

# Eyak Echo

ECHOES OF OUR ANCESTORS



Native Village of Eyak | 1st Quarter, 2020



## *Eyak strong*

Three Junior Native Youth Olympians  
place during 2020 games

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# Native Village of Eyak Employees

## TRIBAL COUNCIL

Darrel Olsen ..... Tribal Council Chairman  
 Tom Andersen ..... Tribal Council Vice Chairman  
 Pam Smith ..... Tribal Council Secretary-Treasurer  
 Jack Hopkins ..... Tribal Council Member  
 Raven Cunningham ..... Tribal Council Member

## NATIVE VILLAGE OF EYAK

Bertrand Adams ..... Executive Director  
 Brooke Mallory ..... Deputy Director  
 Jim Gittleson ..... Finance Director  
 Steve Bambakidis ..... IT Director  
 Kari Collins ..... Health and Wellness Director  
 John Whissel ..... Environmental Director  
 Sarah Kathrein ..... Tribal Judicial Systems Administrator  
 Denna Francischetti ..... Human Resources Manager  
 Aniessa Hodges ..... Human Resources Assistant  
 Reyna Newirth ..... Executive Administrative Assistant/  
 Office Manager  
 Rebecca Calfina ..... Administrative Assistant  
 Joe Cook ..... Maintenance  
 Jackie Ladd ..... Elder Services Coordinator  
 Cheryl Eleshansky ..... Tribal Family Services Manager  
 Jessica Weaver ..... Family Program Coordinator  
 Linda Powell ..... ICWA Coordinator  
 Altana Hamilton ..... Health & Wellness Advocate  
 Laura Blackadar ..... Staff Accountant  
 Celeste Gasmen ..... Accounting Technician  
 Sean O'Brien ..... Capital Projects Director  
 Myra Eleshansky ..... Housing Coordinator  
 Matt Piche ..... Natural Resources Coordinator  
 James Paley ..... DENR Engineer  
 Ivy Patton ..... Environmental Coordinator  
 Andy Pfeiffer ..... IT Coordinator II  
 Russell Mallory ..... IT Coordinator I  
 Lennette Ronnegard ..... Enrollment Clerk

## ILANKA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Cindy Bradford ..... Operations Manager  
 Kristel Rush ..... Physician/Medical Director  
 Florelyn Adajar ..... Medical Assistant  
 Jim Cabusora ..... Medical Assistant  
 Audrey Cunningham ..... Medical Office Receptionist/  
 Outreach Advocate  
 MaryCris Carino ..... Medical Assistant  
 Cindy Frohnapfel ..... Office Systems Coordinator  
 Brian Iutzi ..... Physician  
 Victoria Peterson ..... Case Manager  
 Jessica Arasmith ..... Operations Assistant  
 Nicole Piche ..... Nursing Coordinator  
 Matthew Rush ..... Behavioral Health Coordinator  
 Susan Powell ..... Behavioral Health Clinician  
 John Yakanak ..... Behavioral Health Specialist  
 Berna Quemado ..... Certified Nursing Assistant/  
 Patient Services  
 Ellen Sheridan ..... Registered Nurse  
 Karin Siebenmorgen ..... Registered Nurse  
 Brittany Welzant ..... Administrative Assistant

## ILANKA CULTURAL CENTER

Angela Butler ..... Eyak Language Specialist  
 Sara Tiedeman ..... Traditional Harvesting Coordinator  
 Teal Hansen ..... Cultural Center Coordinator  
 Danaya Hoover ..... Gift Shop Coordinator  
 Mark King ..... Subsistence Boat Captain  
 Shyla Krukoff ..... Sugcestun Language Specialist

## TRIBAL ENTERPRISES

Scott Aiken ..... Boat Captain/Maintenance  
 Bob Ladd ..... Prince William Marina Manager

## THE CORDOVA TIMES

Annette Potter ..... Managing Editor  
 Vivian Kennedy ..... Administrative Assistant  
 Zachary Snowdon Smith ..... Staff Reporter/Photographer



**Have a special life announcement, project, accomplishment to share in the Eyak Echo?**  
 EMAIL IT TO US AT [share@thecordovaitimes.com](mailto:share@thecordovaitimes.com)!  
 (Please put "Eyak Echo" in the subject line.)

The Eyak Echo is a special production of  
**The Cordova Times**  
 in partnership with Native Village of Eyak



## Safety is our No. 1 priority right now

Hello, Community of Cordova,

I am contacting you as a Tribal Leader on behalf of the Native Village of Eyak.

We want all of you to know that our number one priority is the safety of our community. NVE, the City of Cordova and other local entities have been working together to take steps in preparation for a possible outbreak.

Due to the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, NVE is closed to the public and only essential office personnel are in office, we have temporarily asked that all other employees work from home. However, Ilanka Community Health Clinic is still open and we ask that you please call first if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. NVE has also canceled all travel, gatherings, meetings, and events until further notice.

NVE has also been working with all the regional villages and corporations, Port Graham, Nanwalek, Qutekcak (Seward), Chenega, Valdez, Tatitlek, and Eyak, along with Chugach Alaska Regional Corporation to make sure we keep each other updated on new information and current cases in our area. Here are sites you can visit for current and accurate information.

State of Alaska DHHS: [coronavirus.alaska.gov](https://coronavirus.alaska.gov)

CDC: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

ANTHC: [anthc.org/news/resources-coronavirus](https://anthc.org/news/resources-coronavirus)

NVE encourages everyone to stay calm and stay informed. Follow updates from DHSS, CDC, ANTHC, and other trusted public health officials. Do not panic. Fight fear, stigma, and misinformation with correct information and news. Talk to your neighbors, friends, and co-workers about how to help each other. Remember to ask them if they have any special needs that should be considered in a health emergency.

Please know that your Village is working hard to keep things running in this chaotic time, if you have any questions, please let one of the NVE Council Representatives know or call our office at 424-7738. ■

**Raven Cunningham**

*NVE Tribal Council member, Cordova*

### Elder services

## Contact NVE for pharmacy, food, mail and other delivery services during pandemic

- Pharmacy and mail delivery: Contact Jackie Ladd to have your outgoing mail picked up and mail checked at the post office. Also, get your prescriptions picked up and delivered from the pharmacy.
- Elders may sign up for home delivery meals with CCMC. Contact Monica Shaw at 907-429-3167.
- NVE also has two food bank programs. Rebecca Calfina or Altana Hamilton at 907-424-7738.
- NVE is setting up a one-time \$50 credit on Elders fuel bill at Shoreside Petroleum.
- NVE has a group of 98 Elders and can offer resources to when available. Jackie Ladd is making daily welfare checks to Elders but if Elders haven't heard from her please contact her at 907-253-5523.

*If you need something not listed, please to contact Jackie Ladd. Everyone has their own special needs.*

**Jackie Ladd**

Elder Services Coordinator  
Jackie.Ladd@eyak-nsn.gov

### TECH TIP

## Using Technology to stay connected and feel engaged:

- Use free tech like Facebook, Facetime, WhatsApp, Google Hangouts, or Skype to connect via Video.
- Download Books there are free books in Amazon Kindle available for download.
- If you haven't already now is a great time to get set up with online banking and utilities bill-pay.
- Always wipe down your devices with a Disinfectant wipe, but for monitors and TV's use a damp warm cloth and rubbing alcohol to clean them (when off). ■



## Coming soon! A BRAND NEW Native Village of Eyak WEBSITE

*New look, same location:*  
**EYAK-NSN.GOV**



## FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

# Staying healthy during isolation

BY DR. KRISTEL RUSH

For The Cordova Times

I am thankful that as I write this, we have made it into the first week of April without any positive tests for COVID-19. What the city and state have mandated, and what the grassroots community members have been advocating, has obviously made a difference. The incident team continues to meet daily to stay abreast of the constantly changing landscape of the medical recommendations and prepare for all possible scenarios. Do not lose heart.

However, over the past few weeks our regular routines, social contacts, work, recreation and childcare/school for our children have been completely disrupted. As a matter of fact, “disrupted” seems like a far too mild description of the hurricane of life changes that has bombarded us over the past three weeks. But as Cordovans, you all know how to weather a storm, even one as unexpected and disorienting as this one is. Here are some recommendations from the medical and mental health experts to help you while you are in your “storm shelter.”

Most of what I am going to relay is common sense, and applies to staying healthier under any circumstance. However, with the exponential stress that has been associated with Covid-19, which not only includes the fear of contracting the virus, but the extra stressors of financial strain, online learning for your children, childcare for your children, and so on, the following things are now more important than ever.

1. **Take a break from social media and news about COVID-19.** I can't emphasize this enough. Set a time limit (I recommend no more than 30 minutes a day) and stick to it. Understand that constantly checking on updates can increase anxiety and feelings of helplessness. Instead, use that time to do (see list below) things that help with your health and mental wellbeing.

2. **Set a daily schedule and routine but give yourself (and your kids) lots of leniency and grace within that routine.** Get out of your pajamas every morning!
3. **There are no vitamin, mineral, nutrient or herbal preventative or curative regimens for COVID-19.** Be wary of social media reports that tout hot beverages, throat gargles, certain vitamin combinations, or a timeline for washing hands X number of times an hour. However,

eating nutritious foods, staying hydrated, exercising and thinking about cutting out detrimental habits (like smoking) are beneficial at any time, but even more important now.

4. **Practice mindfulness.** Take time to be completely present in today. Watch your children who are absorbed in play, they know how to do it the best! Step outside and feel the sunlight, watch the ducks or seabirds, bask in the beauty

## 6 COVID-19 PARENTING Talking about COVID-19

Be willing to talk. They will already have heard something. Silence and secrets do not protect our children. Honesty and openness do. Think about how much they will understand. You know them best.

### Be open and listen

- 1 Allow your child to talk freely. Ask them open questions and find out how much they already know.

### Be honest

- 2 Always answer their questions truthfully. Think about how old your child is and how much they can understand.

### Be supportive

- 3 Your child may be scared or confused. Give them space to share how they are feeling and let them know you are there for them.

### It is OK not to know the answers

- 4 It is fine to say “We don't know, but we are working on it; or we don't know, but we think.” Use this as an opportunity to learn something new with your child!

### Heroes not bullies

- 5 Explain that COVID-19 has nothing to do with the way someone looks, where they are from, or what language they speak. Tell your child that we can be compassionate to people who are sick and those who are caring for them.

### There are a lot of stories going around

- 6 Some may not be true. Use trustworthy sites: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public> and <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/covid-19> from WHO and UNICEF.

### End on a good note

- 7 Check to see if your child is okay. Remind them that you care and that they can talk to you anytime. Then do something fun together!

For more information click below links:

Parenting tips from WHO

Parenting tips from UNICEF

In worldwide languages

EVIDENCE-BASE



unicef  
for every child



Parenting for Lifelong Health is supported by the UNICEF Accelerating Achievement by All Stars Ambassadors (all), the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme and the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, Oxford University Innovation (OUI) Sustainability Impact Fund, UNICEF, the Leverhulme Trust, the Economic and Social Research Council, WHO, ODA, the National Research Foundation of South Africa, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Asper Foundation, the John Fell Fund, the Evaluation Fund, the ISES Optimum Foundation, USAID PFFPFA, the Wellcome Trust, Grand Challenges Canada and Wellpring Advisors.



of the mountains. Take a “body-scan.” Close your eyes and notice the tension or acknowledge how each “part” of your body is feeling, starting at your head and going to your toes. Practice breathing deeply, in through your nose and out through your mouth, as you focus on each part of your body. These are all techniques to help you be present in the moment and move from the fear zone to the growth zone. (See diagram.)

5. **Find time for movement at least 30 minutes a day.** Get outside if you can; if not, find online exercise programs. Better yet, check for Current Rhythms zoom classes so that we can exercise “apart but together.”
6. **If you believe, pray daily for healing and protection for your family and community.** There have been many double and triple-blind randomized controlled studies (good science) on the healing power of prayer and the benefits to you as you pray. Prayer and meditation have been shown to have a clinically significant positive effect on blood pressure, heart rate, levels of melatonin and serotonin, boost the immune response and reduce anxiety and pain. Although there will always be a mystery to faith and prayer that cannot be explained by science, if you are interested in reading more about the research on spirituality and healing check out Duke University Psychiatrist and Professor Dr. Harold Koenig’s article reviewing studies between 1872 and 2010. doi.org/10.5402/2012/278730.
7. **Find a way to help out.** I know many are making masks, knitting hats for the baby boxes, checking on your neighbors by phone, and delivering food. I love that our local stores have insured that we all have enough by setting quantity limits on high demand items.
8. **Find ways to connect over the distance.** Although phone calls have fallen out of fashion in the era of text, messaging, and social media or try calling a good friend. The sound of a voice can be almost as healing as a touch.
9. **Don’t forget to laugh and find joy. I love seeing posts of your kids dancing other things that lighten our moods.** Laughter may not be the best medicine, but it does increase those good brain chemicals and help keep us healthy.
10. **Times of stress can cause or exacerbate clinical depression or debilitating anxiety or panic.** The CDC has a disaster distress helpline if you are having thoughts of harm to self or others at

# 1 COVID-19 PARENTING One-on-One Time

Can't go to work? Schools closed? Worried about money? It is normal to feel stressed and overwhelmed.

School shutdown is also a chance to make better relationships with our children and teenagers. One-on-One time is free and fun. It makes children feel loved and secure, and shows them that they are important.

## Set aside time to spend with each child

It can be for just 20 minutes, or longer – it’s up to us. It can be at the same time each day so children or teenagers can look forward to it.



## Ask your child what they would like to do

Choosing builds their self confidence. If they want to do something that isn’t OK with physical distancing, then this is a chance to talk with them about this. (see next leaflet)

### Ideas with your baby/toddler

- ▶ Copy their facial expression and sounds
- ▶ Sing songs, make music with pots and spoons
- ▶ Stack cups or blocks
- ▶ Tell a story, read a book, or share pictures



## Switch off the TV and phone. This is virus-free time

### Ideas with your teenager

- ▶ Talk about something they like: sports, music, celebrities, friends
- ▶ Cook a favorite meal together
- ▶ Exercise together to their favorite music

### Ideas with your young child

- ▶ Read a book or look at pictures
- ▶ Make drawings with crayons or pencils
- ▶ Dance to music or sing songs
- ▶ Do a chore together – make cleaning and cooking a game
- ▶ Help with school work

**Listen to them, look at them. Give them your full attention. Have fun!**

For more information click below links:

- Parenting tips from WHO
- Parenting tips from UNICEF
- In worldwide languages
- EVIDENCE-BASE



Parenting for Lifelong Health is supported by the UKRI GCRF Accelerating Achievement for Africa’s Adolescents Hub, the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme and the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, Oxford University Innovation GCRF Sustainable Impact Fund, UNICEF, the Leverhulme Trust, the Economic and Social Research Council, WHO, CIDA, the National Research Foundation of South Africa, Iflfa Labantwana, Rand Merchant Bank Fund, the ApexHI Charitable Trust, the John Fell Fund, the Evaluation Fund, the UBS Optimus Foundation, USAID-PEPFAR, the Wellcome Trust, Grand Challenges Canada and Wellspring Advisors.

1-800-985-5990 or text “TalkWithUs to 66746. Or even better, call Sound Alternatives at 907-424-8300 or Ilanka Community Health at 907-424-3600 to set up an appointment to help cope with the added stress of COVID-19. Both are doing Telehealth appointments and can help while you are in your own home.

11. **Lastly, focus on gratitude.** Take time each morning to think of three things to be thankful for during this time. I,

for one, am thankful for the diversity and resilience of this community that helps make us stronger because of our differing beliefs and opinions. Many of you have become my extended family and I am praying daily that we will come through this time stronger, healthier and more connected than ever before. ■

Dr. Kristel Rush is the medical director at Ilanka Community Health Center in Cordova.



## COMMENTARY

# Take simple steps to manage your stress

BY SUSAN POWELL

For The Cordova Times

*“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.”*

—Helen Keller

The human psyche likes a sense of control, predictability and familiarity in our daily lives to keep us feeling grounded and safe. The rapid changes imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic present challenges to these aspects of our mental and emotional stability.

Most all of us are experiencing stress in these uncertain times.

Stress is an emotional, mental and physical response to an external circumstance, with symptoms including exhaustion, sleep disruption, digestive problems, irritability, anger and muscle tension. Our fight-or-flight response kicks in when we perceive danger. With the threat of the virus to ourselves, our loved ones and our community, it is natural for this fight-or-flight state to activate. In a nutshell, our bodies release stress hormones that set off physical responses to protect us: our heart rate increases, blood pressure rises, breathing quickens and muscles tense. This is helpful with short-term immediate threats. However, when activated for a prolonged time, these physical responses mess with sleep, make it hard to relax, can cloud our thinking and make us emotionally reactive. Many of us are now living with extended fight-or-flight and stress activation and our normal ways of coping may not be readily available.

The good news is there are things we can do to shift gears into the opposing “rest and digest” response system and tap into our inner reservoirs of resilience, even in these times of social distancing and stay-at-home mandates.

- **Breathe.** Nothing slows the stress response like deep breaths from the belly.
- **Maintain or create daily routines.** This brings a sense of comfort and familiarity, of knowing what to expect. For example,

walk your dog every morning or eat lunch around the same time every day. This creates some solid ground where we can plant our feet and stay grounded. As an added bonus, we might connect with some gratitude for things we had previously taken for granted.

- **Read the news and interact with social media intentionally.** Stick to trusted news sources and limit your time engaging with them. Strike a balance between staying informed and bombarding yourself with information that spikes fear and anxiety. Checking the news one to two times a day for a limited time may work well. If you notice the stress response activating, listen to your physical cues and put it away for a while.
- **Be active.** Movement and exercise are some of the best ways to prevent or counteract the harmful effects of stress. Hike. Take walks. Stretch. Do yoga. Do at-home HIIT workouts. Find free online exercise classes.

- **Stay connected.** We are collective creatures and, especially in these times of social distancing, we need connection. According to trauma expert Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, “the synchrony and the rhythms between faces and voices keep us feeling alive.”

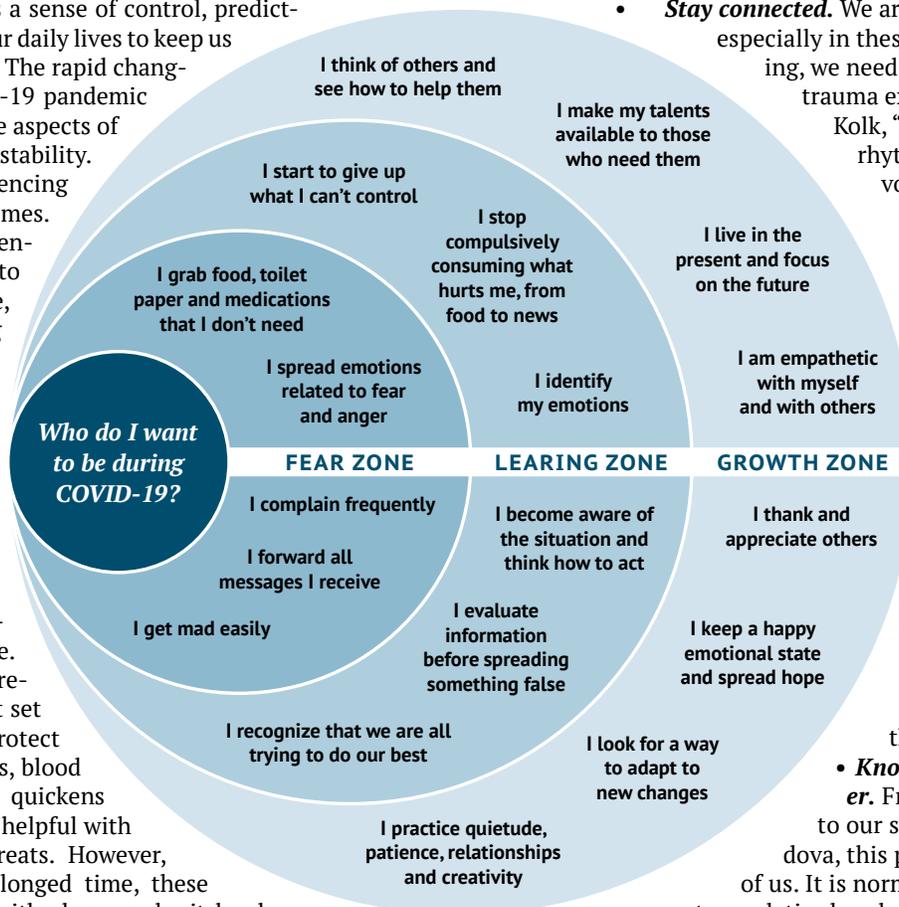
Share your experience with others. Video chat. Talk on the phone. Online game with friends. Cuddle your pets. If you live with others, have meals together, play games, make music.

- **Focus on things you can control.** You can control the steps you take to keep yourself and others safe. What you pay attention to grows, so instead of focusing on things you can't control, focus on things you can.

- **Know we're all in this together.** From the global community to our small community of Cordova, this pandemic affects each one of us. It is normal to feel scared, angry, stressed, tired, sad, anxious, disappointed, or

any other emotion. You're not alone in this. That person whose Facebook comment upset you or that decision-maker you disagree with is also likely experiencing these feelings. If we connect with a sense of common humanity, that we're all navigating threats to our health and security and trying to adapt to unprecedented uncertainty the best we know how, we can cultivate the resilience that lives within us individually and communally so that suffering may turn into the overcoming of suffering. ■

Susan Powell, LPC, CDCII is a behavioral health clinician for Sound Alternatives at Ilanka Community Health Center.





## Ilanka Cultural Center

### *Ilanka means family*

Ilanka means family, and we hope you are able live life to the fullest during these winds of change by focusing on your family and reconnecting with nature. For generations, local cultures have depended on the rich ecosystems in Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta. Our lands and waters are the source of our traditions and our customs have survived thousands of years on this cultural landscape. We hope you take this time to acknowledge all that has been passed down and consider how you wish to continue these traditions by reconnecting with your roots during this time of uncertainty.

In order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect our elders and community, Ilanka Cultural Center will be closed to the public until further notice. Staff will continue working remotely during regular business hours. ■

**Feel free to email Danaya with any questions in regards to the gift shop or ICC memberships:**  
danaya.hoover@eyak-nsn.gov.

**Please email Teal with questions regarding the museum, cultural classes, or NVE scholarships:**  
teal.hansen@eyak-nsn.gov.

*All NVE and ICC events have been canceled until further notice. This includes cultural classes, elder sew circle, and native dance practices.*

**Language classes are now offered via Skype only.**

- **SUGT'STUN LANGUAGE CLASS:** is held on Monday's from 6-7pm, the Skype link: <https://meet.lync.com/eyak-eyak-nsn/brooke.mallory/5NQ95ATW>.
- **EYAK LANGUAGE CLASS:** is held on Wednesdays 4-5pm, the Skype link: <https://meet.lync.com/eyak-eyak-nsn/brooke.mallory/SGHBZ753?sl=1>.
- The drum making class scheduled for June 27th and Nuuciq's Katuwaq Family Retreat in July are still too far out to cancel or reschedule at this point. A decision will be made by early summer and advertised.
- **ICC MEMBERSHIPS:** To become an ICC member, please email Danaya. Becoming a member allows you to take cultural classes, gives your first notice on upcoming cultural classes, and gives you access to our cache of different furs and hides. ICC memberships are available to anyone, Natives and non-Natives alike.
- **GIFT SHOP:** To shop Ilanka's online gift shop, go to: <https://www.ilankaculturalcenter.com/>.
- **FACEBOOK:** To connect with ICC on Facebook for cultural history, updates, and information, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/IlankaCulturalCenter/>.
- **2020 NVE SCHOLARSHIPS:** Scholarships for higher education or vocational training are due by April 30th via email or mail only. For the 2020 scholarship application, students can go to [nveyak.com](http://nveyak.com) and click on the education link, or enter in: <https://nveyak.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-Scholarship-Application.pdf>. If you wish to be on the email notification list for scholarships, please email Teal. ■





The Cordova Ikumat Dancers perform at the North Star Theatre. *Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times*



Attendees watched a series of videos focusing on local artists. *Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times*

## ILANKA CULTURAL CENTER

# Banquet honors Native artists

BY ZACHARY SNOWDON SMITH  
zsmith@thecordovatimes.com

Native artists were made guests of honor at a Tuesday, Jan. 21 fundraising banquet. The third annual Ilanka Cultural Center Membership Drive Dinner also raffled off works by artists, including a ceremonial boat oar and a doll wearing a hand-sewn seal fur outfit. The ticketed event served as a fundraiser by the Ilanka Cultural Center.

The event began at the Cordova Center, where attendees dined on a variety of traditional Native cuisine including staples such as frybread and baked salmon. Afterward, attendees adjourned to the North Star Theatre, where they viewed a performance by the Cordova Ikumat Dancers. This was followed by a series of documentary short films and presentations on artists Sean O'Brien, Diana Reidel, Sylvia Lange, Gloria Cunningham and Mike Webber.



Artist Sean O'Brien speaks at the North Star Theatre. *Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times*

"The more traditional art we have in our community, the better understanding and connection we have with our heritage," Webber said, addressing the audience.

Webber also expressed interest in carving a 40-foot totem pole for the town, memorializing the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Attendees also bid in a silent auction for



Brooke Mallory speaks at the North Star Theatre. *Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times*

items such as an ornamented Japanese fishing float, a painting by Sylvia Lange, a bottle of devil's club tincture and other local products. The event was sponsored by local groups including Native Village of Eyak, Chugach Alaska Corporation, the Reluctant Fisherman Inn and Cordova Telecom Cooperative. ■



Ilanka Cultural Center Membership Drive Dinner participants bid in a silent auction. Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times



The third annual Ilanka Cultural Center Membership Drive Dinner was held at the Cordova Center. Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times



Artist Mike Webber speaks at the North Star Theatre. Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times



Linda Powell cuts the cake at the third annual Ilanka Cultural Center Membership Drive Dinner. Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times



Renee Lindow displays an artwork by Gloria Cunningham that she won at the third annual Ilanka Cultural Center Membership Drive Dinner. Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times



Ilanka Cultural Center Membership Drive Dinner attendees dined on a variety of Alaska Native cuisine. Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/The Cordova Times



Madden Merritt catapults himself from a kneeling position during the kneel jump event.  
*Photo by Roy Corral*

## JNYO

# Three Junior Native Youth Olympians place during 2020 games

Three Cordova athletes won medals in the Junior NYO Games. Thirteen Cordova athletes joined students in grades 1-6 from across Alaska to compete in the games held Feb. 14-16, at the Seawolf Sports Complex at University of Alaska Anchorage.

In the Eskimo Stick Pull event, Taylor Tiedeman took second place and Willow Tiedeman placed fourth. Marcus Holley placed third in the Arm Pull.

JNYO games allow young athletes to compete in traditional skills-building contests such as the Eskimo Stick Pull, Seal Hop, Two-foot High Kick and the Arm Pull. Cook Inlet Tribal Council hosts the annual event to promote healthy lifestyles, positive self-esteem and leadership skills, and to offer insight into Alaska's rich cultural diversity.

"NYO is more than a celebration of Alaska Native tradition — it's an incentive that improves the lives of our children," said Gloria O'Neill, President and CEO of CITC. "NYO athletes help each other succeed in the games, teaching our young people the value of hard work, cooperation and achieving their personal best." ■



The Cordova Junior Native Youth Olympics team with coach Nick Tiedeman and assistant coach, Jake Holley. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Twin sisters, Willow (left) and Taylor (right) Tiedeman, stand at the awards podium with their medals for the arm pull. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Cordova's Junior Native Youth Olympics team coached by Nick Tiedeman (right) and Jake Holley (left). *Photo by Roy Corral*



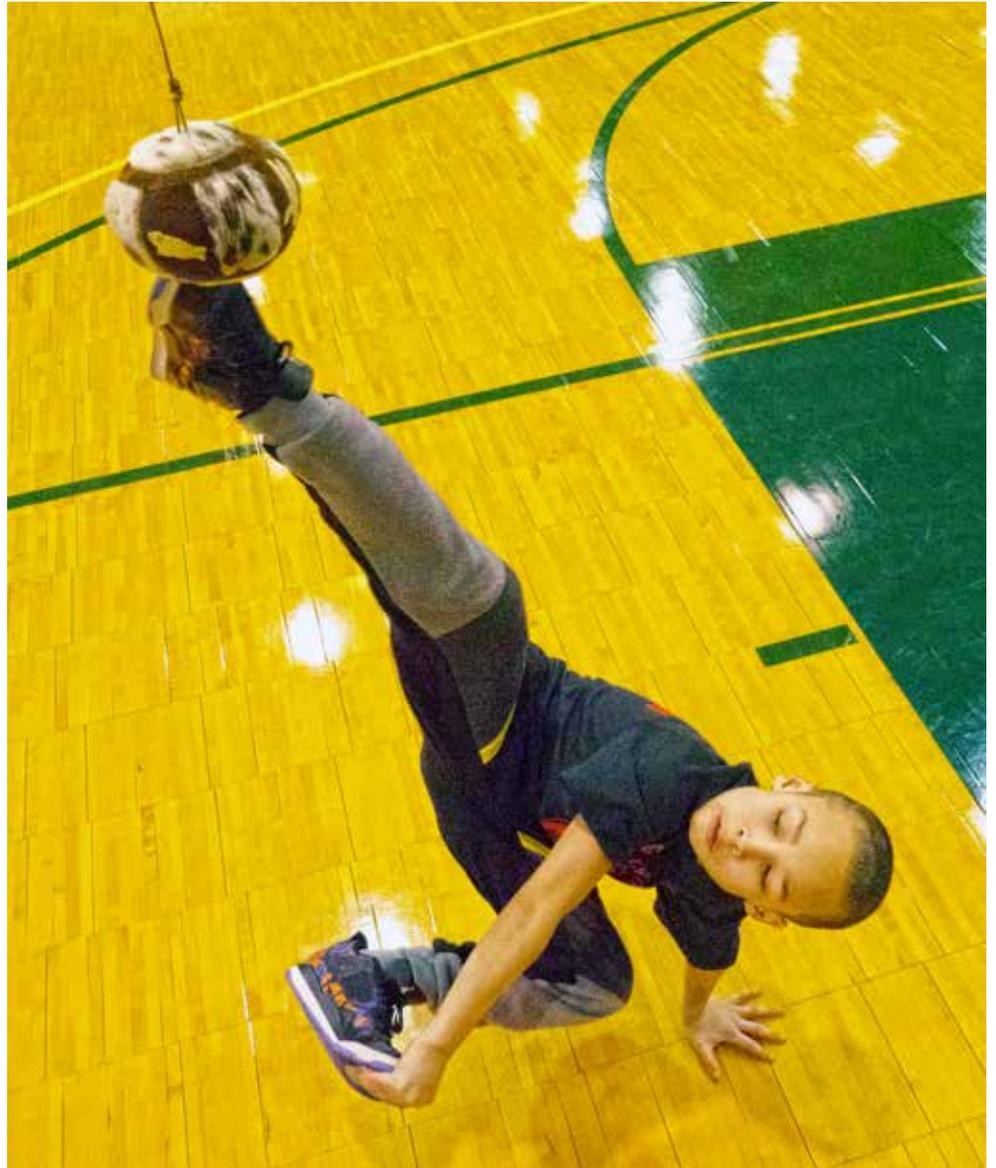
Marcus Holley wins a round in the arm pull competition through sheer determination. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Momentarily suspended in mid-air, Madden Merritt propels himself hopping like a seal across the gym floor during the seal hop competition. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Willow Tiedeman wins her round at the Eskimo stick pull competition to eventually secure her a fourth place medal. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Cordova's Chris Fernandez successfully connects with the ball during the Alaskan high kick competition. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Fifth grader, Isabelle Nothstine, takes to the air to execute a scissor broad jump. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Lily Clement balances her weight on her left arm while lifting herself up to connect with the seal fur-covered ball. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Milana Merritt dangles on a pole by the sheer strength of her wrist, as Taylor Tiedeman and coach Nick Tiedeman carry her across the gym floor. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Coach Jake Holley holds a smiling Chris Fernandez, while his sons Marcus and Jameson (left) amuse themselves. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Tiedeman twins, Taylor (left) and Willow (right), flank their dad, Nick Tiedeman. *Photo by Roy Corral*



Fifth-grader Gunnar Davis leaps into position to connect with the ball using both feet during the two-foot high kick. *Photo by Roy Corral*



## CFRC

## Games help teens open up about dating violence

BY ZACHARY SNOWDON SMITH  
zsmith@thecordovatimes.com

During a week of games and activities, the BIONIC youth program taught teens about the issue of dating violence.

Cordova Family Resource Center and the Native Village of Eyak partnered to support BIONIC Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week, held Feb. 10-14 at Cordova Jr./Sr. High School. The event was part of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, taking place throughout February. Sixty-three students participated in this year's Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week, said Emily Stoddard, CFRC prevention coordinator.

Games were used to help students grow more comfortable talking about the sensitive topic of verbal, psychological and physical abuse in relationships, Stoddard said. One activity had students take pieces of paper describing dating scenarios and sort them into two buckets, based on whether or not the scenarios depicted a healthy relationship. This activity helped students learn to discern normal forms of romantic conflict from signs of abuse, said NVE Family Program Coordinator Jessica Weaver, who helped design games for the event.

"It's nice to have some way to interact with the kids instead of just handing out pamphlets," Weaver said.

Other activities mixed material on dating violence with more general material to help maintain a reasonably light tone, Stoddard said. At the end of the week, students received goodie bags with water bottles, lanyards, pens and other items with anti-dating-violence branding. NVE also sponsored a raffle for a gift bag containing a basketball and other merchandise.

Weaver hopes the program will teach students to identify and deal with forms of violence that often take place behind closed doors, she said. Working with the school was instrumental to the event's success, Stoddard said, as it's more challenging to draw students to out-of-school activities.

"I hope that the kids learned that this is an issue that can affect them and that, if they are in that situation, that there are people who care and there is help available," Stoddard said.



From left, Native Village of Eyak Family Program Coordinator Jessica Weaver and Cordova Family Resource Center Prevention Coordinator Emily Stoddard participate in a teen dating violence awareness event at Cordova Jr./Sr. High School. *Photo courtesy of Emily Stoddard*



BIONIC youth program President Jessica Wray, left, runs a game designed to raise awareness of teen dating violence. *Photo courtesy of Emily Stoddard*



## Prince William Marina

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EMAIL: BOB.LADD@EYAK-NSN.GOV

**Contact Jackie Ladd**  
Elder Services Coordinator

**907-424-7738**  
for information on Elder Services, activities and events.

## Tribal Youth Council

On Monday, March 2nd (Dr. Seuss Birthday) the Tribal Youth Council showed the movie, "The Lorax" for the community at the Northstar Theatre. There were 65 people who attended. Before the movie played the Tribal Youth Council showed their Public Service Announcement.

"According to tobacco-free kids, Big Tobacco is back with a new way to addict kids: this is by Juul's Flavored E-Cigarettes. The flavors are designed to hook you, but they are just masking the real ingredients. The vapor that e-cigarettes make is a fine mist of tiny particles that can contain nicotine, toxic chemicals and heavy metals and the liquid used in vapes can contain formaldehyde, nickel, acetaldehyde as well as other chemicals.

Besides the tempting flavors Juul has played tricks on young people to get them hooked on vapes. Their ads make vaping look cool and safe and they even have developed trendy looking vapes, so now owning a device is easier for teens because they are designed to look like USB flash drives.

So, don't be fooled by vape company tricks. There is a distinct difference from strawberries you gather vs. strawberry flavored vape products. Pick the healthier one and say no to vaping!" ■

Sources: Tobacco Free Kids, Journeyworks Publishing, CDC, U.S Food & Drug Administration, American Lung Association



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT NVE

**View current available positions at**

**WWW.NVEYAK.COM/JOBS**

or call NVE's Human Resources Manager Denna Francischetti at

**907-424-7738**

Full job descriptions and applications are available at NVE's main office at 110 Nicholoff Way, online at [www.nveyak.com/jobs/](http://www.nveyak.com/jobs/) and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NativeVillageofEyak/>

## NVE TRIBAL COURT

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Everyone is welcome*

Native Village of Eyak's Judicial Department offers:

- Conflict Resolution
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- Juvenile Diversion
- Child Welfare (tribal members only)
- Intervention

For more information, please contact the Court Administrator Sarah Kathrein at

**907-424-7880**

500 Water Street, Cordova, AK (next to the courthouse)  
[sarah.kathrein@eyak-nsn.gov](mailto:sarah.kathrein@eyak-nsn.gov) or [courtclerk@eyak-nsn.gov](mailto:courtclerk@eyak-nsn.gov)





All photos by Zachary Snowdon Smith/  
The Cordova Times

Residents sing from phonetic versions of Church Slavonic and Aleut hymns.

С РОЖДЕСТВОМ

## Suppressed languages live on through Russian Orthodox ceremony

*Church won't trade Aleut hymns for English*

BY ZACHARY SNOWDON SMITH  
zsmith@thecordovaitimes.com

Despite its name, Alaska's Russian Orthodox community has changed a lot. At St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Church in Cordova, women once wore dresses and sat only on the left side of the church, while men sat to the right. Now, congregants sit where they like and wear what they please.

Darrel Olsen has been "starosta," or church caretaker, for St. Michael's off and on for decades. It's a role that has assumed magnified importance, as an Orthodox priest only visits Cordova four times per year. Over time, Olsen has seen dresses and headscarves exchanged for down coats and Xtratuf boots, as well as other relaxations of protocol. For the most part, he doesn't mind these changes. But there is one thing Olsen will never do: translate the church's Christmas hymns into English.

Cordova's Orthodox believers celebrate Christmas over three nights, beginning Jan. 7. On each night, participants move from



Kenneth Eleshanksy rotates the Nativity star at St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Church.



The third and final night of Orthodox Christmas celebrations involved several frenzied scrambles for Christmas gifts.

venue to venue, chanting hymns before a garlanded Nativity star wielded by a designated star-twirler. These hymns are mainly in Church Slavonic and in Aleut, an Alaska Native language preserved through the 19th century with the help of Orthodox linguists. Today, Aleut remains critically endangered, with fewer than 100 speakers, according to studies by the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Slavonic itself was intermittently suppressed in the Soviet Union, but lives now as a litur-

gical language used in Russian Orthodox ceremonies across the world.

Putting the Aleut language to use helps preserve it, Olsen believes. Christmas participants are given handouts with phonetic renderings of hymns that allow them to sing convincingly in Aleut and Slavonic even if they don't understand it. As Olsen sees it, a decision to abandon the endangered Aleut language shouldn't be motivated by mere convenience.



Residents practice Church Slavonic and Aleut hymns at St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Church.

"I've said, I don't mind if we move Christmas to Dec. 25, but the church better be prepared to allow women to become priests," Olsen said. "The women are the backbone of our church. They decorate, they clean up — they do everything. And it's like that everywhere. I don't mind if they change the Christmas date, but, you know what? For 2,000 years, Christmas has fallen on Jan. 7-9. If we're just going to change it for convenience, let's change other things."

This year's celebrations took congregants from Cordova Community Medical Center to Ilanka Cultural Center and private residences across Cordova. Hymns were led by Kenneth Eleshansky, who served as star-twirler. Once chanting concluded, gifts purchased by the host were distributed. These were a cut above typical Halloween treats, ranging from cherry cordials and Whitman's Samplers to hand-knitted scarves, beauty products and cold, hard cash.

But Russian Christmas gifts aren't arranged under a tree: they're thrown into the air and fought over in a giant scrum resembling a cross between trick-or-treat and free-style wrestling. Some participants come away with a single jar of Play-doh, while others emerge with 10,000 calories' worth of candy under each arm. It's the Matthew principle in action: "To everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away."

"And it used to be a lot rougher," Olsen said. "I mean, a lot rougher. It's really calmed

down a lot, which I appreciate ... Once, at a home, they actually threw frozen moose meat out. We had to tell them, 'Don't throw it! Just slide it.'"

Though Christmas observances at St. Michael's closely follow Orthodox traditions, it's worth noting that this particular method of gift distribution is a Prince William Sound innovation.

Once the mainly good-natured skirmishing has concluded, the more successful participants may share their gifts. The mark of a good Christmas participant is a gracious and reverent attitude in spite of the imminent temptation of chocolatey plunder.

"Other years, I've seen kids come only for the stuff," Olsen said. "Now, a lot of the kids who come are learning respect ... They hand out the stuff they get and they share it with the elders. I was so honored and so pleased to see that."

Cordova's Orthodox community is relatively small, buoyed in the summer by the Eastern European cannery workers who stop by St. Michael's to light a candle. However, non-Orthodox Cordovans show their support in other ways, such as leaving their Christmas lights up through Jan. 9.

"More and more, people call me and ask when they can take their Christmas decorations down," Olsen said. "Now, you drive around town and you see houses with the lights still on. Growing up, that didn't happen, but now it does. They acknowledge it and honor it with us." ■



## Food Distribution Program

on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

### WHAT IS FDPIR AND HOW DO ALASKA TRIBES APPLY?

The FDPIR is a federal program that provides a month's supply of supplemental nutritious foods to income eligible Alaska Native, American Indian, and non-Indian households residing on a reservation or in a federally recognized (Alaska Native) tribal community, or in approved near-areas containing at least one tribal enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe.

Federally recognized tribes in Alaska are all eligible to administer FDPIR provided they can to follow USDA regulations to guarantee food safety, protect client privacy, and meet on-time reporting requirements.

### HOUSEHOLD ELIGIBILITY

A household application for FDPIR is available in a few select Alaska tribal communities. Households can apply and be deemed income eligible on the same day they contact a tribal agency that administers the FDPIR program. To view a current list of active federally recognized tribes administering the FDPIR program in Alaska visit:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/fdpir/fdpir-contacts>

### WHAT FOODS DOES THE PROGRAM OFFER?

Each month income eligible households receive a food package to help them maintain a nutritionally balanced diet. Participants may select from over 70 products including, but not limited to:

- Fresh Produce
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Canned meats, poultry, and fish
- Canned soups and spaghetti sauce
- Macaroni and cheese; pastas; cereals; rice; and other grains
- Cheese; egg mix; and nonfat dry and evaporated milk
- Flour; cornmeal; bakery mix; and reduced sodium crackers
- Low-fat refried beans; dried beans; and dehydrated potatoes
- Canned juices and dried fruit
- Peanuts and peanut butter
- Low fat buttery spread, butter & vegetable oil.

Find out more. Contact:

**Linda Powell**

907-424-7738

E-mail: [linda.powell@eyak-nsn.gov](mailto:linda.powell@eyak-nsn.gov)





Danaya Hoover's Raven's Tail project, almost complete.



Brooke Mallory at the beginning stages of Raven's Tail Weaving.

### Cultural center classes

## Raven's Tail Weaving Class with Brooke Mallory

Brooke Mallory taught two separate Raven's Tail Weaving classes due to lots of interest. The second class was not completed due to Coronavirus.

Raven's Tail Weaving is the predecessor to Chilkat weaving. It was named for the resemblance it bore to Raven's tail feathers.

Raven's Tail Weaving is more minimalistic with geometric designs, whereas Chilkat robes have more Northwest Coast form-line design imagery. Traditionally, mountain goat wool was used to weave, but merino wool is used now. Raven's Tail robes can take over a year for an artist to complete. ■



### MUKLUK CLASS

A Mukluk class was taught by Gloria Cunningham, but was interrupted due to the novel coronavirus pandemic.



### HALIBUT HOOK CLASS

A Halibut Hook Class was taught by Mike Webber in February at the Masonic Lodge.



### PADDLE CLASS

A Paddle Class was taught by Nick Tiedeman in February.





## Tribal member appreciation

Native Village of Eyak held its annual Tribal Member appreciation dinner Tuesday, Feb. 25 at the Cordova Center.

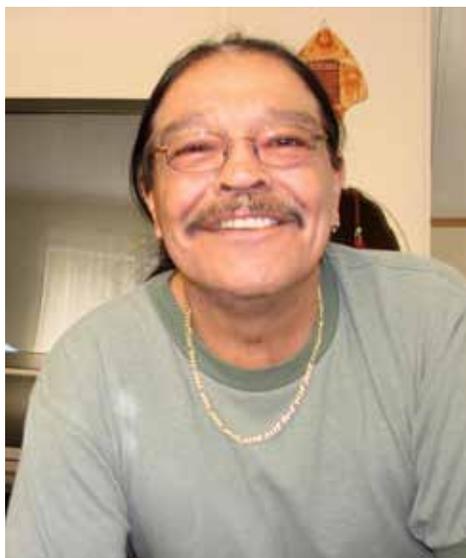
*Photo by Zachary Snowdon Smith/  
The Cordova Times*



## OBITUARY

### *Fredrick Michael Tiedeman Jr. AKA "Two Feathers"*

*August 28, 1949 –  
March 9, 2020*



"There is no death, only a change of worlds." -Chief Seattle

"At the center of the universe dwells the Great Spirit. And that center is really everywhere. It is within each of us." -Black Elk

Fredrick passed away peacefully on the morning of March 9 after a long battle with a terminal illness, all the while holding strong to his dreams of playing music. He was loved by so many and known for his infectious enthusiasm for life. With his sense of humor and quick wit, he was always the life of the party and never knew a stranger.

Fred was born and raised in Cordova, Alaska, a proud Aleut. He loved sharing many stories about his time in Alaska and his Alaskan Native Heritage. Whether it was about subsistence fishing, working as a Journeyman Carpenter or laying the Alyeska Pipeline, it was always enjoyable listening to his storytelling.

He was drafted into the military at age 17 and was honorably discharged from the Navy after serving in Vietnam.

Fred was a self-taught musician from a very young age and shared his love and passion for the blues with so many.

Fred was survived by his wife Grace Tiedeman; his children, Nicholas Tiedeman, Onika Kuhn, Natasha Evans and Jeffery Chappell; his grandchildren Aaliyah, Taylor and Willow Tiedeman, Kiona and Onawa Kuhn, Miakoda Freiberg, Emily and Kaitlyn Kelbatyrov, Gavin Parel and Colin Chappell. A Celebration of Life will be held in summer 2020 in Everett, WA. Details to be announced. Visit Fred's "Ever Loved" webpage at <https://tinyurl.com/rml7u-xj> to share memories and condolences. ■

To submit a life announcement to the Eyak Echo, email [share@thecordovaitimes.com](mailto:share@thecordovaitimes.com).

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**THE NATIVE VILLAGE OF EYAK**  
*has made the difficult decision to cancel this year's*  
**27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL**  
**Sobriety Celebration**  
**and Memorial Potlatch**

*due to circumstances surrounding  
the COVID-19 pandemic.*

**The Native Village of Eyak continues  
to encourage everyone to follow all health  
mandates and stay safe and healthy.**

*We look forward to seeing  
you all in November 2021!*



Visit us on our website [eyak-nsn.gov](http://eyak-nsn.gov) or find us at [Facebook.com/NativeVillageofEyak](https://www.facebook.com/NativeVillageofEyak)  
for more information on the 26th Annual Sobriety Celebration



**Native Village of Eyak**

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