



# Community Health Services Building dedicated



November 19 was a proud day for YKHC's administration, Board of Directors, Facilities & Planning Department, and all the companies that had a hand in the dreaming, planning and construction of the Community Health Services Building. With a ceremonial smudging by Bethel Elder Peter Aluska, speeches of congratulations, and a ribbon-cutting, the building was officially opened for business.

Both new Board Chairman Michael Hunt, Sr. and past Board Chairman Henry Hunter, Sr. recalled the board's long-standing desire to bring YKHC's scattered services under one roof—and expressed the belief in the new facility's promise to improve health care by improving efficiency, communication and cooperation within the corporation.

Guest speakers representing the various contractors who worked on different aspects of the construction praised the high degree of cooperation, teamwork and trust that went into getting the project completed on schedule.

see OPENING, p. 10

From the top...

**1:** Peter Aluska blesses the building; Facilities & Planning Director John Guinn, with other guests, takes in the aroma of labrador tea. **2:** Henry Hunter, Sr., President/CEO Gene Peltola, and Michael Hunt, Sr., cut the ribbon. **3:** Guests from the community and employees crowd the lobby to join the celebration. **4:** Gene Peltola shows visitors the boardroom. **5:** Facility Engineer Tom Humphrey (center) congratulates Facilities Planning Assistant Emilee Kutch and Project Coordinator Bob Koski on jobs well done. **6:** Traditional Chief and Board Member Antone Anvil addresses the crowd while Executive Vice President Orié Williams (Master of Ceremonies for the event) looks on. **6:** Dave Gilmer, of Udelhoven Oilfield System Services, the lead contractor for the construction project, praises the project coordinators and construction workers. **7:** Janet Mullen gives Lucy Beaver a guided tour of the building. **8:** (Below) Rose Henderson, who organized the grand opening event and also coordinated the moving into the new building, chats with a guest.



**YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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(907) 498-4215

**Michael Hunt, Sr.**  
P.O. Box 20250  
Kotlik, AK 99620  
(907) 899-4301

**Unit 2**

**Kate Thompson**  
P.O. Box 322  
St. Mary's, AK 99658  
(907) 438-2833  
**Alvin Owletuck, Sr.**  
Box 1  
Marshall, AK 99585  
(907) 679-6056

**Unit 3**

**Billy Morgan**  
P.O. Box 72  
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**Peter Zaukar, Sr.**  
P.O. Box 70  
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**Unit 4**

**Fritz George**  
P.O. Box 62  
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**Moses Nicolai**  
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**Unit 5**

**Henry Hunter, Sr.**  
P.O. Box 632  
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**Unit 10**

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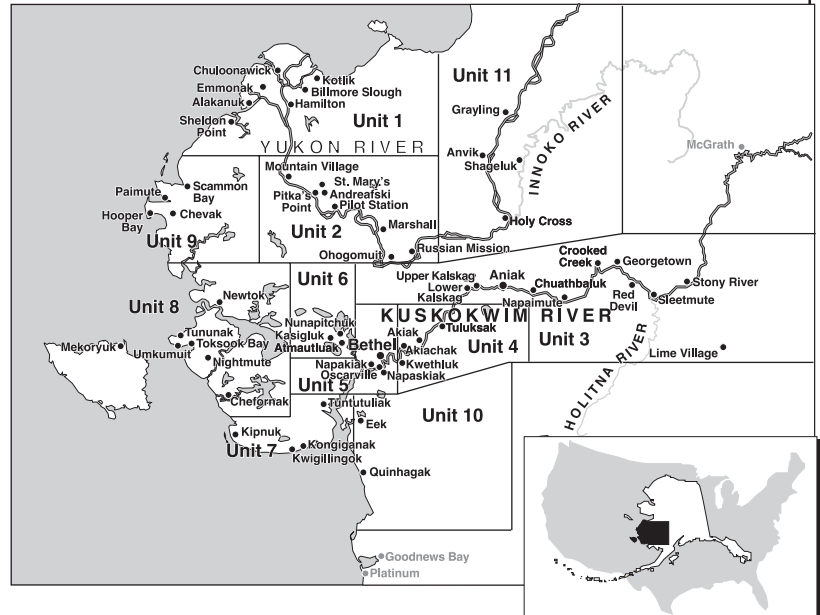
**Unit 11**

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**Honorary Board Member**  
**Paul John**  
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*(Revised April 1999)*

**YKHC Service Area**



**NUMBERS TO CALL**

<b>YKHC</b> .....	<b>543-6000</b>	Dental Appointments .....	543-6229
<b>Tribal &amp; Program Support</b> .....	<b>543-6030</b>	Optometry Appointments .....	543-6336
Media Services .....	543-6038	Audiology Appointments .....	543-6466
Office of Environmental Health & Engineering .....	543-6420	Optical Shop .....	543-6410
Technology Help Desk .....	543-6070	Public Health Nurses .....	543-6530
Human Resources .....	543-6060	Pharmacy .....	543-6382
Job Line .....	543-6443	WIC Program .....	543-6459
Corp. Training & Development .....	543-6095	<b>Community Services</b> .....	<b>543-6024</b>
<b>Administration</b> .....	<b>543-6020</b>	Village Operations .....	543-6160
<b>Hospital</b> .....	<b>543-6300</b>	CHAP .....	543-6160
Emergency Room .....	543-6395	EMS .....	543-6080
Hospital Community Relations .....	543-6350	Nutrition Improvement .....	543-6196
<b>Clinic Appointments</b>		Injury Prevention .....	543-6085
Group 1 .....	543-6373	Regional Substance Abuse Srv .....	543-6700
Group 2 .....	543-6442	Mental Health Services .....	543-6100
Group 3 .....	543-6404	Home Care Services .....	543-6170

# CORPORATION NEWS

## Michael Hunt Sr. elected board chair



Michael Hunt, Sr.

YKHC's Board of Directors met in their new boardroom in the Community Health Services Building for the first time November 16 - 18. Michael Hunt, Sr., representing Unit 1 from Kotlik, was elected Board Chairman. He replaces Henry Hunter, Sr., of Bethel, who will be holding the First Vice Chair position on the YKHC Executive Board.

A new board member, Joseph C. Bavilla of Napaskiak, was elected to represent Unit 5, Seat C. He will replace Sally K. Billy, who has been on the YKHC board of directors for many years. Bavilla was unable to attend the November board meeting; he will be seated at the next Executive Board meeting this month.

The boardroom, located on the third floor of the Community Health Services Building, overlooks the Kuskokwim River and a good deal of the Y-K Delta. It is the first time in YKHC history that the Board has had a room specifically dedicated to its needs that has not had to double as a conference room or class room. Eventually the V-shaped table will be equipped with computer network connections and microphones.

There is a large television and projection screen for viewing presentations.



YKHC Board members question Medical Director Joe Klejka, MD, during his presentation to the board.

(photos by Michael Faubion)

## YKHC Committee Appointments

### Executive Board

Michael Hunt, Sr., Chair  
 Henry Hunter, Sr., 1st Vice Chair  
 Fritz George, 2nd Vice Chair  
 Robert Enoch, Treasurer  
 James R. Charlie, Sr., Secretary  
 Kate Thompson, Sgt.-At-Arms  
 Billy Morgan, 1st Additional Member  
 Bill Kristovich, 2nd Additional Member  
 Paul John, Honorary Board Member  
 Gene Peltola, Ex-Officio

### By-Law Committee

Fritz George  
 Kate Thompson  
 Peter Zaukar, Sr.  
 Antone Anvil

### Finance Committee

Bill Kristovich  
 Robert Enoch  
 Edgar Hoelscher  
 Paul Manumik, Sr.  
 Michael Hunt, Sr., Ex-Officio  
 Gene Peltola, Ex-Officio

### Governing Body

Paul Manumik  
 Edgar Hoelscher  
 John Nicholas  
 Moses Nicolai  
 David Jimmie, Sr.  
 Alvin Owletuck, Sr.  
 Antone Anvil  
 Henry Deacon  
 James R. Charlie, Executive Board Representative  
 Michael Hunt, Sr., Ex-Officio  
 Gene Peltola, Ex-Officio

### Policy Committee

Frank Chayalkun  
 Alvin Owletuck, Sr.  
 James R. Charlie, Sr.

### Joint AVCP/YKHC/Calista

Henry Hunter, Sr.  
 Michael Hunt, Sr.  
 Gene Peltola



Board members Paul Manumik, Paul John, John Nicholas, and Paul Beebe. In back: Daisy Mae Berrera, Jack Crow, Sandra Mirinov, Mary Anaruk.

### Board Appointments:

Mental Health Advisory Board Member  
 Kate Thompson  
 H.A. Advisory Board & PA School Committee  
 Paul Beebe  
 Alaska Native Health Board  
 Henry Hunter, Sr. *Alternate*—Edgar Hoelscher  
 Home Care Liaison  
 Fritz George  
 Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)  
 Michael Hunt, Sr. *Alternate*—Paul Manumik,  
 Gene Peltola



## Richard Blackwell remembers 30 years of Self-Determination

by Michael Faubion, Media Services Coordinator

Richard Blackwell, who retired earlier this year after nearly 30 years with YKHC, was one of the corporation's first four employees. The others were Marilyn Thaden, Interim Project Director; Rebecca Nicholai, Secretary; and Alvin Ivanoff, Community Liaison. Blackwell was Medical Trainer, responsible for improving village health aide education.

"We mainly wanted to make them more independent in the village," Blackwell said. The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) administered the health aide program at the time, but eventually turned over its medical branch to YKHC.

"The first year I done a lot of traveling, finding out what kind of health care clinics they had, what kind of people were running them," he said.

"We decided to bring in eight people for eight months, with their families. We had academic training for probably the first month before we went to the hospital. And then they had...practical training at the hospital with the doctors there."

"Of course, we knew we couldn't do this all the time, with the turnover we had in health aides. So we switched to, I think it was, two or three weeks in Bethel as a course, and sent them back home for approximately two months and [then they'd] come back in for another two weeks of training. We started building and building that way.

"I done a survey there and we had a 95 percent turnover. In the first five or six years we went down to maybe 50 percent—which we thought, 'hell, that's great.'"

YKHC got started with a grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity through the Alaska Federation of Natives for \$200,000—that was the first year's budget. But growth began immediately. As the Indian Health Service began allowing Native organizations to contract health care services, YKHC started taking over programs. "The first big one was dental," Blackwell said, "right around \$600,000 at that time."

An Eye Care program and a Community Health Representative program were soon added. CHR was a precursor to the current Home Care program and involved "taking people

medicine, bringing them up to the hospital to be seen, taking them back home—and they had to do a little home care."

YKHC also took on the task of improving village health clinics and getting new ones built. That was the job of the Community Liaison. "During that first year we got a \$300,000 grant from Kaiser foundation to build clinics. And the concept at that time was to build three or four clinics—they would pay you back and that money could be used to build other clinics. It didn't work that way—because we couldn't get paid back..."

Another early program was screening for sexually transmitted diseases. "When we first started [collecting statistics for] the

Indian Health Service, someone said 'Man do you guys have an epidemic? This has really increased.' I said, 'no, it hasn't increased, it was just never reported before.'"

By the late 1970s, the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (a.k.a. PL 93-638) provided more opportunities for YKHC to take over Indian Health Service programs. But wrestling with the federal bureaucracy was never easy. Among YKHC's first executive directors were medical doctors—Dr. Tom Deak, A California Pediatrician and Dr. Robert Wainwright, a Navy physician. "Both those guys, they could fight with HIS," Blackwell said, in spite of their being recruited in part to give the new organization some medical credibility.

YKHC continued to grow through a series of executive directors, some Native like Ivan Ivanoff and George

Peratrovich, and some non-Native.

Blackwell credits YKHC's survival, growth, and faithfulness to its mission throughout its history to a dedicated and consistent Board of Directors. The Board took "time and effort away from home and families to make it work. In the last 30 years they have become a very effective Board of Directors which all of the residents of the YK Delta should be proud of."

In 1990, the Board of Directors lured Gene Peltola to YKHC from AVCP. By 1991, the corporation was able to convince the



YKHC Comptroller Richard Blackwell checks the books in this file photo from the mid-80s.

see BLACKWELL, p. 11

# HOSPITAL NEWS

## Emergency room relocation project completed

by Dr. Jane McClure, Clinical Services Administrator and Mary Ann Schaffer, Patient Care and Ancillary Services Administrator

In late November and early December we made the transition back to our remodeled areas. The next time you visit the hospital you will notice that:

- The Emergency Department is now in the remodeled area with a separate waiting room. You will notice more rooms to serve our patients and a new look.
- Physical Therapy is in the previous location but in a remodeled, larger space to better serve our patients.
- Travel Management Center is also in a remodeled, larger location to better serve our patients.
- Just outside the Travel Management Center is a family quiet room or Chapel close to the Emergency Department to provide a place for families with loved ones being treated in the Emergency Department or for quiet meditation.

We want to take this opportunity to recognize all the staff that has made this project possible. First of all, A BIG THANK YOU to the staff who have worked in crowded areas during the remodel: Groups 1, 2 and 3 staff, Emergency Department and Aeromed Staff, Travel Management Center Staff, Physical Therapy Staff, Specialty and Pediatrics Clinic Staff, Health Aide Training Staff, Optometry staff that moved to the AC store before moving into the new Community Health Services Building to make more space for specialty clinic and Inpatient Staff who gave up storage and meeting room space.



**Construction workers scurry to finish the new Emergency Room at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Hospital.**

(photo by Michael Faubion)

The ER Relocation Project Team is recognized for an excellent team effort and a lot of behind the scene work to assure the success of this project. Team members include: Bonnie Schooley, Debra Samson, William Eggimann, Catherine

see REMODEL, p. 10

## Mary Hoffman retires after 18 years on the phone

By JoAnn McDonald, Switchboard Supervisor

On behalf of the switchboard operator department and YKHC I'd like to congratulate Mary Hoffman on 18 years of outstanding service to YKHC as head switchboard operator. A company like ours needs and appreciates people with energy, expertise and intuition and we had the entire package with Mary.

She has always been a valued employee and I thank her for the exceptional manner in which she handled her position. She was the one with timely and excellent solutions to problems and tangles within the department. She was a good-hearted soul who trained newcomers, checked policies & procedures, schedules and still kept up with her own work. I am most appreciative of everything she did and am proud to know her. Working with Mary has been a pleasant experience from start to finish.

Mary has dealt with every type of situation—threats, emergencies, angry callers, broken equipment—you name it and she has been through it. She was the one who so many times put you through to the right person for help. I am grateful for the high standards she maintained throughout the years and I am looking forward to seeing her often in the future.



**Switchboard operator Lynette Fritz and Switchboard Supervisor JoAnn McDonald honor Mary Hoffman (center) at her retirement party last month.**

(photo by John Guinn)

# COMMUNITY SERVICES NEWS

## Murkowski gets \$3.5 million for inhalant abuse center



**Senator Frank Murkowski addresses the Tribal Unity and Traditional Medicine Gathering in 1998, when he was asked to help with the inhalant abuse problem in our region.**  
(Media Services file photo)

In November, Alaska's Senator Frank Murkowski saw to it that \$3.5 million was included in the \$385 billion Omnibus Appropriations bill for an inhalant abuse treatment center in Bethel. The detoxification and treatment center will be operated by YKHC.

"This facility will put Alaska in the forefront in efforts to combat this deadly trend," Murkowski said in a press release, "It can't be built soon enough given the problems we have in Alaska."

The funding was supported by Appropriations Chairman Senator Ted Stevens and passed with the appropriations bill on Nov. 19, just before the Senate adjourned.

"Inhalant abuse is a major problem in Alaska that requires major federal support to solve," Murkowski said. "Youths who abuse inhalants suffer a high rate of relapse because 'huffing' is both physically and psychologically addictive. It takes special facilities and considerable time to treat. Unfortunately, treatment facilities nationally are rare and difficult to find and in Alaska they are nearly non-existent."

The Alaska treatment center, being funded with money from the Department of Health and Human Services, will provide inpatient residential care for inhalant abusers in rural Alaska. It often takes 30 to 40 days of treatment to curb inhalant abuse, whose withdrawal symptoms include hallucinations, nausea, cramps, headaches and chills.

Because gasoline and other chemicals used as inhalants are relatively cheap and readily available, inhalant abuse is generally a bigger problem among children in rural areas. In Alaska it is a particular problem where one in five students have tried inhalants by the time they reach eighth grade.

Two years ago Sen. Murkowski attended YKHC's first Inhalant Abuse Conference. At that time, he became more aware of how serious a problem this is, particularly among our region's youth.

He then began working at the national level to increase awareness of inhalant abuse by coordinating inhalant abuse awareness activities. These activities include the designation of National Inhalant Awareness Day in March, and holding assemblies such as was held last year in Anchorage. Another assembly will be held at Bethel Regional High School on December 9.

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation fully supports these efforts and will be assisting with the arrangements for this assembly. Trill Webster with Channel 4 in Anchorage will be MC. Other speakers include Senator Murkowski via videotape, Joe DiMateo from the Alaska Council on Substance and Drug Abuse, and George Taft of the Alaska Crime Lab. In addition we have our own Bethel police department represented, and a student speaker who has used inhalants. The Togiak Native Youth Organization, who presented at our Inhalant Conference earlier this year, will return.

It is our hope that increasing awareness of the dangers of inhaling among our young people will help to decrease the abusing of these serious substances. A death this year in one of our communities has prompted more dialogue around this subject and we welcome any questions. Call 1-800-478-2642 or 1-800-478-2128. In Bethel, call 543-6100.



**Inhalant debris left behind near the Kuskokwim River at Bethel last summer.**  
(photo by Michael Faubion)

*Happy Holidays*



**YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION**

# Practice snowmachine safety this winter



The snowmachining season is upon us. Unfortunately with the excitement of starting the machine and heading out in the new snow, come injuries, accidents and even deaths. In the 10 years between 1986 and 1995, 40 deaths were reported due to snowmachine crashes in the YK Delta.

Sadly, between 75 and 80 percent of snowmachine mishaps involve alcohol. And about 75 percent of the incidents occur during the night between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. Drowning is the leading cause of death when using

snowmachines. 15 to 24 year olds have the highest rate of death and injury. The second highest is ages 25 to 34.

These deaths and injuries are highly preventable. Snowmachiners who take their responsibilities seriously are the ones who stay out of trouble. Most deaths involve thrill seekers who speed and ignore open water and thin ice warnings. Do not ride after drinking or in the dark. Never misuse high performance machines by speeding. Never zoom across open water, across roads or any rough surfaces. Pay attention to the terrain and adjust your speed to the conditions!

For more information on snowmachine safety or to purchase a helmet, contact the Injury Prevention Department at 543-6085 or 543-6090 in Bethel or 1-800-478-4471 from outside of Bethel.

**Make it through this winter safely by following these precautions:**

- Never drink and drive
- Wear a helmet
- Observe open water and thin ice warnings
- Bring survival gear, food, water, dry clothes, and extra fuel
- File a travel plan with family or friends
- Reduce speed
- Use common sense
- Teach your children safe riding

## Sometimes the biggest reason to abstain from alcohol is a little one

101 reasons to abstain from alcohol during pregnancy:

- two eyes
- one nose
- two ears
- ten toes
- .....
- ten fingers
- one sweet mouth
- two strong legs to run
- two arms to give hugs with
- one straight and strong spine
- two hands to hold on tightly with
- two feet to walk on tall and proud
- .....
- one heart to beat steady & strong
- two lungs to sing a nursery song
- 20 baby teeth for a beautiful smile
- 32 bright & white secondary teeth
- one liver for a healthy metabolism
- two first words: "Mama" & "Dada"
- 1 first step towards independence
- .....
- 2 frontal lobes to control impulses
- 1 corpus callosum to process info
- 2 healthy parents to care for baby
- 1 precious little spirit that will thrive with the love of a nurturing family, to realize a full potential of health, happiness, and life independence!
- .....

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For information on alcohol related birth defects, contact:

**Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation**  
FAS Prevention Dept.  
P.O. Box 528 • Bethel, Alaska 99559  
907-543-6486 • 1-800-478-3321  
Fax: 907-543-6143

This month we begin a series on HIV/AIDS, with information compiled by Dr. Raj Maskay. This introduction will answer some basic questions.

Next month: HIV testing.

## What is HIV?

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is the virus that causes AIDS. This virus is passed from one person to another through blood-to-blood and sexual contact. In addition, infected pregnant women can pass HIV to their baby during pregnancy or delivery, as well as through breast-feeding. People with HIV have what is called HIV infection. Most of these people will develop AIDS as a result of their HIV infection.

**These body fluids have been proven to spread HIV:**

- blood*
- semen*
- vaginal fluid*
- breast milk*
- other body fluids containing blood*

These are additional body fluids that may transmit the virus that health care workers may come into contact with:

- cerebrospinal fluid surrounding the brain and the spinal cord*
- synovial fluid surrounding bone joints*
- amniotic fluid surrounding a fetus*

## What is AIDS? What causes AIDS?

AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. An HIV-infected person receives a diagnosis of AIDS after developing one of the CDC-defined AIDS indicator illnesses. An HIV-positive person who has not

see HIV, p. 11

## INTERAGENCY NEWS

### **Organizers say thank you for suicide prevention month**

by Margie Wells, Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator

What an exciting and educational month we have had in November. Many people are more aware of suicide, know the warning signs and how to intervene and where to get help for others and themselves.

Thank you goes to the City of Bethel for showing their support by signing a proclamation declaring November as Suicide Prevention Month.

Thank you Liz Sunnyboy and Beth Kersey for coordinating the free informational sessions throughout the month. Thanks to all of the guest speakers that helped to support the program and the Bethel Moravian Church for the use of their Social Hall for these sessions.

The Suicide Prevention Workshops were overwhelmingly successful. There were 8-10 villages represented by teens, adults, and elders. Thank you to the following elders for honoring the workshops with morning blessings and prayer: Chief Antone Anvil, Lucy Beaver, Wesley Beaver, Elaine Thompkins, and Peter Jacobs. Your support of this program and your blessings no doubt were contributing factors to its success. Also thank you for staying at some of the sessions and your input. It was quite valuable.

It was good to see the different age groups working together and brainstorming on how to help each other. There was definitely no generation or communication gap at these workshops.

The resource panel that was presented on the third day of each workshop was extremely beneficial to the panelists and participants of the workshops. I would like to thank the representatives on those panels by identifying the organization or group they represented: YKHC Behavioral Health, AVCP Social Services, U.S. Army Guard, LKSD Social Services; which included representatives from BRHS and BABS, the Clergy, the Bethel Police Department, and LYSD.

It was exciting to see the representatives working hand-in-hand, identifying each other's expertise and collaborating

to work together on issues. They gave freely of their time, taking away from their work schedule, and one team was there on Saturday morning. The community thanks you for your concern and interest in suicide prevention and the well being of the residents of the YK Delta. From the two hours of networking at each panel session, I am confident that several issues will be resolved and lives will be changed for the better.

I would like to especially thank Bev Cobain and Flemming

see PREVENTION, p. 11

### **Tundra Center adopts new program**

The Cornell Tundra Center is implementing a specific culturally relevant program as part of their rehabilitation program. This will primarily take place evenings and weekends. This new program will emphasize cultural identity and community ties to assist the resident in the process of preparing to return home with more tools and resourcefulness for their goals of living a crime-free life.

Weekday afternoons and evenings will be devoted to learning, sharing and discussing the many aspects of Native life. Topics will include spirituality, subsistence skills, traditional healing, local stories, and contemporary challenges today's people face. Elders, individuals and agencies are invited to come in and present on these and other subjects that will assist the residents in identifying with their culture.

The weekend component of this new program will evolve into direct hands-on traditional crafts and subsistence activities that residents and community members can participate in together. If anyone in the region is interested in donating materials, or spending a few hours a month sharing with the residents, please contact the Tundra Center at 543-3414 and leave a message with Susan Taylor. Susan can also be reached at 543-4368.

### **TWC sponsors Christmas giving tree**

by Carrie Sessarego, Community Education Coordinator

Once again, it's time for the TWC Giving Tree Program. Tundra Women's Coalition asks moms and children who have stayed in the shelter in the last year what they would like for Christmas. Then, with donations from businesses and individuals, we match their gift requests. Gifts are delivered by Santa at TWC and to villages by Santa's helpers, the local airlines, who donate cargo space.

If you would like to make Christmas special for someone, watch for the Giving Trees around town. They are paper trees decorated with paper ornaments—each ornament has one person's gift request written on it. Please bring the gift and the ornament to TWC by Monday, December 13. You can also adopt a family or an individual mother or child by calling Tundra Women's Coalition at 543-3444. We do ask that gifts be new, not used, and that the gifts be unwrapped—you can also donate wrapping paper and ribbon if you like.

Thank you for making this program possible. Again, gifts are due by Monday, December 13th. We are also in need of new board members. The board meets once a month—call 543-3444 if interested. All of us at TWC wish the Y-K Delta a peaceful and joyous holiday season.

# YOUR HEALTH

## Enhance your absorption of iron

by Ester Jarin-Ocampo

In January, 1999, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation went to Hooper Bay to conduct a study of anemia in young children. Anemia is a condition in which there is a reduction in total circulating hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is the part of the blood that carries oxygen throughout the body. Iron is a very important part of hemoglobin. Iron deficiency anemia results when iron reserves are depleted, and there is not enough iron to make more hemoglobin. Eighty-six children took part in the study. Samples of blood, breath and stool were taken to look at iron level and other factors that may be related to anemia. Seventeen percent of the children who were in the study had anemia, more than twice the national average (9 percent) for children age 1-5 years.

The investigation demonstrated that iron deficiency anemia remains a persistent problem among Alaska Native children. Most of the anemia was related to children not having enough iron stores in the blood. Two conditions may lead to this deficiency:

1. Dietary: the diet does not contain enough iron foods or vitamin C foods that enhance iron absorption.
2. Parasite infection: Iron can also become low because of parasite infection or blood loss that can rapidly lead to iron deficiency.

Some of the children in the study were found to have H. Pylori, an infection of the stomach which can cause problems such as sore stomach and ulcers in some people. The stomach infection could contribute to anemia by causing bleeding or making it harder for the body to use iron. The physical symptoms most frequently associated with anemia include lack of energy, fatigue, difficulty regulating body temperature, decreased immunity, decreased resistance to infections, and impaired mental and psychomotor development in infants and children.

### Ways to help iron from foods absorb better:

#### Include heme iron sources.

There are two types of iron in foods: heme iron and non-heme iron. Meats such as moose, caribou, seal, fish, liver, beef, pork, ptarmigan, and duck contain heme iron which is more easily absorbed by the body than non-heme iron, found mainly in plant foods. If you eat meat and vegetables together, you will be able to absorb more iron from the vegetables than if you eat the vegetable alone.

**Include vitamin C rich foods** with your meals, such as orange juice, berries, sardines, rhubarb, broccoli, and greens.

Vitamin C foods help the body absorb more non-heme iron. Eat your vitamin C foods along with your breakfast cereal and

you will absorb more iron from the cereal than if you eat the cereal alone.

Some drinks like tea, coffee, chocolate, soda pop can prevent your body from using iron to build strong blood. These drinks contain tannins and phosphates. They should be consumed between meals rather than with your meals.

It is recommended that your child should get checked for anemia between the ages of 9 and 12 months and again 6 months later. Your child should be rechecked once a year from age 2 to 5 years of age. If your child is found to have anemia, ask your health care provider about possible treatments.

The following is our wish to Mary Hoffman for a very happy retirement!

*Mary,*

*Now is a time for you to  
celebrate... the accomplishment  
of dreams you have worked  
so hard to realize. You have shown  
so many people how special you are*

*Now is the time to begin  
to pursue the next path,  
to reach out for the next star,  
and to achieve the things  
that are so important to you.*

*Always keep  
Your dreams alive*

*And keep them coming true*

THE SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS  
keep in touch!

**OPENING, from p. 1**

President/CEO Gene Peltola described a dog-team logo concept adopted by YKHC's Behavioral Health Program—"The driver is the Board of Directors, health care is the cargo in the sled, and the employees are the dog team—"and I mean to emphasize the employees are a *team*, not that we're dogs," Peltola said.

Following the ribbon-cutting, YKHC employees took visitors on tours of the building. Souvenir gifts were given to all and food was served by the YKDRH Food Service.

The Community Health Services Building was built with funding made possible by revenue bonds issued by the municipalities of St. Mary's and Emmonak, with the approval of the City of Bethel. The bonds were purchased by the National Bank of Alaska, with repayment of the bonds assumed by YKHC. The bonds will be repaid with IHS funds provided to YKHC for "rent" of the nine office buildings it would have continued to use if the CHSB wasn't built. With this strategy, not one dime of YKHC program or health care services funds were used to construct the facility.

Many praises and thank-yous are in order. To name a few: City Council and staffs of Emmonak, St. Mary's and Bethel; People of Emmonak & St. Mary's; National Bank of Alaska; YKHC Facilities and Planning Dept.; Livingston & Slone, Inc., Architectural Services; Udelhoven Oilfield System Services; Osborne Construction Co.

**REMODEL, from p. 5**

Longbotham, Anne Kosacheff, Juanita Treat, Jeannette Cawyer, Jack Crow, Curt Madison, Margaret Arriola, Sharon C. Kelly, Eric Pavil, JR Krevans, Dusan Kovac, Eric Noble, Alan L. Finkelstein, Richard Westdahl, Val Warzewick, Pam Conrad, Darlene Engebretson, Rebecca Grandusky, Lisa Creech, Tom Piakak, JoAnn McDonald, Joyce Berry, Joseph Moses, Manny Konig, Andrew Martin and Project Coordinator, Katrina Bentley.

Most of all, we want to thank each of our patients for the extra patience and cooperation during the remodel process. Watch for announcements about the GRAND OPENING of the remodeled areas to be held in January 2000.

*QUYANA*



**There's a brand new floor in the Pediatrics Hallway.**

***I do solemnly swear...***

**YKHC's Legal Counsel Valerie Davidson was sworn in as a bona-fide member of the Alaska State Bar on Nov. 17 by Judge Dale Curda. A crowded courtroom witnessed the proceedings, including Valerie's mother, Tillie Davidson, and her grandmother, Annie David. Also on hand was most of YKHC's Board of Directors.**

**(photo by Michael Faubion)**

**To Our Teens**

Many teenagers are facing their challenges and making positive choices today.

I know of many who are active in Youth Alive, who are committed and dedicated to participating in all the events.

I would like to commend our teenagers who are active in such positive activities.

I would like to say "thanks" to those who have spoken out in the newspaper and expressed their feelings.

I would like to say "Keep it up!"

—Marie Randall

**NEXT MESSENGER ..... January 6, 2000**

**DEADLINE ..... December 24, 1999**

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## PREVENTION, from p. 8

Funch for coming to Alaska and doing this training. They were very aware of cultural differences and worked hard to present their program so it would be useful for the Delta. They gave an excellent presentation and were overwhelmingly accepted by the participants. As people left the workshop, they asked Bev and Flemming to visit their village and help train more people on suicide prevention.

Thanks to KuC for making it possible for participants to receive college credit if they so desired.

A special thank you to KYUK General Manager Ron Daugherty and the staff of KYUK for their support of this project, without which it would not have been possible. The staff helped people get information on the project and, during the workshops, delivered messages and ran errands important for the success of the workshops.

KYUK also donated four one-hour spots during the month to do call-in shows. I would like to thank those people who participated in the shows: Liz Sunnyboy, members of the panel of organizations, Bev Cobain and Flemming Funch, Sam Alexie for interpreting, and students from BABS and their advisor Abbey Cohen who did a show on Teens Talking To Teens About Suicide.

Thank you to YKHC for their additional support. A very special thank you goes to Michael Faubion, who designed the brochures we have been using throughout the month. Michael was most tolerable of deadlines and last minute changes. Thank you also to Allen Joseph who played a large role in getting this program to work. Your continued support and encouragement when I had doubts of success are greatly appreciated.

Thankyous go to: AVCP, the Community Clergy, BABS, LKSD, LYSD, U.S. Army Guard, the Alaska State Troopers, Bethel City Police Department, YKHC, KNIK Construction, WAVE, Calista, The Tundra Drums, The Delta Discovery, The Penny Saver, United Utilities, Bethel Council on the Arts, The Lions Club, The VFW Women's Auxiliary, Swansons, AC, Sea Lion Corporation, Hooper Bay Fire Department, all of the organizations in Hooper Bay that contributed to send people to the workshop, and all of the businesses and people who donated in some way to the Suicide Prevention Program.

One goal we had from the inception of this project is to establish a Suicide Hot Line/Crisis Center. It is closer than we ever thought possible. GCI has donated \$500 worth of calls against a toll free number. They have also given us a quote of what continued use of the number will cost. There will be two trained staff to volunteer for each shift (we already have people volunteering to cover shifts), and the center will be in direct contact with clergy and the emergency on-call people from YKHC and AVCP, the Bethel City Police and the Alaska State Troopers/VPSOs. People calling in will have a choice as to whom they wish to talk with if they feel they need immediate counseling.

What is left to make this happen? A suitable location, two local phone lines, trained personnel and funds to pay the expenses. This project could become a reality after the first of

the year. If you are interested in learning more about being a volunteer with the crisis center, please call me at 543-5244 or e-mail me at margie\_wells@ddc-alaska.org. If anyone knows how we can acquire the additional items we need please let me know.

It is the ongoing concern of this project that everyone will continue to keep suicide and suicide prevention in the forefront. This is not something that needs to go back into the closet. If you need copies of the brochures we used during the month, please contact me.

Thanks to everyone who attended the sessions and workshops.

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## HIV, from p. 7

had any serious illnesses also can receive an AIDS diagnosis on the basis of certain blood tests (CD4+ counts).

A positive HIV test result does not mean that a person has AIDS. A diagnosis of AIDS is made by a physician using certain clinical criteria (e.g., AIDS indicator illnesses).

Infection with HIV can weaken the immune system to the point that it has difficulty fighting off certain infections. These types of infections are known as "opportunistic" infections because they take the opportunity a weakened immune system gives to cause illness.

Many of the infections that cause problems or may be life-threatening for people with AIDS are usually controlled by a healthy immune system. The immune system of a person with AIDS is weakened to the point that medical intervention may be necessary to prevent or treat serious illness.

Today there are medical treatments that can slow down the rate at which HIV weakens the immune system. There are other treatments that can prevent or cure some of the illnesses associated with AIDS. As with other diseases, early detection offers more options for treatment and preventative care.

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## BLACKWELL, from p. 4

Indian Health Service it was ready and able to take over management of the Bethel Hospital—a primary goal of Self-Determination efforts since YKHC began.

"It took a lot of negotiating," Blackwell said. "There was a lot of concern from the Indian Health Service administrators, but it had turned around good. And I give most of the credit for that to Gene."

Programs were expanded, YKHC began providing alcohol treatment both in Bethel and the villages and improved Mental Health services. A subregional clinic was built in Aniak and two others begun in Emmonak and St. Mary's. The corporation outgrew one building after another, eventually finding itself scattered in seven different locations throughout Bethel. This year's construction and occupancy of the Community Health Services Building—finally consolidating all services and programs in the same vicinity—marks the culmination, but not the end, of a 30-year journey. Richard Blackwell was there throughout—as medical trainer until 1976 and then as YKHC's chief accountant, Finance Administrator and Comptroller.

# YKHC Employment Opportunities

Bethel Travel Technician  
 Anchorage Travel Technician II  
 Optometric Assistant  
 Director of Nursing  
 Pharmacy Technician I  
 Quality Mgmt. Division Secretary  
 Health Aide Support Coordinator  
 Corporate Training & Development Specialist  
 Hostel Technician  
 Radiology/Mammographer Technician  
 Food Service Worker  
 Cashier/Cafeteria Attendant  
 Vending Machine Operator  
 CHSB Receptionist  
 CHSB Clerk  
 Statistical Data & Information Analyst  
 Logistics Coordinator  
 Accounting Technician II  
 Admissions Supervisor

(2) night shift ER Technician  
 ADT/Registration Technician  
 Technology Support Staff  
 Aeromed Chief Flight Nurse  
 Media Services Videographer  
 Patient Financial Services Director  
 Pharmacist  
 Laboratory Assistant (Aniak, St. Marys, Emmonak)  
 Inpatient Certified Nursing Assistant  
 YKDRH Division Secretary  
 YKDRH Medical Staff Secretary  
 YKDRH Physical Therapist  
 Aeromed Team Leader  
 Emergency Room Technicians  
 Director of Emergency Services  
 Behavioral Health Rural Human Services Program Coordinator  
 YKDRH Telephone Operator  
 Basic Training Instructor  
 Clinical Clerical Technician

Aeromed Flight Nurse  
 Aeromed Flight Paramedic  
 RSAS Clinical Supervisor  
 Chief Financial Officer  
 Medical Technologist  
 Home Care C.N.A's  
 Home Care Respite Worker  
 Health Educator I & II  
 Family Services Trainer  
 Bethel Dental Assistant Apprentice  
 OB Manager  
 Care Manager(s)  
 Family Practitioner  
 WIC Nutritionist  
 Staff Dentist (Bethel)  
 Registered Nurse(s)  
 ER Physician  
 Group PA or NP  
 On-Call Telephone Operators  
 On-Call Counselor Technicians

Temporary position(s)  
 in Emmonak & St. Mary's:  
 Maintenance Technician  
 Plumber Apprentice  
 Electrical Superintendent  
 Sheetmetal Worker(s)  
 Journeyman Plumber  
 Journeyman Electrician  
 Driver/Groundskeeper

NOTE: Submit an application to:  
 YKHC Human Resources Department, PO Box 528, Bethel, AK 99559.

For more information call 543-6060 or if you are out of town 800-478-8905; FAX 543-6061. Indian/Native Preference Hire PL 93-638/EOE.

**YKHC Job Line 543-6443**



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