Arielle Mike of Emmonak shows off the t-shirt she tie-dyed at the Energize Emmo Tobacco Prevention booth. Tie-dyeing was just one of the many activities at the family fun event. Energize Emmo was a new kind of community health fair that was largely driven and planned by local community members in partnership with YKHC. See page 6 to find out more about it.
A Letter to Our Customers

As most of you are aware, during the last week of September YKHC notified 191 customers that the YKHC Bethel Dental Clinic used clean but unsterile equipment on up to 13 dental customers during the week of September 13–20. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the risk of infection from cleaned but unsterile equipment is very low. We initiated calls to 191 customers and followed that with written letters informing each of what happened and recommended next steps. We also performed a number of follow-up calls to some customers that wanted more information. Only after the initial telephone calls were placed to the 191 customers did we also notify KYUK since YKHC wanted to personally inform affected dental customers first. KYUK was then notified in an effort to be transparent about the problem, reach some customers we had difficulty contacting and notify the public as to what we were doing to keep it from happening in the future.

Once the problem was detected, YKHC immediately implemented further safeguards to improve the dental sterilization process. YKHC coordinated our response with the Centers for Disease Control and the State of Alaska’s Department of Epidemiology. I also directed administration to begin reviewing all sterilization procedures hospital-wide with the assistance of an expert in infection control procedures. YKHC is also in the process of conducting a detailed investigation to determine exactly what happened and how it can be prevented in the future.

Like you, I am very disappointed with the care we rendered to the affected 191 customers. As health care professionals, we have two goals that are the foundation of everything we do: 1. Do not hurt the patient; and 2. Try to help the patient. In this instance and despite our best intentions, YKHC did not fully live up to those goals. On behalf of YKHC, I apologize.

After traveling to all 50 villages in our service area with YKHC facilities and meeting with many customers, staff and tribal councils, I heard loud and clear that change was needed across the company. Whether it was improving access to health care, quality, or customer satisfaction, many of you said YKHC needed to improve. I agree. This incident in our Bethel Dental Clinic further supports that call for change.

Over the last year and one-half, we began several new initiatives to begin addressing your concerns:

We are investing in the Dr. Paul John Calricaraq Project to renovate and build a new, larger hospital with more providers and staff housing. We are hiring more providers to fill our vacant positions. We are designing a new model of integrated care that focuses on you and your needs. We are just beginning to implement LEAN, a process used to improve reliability and reduce errors. And, finally, we are strengthening YKHC’s finances to pay for these new and needed initiatives.

YKHC will continue to keep you informed on these and other improvement initiatives in our monthly Messenger, website and other forms of media.

Clearly more work is needed. As we learn more from our detailed investigation we will continue to implement whatever changes are necessary to ensure we protect our customers. It is our goal to begin to rebuild your trust in YKHC as your health care provider. We realize trust is earned . . . not just given.

Our staff is committed to earn your trust one day at a time.

Respectfully,

Dan Winkelman, President & CEO
YKHC Board of Directors

Unit 1
Mary Ayunerak
Alakanuk

Unit 2
Geraldine Beans
St. Mary’s
James C. Landlord
Mtn. Village

Unit 3
Billy Jean Stewart
Kalskag

Unit 4
Betty Turner
Lower Kalskag
Phillip K. Peter, Sr
Kwethluk
Mildred Evan
Akiachak

Unit 5
Stan Hoffman, Sr.
Bethel
Gloria Simeon
Bethel
Hugh Snyder
Bethel
Chris Larson
Napaskiak

Unit 6
Esai Twitchell, Jr.
Kasigluk

Unit 7
Joshua Cleveland, Unit 10 Board Member, is an interim representative for Unit 7.

Unit 8
James Charlie, Sr.
Toksook Bay

Unit 9
Mary Ayunerak, Unit 1 Board Member, is an interim representative for Unit 9.

Unit 10
Joshua Cleveland
Quinhagak

Unit 11
Joshua Cleveland
Quinhagak

Esai Twitchell, Jr.
Kasigluk

The Messenger is a monthly publication produced by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation’s Public Relations Department as a report to Tribal Members.

For questions, comments, submission of articles, or subscription information, write to Messenger Editor, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, P.O. Box 528, Bethel, Alaska 99559; or call 907-677-2232. E-mail: michael_faubion@ykhc.org.

Deadline is the 10th of the month, or the preceding Friday if the 10th is on a weekend, for publication on the first of the following month.

The Messenger is also available for download on our website at www.ykhc.org/messenger. Please ask permission to reprint articles or pictures.

© 2016, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation.
Trick or Treat – Crash Dieting vs. Healthy Living

If you’ve ever tried a crash diet, you’re not alone. Many people interested in healthy living look to these tricks for a fast solution to an overwhelming problem. And with the health claims they make, it’s hard not to be interested. Lose ten pounds in a week? All the bacon you can eat? No exercise with speedy muscle gain? Sounds great!

However, the truth of the matter is that healthy living is supposed to be a lifestyle, something to be achieved over a period of time. Trying to figure out what healthy living is versus a crash diet can be challenging. Here are a few red flags to help discern if what you’re getting into is a trick or a treat.

A plan that only lasts a short period of time. With longterm health, always think about longterm goals. Healthy living is a marathon, not a sprint. Take small steps every day.

A plan that boasts abilities to eat whatever you want. Healthy living requires sensible food choices and moderating extremes.

A plan that suggests “off limit” foods. Again, moderation is needed here. The occasional special food can help increase motivation to keep long term goals in sight. Treat yourself every once in a while—in moderation.

A plan that requires supplements, gels, creams, or wraps. If these were absent would you still be able to make healthy choices? Become dependent upon yourself and your behaviors, not your products.

A plan that claims substantial results with minimal effort. Let’s be honest, healthy living can be challenging. Every day try to be conscious of lifestyle choices you make that affect your overall health. Seek support from friends, family, and your healthcare team when times get tough.

Try to avoid the tricks! Remember you can do anything you set your mind to, healthy living included. Treat yourself to these habits:

- Eat every day
- Plan for three meals a day with snacks
- Eat a wide variety of foods including fruits and vegetables
- Drink plenty of water
- Move more
- Avoid things in excess

- Stay away from tobacco and other harmful substances
- Make regular appointments with your provider to see how you’re doing

Call the Diabetes Prevention and Control Department to schedule a Diabetes appointment today. 543-6133.

Recipe of the Month

Pumpkin Pasta with Sausage and Sage

Ingredients:
- 1 16oz box whole wheat pasta, penne or ziti
- Oil for cooking
- 1 pound moose, sausaged
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 medium onion
- 1 bay leaf, dried or fresh
- 2 T sage
- 1 chicken bouillion cube, 2 cups water
- 1 15oz can pumpkin puree
- ¼ cup evaporated milk, ½ cup water
- 1/8 t cinnamon
- ½ t nutmeg
- Pepper to taste
- Parmesan and extra sage for garnish

Directions
2. In a large nonstick skillet brown sausage. Transfer to paper towel to drain.
3. Add garlic and onion to skillet, sauté until tender.
4. Add bay leaf, sage, 2 cups water and bouillon cube. Heat and stir, about 2 minutes.
5. Add pumpkin, evaporated milk, and remaining ½ cup water. Stir to combine, bring to simmer.
6. Add cooked sausage, cinnamon, nutmeg, and pepper. Simmer 5-10 minutes.
7. Remove bay leaf, add cooked pasta, toss.
8. Garnish with parmesan and extra sage.

Serve with your favorite veggie for a well balanced meal. Serves 4.

Recipe modified from foodnetwork.com. Image source: pintrest.com
Remembering my Mother...

*by Dan Winkelman, YKHC President/CEO*

It is the time of the year that I reflect back on memories of a very important person, my mother. Next month will be five years since my mother, Louise, passed away from breast cancer. While leading a healthy lifestyle can reduce your risk factors for breast cancer and other diseases, early detection (before symptoms occur) remains one of the best strategies to enable treatment to be successful. My mother was always an advocate for timely cancer screenings because she knew early detection was the best chance for a successful outcome or, as in her case, lengthening the quality of her life.

Louise always followed her physician’s advice and was timely with her annual breast screenings. However, nine months after a normal annual mammogram, she detected a small lump during her own monthly self-exam. For six more years she lived a wonderful and joyous life. Our family and friends enjoyed many more holidays, birthdays and special occasions with her. We came to the realization that the time we spent with her was always a “special occasion.”

Louise and her physicians believed that her life would have been shortened significantly if she chose to ignore doing her annual clinical exams, mammograms and monthly self exams. Instead, because of her diligence about her own health, we all got to spend more quality time with her.

You should seek the advice of a physician when deciding what screenings are right for you. YKHC can help with that. Be proactive about your health and call our Women’s Health department at 907-543-6296 or the Outpatient Scheduling department at 907-543-6442 to schedule your next appointment.

While all cases are different and although early detection was not possible in my mother’s case, most physicians and experts agree that timely cancer screenings are still one of the best things to do for a good outcome and are effective for most people.
On Saturday, August 27, more than two dozen YKHC staff and volunteers, including staff flying in from Aniak and Hooper Bay SRCs, as well as many external partners such as UAF cooperative extension and Public Health Nursing, converged on Emmonak to host a family-oriented and community-focused health and wellness outreach event called Energize Emmonak.

This event was planned and organized primarily by the Diabetes Prevention Department, spearheaded by Elizabeth Tressler, with lots of support from Emmonak sub-regional clinic staff led by Ted Hamilton and Bonnie Johnson.

The event was an alternative to a traditional health fair, intended to engage the entire family and educate them through fun and useful activities instead of just handing out information sheets. This approach encourages attendance and participation through fun instead of just moving through the stations.

This model has been used with success in Bethel and now has been piloted successfully in a larger village community. It was so successful that nearly 300 Emmonak residents registered and attended the event—about one third of the entire community!

Activities included making healthful smoothies with fresh fruits by using pedal power on a bicycle, growing “micro-greens” to be used as food, learning basic CPR and so much more. There were more than 20 different wellness activities and interactive stations occurring simultaneously. A huge thank-you to all who attended and volunteered to make this event a wild success!

—Matthew Scott, MBA, BSN, RN, Director, Community Health and Wellness
Tobacco Prevention Dept.

Meet Our Team!

The staff of the Tobacco Prevention Program is here to help support you in your journey towards becoming tobacco free. We have all been through the experience of quitting tobacco and can encourage you as you do the same.

If you would like to make a positive change in your life and stop using tobacco, our team is available to help. Our Tobacco Cessation Counselors Henry George and Moses Ayagalria are both available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday to help you take advantage of our services. The program offers counseling support for quitting tobacco as well as optional nicotine replacement therapies including nicotine gum, nicotine patches, nicotine lozenges and prescription aids with your provider’s approval. Counseling services are available in both Yup’ik and English, and you can enroll by walking in to our office location next to the Pharmacy, asking your provider to make a referral, or calling 907-543-6312 or 1-800-478-3321 ext. 6312.

“I’m Moses Ayagalria, Tobacco Cessation Counselor. I help patients who are ready to quit tobacco. I quit myself because I wanted to improve my health.”

“I’m Henry George, Tobacco Cessation Counselor. I help patients who are ready to quit tobacco. I quit myself because my doctor referred me and I listened.”

“I’m Agnes Roland, the Healthy Pregnancy Research Coordinator. I am working with YKHC and the Mayo Clinic to develop programs that help women in the YK Delta have healthy, tobacco-free pregnancies. I quit tobacco because my son inspired me to see how using tobacco hurts those we love.”

“I’m Sara Stockton, Tobacco Prevention Program Manager. Within our department we are home to the Tobacco Cessation Counseling Program, the Healthy Pregnancies Research partnership, and the State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Grant. I quit tobacco because I was tired of feeling that it had control over my life.”

Agnes Roland—Tobacco Quitter

I’m Agnes Roland, originally from Kipnuk. I’ve lived in Bethel for over 25 years. I’ve worked for YKHC for the last 10 years. Within that ten years I can’t even remember the first time I started using tobacco, two years ago I quit for good.

That day was during a cold October month. I drove into the parking lot of the old Ayaprun school (before it burned down) to pick up my son Cingliaq after school.

During the day I’d been having tobacco, Copenhagen. I was feeling stressed that day and I was using tobacco. Cingliaq came in the car, the radio was on, and I was listening to music.

I had a lot of spit in my mouth. Cingliaq asked me a question and with my full mouth of spit I responded to him and said “I can’t talk right now.” He looked at me with this face I can still picture right now, he looked so sad and said, “Mom, you should quit chewing snuff, if you die who’s going to take care of me?”

Before that he used to tell me, you shouldn’t chew snuff, but it didn’t have any effect on me. On that day, I looked at him, I backed up and drove to my home near the airport in silence. As we were driving home we weren’t talking but what he said to me kept playing over and over in my head, because I was thinking, “tobacco does kill and I don’t want him to think that it will happen to me.”

So we drove home in silence, we went in my driveway, he got out, I opened my truck and spat out my spit, and I quit that day. I’ve been tobacco free since then. I haven’t struggled with nicotine withdrawals. Every time I think of what would happen to me, it makes me a strong person and helps me not to think about tobacco any more.

To this day I haven’t wanted to use tobacco again, and I didn’t know how much it hurt my loved ones. Even when I thought it wasn’t hurting anyone else, it really was hurting. I’m so thankful that I’m tobacco free to this day.
Measuring the cost and effects of tobacco

Tobacco use contributes to many health conditions that affect the people of the YK Delta, including lung, colorectal and kidney cancer; stroke; and chronic lung diseases like COPD and pneumonia. Tobacco use can also cause heart problems and lead to complications for diabetic patients. Pregnant women who use any form of tobacco are at a higher risk for complications in their pregnancies and for their children to be born with health conditions including asthma, low birth weight, and learning disabilities.

New Opioid Treatment Program at YKHC

A new heroin and synthetic opioid treatment program is starting at YKHC. We will provide modern, medication-assisted treatment for opioid dependence.

Heroin and synthetic opioid addiction is a growing problem in the United States. Alaska and the YK delta villages are also experiencing this increase. YKHC is opening a new program so those needing help to get off the drug can do so closer to home. The program will offer a treatment protocol combining behavioral health and medication-assisted therapy (MAT). MAT helps avoid the difficult withdrawal symptoms while receiving effective counseling for drug addiction.

Anyone interested in treatment can call for an assessment at 543-6100 (Intensive Outpatient Clinic), 543-6730 (PATC), or contact their local behavioral health provider.

People seeking treatment will be assessed and, as appropriate, admitted to a six-week residential treatment. Upon completion the participant will receive intensive outpatient treatment, attending sessions at least three days a week. When appropriate, the participant will step down to once-a-week sessions. During this time the participants may receive Suboxone, a medication to help prevent withdrawal symptoms. Recent practice has shown this to be effective in helping people get off opioids, including heroin.

Priority for admission to this program is pregnant women and injection drug users.
October 2016
Dr. Paul John Calricaraq Project

Guiding Principles: Represent the Y-K region’s Culture & Identity | Promote Customer Centered Care | Affordable Cost & Sustainable Operations

**PJCP Design reaches 35 percent**

After six months of design work and four week-long staff member workshops, Bettisworth Architects and Planners (BNAP) submitted schematic design documents in August representing 35 percent of the complete design for the project. The design review process is underway.

Arcadis, YKHC’s project management partner, is overseeing the comment process. Additional Indian Health Service (IHS) comments are anticipated. Comments from YKHC’s customers, patients and Tribal members will continue to be collected throughout the project.

The project team met in late August to review the progress of new design changes. The design team planned to move into the Design Development phase in mid-September and complete the 65 percent design by March, 2017.

BNAP and medical equipment designer, The Innova Group, held a “mock-up review session” with YKHC medical staff, administration, Customer Advisory Committee, and stakeholders to review floor plans and collect feedback on the project work-in-progress. Mock-ups will be available for a few months with continued refinement expected.

YKHC is beginning work on non-medical furniture, fixtures and equipment to develop a master list for the new clinic.

**Project Construction**

ASKW/Davis Constructors, the construction contractors for the project, have been working with the design team to provide cost estimating support and constructability support. Site work began in August with site clearing, building pad construction and the construction of project offices. Piling materials for the new clinic have arrived in Bethel and installation was scheduled to begin in mid-September.

**YKHC Staff Housing**

In May, YKHC issued a Request for Proposals to design and build a 54-unit housing complex in support of the PJCP, as required by the Indian Health Service. Three firms were selected to provide housing unit concept designs. The Selection Committee selected Bethel Services Inc. (BSI).

The project team is working with BSI’s architect to refine unit layout and reduce some site work scope to bring the project into alignment with the budget. A full contract agreement was negotiated and signed at the end of August. The project is scheduled to be complete October, 2017.

View from the webcam: Pilings are ready at the construction site of Paul John Calricaraq Project. Visit our website at www.ykhc.org/pjcp for weekly updates of the webcam image.

Talking Wall Question of the Month:

**What type of art would you want to see in the exam rooms?**

Write on the Wall, or call into our suggestion line: 907-543-6600 or send an email to ykhcproject@ykhc.org.
August Health Aide of the Month

Hope Brown, CHA II from Quinhagak

Hope Brown, CHA II from Quinhagak has been recognized as the Health Aide of the Month for August. Hope has been working since December, 2015, at the Quinhagak clinic. She has been very busy responding to emergency calls. Even after working long days at the clinic she never complains and has a positive attitude.

Hope has been working tirelessly and still gets all of her required work assignments done on time. Hope has finished Session II training in Anchorage this year, and she was a standout student. Hope went above and beyond during her training and passed her exams with 100 percent.

Hope says she likes to hope for the best and treat her patients as if they are part of her family. She learns new things every day, and hearing “Quyanaqva” or “Quyana Cakneq!” is always a rewarding and joyful feeling. Thank you Hope for all that you do for the Community of Quinhagak, and keep up the great work!

Session 1 Health Aides master the basics

On Sept. 15, Session 1 Health Aides toured the Operating Room to learn about clean and sterile techniques. This enthusiastic group will train in Session 1 to take basic histories and examine patients. Many have already been working in their clinics, taking vital signs, drawing blood, taking x-rays, and helping to run the clinic. They will become important health providers for their communities.

Caring for you and your family—thank your Health Aide today!

Airport Shuttle Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RT #</th>
<th>DEPART HOSPITAL</th>
<th>DROP OFF YUTE</th>
<th>DROP OFF RAVN</th>
<th>DROP OFF GRANT</th>
<th>PICK UP YUTE</th>
<th>PICK UP RAVN</th>
<th>PICK UP GRANT</th>
<th>RETURN TO HOSPITAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>10:08 AM</td>
<td>10:16 AM</td>
<td>10:24 AM</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>10:38 AM</td>
<td>10:46 AM</td>
<td>10:55 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>1:08 PM</td>
<td>1:16 PM</td>
<td>1:24 PM</td>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>1:38 PM</td>
<td>1:46 PM</td>
<td>1:55 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>2:08 PM</td>
<td>2:16 PM</td>
<td>2:24 PM</td>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>2:38 PM</td>
<td>2:46 PM</td>
<td>2:55 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>4:08 PM</td>
<td>4:16 PM</td>
<td>4:24 PM</td>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>4:38 PM</td>
<td>4:46 PM</td>
<td>4:55 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Immunizations— Safe and Effective

Health Aides are on the front lines of immunization and vaccine safety.

Over the last year Health Aides have made tremendous effort and progress to vaccinate children in the YK Delta. Giving immunizations on time, every time is the best way to stop vaccine-preventable diseases. As health care providers it is our duty to educate our patients and their families about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines we provide. Research shows that health care professionals are the ones parents turn to with vaccine questions and trust for answers.

The United States’ long-standing vaccine safety system ensures that vaccines are as safe as possible by monitoring from the FDA (Food and Drug Administration). Before the FDA approves a vaccine for use by the public, results of studies on the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine are evaluated by the highly trained FDA scientists and doctors. The FDA also inspects sites where vaccines are made to make sure they follow the strict manufacturing guidelines. The FDA constantly monitors side effects and rare adverse events so public health officials can take swift and appropriate action.

Before a new vaccine is ever given to people, extensive lab testing is done that can take several years. Once testing in people begins, it can take several more years before clinical studies are complete and the vaccine is licensed. The FDA licenses the vaccine only if it is safe, effective and benefits outweigh risks.

The FDA and CDC (Centers for Disease Control) closely monitor vaccine safety after the public begins using the vaccine. The United States currently has the safest vaccine supply in its history.

Health Aides and all YKHC providers practice infection prevention by hand-washing, using hand antiseptic, wearing gloves and cleaning injection sites with alcohol as part of everyday patient safety habits.

Health Aides give vaccines because they know vaccination protects children from serious illness and complications of vaccine-preventable diseases that could include amputation of arms or legs, paralysis of limbs, hearing loss, brain damage or death.

Whooping cough and meningitis are examples of vaccine-preventable diseases that have killed children in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta.

Vaccines protect children that cannot get vaccinated because they are too young and also protect people who have weakened immune systems such as people with cancer.

For more information call Dena Gray, Well Child & Immunizations Coordinator at 543-6148 or Sandra Forbes, Well Child & Immunizations Case Manager at 543-6186

—Dena Gray, BA, BSN, RN, Well Child & Immunization Coordinator

Dear Bethel Community Members:

Blood Bank of Alaska appreciates your efforts at your two-day blood drive on September 16 & 17, 2016. We are always deeply touched by Alaskans who are willing to save lives through blood donations.

The community and military mobile blood drives provide more than half of Alaska’s blood supply. The Annual Bethel Community Blood Drive plays a vital role in keeping our state’s blood supply at safe levels. People who receive your blood donations are very much appreciative of your heartfelt efforts.

Overall, the Annual Bethel Community Blood Drive registered 62 donors to give blood. A total of 45 units of blood were collected—potentially saving up to 135 Alaskan lives.

Out of the 62 donors registered to give blood, the Annual Bethel Community Blood Drive added 25 new blood donors to help hospital patients throughout Alaska.

I want to thank you for your ongoing support in behalf of the Blood Bank of Alaska and our life saving mission to provide needed blood to Alaskan recipients. We look forward to seeing all those donors who donated and more new donors at your next Annual Bethel Community Blood Drive.

Sincerely,

Troy Palmer, Community Coordinator, Blood Bank of Alaska
The flu vaccine is safe. You can’t get the flu from a flu vaccine. Pneumonia and flu are a leading cause of death among Native elders. Even healthy people can get the flu, and it can be serious. Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine.

Please get a flu vaccine each year to protect you and your family.