

# Staff Connections

YUKON-KOYUKUK SCHOOL DISTRICT



October 2012



## News from the Superintendent

### Happy October!

It was good to see all of you at in-service last month and many of you recently on site. I would like to mention to you that checks for certified staff will have a little extra money if you were *required* to travel during a weekend this past in-service. Tillila, our payroll specialist, is working diligently to make this happen. Also, please remember that there is \$200.00 set aside for each teacher, counselor and principal for school supplies. If you have questions regarding how to

access this funding, contact Kathy Steckel in the business department.

### New School Board Members

I would like to congratulate our two new YKSD regional school board members recently elected. Shirley Kruger of Nulato and Eileen Jackson of Huslia will be sworn in this month. Our new student school board member representative is Si-daadza Williams from Allakaket. We will be saying goodbye to Fred Bifelt of Huslia and Gloria Patsy of Nulato after many years of dedication

and service to the students of YKSD. When you see them, please take a moment to thank them for their commitment to this most worthwhile form of community service. Across the district the names of the local CSCs have changed while some have remained the same. Please be sure to check with your principal about your new CSC members. They are the voice of your school and community.

*Submitted by Kerry Boyd*

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*Did you know?.....  
The most up-to-date  
staff directory is  
available on our website  
under 'About YKSD'*



Group photo of YKSD! All the great people at YKSD who do 'Whatever It Takes' to make sure our students receive the best education possible. In this photo are teachers, paraprofessionals (teacher aides), and district office staff.

# State and Federal Programs Department

## Grant Highlights

This is a busy time of year for the State and Federal Programs department. We are in the process of writing new grants, attending required grant meetings, and working to insure 1<sup>st</sup> quarter reporting requirements are met.

Our **Pre-K grant** is off to a great start. All Pre-K aides have been hired. Pre-K Open Court curriculum has been ordered and sent out to sites (although I believe we are still waiting on the order for one site). Site visits have been set up and Kim Barnes, education specialist, will be visiting each of the Pre-K sites to provide professional development through coaching and modeling. In addition, Pre-K supplies are currently being ordered for the classrooms.



The **PE grant** is getting off the ground. We have met with Challenge Life and are in the final stages of putting

a schedule together for site visits. These site visits will be a great time for students and community to get involved in physical fitness challenges after-school. The Challenge Life team would also like to get into the classrooms during their visits to do a motivational talk

on healthy habits and life skills. The CL team will be meeting with principals to develop a schedule for visiting the classrooms during their visit. More information to come...



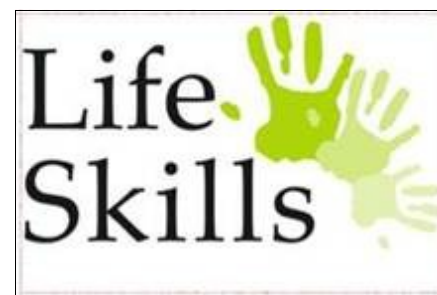
The **Race to the Top grant** is currently being developed. This grant is due in D.C. before October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Through this project, we will be able to continue providing on-going professional development for teachers, focus more on using data to inform instructional practices, and insure our students are college or career ready upon graduation.

## Professional Development September In-Service Course for Credit

– We had 23 teachers register to take the in-service for credit. I believe this is the highest number of participants we've ever had! It's exciting to see people take advantage of these opportunities.

**Life Skills Training** – We are in the process of setting up a Life Skills training at the district office in Fairbanks. The training is scheduled for November 26 – 27<sup>th</sup>. Our counselors, grad coaches and social worker will be participating in this training. The Life Skills curriculum has great activities that can easily be incorporated into the classroom. Some activities require only about 10 minutes of time, but offer a motivational message to students on prevention topics. The counseling staff will again be using this curriculum and activities when visiting classrooms.



## Highly Qualified Designations

We are busy determining the highly qualified status of all teaching staff. The required Not Highly Qualified letters will be sent out within the week along with more information. Please be on the lookout for this.

*Submitted by Gina Hrinko, Assistant Superintendent*

## AKSCI Science/Literacy Project



Ten teachers from the YKSD and Yukon Flats SD are participating in the AKSCI Science / Literacy Project. YKSD was recently awarded a federal grant through the Title IIA Professional

Development Partnership Grant and State of Alaska for the 2012-13 school year. Partners are YKSD, YFSD, the University of Alaska School of Education, and the University of Alaska Outreach department.

Teachers will learn inquiry-based science methods using topics from [www.aksci.org](http://www.aksci.org), the online science curriculum in its first year of implementation. The Science/Literacy Kits will include reading and writing activities that use the newly adopted State English/Language Arts standards, along with cultural standards to enhance student learning, PEAK strategies, and

instructional technology. Watch for these wonderful, teacher – developed learning kits to be posted to the YKSD web site at the end of this school year!

*Submitted by Barb Sundberg, State and Federal Programs Coordinator*

*Yukon Koyukuk School District has been awarded the Alaska Native Educational Equity Program (ANEP) grant for \$681,631 over the next 3 years!*

# Career & Technical Education



## 1<sup>st</sup> Semester CTE Courses

In Allakaket, twelve (12) students are enrolled in Culinary Arts I. Business Computer Applications and Digital Photography are being taught in Nulato, with nine (9) students enrolled in each course. In Huslia, twelve (12) students are taking Animal Husbandry for Veterinary Science, seven (7) students are taking Woods I, twelve (12) students are in River Fisheries and fifteen (15) students are taking Environmental Survival. In Hughes, one (1) student is taking Animal Husbandry for Veterinary Science via distance. In Kaltag, four (4) students are taking Business Computer Applications. Two (2) students in Manley Hot Springs are taking Digital Photography. In Ruby, one (1) student is taking Fashion Design. In Minto, three (3) students are taking Keyboarding I. A total of 87 students are taking different CTE courses.

## English & Math Classes

In partnership with UAF-IAC, a distance math and English class is being taught via distance. Students participate in videoconference classrooms; use Blackboard, Elluminate (E-Live) and email to interact with the university teacher. An on-site teacher monitors progress and coordinates with the UAF teacher. Students are provided instruction and given in-class time to complete homework. Students from Minto, Kaltag, Allakaket and Nulato are participating in this opportunity.



## Math Skills Class (Algebra I/II)

Students are participating in a hands-on algebra class. The math class meets from 10:00-11:00 am daily, with the UAF teacher sending out weekly updates on assignments and lectures. Students will receive 1 high school credit and 6 college credits for completing the yearlong course. Currently,



## Business English Class (English 9/10/11/12)

Students are participating in a semester long English course focused on building their grammar skills through Business English. A second semester will be provided based on the students' abilities. Class meets daily from 2:00-3:00 pm, with the UAF teacher providing weekly updates on assignments and coursework. Students will receive 0.5 high school credits and 3 college credits for the semester.



## Camp Kick Ash

Six (6) students, three (3) river students and three (3) Raven students are participating in Camp Kick Ash from Friday, October 5<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. Students will receive basic firefighter apprenticeship training; have the opportunity to obtain their Emergency Trauma Technician certification (ETT-First Responder) and 3 UAF college credits/0.5 high school CTE or elective credits; learn high ropes, fire, water, ice, rescue techniques; outdoor survival skills; learn employability, teamwork, and leadership skills; learn to set individual and team goals; and develop independent living skills. Students are in Aniak, staying at the Joe Parent Vo-

cational Center, from October 5<sup>th</sup> to October 20<sup>th</sup>. From October 20<sup>th</sup> to October 25<sup>th</sup> students will be in Fairbanks staying at the Fort Wainwright Barracks. In Fairbanks, the students will take what they have learned and integrate it into real life simulations with other Emergency Response professionals, connect with Rural Student Services at UAF, and learn about other college programs.

*Submitted by Patty Woody,  
CTE Coordinator*

**A total of 87  
students are  
taking  
different CTE  
courses**



# Assets & Youth Resiliency

## Future Educators of Alaska

YKSD is currently in its fourth year of partnering with Future Educators of Alaska (FEA) which is a grant funded program through the Department of Education, to help us “grow our own educators”. The program is under a new funding cycle and received less funding which in turn means that YKSD will receive less funding as well. All of the money received from the program goes directly to fund our FEA Advisors at each of our sites and purchase FEA supplies in the amount of \$200. Job announcements went out in September and so far we have advisors in Minto (Monica Garza), Huslia (Casey Weter), Kaltag (Evelyn Esmailka), Koyukuk (Josie Dayton), and Allakaket (Camille Varin). Advisors will meet with students once a week throughout the school year for an hour to do activities. Weekly reports must be submitted online for grant reporting purposes. Club activities are range from anything to creating bulletin boards, grading papers, planning activities, elder visits, native singing and dancing, writing, book club, reading to elementary students, or even teaching a lesson. If you have any questions on the reporting or would like to share ideas please contact Andrea Durny at [adurny@yksd.com](mailto:adurny@yksd.com).



FEA Student working with Eskimo Dancer at the Morris Thompson Cultural Center



Beetus Moses of Huslia introducing himself to the rest of the students during the FEA Jr.

## Area Wide Student Council

We are in our third year of doing the Area Wide Student Council. The AWSC is a student advisory board made up of at least one student representative from each site and the group meets once a month over video conference. Students meet and give their site report, share/generate ideas, express concerns, and help to distribute communications on upcoming events to their schools. On Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm the members will have the election of officers and the President will serve as the YKSD Student Board Representative, this individual will be required to present the student report at all regular scheduled YKSD board meetings. The Student Board Representative's first assignment will be to attend the AASB Conference in Anchorage November 1-4, 2012.



## Assets & Youth Resiliency

This is a great leadership opportunity and students can gain valuable experience to help prepare them towards future goals. It also looks great in the community/school involvement sections of a scholarship essay or applying to any program when they list they served on the “District Wide Student Council for YKSD”, or any Student Council. There are scholarships and conference opportunities specifically available to any students who are elected officers of Student Government.

We are also looking to send four of the AWSC members to the Alaska Association of Student Government Conference in Wasilla, October 25-27 for training. This is one of the largest high school gatherings in the state of Alaska! Students will get to represent your school by voting on resolutions presented by AASG which effect Alaska schools. Since our schools are so small, our student votes are pretty powerful.

If any of the sites have had elections, please email me the names of your officers because they will automatically be entered to sit on the Area Wide Student Council. Student Council is a great way to keep students, principal and teachers informed of each other’s ideas, needs and opinions. Give back to the school, community, enjoy special activities, volunteer, and work together on events.



2012 Jr. High Regional Gathering

### District Wide Fun Run

2012 marks completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual District-Wide Fun Run, results submitted were emailed out on October 4<sup>th</sup>. The run is held to promote healthy lifestyles and exercise within our district and is open to any students K-12 who would like to participate. Like the two previous years, students who completed 10 running practices/activities, and submitted a registration form received a free t-shirt. Thanks to all the students who sent in their registration forms, coaches, and volunteers for making this a success. By now each site should have received their t-shirts, I tried my best to order each sites school colors.

For more information of Healthy Futures please visit:

<http://www.healthyfuturesak.org/activity-logs.html>

### AFN Youth Delegates

Congratulations to Ophelia Moses (Huslia), Kaylen Gray (Allakaket), and Wendy Cleveland (Hughes) for being selected as a Youth Delegate for Tanana Chiefs Conference to attend the 2012 AFN Elders and Youth Conference in Anchorage October 14-18. A total of 6 Youth Delegates were chosen from a pool of student applicants coming out of TCC’s 42 villages. Delegates will represent and speak on behalf of their sub-region while at the conference. This opportunity is fully funded by TCC.

### TCC Education Summit

The TCC Youth Delegates Application for the 2012 Education Summit here in Fairbanks is now open to youth (ages 14-18) in the region. Deadline to apply is October 26th by 5:00pm, applications must be sent to TCC, ATTN: Katina Charles, Youth Manager. Ph: 907-451-8251 Ext. 3353, Fax: 907-459-3885. If you know of any students who would like to attend, please encourage them to apply. This opportunity is fully funded by TCC.



*Submitted by Andrea Durny, Youth Resiliency Specialist*

## Native Language & Culture

The Native Language Program at YKSD is happy to announce that 165 students are now taking Denaakk'e or Menhte Kenaaga' classes at all nine of our river schools. In addition, ten students from Beaver and Stevens Village have joined our video-conference classes. The following language teachers have on-site classes in addition to participating one day a week in the video-conference classes: "Taamaanyee" Sophie Alexie in Kaltag; "Hok'etnolno" Irene Henry in Allakaket; and Katie Kangas in Ruby.

This quarter students learned about animals, birds, fish, and berries. As students learn the new vocabulary they glue a picture of the animal to their landscape poster. In addition to the animal or bird, students learn to use the word in a sentence. One parent reported that her son saw a raven and said "Dotson' doldo.", which means 'a

raven is sitting up there'. A "solution station" poster was sent home to all students so they can share and practice their language with their parents or grandparents.

This quarter I was able to make visits to Kaltag, Hughes, Koyukuk and Ruby. In Kaltag and Ruby I was able to provide language-teaching strategies to Sophie Alexie and Katie Kangas, respectively. The greatest joy in my job is working with the students face to face, seeing them have fun while learning. In Koyukuk and Ruby I took student portraits.

Each of the guests for the Wednesday Story Hour have been such a treasure. Elders have shared cultural stories to students in Allakaket, Hughes, Huslia, Koyukuk, Nulato, Kaltag, Minto and Manley Hot Springs. Mary Rose Agnes of Kaltag talked about growing up in

camp and shared her late father Alexie Pitka's song. Pauline Peter of Nulato advised students to become hard workers. Setsoo Cecelia Beetus talked about paddling for three days before the introduction of kickers. Students sang her Hooleelaanh Dedzaanh Sodeelts'eeyh in honor of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Eliza Jones and I dissected a white fish using the document camera. Madeline Williams of Hughes dissected a deyh 'spruce grouse' and blew up it's air sac, also known as the crop. One sack was full of el 'spruce needles' and the other was full of blueberries. Billy McCarty of Ruby told a story about when he went out muskrat hunting with his father when he was nine years old. Martha Wright of Ruby told about how they moved from Mouse Point to the Kokri-nes camp because there was so much grass at Mouse Point, it was fire hazard.

*Submitted by K'etsoo Susan Paskvan*



The students of Merrelaine A. Kangas school sing "Doogh dzaanh elyol" 'it is snowing today' as they motion the snow falling down. This was one of the activities during the Denaakk'e Fun Night. About 50 people of all ages played games in Denaakk'e to learn the vocabulary for family members, sang songs, and learned how to introduce themselves.



Students, staff, and parents of Johnny Oldman School in Hughes jump for joy at the beginning of a walk to the end of the field and back. This was the first activity of the school sleepover.





Michael Simon teaches Ethan Nicholai and Curtis Ambrose how to scrape a bedzeyh lel 'caribou skin'. As students scraped the skin, they said "Bedzeyh lel estl'uh." 'I am scraping the caribou skin'. The fall caribou skin is the warmest because the fur is thick. The skin is used as a mattress when out camping. Michael also taught the students about what he carries in his survival gear.



Elder Richard Frank of Minto passed away in September. In this photo, the draahtaah ch'eleeleek (mourning songs) are sung the night before his funeral. In the middle, Sarah Silas leads along with LouAnn Williams. Chad Roberts, second grade, leans in to intently learn the songs. Chad has been a song leader in his class since he began school.



Taamaanyee Sophie Alexie, teaches her second and third grade students the Denaakk'e sentences: Demee dlel te ledlo. 'the Dall sheep live in the mountains'. Medzeyh letaanh. 'the caribou is lying down'. Dedaayee taah lehaanh. 'the four-year old bull moose is standing in the water'.



Susan "K'etsoo" Paskvan teaching the Geege Ooneent'aanee? Song to early elementary students over video-conference. The song goes like this:

Geege Ooneent'aanee? Are you picking berries? (sing three times)

Kooyh oonst'aanh. I'm picking rose hips. The students are pretending to put berries in the bucket as they sing.



The staff and students of Ella B. Verneti School jump for joy. During my visit, there was one sunny afternoon, so we went on a school picnic down at the boat landing. As part of culture week students beaded dragon fly decorations, ground moose meat, and learned about fish anatomy.



## Meet Our New Staff Members....



**Monica Acosta**-Elementary Teacher, Kaltag School

I am from Illinois and enjoy seeing family and friends when I can. I went to Illinois State University and have worked in many areas. I have taught from Peoria, Illinois to the far reaches of Tacoma, Washington and have enjoyed it tremendously.

I thought what a unique opportunity to work in Alaska. In 1990 I took a cruise to Alaska with my parents and the seed was planted. The beauty of Kaltag is breath taking. I have been able to see the moon rising over the Yukon River and a gorgeous sunrise as well. I have also been lucky to see a gorgeous sunset over the Bering Sea.

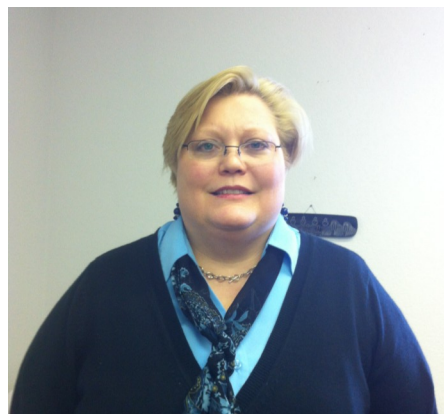
I have been in a village that has caught a whale and saw how the village works together harvesting the animal. Moose season was so exciting for many of our students. Several of the students were able to "go out" get an animal. It has been neat to see how proud they are in being able to help feed their family and friends.

A teacher takes  
a *Hand*, opens  
a *Mind* and  
touches a *Heart*



**Colton Arneson**-Elementary Teacher, Minto School

I grew up in Colorado and moved to Montana when I was fifteen. I graduated from MSU Billings with a degree in Elementary Education. Aside from my time in Minto, my only teaching experience was student teaching in a third grade classroom and doing my junior field in a fifth grade classroom. I chose to try teaching in rural Alaska because I wanted to try living in a part of the world that I had never seen. My experience so far has been very positive. I have really enjoyed how hospitable people in the village of Minto are. The cohesiveness of the community during celebrations has been something that I have simply not seen in larger communities. I am looking forward to the rest of a great year here in Minto working for YKSD.



**Karin Baldwin**-Chief Financial Officer, District Office, Fairbanks

With over twenty years of diverse ac-

counting experience in compliance reporting and four years in education, I hope to enhance the Business Office's procedures and develop consistency that will strengthen the organization. Most recently, I was the Financial Accounting Director for the University of Alaska System Offices. My primary function was to drive the external reporting for all of the campuses to a variety of authorities. Prior to working at the U I was the controller for Ilisagvik College in Barrow, Alaska. This was an awesome opportunity to enter the education industry while living in a village and learning about the Inupiaq culture. Being an Army brat I have lived in many states, cities and towns. A good portion of my childhood and adult life was spent in Colorado, although I now consider Fairbanks my home. I am looking forward to learning more about the remote communities served by YKSD including their heritage and future.



**Chane Beam**-Director of Instruction & Professional Development, District Office, Fairbanks

I am a National Board Certified Social Studies Teacher with over 23 years of experience in education including working as the social studies department chair, athletic director and head boys basketball coach for St. Petersburg High School. Prior to joining YKSD, I was a consultant for PEAK Learning Systems and led training sessions for teachers across the United States. In this role as a consultant, I have worked with the YKSD staff for four years, both through presenting trainings and visit-



## Meet Our New Staff Members....

ing the village schools to work directly with the teachers. I am excited to join our district to continue and enhance this effort to improve achievement for our students. In September, my wife of 25 years, Laurie, and I drove from Florida to Alaska. The trip took ten days and we were highly impressed and excited to see the sights and wildlife of the northern US, Canada, and of course, Alaska.



**Scott Brucker**-Special Education Teacher, Minto School

I am originally from Pittsburgh, PA. I have a Bachelors degree in elementary education and taught 2nd and 3rd grade in Venetie, Alaska for the past 2 years. I will finish my Special Education Master's degree in the Spring of 2013. I chose to work in rural Alaska to have life experiences different from any other teaching position in America. My favorite experiences so far are the opportunities to work with cultures different from my own and learning new things. In my spare time, I love to backpack and cross-country ski in Alaska. I follow my Pittsburgh sports teams (Steelers, Penguins, Pirates). I also enjoy reading Alaskan literature. A fun fact about myself is that I've had 10 wisdom teeth removed.



**Teresa Cox**-Principal, Jimmy Huntington School, Huslia



**Barbara Crane**-High School Teacher, Minto School



**Tommy Dahill**-High School Teacher, Johnny Oldman School, Hughes

I moved around a lot but have spent just over half of my life in Coronado, California...the balance in South Texas, West Texas, North Dakota, Sacra-

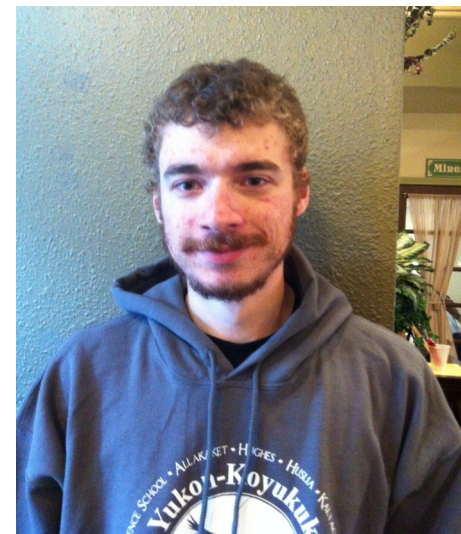
mento, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Santa Barbara, Florida, Sicily, Skagway, and Belgium.

I received my Bachelor's degree from UC Santa Barbara in 1987. I have also worked as a B-52 Navigator, Subway Sandwich Artist Extraordinaire, Stockbroker, Salesman and a Teacher for the last 12 years, in San Diego Unified Schools in Coronado, CA and Skagway City School.

When asked why I wanted to work in rural Alaska, to me this is kind of a no brainer; who WOULDNT want to live in a place like this? Awesome people, beautiful nature, people who have been living sustainably for...oh...10,000 years or so.

I have had many great experiences so far, seeing the river shrouded in fog; talking to the elders; waking up whilst camping to a beautiful crisp fall day with my boots frozen solid; learning from my extremely insightful students; and staining my face blue with overripe blueberries.

I cannot speak highly enough about the people of Hutodleekkaakket.



**Steve Duby**-Teacher, Andrew K. Demoski School, Nulato

I was born & raised in Upstate NY, but have been in & around Alaska for 3 years, most recently from Anchorage. I am a member of the 2012-13 cohort for EED's Alaska Transition to Teaching (AKT2) program. I am also working on my Master's degree in Outdoor & Envi-



## Meet Our New Staff Members....

ronmental Education at Alaska Pacific University. My bachelor's degree is from SUNY Oswego. Before getting into teaching, I was a park ranger for the National Park Service in Alaska.

I chose YKSD because it is a partner district with AKT2. Also, my past bush experience has been within the Interior, so the Athabascan culture is one that I had become interested in and wanted to learn more about.

I had the privilege of going on a successful moose hunt with our school board president, Maurice McGinty.



**Merrill Feller**-I am currently the principal at Andrew K. Demoski School in Nulato. For the last 3 years I was the Site Administrator in Nunapitchuk, AK. While at Nunapitchuk I heard how beautiful the Nulato area was, how friendly everyone was, and how important education was to everyone. Two staff members there were familiar with Nulato and made many comments about the area. When I decided to change locations, Nulato was the first location that interested me. I think the decision to move here has been a good one. The community members are friendly and helpful. The students work hard and have goals to be successful. All the staff are hard working and strive to provide the teaching and support that our students need to be able to succeed.

Before working at Nunapitchuk, I

taught high school science on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in Mission, South Dakota for 10 years. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in 6-12 Science and a Masters in K-12 School Administration. Most of my life I have lived in South Dakota or Nebraska.

As a youth I read stories about Alaska from books written by Jack London and others. The books contained fascinating stories about life and survival in the wilds of Alaska and other topics. My most favorite experience here outside of school duties is to observe the beauty of the area and hear stories from the locals that have lived here their whole lives. I especially enjoy looking out my office window and across the Yukon River. Seeing the Iditarod dog teams go through Nulato next year will be an experience I will enjoy.



**Barbara Greene**-Counselor, Al-lakaket, Hughes & Huslia

I was born and raised in Ozone Park, NYC and stayed there till age 15 then moved with my mom, and grandfather to Daytona Beach, Florida. I have lived in various parts of Alaska since 1986 and consider Alaska my home as I live here 9 months and vacation in Florida or travel overseas for the summer months.. I have 2 children - a boy and a girl and a 1 year old granddaughter; Sahara. I have a masters degree in Social Work from Barry University in Miami, 2 Bachelor degrees in Social Work and Psychology and a Associate degree in Psychology. I have many years experience working as a Menta Health Director and as a State Child

Abuse Investigator plus 12 years as a School Counselor. I love working with children, teens and families and try to help people as much as I can. I chose to apply to YKSD as I wanted to remain working in rural Alaska and wanted to explore new areas I have not seen. My favorite experience so far in YKSD has been traveling to the 4 villages and working as their School Counselor. The students, staff and the community have been very friendly and enjoyable to work with. Of course I cannot leave out Huslia, which is my base. I have just moved into teacher housing this week and now I feel like a member of the community. I also enjoyed going to the Manley hot springs and eating at the Roadside Inn. After eating boxed food, a steak was a real treat. I am very happy working for YKSD and I know I will have great adventures to tell my family and friends in Florida.



**Malene Johnson**-Special Education Teacher, Raven Correspondence School in Juneau.

I am originally from Upper Michigan, but now live in Juneau, Alaska. This will be my ninth year in Alaska, having lived in Anchorage and Haines prior to my recent move to Juneau. I graduated from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities with a major in Global Studies, Anthropology and minor in Spanish. While in high school and college, and after college, I studied abroad and traveled throughout South America. I attended UAA and received my MAT in Social Studies and Spanish and taught high school Spanish. While liv-



## Meet Our New Staff Members....

ing Haines, I attended UAS and received an additional endorsement in Special Education and taught a variety of classes in a variety of settings at the Haines School. Prior to teaching in schools I worked in a variety of education settings including the outdoors and community centers. I chose to work for the Yukon-Koyukuk School District and Raven Correspondence School because my husband and I recently relocated to Juneau, and the Raven sounded like the perfect adventure and challenge for me! I really enjoy working with and supporting families; teaching and advising in the homeschool setting fits my educational philosophy to support both parents and students as life-long learners. My favorite experience so far has been getting to know the families and my colleagues.

I am interested in helping families integrate experiential learning, research-based reading, writing and math curriculum, and the arts into their everyday instruction. I believe that students learn best by actively participating in their education through the development of their creativity and inquiry skills. In the homeschool setting, students are naturally active and creative participants as their learning is dependent upon their input and participation. I also think it is important for parents and teachers to “choose wisely” when selecting a curriculum for their students as not all materials are created equally. As state and national standards and accountability increase across all levels, homeschool students have much more choice in how they meet and exceed these standards through their individualized programs. As a homeschool advisory teacher, I aspire to find the best match for each and every one of my students and their families in terms of program approach, curriculum choice, accountability and creativity.



**Fargo Kesey**-High School Teacher, Gladys Dart School, Manley Hot Springs

I am originally from Western Oregon, but took my first teaching job with Berling Sea School District at a small village near Nome. My wife, Cathy, and I taught in Alaska a few more years before moving to Idaho to be closer to family. I took a break from teaching for a while to be a firefighter with the Forest Service, and while rappelling out of helicopters into a fire is fun the first few times, I missed the more dangerous and exciting world of teenagers, and so we returned to Alaska to teach.

We love Manley Hot Springs so far, and it's wonderful to see how our two children are thriving here.



**Elisa Koler**- Elementary Teacher, Merrelaine A. Kangas School, Ruby



**Sandra Main**-Teacher, Raven Correspondence School, Wasilla

Moving from the Snake River Plains of SE Idaho to the Matsu Valley of Alaska brought with it many adjustments as well as adventure. We love Alaska! Hello fellow YKSD personnel. My name is Sandra Main and I am pleased to be part of the Raven program. As an advisory teacher and special education teacher, I work primarily out of the Wasilla office with frequent visits to the Anchorage office. Since I stepped into this position in July, it has been a rollercoaster ride as I am learning the many aspects of the job. Raven is made up of a dedicated staff, which I am please to be a part of.

When not at work or thinking about work, I enjoy spending time with my family exploring the outdoors. We had a great summer full of adventure with lack of sleep thrown in. The long days threw us for a loop as we often forgot to go to bed till long into the night – but what fun.

I also enjoy music, cooking as well as reading a good book on a rainy day. Of all the accomplishments I have made in life thus far, raising my children must be at the top of the list. My husband and I have three boys ages 22, 20, and 19 as well as one daughter age 14. We are a military family and have experienced two employments (Iraq and Afghanistan) in the last four years. I am enjoying the calm of life right now before a new challenge should arise. Life is good – we are blessed.

## Meet Our New Staff Members....



**Eleanor McCrary**-Elementary Teacher, Andrew K. Demoski School, Nulato

I was born in Rogers, Arkansas, and grew up there. After marrying my husband, we moved to his village in Oklahoma to live on his great great grandmother's original tribal land allotment. I taught mostly Kindergarten in a rural Arkansas school district for eight years before coming to teach in Alaska. My husband and I had both heard many stories about Alaska from people we knew, and we wanted to come to see "The Last Frontier" for ourselves. I feel very fortunate to be a member of a friendly community of people living and working in a land of such amazing beauty. My favorite parts of being here so far have been the opportunities to learn from elders and others in the community such as during Culture Week. I am looking forward with some mild trepidation to my first winter in Alaska. During the cold winter months, I am hoping to learn more about beading and plan to try my hand at making my first quilt.

**Rodger Pitts**-High School Teacher, Kaltag School

I am from Chugiak, Alaska. I was born in Alaska Native Hospital in Anchorage and went to school in Chugiak and Longmont, Colorado. I have an Associate of Art from Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho, a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education of Social Sciences and a Minor in English from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and am working on my thesis for a Master of Education in Special Education from University of Alaska Southeast.



As an Athabaskan, I am glad to be able to come back into the part of the country that I consider home. While there are wonderful things about anywhere you can be, truly, there is no place like home.

My favorite experience so far has been going out on a hunt. To be able to be in a boat and travel the river was beautiful and a great deal of fun.

My wife and I recently shared our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. We are both teachers and have worked in several location in Alaska and the lower 48. We are happy to be in such a beautiful and friendly place. We love dogs and enjoy outdoor activities.



**David & Katie Riemer**-High School & Elementary Teachers, Jimmy Huntingdon School, Huslia

We are David and Katie Riemer. We grew up in Wisconsin and moved to Anchorage about two years ago. We attended University Wisconsin Stevens Point, where I earned my degree in elementary education and David earned his degree in Secondary education.

Right from the start, we knew we wanted to live in Alaska. Our journey as been nothing but wonderful, and we are looking to the future with great anticipation!



**Michele Sturdevant**-Special Education Teacher, Allakaket School

Wow! I love living and teaching in Allakaket, Alaska. Why did I leave

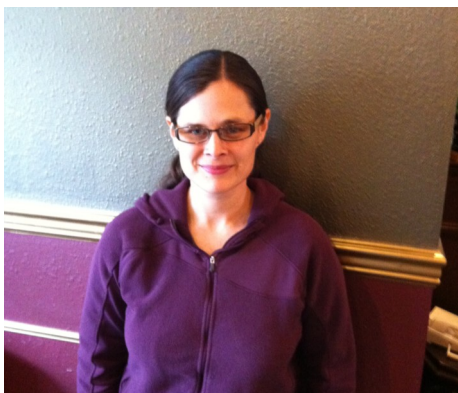
Montana? I have always wanted to live in Alaska. As I explore the land, I discover that the beautifully shimmering Koyukuk River is close to my housing. Never have I experienced picking blue berries at the airport nor cranberries across from the church built by the community, log by log. I was nervous arriving at the school because I thought that the students might be disrespectful. The converse is true. I am so impressed with the students' respectful behavior, questions, and willingness to share their lives and culture. I feel at home. Thank you for this opportunity. I am truly blessed! I have been a Special Education Teacher since 1983 in grade K-12. I attended Carroll College for my B.A. and Lesley University for my Mas-

*Did you know?.....  
The YKSD Board Policy  
Manual is available on  
our website under  
'Administration'*



## Meet Our New Staff Members....

ters in Education.



**Cathy Walker**-Elementary Teacher, Gladys Dart School, Manley

My name is Cathy Walker and I am originally from Oregon. I have taught elementary students for the last 12 years. I started teaching in Alaska in the King Salmon area and then taught several years in a small town in Idaho. I returned to Alaska 2 years ago and taught in a small Russian village outside of Homer. Now I am teaching in Manley Hot Springs with my husband Fargo. I love the beauty of Alaska and have always preferred rural areas to the big city. Manley Hot Springs is a beautiful area and the community has been very receptive and welcoming. The hot springs are definitely a bonus after a long week of teaching!



**Priscilla Williams**-Teacher, Allakaket School

I was born and raised in Allakaket. I went to Sheldon Jackson College and



New Teachers who attended the PEAK Institute in Vail, Colorado in June

*Teachers who inspire realize there will always be rocks in the road ahead of us. They will be stumbling blocks or stepping stones; it all depends on how we use them. ~Author Unknown*

received my B. A. in Elementary Ed. I have taught in Koyukuk, Kaltag, Huslia and Fort Yukon for 6 years. I wanted to come back to Allakaket and make sure the students are getting the high quality education that they deserve.

I enjoy one of our science activities "A Star Is Born" with Michelle Sam. I am enjoying visiting with the elders, family. After school Michele S. and I have Jr. High Basketball practice. Hopefully soon, we will start a sewing club in my room. Also, students are welcome to my apartment on Sunday at 1:00 p.m. They usually play monopoly and I am teaching them how to bake bread and cinnamon rolls.





## September In-service a Success!



**May I have your help please with Steve Swatling (HSL) and Nancy Mason (KAL).**



**Elementary teachers Cathy Walker (MLY) and Monica Acosta (KAL) discuss ways they can use the cootie snatchers.**



**Maurice McGinty, School Board Chair, addressing the staff.**



**Dodecahedron vocabulary balls; add sticky notes to each face to review concepts. Eddie Hornsby and Alan Swenson (NUL)**



**Asst. Superintendent Gina Hrinko talking about teacher credit.**



**Joan Jones (RCS-Delta); Anne Titus (RBY); Nancy Mason (AET) and Marilyn Marshall (KYU)**



## More from the in-service....



**The bearded ones: David, Fargo and Steve**



**Katie and her glasses**



**Ellie McCrary (NUL); Elisa Koler (RBY); Pete Moyryla (RBY); Nicholas Graves (RCS - FAI); and Scott Brucker (MNT)**



**Always fun to catch up with fellow teachers. Danae Davis (RCS-Anch); Katie Riemer and Brandy Henderson (HSL)**



**Cathy Walker (MNT); Elisa Koler (RBY); Colton Arneson (MNT); and Monica Acosta (KAL)**



**Jen, Rachel & Patty holding down the fort.**



# Kaltag



7th grader, Courtney Saunders, won first place in TCC's "What Wellness Means to Me" poster contest. Great Job!

Students enjoying the moose horns that Colby got. Her dad, Justin, brought it to the school for the kids to learn about telling how old the moose was.



The new teaching family in Kaltag: Monica Acosta, Nancy Mason, Michele Patterson, Evelyn Esmailka, Rodger & Shauna Pitts



# Ruby's New Playground

It is with great honor and appreciation that the students and staff of Merrelaine A. Kangas School in Ruby, Alaska now currently the owners of a brand new playground; announce the completion of that project!

We have been working on playground fundraising since 1997. Yes, it took that long for our fundraising to occur. Twice we faced setbacks due to the recession and poor economy, but with a quiet patience we finally found real success in the last two years to finally build what now sits out our lot. On August first, another rainy day for many along the Yukon turned into a day that was not for the feint of heart. We had a “spreading of the chips” party and twenty one community members: fathers, mothers, children and assorted other relatives showed up to be a part of Ruby Community and school history to participate in this project. With over 700 bags filled with woodchips you can imagine how much their help was needed. Our thanks to YKSD employee, Jim Cooper, and the septic system crew for their assistance in getting the bags up from the slip to the school grounds. We had our dedication on yet another rainy foggy day and enjoyed a fine celebratory dinner with our friends here in this tiny “gem” along the Yukon. The children have been enjoying their playground, which came with a picnic table, and afterschool hours we have noticed children in both elementary and secondary playing and working on homework at the table making it all worth while.

Our thanks go to many YKSD staff, board members and local and regional congressional representatives and businesses that thought our project worthy of funding.

In the words of one of our CSC members- if you build it they will come. And they sure did!

*Submitted by Anne Titus, Principal/Teacher*



## SCARY WORDS WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

Find the **scary words** that are listed below in the word search grid. Circle each letter one by one. Each letter of the *Scary Words* word search grid may be used in more than one word. **When the word search puzzle is complete, read the remaining letters left to right, top to bottom, to learn an interesting fact about the scariest movie ever.**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | I | B | R | O | M | T | H | E | E | H | X | O | S | C |
| R | C | L | I | S | T | W | H | E | S | I | C | H | H | W |
| A | S | O | R | E | L | Y | M | I | L | E | A | I | O | S |
| E | D | O | Y | D | O | O | L | B | I | I | L | N | C | N |
| I | N | D | E | T | S | U | E | S | E | L | V | N | K | S |
| H | E | C | V | E | O | E | C | G | I | N | T | E | I | Y |
| O | T | U | U | H | H | A | R | N | E | R | E | Y | N | I |
| R | S | R | G | O | R | F | G | I | T | E | G | L | G | S |
| R | G | D | N | Y | G | N | I | Y | F | I | R | T | E | P |
| I | C | L | O | N | S | I | P | F | D | E | R | S | E | O |
| F | R | I | G | H | T | E | N | I | N | G | D | A | T | O |
| I | O | N | B | E | E | H | O | R | R | I | D | H | T | K |
| C | H | G | E | R | S | C | A | R | R | I | E | G | S | Y |
| T | F | I | C | L | M | E | D | E | M | O | N | I | C | V |
| E | R | M | A | G | N | I | L | T | R | A | T | S | D | E |

### SCARY WORDS LIST

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| BLOODCURDLING | GRUESOME   |
| BLOODY        | HORRID     |
| CHILLING      | HORRIFIC   |
| CREEPY        | MORBID     |
| DEMONIC       | PETRIFYING |
| EVIL          | SCARY      |
| FRIGHTENING   | SHOCKING   |
| GHASTLY       | SPOOKY     |
| GHOULISH      | STARTLING  |
| GRISLY        | TERRIFYING |



# YKSD Birthdays to watch out for....



*Did you know?.....  
All of your payroll &  
leave information is  
available by logging  
into the 'Employee  
Portal' on our website  
under 'Staff Links'.  
Contact Payroll for  
more information.*

## OCTOBER

|    |          |            |
|----|----------|------------|
| 2  | MARY     | McCARTY    |
| 2  | SCOTTY   | STARR      |
| 3  | MICHELLE | SAM        |
| 4  | BARBARA  | SUNDBERG   |
| 6  | LINA     | EDWIN      |
| 6  | CYNTHIA  | REILLY     |
| 8  | HOLLY    | HILDEBRAND |
| 9  | KERRY    | BOYD       |
| 9  | CAMILLE  | VARIN      |
| 14 | MAURICE  | MCGINTY    |
| 18 | HEIDI    | WRIGHT     |
| 20 | MARIE    | DAYTON     |
| 21 | SOPHIE   | ALEXIE     |
| 22 | RANDI    | SHRIDER    |
| 27 | JUNE     | STROTHENKE |
| 28 | JENNIE   | MCLEAN     |
| 29 | ANDREA   | BERG       |

## NOVEMBER

|    |          |           |
|----|----------|-----------|
| 1  | STEVEN   | DUBY      |
| 7  | TAMI     | RUMP      |
| 8  | JUDY     | MADROS    |
| 10 | PATRICIA | BASER     |
| 12 | SAMUEL   | BARNEY    |
| 12 | HAZEL    | OLSON     |
| 13 | KAREN    | GURTLE    |
| 13 | OLGA     | SEMAKEN   |
| 18 | LAURA    | RASMUSSEN |
| 23 | KATRINA  | FRANK     |
| 24 | EVELYN   | ESMAILKA  |

## DECEMBER

|    |           |           |
|----|-----------|-----------|
| 1  | RACHEL    | REILLY    |
| 9  | VIRGINIA  | WOOD      |
| 10 | DIAN      | GURTLE    |
| 10 | ELEANOR   | McCRARY   |
| 11 | JOYCE     | BILLUPS   |
| 14 | TAMMI     | STOCKS    |
| 19 | EMILY     | FRANK     |
| 19 | REBECCA   | LINUS     |
| 19 | NANCY     | MASON     |
| 20 | EMILIE    | CAMPBELL  |
| 26 | BRANDY    | HENDERSON |
| 27 | CHRISTINA | SEMAKEN   |