Medicare Information Office: 269-3680 in Anchorage, 1-800-478-6065 toll-free statewide. Medicare Information Office staff and volunteers also offer local Part D enrollment clinics.

The office is part of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. For more information, visit medicare.alaska.gov.

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for Americans 65 and older or with certain disabilities. For national Medicare information, call 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227), or go to medicare.gov.

People are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible to avoid delays in January.

Contact: Sarana Schell, (907) 269-8041, Cell (907) 398-1480, sarana.schell@alaska.gov

Great American Smokeout November 18, 2010

Join YKHC's Nicotine Control and Research Dept. for a 15 minute WALKOUT starting in the YKDRH lobby at 12:15 p.m.

Join the celebration and quit tobacco products TODAY!

For more information, contact Nicotine Control at 907-543-6312.



FUNDERS, from p. 3

had several opportunities to engage one-on-one with the cohort of six DHATs anticipating graduation this December.

The DHAT students gave heartfelt thanks to the Oral Health funders group in presentations and speeches. The speeches moved many of the attendees, including former YKHC Dentist and ANTHC's current Dental Health Aide Director Dr. Mary Williard, DDS and Yuut instructors Cathy Belasko and Dr. Sarah Shoffstall.

Most of the students mentioned the challenges and rewards they and their families committed to as part of their experience in the two-year intensive education program which includes one year in Anchorage and one year at Bethel's Yuut Elitnaurviat "People's Learning Center."

The visiting group concluded their trip with a walk-through of YKHC's Dental Department under the direction of YKHC's dentists Dr. Edwin Allgair, Dr. Brian Hollander, and Dezbbaa Damon. Many of the visitors were fascinated by the amount of effort and travel made by our staff of dentists in bringing oral health equipment out to our local village and subregional clinics.

SHOW UP

with reflective tape

More than
65 percent of
pedestrian accidents
happen at night.

Be safe.

Be seen.

Wear reflective tape.



Working Together to Achieve Excellent Health



For more information or for free reflective tape call 907-543-6420

Be Bright and Be Seen!

By Teresa Markham, YKHC Injury Prevention & EMS

People like to wear dark colored coats in the winter, but this makes them practically invisible to the drivers! Often, pedestrians are not recognized until the driver has passed them. This can add additional worries and anxiety to the drivers, especially if it was a near miss.

Among many aspects, drivers need to be alert for oncoming traffic, road and visibility conditions. A driver moving at just 30 miles per hour is moving at 2,640 feet per minute! (44 ft per second) .Studies have shown that a person wearing dark colors are first seen approximately 55 feet away. This gives the driver barely one second reaction time. A person wearing reflective tape is seen as far as 500 feet away. This gives the driver more time to slow down or stop, preventing a tragic event.

How can you help? Increase your chances of being seen! Wear brighter clothing. Walk on designated and lighted pathways and sidewalks. Be extra alert and cautious of drivers approaching in all directions. Use reflective material.

The YKHC Retail Store has iron-on and stick-on reflective tape available for sale inside the CHSB. Some considerations about reflective tape:

- The human eye is drawn toward moving objects. Placing the reflective tape at the end of the arms and legs will further enhance your visibility. This will also help the driver identify the object as a human form.
- Pedestrians need to be seen at all angles. Placement should be considered on ALL sides of clothing, footwear, and accessories.
- The iron-on reflective tape can endure more washes compared to the stick-on reflective tape.



Saturday, October 30th. ICEMS irons reflective tape onto approximately 90 coats, at M.E.'s annual Little Kids Halloween Carnival. Above: Karl Powers and son. Below left, Jessica Horras. Below right, Bill O'Brien.



- The stick-on reflective tape is encouraged for use in material that will melt if ironed, winter boots, and backpacks

For more information, contact the Injury Control and EMS office at 1-800-478-6599



Photos by Bev Hoffman