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SAVE THE DATE: MAMMA MIA
MORE ON PAGE 11 OF MAKE A SCENE MAGAZINE



AUDITIONS: ALASKA HOME COMPANION
MORE ON PAGE 9 OF MAKE A SCENE MAGAZINE

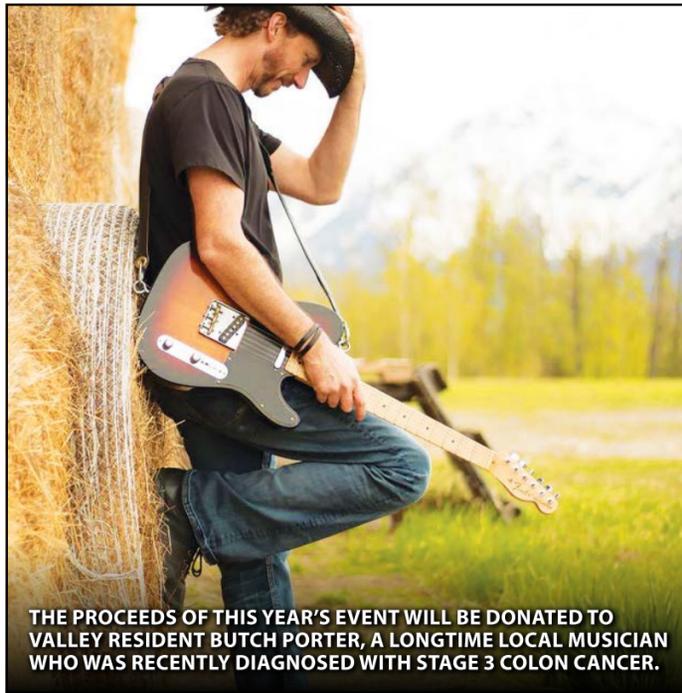
The People's Paper

FREE

MID-AUG 2019

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA VALLEY, ALASKA

Big 'M' Memorial Benefit



THE PROCEEDS OF THIS YEAR'S EVENT WILL BE DONATED TO VALLEY RESIDENT BUTCH PORTER, A LONGTIME LOCAL MUSICIAN WHO WAS RECENTLY DIAGNOSED WITH STAGE 3 COLON CANCER.

Contributed by Nikki Lee

Big 'M' Memorial Benefit
 08/17/19 - 12PM - 10PM
Mug-Shot Saloon
 251 W Parks Hwy, Wasilla

The Mug-Shot Saloon and Big 'M' Inc. are excited to announce our *10th Annual Big 'M' Memorial Benefit*, to be held on Saturday, August 17th from 12pm-10pm at the Mug-Shot Saloon, located at 251 W. Parks Hwy in Wasilla.

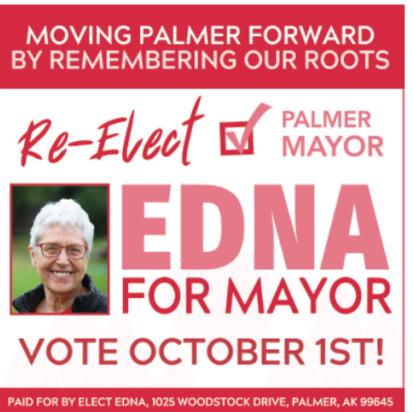
This inspiring annual event is an all-day fundraiser that was created in honor of Marilyn Anderson, commemorating her lifetime of commitment to helping her neighbors, friends and patrons in times of need.

Marilyn, along with her husband Ted, together owned and operated the Mug-Shot Saloon in Wasilla until she lost her battle with cancer in 2009.

ARTICLE CONTINUES ON PAGE 3

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SILVERS FOR SENIORS 2019
MORE ON PAGE 2 OF THE PEOPLE'S PAPER

Fly Fishing Film Festival Returns



AN ANIAK RIVER RAINBOW TROUT FROM TODD MOEN'S FILM "ANIAK"



FILMMAKER MARC CRAFO SHOWING OFF HIS CATCH IN "ONE DAY IN ICELAND"

Contributed by Ben Rowell

The International Fly Fishing Film Festival™ (IF4™) returns to the Mat-Su Valley this fall for a fifth year.

The film festival consists of short and feature length films produced by professional filmmakers from all corners of the globe, showcasing the passion, lifestyle and culture of fly fishing.

This year's festival features nine films, including "ANIAK", filmed on the 95-mile tributary of Alaska's Kuskokwim River, by acclaimed film maker Todd Moen.

The films run for 1 hour and 36 minutes, followed by gear giveaways from national and local sponsors.

"This event is all about bringing together the Mat-Su angling community for a couple hours of fun", says host Ben Rowell of Highway 3 Angler LLC.

"The festival will entertain all ages and inspire anglers to get out more on their local waters or travel to exotic destinations."

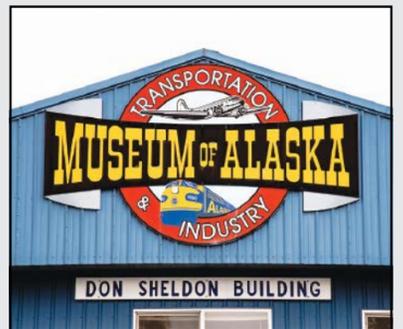
IF4™ is sponsored locally by 3 Rivers Fly and Tackle, Cache Camper Manufacturing, Inc., FischeWear, and Trout Unlimited Southcentral Alaska

Chapter. The 2019 films screen on Friday, September 13 at 7:30pm at The Glenn Massay Theater on Mat-Su College campus in Palmer.

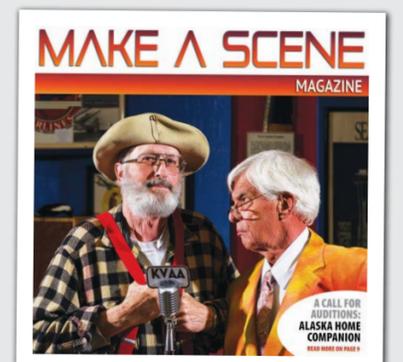
Tickets are available in advance for \$15 at 3 Rivers Fly and Tackle and www.flyfilmfest.com and at the door for \$18.



2019 CARDBOARD CITY A SUCCESS
MORE ON PAGE 12 OF THE PEOPLE'S PAPER



FREE MATI ADMISSION FOR ACTIVE-DUTY
MORE ON PAGE 6 OF MAKE A SCENE MAGAZINE



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COMMUNITY & EVENTS

A Silver Miracle

Contributed by Charice Chambers

A small silver miracle has happened once again in the Mat-Su borough! For valley seniors, a meal of fresh silver salmon, a dinner many seniors could not afford to purchase, is on the menu at Palmer senior center. Thanks to Northern District Setnetters Association, Mat Valley seniors have the opportunity to dive into one of Alaska's best renewable resources.

Chef Phyllis Moore prepared the long-awaited silver filets with a tart wild blueberry sauce. According to Frank Bird, it was perfect. The dinner also provided an opportunity to reminisce about his setnetting experiences on the Kasilof, and of the 21 fish he brought home a few years back. Long-time fisherman Pete Christenson expounded on the culinary superiority of silvers over reds and kings, though not everybody at his table was in agreement. Mary Campbell, who is new to Alaska, declared that no matter the type of salmon, she loved it all. "It's worth moving to Alaska for!"

The brainchild of fisherwoman Page Herring and husband Bob Cellers, Silvers for Seniors has become a well-established tradition at Mat-Su Senior Services. Each year members of Northern District Setnetters enthusiastically donate a portion of their catch during a single day of the fishing season to the Center.

Northern District Setnetters like Gary Swan are happy not only to donate, but also show up at the dinner to swap fishing stories with seniors. This year, Swan regaled seniors with tales that included the swamping of his boat in a thirty-foot tide and the eight-foot surf that accompanied it. Fortunately, there were no injuries. With the help of fellow setnetters, the boat was righted, pulled off the sand, and towed back to town where it is being repaired.

Swan is quick to point out that setnetting is generally a family business. Both son Daryl and daughter-in-law Denise Swan fish their site near Fire Island. Daryl, who started setnetting at sixteen with several of his high school buddies, eventually acquired his own permit as an adult. He proudly points to his three kids and says they'll one day be delivering fish to the senior center as part of the Silvers for Seniors program.

Since the inception of Silvers for Seniors, Copper River Seafoods has also done much to make the event a success. Each year the company has provided a tote with ice to haul fish from the Port of Anchorage to the Center in Palmer. They have donated fish as well. Created by a trio for Cordovan fishermen, the company believes that salmon represent a limited natural resource that must be cared for and respected. Copper River Seafoods has always tried to support the community. Giving to seniors is a form of repayment.

This year's donation will put to good use. The Center will be able provide nearly 180 meals for local seniors, and an additional 117 meals for local home bound seniors, through the Home Delivered Meals program. Additional salmon will be used in salads and salmon soup throughout the fall season.

During the last fiscal year, Mat-Su Senior Services provided 42,455 nutritious congregate noontime meals in their community dining facility. Additionally, 91,859 meals were delivered to homebound senior and eligible individuals during the same period.

According to MSSS Executive Director Fred Traber, donations such as Silvers for Seniors are a much-needed supplement to achieve both financial and nutritional food goals of the Center.



Senior Education Classes Offered Free!

Contributed by Linda Myers-Steele

Senior Education classes resume a regular fall schedule!

This program is directed toward adults 50+ years old, who are interested in keeping mentally active, curious, learning something, and having fun.

No tests, no grades, and homework only if you want to.

And, here's the best part... the classes are free of charge. WASI (Wasilla Area Seniors Inc.) is kindly hosting the classes and the instructors volunteer their time.

SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE:

Advanced Knitting Classes Series: "Knitting in the Round"
Requirements: You must be able to cast on stitches, knit & purl, and increase & decrease stitches.
Instructor: Kathy Miggett, Certified Master Knitter, Northern Lights Valley Knitters. This is a 2-part class.

Lesson #1 of 2-part class: Tuesday, September 10, 2:00-4:00 PM.

Lesson #2 of 2-part class: Tuesday, September 24, 2:00-4:00 PM.

Starting with a hat, please bring these required supplies: 200 yards of worsted weight yarn, 16" circular

needle, size 8, set of double point needles size 8. Choose a plain, light colored yarn, not variegated or fuzzy. Additional knitting classes are on Oct. 8 & Oct. 22, details TBA.

Book Club - "I Read What I Want to Read": Tuesday, September 17, 3:00-4:00 PM.

Participants will be given an opportunity to share a summary of their book of interest with others. Learn from others about books that might interest you.

Facilitator: Andi Nations, Retired Public School Educator/Non-Profit Facilitator

Stir Your Soup

Contributed by Debra McGhan

Following a challenging winter that included major surgery, I'm striving now to regain my health and vitality. I figure that means I should get back to being physically fit; go to the gym, work out, get my body back in shape... But I've come to realize my real goal is not actually fitness, it's wellness. And I know there are a lot of other people on this planet that feel the same way.

I often say that our most important job as human beings is to take care of our bodies. However, most of us are not very good at that. We use and abuse our bodies until we have become a society of unhealthy, grouchy, overdosed, overweight people.

According to Lynn Reynolds, owner of Denali Gymnastics and Fitness, true wellness starts with nutrition.

"People think that fitness equals health," says Reynolds. "They think

that if you can swim, lift weights or run, that you're healthy. But fitness doesn't mean health. It only means that your body is ready for duty. What that duty is depends on the person and the regiment of fitness they have been pursuing."

There have been many cases when high profile athletes have dropped dead and the headlines read, 'He was perfectly healthy: athlete dies unexpectedly.'

How could this happen if he was fit and therefore healthy? "The reality is at the core level of their cells, these athletes were not healthy at all," said Reynolds. "Something was out of balance. They might be fit for running, biking or lifting weights but their heart, lungs or other vital organs may not have the nutritional foundation needed to keep them going.

"No matter what you do," stressed Reynolds. "If you are not giving your body the right building blocks and fuel, you will not be healthy no matter how many pushups or bench presses you are able to do."

On the other hand, just eating all the right food won't necessarily make you healthy and well either. Reynolds is adamant, "You have to 'stir your soup.' That means stressing the body through exercise that is constantly varied, high intensity and duplicates functional movement."

He says that wellness does not come from being fit for one thing, like running a race or climbing a mountain. "Nature abhors a specialist," he said. "If you run fast when you need to be strong, or are strong when you need to run fast, you will die. When you focus on one thing, you may be fit but you will not necessarily be well."

According to 88-year-old Dr. Kenneth Cooper, who inspired millions to exercise with his best-selling book 'Aerobics,' it is easier to maintain good health through proper exercise, diet, and emotional balance than to regain it once it is lost."

That theory has been proven valid through years of scientific research.

ARTICLE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

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COMMUNITY & EVENTS

Big 'M' Memorial Benefit

MAT-SU VALLEY, ALASKA PAGE 3

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

The first Big 'M' Benefit was held in August of that year, originally designed as a fundraising effort to help Ted and Marilyn (known as Big 'M' back in her Mat-Su Softball days), with the enormous financial burden associated with a cancer diagnosis.

Sadly, Marilyn passed away on August 13th. Following her death, Ted was not only faced with mourning the loss of his beloved wife, but also the ever-mounting medical bills from her cancer treatment.

The Big 'M' Benefit displayed a tremendous outpouring of kindness and generosity from our families, friends, patrons and community members. Humbled and inspired by the incredible support, Ted decided to hold an annual memorial benefit in Marilyn's honor, paying forward the generosity to other families in need. Each year, we select a recipient to benefit from our fundraising efforts and raise money through a variety of activities to aid them in their fight.

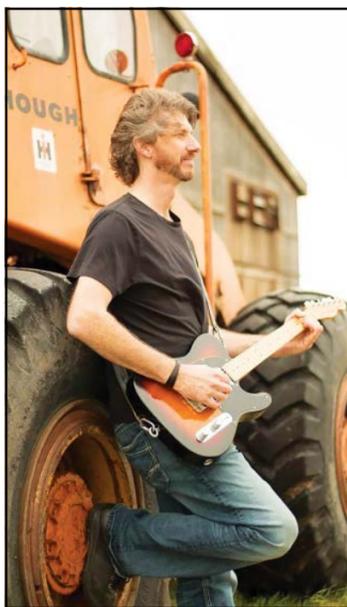
The proceeds of this year's event will be donated to Valley resident Butch Porter, a longtime local musician who was recently diagnosed with Stage 3 Colon Cancer. Butch is currently in Houston, Texas where he will be undergoing extended

and intensive treatment program at the MD Anderson Cancer Center. As insurance does not even begin to cover the exorbitant costs associated with cancer treatment, we hope to raise money to assist the Porter family in whatever way we can.

In 2018, our fundraising efforts raised over \$25,000, the money of which was donated to long-time Palmer resident Joe Trost to aid in his fight against a rare and aggressive form of cancer called Acute T lymphoblastic leukemia/lymphoma. This all-day event will include a multi-prize raffle, live and silent auctions, live music on an outdoor stage and acoustic acts on our indoor stage, a vendor area, a potluck style meal, a beer and wine garden, and a dunk tank. There will also be a great kid's area complete with a bounce house, face painting and carnival style games!

Joining forces with Valley businesses, entertainers, friends and patrons creates a powerful combination of resources, generosity and enthusiasm, which has proven to generate amazing results at previous events. We would like to invite you to be a part of the effort and join us for this amazing event!

For additional information, please contact Nikki Lee at mugshotak@gmail.com or by calling 907-376-1638.



Sammye Pokryfki Joins Mat-Su Health Foundation

Contributed by Robin Minard

Wasilla resident Sammye Pokryfki has joined the Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) Board of Directors. She brings a wealth of nonprofit management and volunteer experience to her new role.



Pokryfki is a lifelong Alaskan who has lived in the Mat-Su Borough for more than 36 years. She was senior vice president at the

Rasmuson Foundation until 2017, where she worked for 12 years. Currently, she works as a consultant and adjunct faculty member in the University of Alaska Anchorage Honors College. Previously, Pokryfki was executive director of United

Way Mat-Su and Denali KidCare rural outreach coordinator for Chugiak Children's Service. She has also served as a volunteer leader on nonprofit boards, government boards and commissions, blue ribbon committees, and in soup kitchens, domestic violence shelters, faith communities, mentoring programs, recreational events, and as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). Pokryfki holds a master's degree in social work and two bachelor's degrees, one in social work and one in English literature, all from University of Alaska Anchorage.

At the same board meeting where Pokryfki was elected, Lebron McPhail, who joined the board in 2016, was chosen as Vice Chair.

Service on Mat-Su Health Foundation Board of Directors is on a

volunteer basis, and applicants apply through a process that includes a written application and interview. Board members serve an initial three-year term, and each term may be renewed for two additional three-year terms.

About Mat-Su Health Foundation: Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) is the official business name of Valley Hospital Association, Inc., which shares ownership in Mat-Su Regional Medical Center. In this capacity, MSHF board members and representatives actively participate in the governance of Mat-Su's community hospital and protect the community's interest in this important healthcare institution, through board oversight. MSHF invests its assets into charitable works that improve the health and wellness of Alaskans living in Mat-Su.

More information is available at www.healthymatsu.org

STIR YOUR SOUP ARTICLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

But what if you have already 'lost it'? Can you still regain optimum wellness? Reynolds believes you can.

In 1986 he and his wife Sandy took over Wasilla Olympic Gymnastics Academy and transformed it into Denali Gymnastics and Fitness.

"Our goal is to create a full 'wellness center' that addresses the whole human being; mind, body and spirit."

To that end, Reynolds recently added a Live O2 system that enables Exercise with Oxygen Therapy (EWOT.) I came into the gym planning to work out but found I couldn't do much because of my surgery and a serious hip injury. But I can ride a bicycle, so Reynolds suggested I give the Live O2 machine a try. The results were amazing. After just one 15-minute session, I feel better than I have in ten years.

The way it works, you climb on the bike, put a mask over your nose and mouth, and then attach an oxygen

hose that delivers about 80% pure oxygen. You start pedaling to elevate the heart rate and dilate the vascular system. During the five to 15-minute workout (depending on your fitness level) you further stress the body by dropping the oxygen level for a few seconds to about 14% which is what you would experience at altitude.

Then you switch it back to super oxygen levels of 80%. This generates turbulence that drives oxygen rich blood deep into the cells throughout the body. Oxygen is the bodies number one nutrient and absolutely essential for health.

"You hear a lot of talk about the importance of water," said Reynolds, "but the reality is, you can survive three days without water. Try going three minutes without oxygen."

True wellness is about balance. It is a 360-degree concept with nutrition at the center. Today a huge portion of the population is suffering from chronic inflammation due to the 'brown out' effect of poor oxygen delivery to the cell. That is regardless of fitness.



Manfred Von Ardenne, a German researcher and applied physicist known for more than 600 patents in medical technology, discovered that super oxygenated blood plasma shrinks swollen capillary cells back to their normal size in minutes.

According to inventor Mark Squibb, "Using Live O2 restores normal blood flow. In just moments, cells switch back to oxygen metabolism. Most Live O2 users report feeling increased energy, alertness, and an improved sense of wellbeing after their first Live O2 session. The benefits are cumulative and the effects from even a single session can last for days."

I've come to realize, no matter what you do, if you really want to be well you've got to eat healthy and 'stir your soup.'

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Lighting Times Aug/Sept in Mat-Su:

Date:	Earliest Lighting:	18MIN Before Sunset:
Aug 16	8:22PM	9:36PM
Aug 23	8:04PM	9:15PM
Aug 30	7:46PM	8:53PM
Sept 6	7:28PM	8:30PM
Sept 13	7:09PM	8:08PM

PLEASE NOTE: Shabbat candles should be lit before sunset. It is a desecration of the Shabbat to light candles after sunset

Shabbat Candle Blessing

Blessing: Baruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-hai-ru Melech Ha-olam A-sher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-votav Ve-tzi-va-nu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Sha-bbat Ko-desh.

Translation: Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the light of the holy Shabbat.

"Kindle the lights of shabbat and you will see the lights of redemption..." - yalkut Shimoni



What are Shabbat Candles?

Shabbat candles are lit by Jewish women and girls, as young as the age of three, 18 minutes before sunset or one and a quarter daylight hours before sunset, on Friday afternoon or on the eve of Jewish holidays. They light candles to usher in peace and blessings to their homes and to the world.



Sponsored by Josh Fryfogel in admiration of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, and in tribute to his timeless leadership and inspiration for all humanity.

For more information, visit chabad.org/shabbatcandles or contact the Mat-Su Jewish Center Chabad 907-350-1787

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The People's Paper

MAT-SU VALLEY, ALASKA PAGE 4

Jewish Cultural Booth at The Alaska State Fair



Contributed by Rabbi Mendy Greenberg

Thousands of Alaskans look forward to the annual State Fair in Palmer, and now they have one more great reason to attend!

The Jewish Cultural Booth, presented by the Alaska Jewish Campus & Museum and the Mat-Su Jewish Center, will bring an incredible and hands-on cultural experience for all fair-goers. Find the Jewish Cultural Booth across from the main office, right inside the Red Gate. The booth will feature a fully stocked

beautiful Judaica gift shop, with incredible artwork by Alaskan artist Jonna Van Zyle, and delicious Challah bread! The booth will also host daily children's story and related hands-on activity time centered around themes of giving and community. These workshops will take place at 4 pm. Join the community can drive for the local food pantry, craft a Shofar (ram's horn used in the Jewish New Year), try some experiments, or learn the secrets for a perfect Challah bread for Sabbath.

The demonstrations are guaranteed to be full of unforgettable learning experiences.

Guests to the booth will enjoy a complimentary peek at the current exhibits viewing at the Alaska Jewish Historical Museum, including the popular "On the Wings of Eagles: Alaska's Contribution to Operation Magic Carpet" exhibition detailing Alaska Airline's refugee rescue mission in Yemen. Other mini-exhibits on display will be: "Refuge in the Last Frontier: The Evolution of the Alaska Development Plan", regarding the attempt and failure of the United States government to put into action an immigration policy that would have allowed Jews trying to escape Nazi Germany to settle in Alaska during the late 1930's and early 1940's, and "Bayles.

David. Koslosky. Gottstein. Green. Loussa: Jewish Movers and Shakers in Early Anchorage" about the early Jewish pioneers and founding members of the city of Anchorage.

Whether you choose to visit for the yummy Challah, the museum exhibit, one of the story hours, or to browse the beautiful shop, it will surely be a highlight of your state fair experience.

If you would like more information about our exciting booth, please contact Rabbi Mendy Greenberg at (907) 350-1787 or email at rabbim@mat Sujewishcenter.org

Religious Privacy



Contributed by Wes Keller

"...Let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion..."

(Webster, 1928)

If this is true, how then can we ensure the morality of our government when the establishment of religion is prohibited? We entrust our leaders with the authority to govern us using moral laws, created and maintained by "religious" people in all three branches of government. The basis of every State's Constitution stems from American Constitutionalism 101.

Without the primacy of moral law, we have tyranny because the governing authority is free to change the rules to accommodate what seems right at the moment. "Religion" matters because moral law matters very much! It is up to the people, without government meddling, to ensure (politically) that we have "religious" public servants. "All political power is inherent in the people..." [bold emphasis mine] (Alaska Constitution, 1-2; <https://ltgov.alaska.gov/information/alaskas-constitution/>).

In other words, moral authority is ultimately and utterly dependent on

political results, not secular authority! Temporal government must be authorized by a higher source of morality. Our laws are meant to be based on a majority consensus utilizing the moral standards of a "religious" electorate. We have been wrongly programmed to be uncomfortable when the subjects of religion and politics are brought up - especially in the same sentence. It is very dangerous to discount another's beliefs or to not defend our own. Additionally, those who didn't vote, or voted ignorantly based on "religious" filters, cannot legitimately judge the morality of elected politicians. The abysmal voter turnout implies we have a huge disconnect between governing standards and the real standard.

Some try to "correct" the perceived Judeo-Christian and Western bias in Daniel Webster's definition and study of religion. However, he defined religion to include:

"... a belief in the being and perfections of God, in the revelation of his will to man, in man's obligation to obey his commands, in a state of reward and punishment, and in man's accountability to God; the practice of moral duties without a belief in a divine lawgiver, and without reference to his will or commands, is not religion." [bold emphasis mine] (Webster, 1928; <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/religion>).

Using popular/modern definitions of religion, not requiring a belief in a divine lawgiver, avoids essential discussion/s. Without a belief in moral law we are left trusting the naive presumption that moral judgement will prevail naturally.

American Constitutionalism presumes religion as Webster defines. While this explains the passion of some a-religious believers in a "living constitution" (adaptable morals) to resist originalism, it is also the explanation of why our laws endorse our national motto: **In God we Trust**. It is why our US Supreme Court building honors Moses and the Ten Commandments (<http://weskeller.com/justice/>); it is why we begin legislative sessions with prayer; it is why our rights are considered "inherent" ... It is intellectually difficult to justify movements to ban monuments to the Ten Commandments in our schools and courts; the Cross; prayer in schools; and, **the main point of this editorial: the need for politicians to be transparent and forthright about their religion** (as defined by Webster). This does not mean, or even slightly imply, anyone is forced to believe something specific - only that public servants must be politically (not legally) required to be transparent about their "religion". In the event the majority of voters put Godless political tyrants in control, whether on purpose by vote or indirectly by not voting, American Constitutionalism will prove to be a failed philosophy of government and history will confirm it so! Thankfully, this has not yet happened. So far, voters prefer to submit to "religious" leaders (as defined

by Webster) more than they want to risk widespread injustice springing from a naive, short-term sense of right and wrong.

Our Alaska Constitution does not establish religion, but it certainly is the product of religious people and contains religious values, evidenced by: "We the people of Alaska, grateful to God..." and it goes on to guarantee inherent, God-given, rights. All cultures (not just ours) have deep "background values" (aka culture and/or traditions) about life, which are so taken for granted they become invisible to us as tenets of religious faith.

We think of them as "just the way things are." To sustain them, these values must be acknowledged and be freely examined and challenged by teachers, colleagues, family members, and friends. If factions, religious or not, presume they always have the sole comprehensive answers to governing challenges, no matter how prestigious they think they are, they have become stupid and are certainly not applying Judeo-Christian doctrine! (Proverbs 12:1, 15).

In summary, I encourage readers to vote and to dispassionately explore the biographies of political candidates for "religion". The candidates "right to privacy" on this topic is waived by their request for your vote! Armed with information about his or her beliefs, judge them fit or unfit to represent YOU... This research and evaluation isn't intolerance, it is the "right" and job of EVERY citizen!

Wes Keller | WesKeller.com

Windows to the Soul



Contributed by Vic Kohring

Eyes Reveal True Character

"Be the living expression of God's kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness." - Mother Teresa

The eyes reveal a lot about a person, whether good or bad, kind or not. Aside from the eyes, other personal characteristics can be telling but aren't necessarily the best way to evaluate others. The Book of Samuel talks about how people often look at one's outward appearance when judging others, but the Lord always looks inside the heart.

I try my best to follow this example, being careful not to ascertain who a person is based on appearance but rather their

character as a human being, while using the eyes as a means to understand them better. The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King proclaimed that we should judge others by the content of their character and not the color of their skin. I would add that judging others must be done by their deeds instead of words as words are meaningless if not backed up with action. We should also cast aside ethnicity, creed, race, and religion and instead look to the heart.

When first sizing up someone and looking into their eyes, I seem to have an uncanny ability to determine within seconds if they are genuine and credible. I often sense an aura through a combination of tone of voice, body language, and overall attitude. It's difficult for one to disguise their true feelings with their eyes, at least in my presence. Most important is the look in one's eyes which reveal a trove of information. Much can

be learned simply by gazing into eyes because they expose a variety of emotions - even what one is thinking - based on how a person gazes back.

Studies have shown that the size of one's pupils change depending on emotions, expectations and intentions. They also reveal one's interest or lack thereof when they speak. In other words, the pupils show what's going on inside a person's mind. You can often tell if one is not being truthful as pupil's never lie. The old sayings that "Eyes never lie even though the lips often do" and that "The eyes have their own vocabulary," are true.

The crucial thing I look for is sincerity, an open mind and whether a person is honest and therefore can be trusted. If I sense otherwise, I usually cut the conversation short and move on. Life is too short to waste it on the disingenuous, manipulative and those not interested in what you have to say. The exception of course is when you believe potential exists to eventually bring someone to your point of view politically, for example, or if

they're open to your views on Christianity. In that case, patience and persistence are important, especially from a Christian perspective as we're directed by God to witness to others and share the Gospel. I think of the plethora of politicians in Ju-neau and Washington with their "haughty eyes and proud hearts" and those who think mostly of themselves. Such wickedness produces sin as Proverbs states. Most pols seriously lack humility, a negative trait I can spot a mile away.

Matthew 6:22-24 says, "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness.

Lots of darkness unfortunately exists in our state and national capitals. Let's be kind to others and reveal an abundance of light through our eyes. It will make our world a better place.

Please visit my website at: www.vickohringministries.net

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COMMUNITY / OPINION

The People's Paper

Nonprofits and Profits



Contributed by
Eddie Ezelle

Howard G. Buffet included in his book "Forty Chances" a quote from Jake Harriman, "In the traditional NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) world I think we've created a glass ceiling where we can't break through and solve extreme poverty," Jake says. "The existing organizations don't believe they can do it and we have created so much dependency for aid, but they won't admit their mistakes."

Which brings to point that a lot of organizations are chasing the money. By this, I mean they add staff or programs because they see someone offering money to do something not quite in their realm of expertise. They then head down the rabbit hole of chasing the funding for a program that really does not support

their original mission or is on the outer fringe. There are several things wrong here: the idea that the money is there, and we must spend it. If we don't use it who will? And my favorite, we can add staff and use it before the next guy can lay claim to it.

So, what can we do to stop this cycle of destruction and dependency?

We need to create revenue streams, however that might look. From building legacy funding to creating something that can be sold or supplying some sort of service. Our old ideas of a nonprofit being strictly a charity are and should be going by the way side. The idea that an agency or 501 corporation cannot have reserves is caveman thinking. We must have some reserves to survive downturns in the economy, or when donations drop off for whatever reason. Folks are beginning to question even

more where the money they donate goes. People do love to give, but they really love to give when it's someone else's money. (Read as Government Programs).

There are so many levels of older thinking that should be addressed that it boggles the mind trying to think of it all, so we shut down and avoid thinking about any of it. I am always telling people to put me out of business. I can find other work, because if I am out of business, our mission to feed the hungry, at least locally is accomplished. I don't think it will happen in my life time, but it is an end goal.

America has always been the country to get things done. The go-to country to help when needed. We now need to help ourselves to get off the "I'm entitled" bandwagon.

Again, how? There are several ways of doing this from changing our government to changing the thought process. We could start on a national level by changing laws, but I have always said

let's start locally, expanding outward to neighboring communities and continue expanding to the state, the country then outside the U.S. What did our parents and grandparents do before us that worked?

If we concentrate on our own neighborhood, we might come up with ways that will work in several areas. Not all needs are the same. People in New York have different needs than in the bush. All people have a basic need of food, clothing and shelter no matter where they live. Once we get these necessities, we can turn to other things such as jobs, transportation, or fuel.

We need to start having these conversations, civilly, before we become a socialist society that believes "everyone gets a ribbon" type thinking.

Hopefully this stirs some meaningful conversations and we can improve all our lives even if only one meal at a time.

Thanks for reading,
 Eddie Ezelle, MatSu Food Bank

What Are Nic Salts?



Contributed by
Tony Delarm

Can you believe it's August already? What a wild summer for Alaskans, with

temperatures in the 90s! We hope you had a chance to get out there and hike, fish, swim, ride ATVs, or whatever it is

you love to do in Alaska! Part of this great state is the nature and wildlife we all take for granted, so we encourage you to get out there and have fun with the kids before school starts back up, and we all get back into our normal routines...

Part of that enjoyment is convenience, and we at Alaska Sweet Vapes know all

about that! No one wants to stop during a hike, pull out their vape, spend time trying to play with cotton and e-liquid while getting sand in their coil... That's why we recommend trying the Nic Salt Pods.

Now on our shelves, these concentrated pods and mods offer a simple system for exchanging juices.

It also provides a concentrated formula that enters the bloodstream quickly, great for those that are looking for the effect of cigarettes, without the toxins.

These Nic Salt devices come in many shapes and sizes and easily fit into a pocket, for that next fishing trip. Plus, we have tons of flavors ready right now.

So, before you go on your next adventure, stop by Alaskan Sweet vapes on 224 N Yenlo St and check out our wide variety of Nic Salts!

Have a great August and don't forget to subscribe to our Youtube channel or visit our website under "Vape Ed" for more info.

Open Letter to the 31st Alaska Legislature



Contributed by
David Vesper

My name is David Vesper. I am the State Director for the Alaska Fathers' Rights Movement. When

I divorced, I had expected a fair Family Law system. However, I fell **victim** to ignorance in the Family Law process and motivations. I also fell victim in the archaic belief that mothers are more important than fathers and that I need to have a stable career in the military in order to provide timely and in-full Child Support. After all, this has been the social construct for the past 30 years. Believing my lawyer, the judge, and social influencers around me, I believed that my child's best interest as a father has always been financial responsibility.

Now, seventeen years later, I firmly believe I am wrong. After my ex-wife and I finalized our divorce in North Carolina, she took my daughter out-of-state to Texas. I went to court to bring her back to North Carolina and enforce our Joint Custody. I wanted to be involved in my daughter's life despite a career in the Army. After my ex-wife's pro bono lawyers stated their case, **the judge refused to hear my argument** from my lawyer. She had decided that Texas should be allowed to make the case for jurisdiction. My lawyer informed me that Texas would pursue jurisdiction and that I should take my case there. It became a fruitless effort and I lost the ability to be **an equal loving parent in my child's life** because I chose a career in the Army (which took me to several duty stations to include Alaska). I continued to make direct, on-time and full Child Support payments since they had moved to Texas. Once I retired from the Army to Alaska, my ex-wife filed for Public Assistance and

opened up a Child Support case through the state of Texas. The Texas Attorney General's Office then informed me that they will work with Alaska (my residency) and North Carolina (where I divorced) in recovering \$65,000 of back support because they had no record of me in their system. Remember, I had paid Child Support directly to my ex-wife... paying just over \$96,000! I had managed to win that back child support battle by producing documents to support my argument but it showed me further evidence that money is more important than time with my child... for which was being denied throughout the years since my ex-wife left the state.

Once I returned to Alaska to retire, I became an advocate for equal shared parenting. I realized that I am an **absent father** and the North Carolina judicial system was just as complicit as I. After meeting several other noncustodial parents in Alaska, I realized that I am not an isolated case. In fact, **the imbalance in parental rights is quite disturbing**. After retirement, I finished my undergraduate degree at UAA. What I discovered in my research was startling. **Roughly 80-85% of Noncustodial parents are fathers**, according to many research documents to include the US Census Bureau, US Child Support Enforcement Division, and Alaska TFRM surveys of Alaskan noncustodial parents. According to the Pew Research Center, fathers in intact relationships with the mother are more involved in parenting than in generations past. This is due to the majority of families are dual-income families. The dichotic family gender roles are nearly nonexistent. However, the Pew Research Center discovered that fathers' involvement in their children's lives significantly declined after separation from the mother. Other Government sources sup-

port that data. Did these fathers willingly abandon their children despite spending nearly the same time with their children as mothers? No.

This is where the State of Alaska fails us. Though 50/50 shared physical custody is allowed under Alaska Statutes, it is not the norm. Several issues lead to the disparity between parents in Child Custody battles. First, it is a battle. These battles contribute to an already toxic high-conflict relationship between the parents. Many judges and lawyers support Single Parent Custody, and this creates biased judges with a reputation for being either mother-friendly or father-friendly. Many of these same lawyers and judges suggest that many of the Child Custody cases result in Joint Custody. But this is a ruse. Mothers usually retain Primary Custody. Even then, we are discovering that whichever parent has Physical Custody, they are alienating their child from the other parent. This further increases high conflict and increases the propensity for violence.

Roughly 85% of Alaskan Noncustodial Parents surveyed by AK TFRM in 2017 and 2018 consider their relationship with the other parent as high-conflict. These high-conflict relationships consistently have one or more allegations against them. Domestic Violence is the most predominant allegation for gaining leverage in a child custody case. We call this **the Silver Bullet technique**. Given the Alaska Statutes have the worst Domestic Violence laws in the nation according to the Stop Abusive and Violent Environments (SAVE), lawyers often recommend that mothers take advantage of Alaska Violence against Women (VAWA) laws for the purpose of gaining leverage in a Child Custody case. Since we are **one of the few states that have an extremely archaic Percentage-of-Obligor model**

for Child Support, Alaskan children become financial assets by transferring family wealth from one parent to another. Alaska encourages this system because they receive millions from the Federal Government (known as Title IV-D) in incentives in the form of Block Grants. By securing Child Support, any chance at co-parenting becomes nearly impossible. I believe that the \$3.2M from the Federal Government for the past two years is **not** worth destroying families for.

Research has shown that children need **both** parents in their lives. I can provide research information for you to peruse. But, consider these stats from various sources:

- 43% of US children live without their father (Census Bureau)

- 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes (National Principals Association Report)

- 85% of all children showing behavior disorders come from fatherless homes (CDC)

- 90% of homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes (US DHHS)

- 70% of juveniles in state-operated institutions have no father involved in their lives (US Department of Justice)

I am looking for a response on your stance to **HB 85 Shared Parenting Bill** so as to inform our supporters of our rapidly growing movement to your intentions with that bill. It is my hope that you can be a leader on this **Human Rights** issue for the sake of our children.

Sincerely,
 David Vesper

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POLITICS / OPINION

MAT-SU VALLEY, ALASKA PAGE 6

Let's Vote on the PFD

Contributed by Bill Topel

When it comes to the issue of the PFD, Alaskans are divided. This division has created issues of class warfare, regional division, and annual hassles within state government about the purpose and size of the PFD. Thus, the traditional PFD is in jeopardy.

The Legislature has formed a PFD working group to analyze the history of the dividend, but rather than focusing on the past, let's look for a solution. To start, we must recognize that there are three main groups of people with strong views about the PFD – those who support the traditional PFD, those who oppose the PFD, and those who want to change the PFD using the POMV model.

Scores of people from rural and urban Alaska have testified at public hearings and on social media sites in favor of the traditional PFD because it provides essentials for families like heating fuel, home and auto repairs, clothing, medical, property taxes, and others. For those in rural Alaska, these needs are often higher priced than those commodities and services in urban areas. The PFD improves the quality of life for all Alaskans and keeps some families from falling below the poverty line.

Private sector economist Ed King and public sector economist Prof. Gunnar Knapp (before he retired) published studies revealing that PFD cuts are a form of regressive taxation that hurt low- and middle-income families the most, while leaving the

upper-class people and families relatively untouched. Former Gov. Jay Hammond, one of the founders of the Permanent Fund and the PFD, wrote in *Diapering the Devil* about the same disparity. Many also believe the PFD satisfies the Alaska Constitution's mandate to manage resource wealth for the people's maximum benefit.

Recent fiscal challenges have revealed that some want the PFD to be used to pay for government. These people have also showed up to testify. They are teachers and public employees, non-profit organizations who receive grants and state funds, state government contractors, union representatives, and local government officials. They have a vested interest in growing government because they have built their non-profit and business models on the current level of spending.

These people claim that they do not want their PFD, which might be true. But they do want a PFD – yours; to spend on their special government program or contract. They have expressed emotions and fears that “the sky is falling” and “people will die” if budget cuts are maintained. They want everybody to get a smaller PFD or no PFD and have framed the issue as “state services vs. a full PFD.” The public sector has been growing over the years and these public contractors and employees don't want their paychecks and benefits to shrink.

Since the inception of the Permanent Fund and the PFD, there have also been those who wish to convert the

PFD program into an endowment or annuity program. The POMV model is designed to use a percentage of the market value of the fund to pay for government and pay a PFD. Discussions against this proposal have centered on: (1) invasion of the Fund's corpus without a public vote; (2) reduced dividends in the hundreds of dollars in the future from the traditional method; and (3) without constitutional protections the Legislature would fight over the amount of the PFD every year.

Regardless of what people believe today about the PFD, the purpose of the Permanent Fund and the PFD, was to protect Alaska's wealth from politicians with insatiable appetites to spend and grow government. It was also to create a rainy-day fund, but it isn't raining. The solution – put any changes to the traditional PFD calculation and distribution formula to A VOTE!

A vote has bi-partisan support, but Legislative leadership continues to delay the one action that can solve the PFD problem. A vote of the people, to enshrine it in the constitution, would settle our division. If it passes, there would be some stability going forward. If it fails, then we can implement a different approach.

Since the PFD touches EVERY Alaskan, we should have that vote.

Bill Topel first came to Alaska in 1966. He graduated from the Anchorage public schools in 1971 and has earned two certificates, an AAS degree, and a BS degree from UAA from 2012 through 2016. Now a Senior Citizen, he often testifies on public policy issues.

Twelve Years Left

Contributed by
Lance Roberts



Just when you think you've seen the worst year of government in Alaska, you find out you were wrong. The past four years were awful. We had a fiscal crisis, but nothing was being done about it. There were attempts to raise revenue, but even if they had succeeded, it wouldn't have come close to solving the problem.

Examine the attached graph, the most important one for the year, and you'll see what every legislator knows. If you use the PFD to fund government, you lose it in two years. If you use the Earnings Reserve balance, then you get about 10 more. If you then implement taxes, you won't get more than a few years (Walker's attempt would have only raised \$700 million). The natural increase of government (a conservative 4% in this graph) will outpace the increase in revenue. This is what Governor Dunleavy realized when he was looking at the budget issue. It's impossible to fix our budget based on revenues alone. If you try, you'll just bankrupt the State in about a dozen years. You'll then lose the University, all the retirement plans and all of those other programs you might love.

This explains why more cuts have to be made because, to get to a sustainable budget, you have to make

a lot of cuts over the next few years. Now the governor is making the hard decisions on how to get there and is taking a lot of heat for being laser-focused on his campaign promise to fix this fiscal situation. It may be enough to cost him a second term, but that shows the courage he has to face the problem.

Now comes the irony. The Legislature is split in two factions. There is the anti-governor faction who want to repeal all of the cuts and not pay anything close to the statutorily mandated PFD, and they are fighting the governor every step, in a way that mirrors the national-level politics. An example of this is their push for an unconstitutional forward funding of education, which left no real funding in the budget for education. Then there are those who want some to none of the vetoes repealed and want to work with the governor to solve the problem. They had tried to amend in funding for education, but it was rejected by the other side.

The governor called the special session to deal with the undone PFD issue, and to give them a chance to repeal the line-item vetoes. The irony is because the anti-governor group has decided to break the law and meet somewhere else than the governor chose, they don't have enough legislators in attendance to overturn the vetoes. After the cuts came out, they should put their heads together and come up with a

compromise to restore a bunch of the cuts and fund a full PFD. The governor made such large cuts, that it made for an obvious compromise. What the anti-governor group has done is to “cut off their nose to spite their face”. Sometimes in politics you just have to compromise to get important stuff done.

So now we have all the vetoes in place, a capital budget that has no funding and no PFD. Legislators are talking about amending something into the capital budget, but that can also still be line-item vetoed, so they have to get ¾ of themselves to agree. Since a few members have been thrown out of the caucus, because they stood for rule of law, it's going to be pretty hard to get that agreement now.

One of the biggest mistakes of the last administration was cutting the PFD for 3 years. That took over \$2 billion out of the economy in a recession, so this governor is pushing hard not to replicate that mistake. A deal will have to be made so when you're writing all those emails and letters to the legislators, you might want to ask them to act more maturely and make some kind of deal that will work for everybody. Email the House Minority, thanking them for standing for rule of law and letting them know that you are OK with some veto or partial-veto overrides, as long as they make the trade for a full PFD.

We finally have a governor intent on solving the problem. We just need a legislature that acknowledges the issue and will rise above childish nose-thumbing to solve it.

Gun Ownership Should Not Be the VA's Focus

Contributed by
Mike Dryden



Alaska Older Veterans Report

Just when you thought the VA couldn't be more offensive, we find out they are denying veterans with traumatic brain injuries and/or post-traumatic stress disorders (TBI/PTSD) of their Second Amendment rights. Yes, you read this correctly, veterans asking for help to recover from service connected injuries are being deemed a danger to themselves and others and unable to handle their affairs by an unelected, appointed VA bureaucrat working for the very government agency founded

to help them “re-integrate” back into peacetime civilian life.

While the vast majority of senior managers at the VA are receiving performance bonuses for a “job well done,” waiting lists disappear and veterans die. This practice is not limited to TBI/PTSD patients but is applied to older vets with injuries that has left them unable to write or walk and may be in need of some assistance.

Some helpful smiling clerk takes down all of the information needed to start the benefits you have earned and disappears. In a couple of weeks, you get your much-anticipated letter from the VA. Instead of the dates and

amounts of your benefits you thought was contained in the letter, you find out the VA has submitted your name to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' NICS. (Hint: The C stands for Criminal.)

So, just to be fair, I have researched the available databases for some area in which the VA excels and have found one. The VA leads the nation in reporting names (veterans) to the ATF's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) which brands a veteran as a criminal for owning, buying or transporting a firearm to

CONTINUES ON
THE NEXT PAGE

PFD and The Golden Goose



Contributed by Jessica Wright

Lately I have been writing articles about the PFD with my different angles try to have my points cross. However, after the "Save the State" slogan came out, I realize some people just don't get it, so today I decide to illustrate my points by using "The Golden Goose" analogy that even little kids can understand.

Most people have heard the story of "The Golden Goose." If you haven't, your parents probably didn't read you bedtime stories, of which I feel sorry for you. The story of "The Golden Goose" is this: A young lad got a magical golden goose. The goose laid a golden egg every day. He and his widow mother were able to sell the golden egg to buy food and things they needed and eventually they became well-to-do. One day, they thought: Why wait for the goose to lay an egg a day? Why not kill the goose and get all the eggs at once? Of course, once they killed the goose

that they couldn't get any golden eggs anymore. Some people might think these people are foolish. Well, they are not the only people that think that way. Right now, some people in our state are for wanting government service by allowing the government to take our PFD. They might be able to keep their benefits for a while, but after our government gets their hands on our 50% share, they are going to spend the money on their endless programs and give us what's left over instead of paying the full statutory 50% dividend share.

When the funds are exhausted, our state will likely to be broke, and state income tax and other taxes will likely follow. Finland, for example, went bankrupt early this year because they embraced the socialists and were drown by the social programs. We are going to be next if we don't break up the so called non-profit organizations and government bureaucracy growing in our state. That's why Governor Jay Hammond in his infinite wisdom set up a 50-50 formula to prevent the ever-

growing government spending and corruption. Some argue if they don't give in and let the legislature take their 50% PFD share, they might not be able to keep their current benefits. In this case, I would advise you to think in the long term. Do you want to keep the goose and have a golden egg daily or do you just want to kill the goose? Keep in mind, once our PFD is gone, it's like losing our inheritance, it will take decades to rebuild the wealth.

The choice we make today will impact not just us, but generations to come. You don't want your grandchildren to ask you, "Grandpa (Grandma), how come you didn't do anything to protect the PFD when you had a chance?" If we don't alter the traditional formula and keep it earning for both the state and the people, then it will continue to pay in perpetuity. We must not listen to the fake news and the corrupted politicians, but any changes to the formula needs to have a vote of the people of which we all hold common shares and interest in our PFD corporation which will always pay dividends.

In addition, "Save the State" is like "Save the Salmon" slogan. It has little to do

with saving the state, but it has lots to do with government control. Do you want to give up your PFD so your government can spend for you? By the way, due to the economic boom in the Trump Administration, we can predict a much larger dividends amount due to the high return rate (10.74%): \$3K in 2019, \$4k in 2020, and maybe we will see \$5k or 6K in the future.

That's \$30K for a family of five, but we are not going to see this kind of money because with the current legislature is capping the PFD's earning and capping our PFD payment unless we repeal SB26, which requires overhaul of AKLEG by electing a great number of Conservatives who will stand by our values and protect our PFD.

Alaskans, you have a choice to make: poverty by letting the government control your PFD or prosperity by keeping the traditional statutory PFD 50-50 formula?

The moral of the story is: be disciplined, try not to get more than one golden egg a day, and never, never ever hand over your golden goose to the government because they are going to kill it. The end!

Budget Woes



Contributed by Joe Ford

I've read there's one bush plane for every 60 people populating this state. From my camp on the Matanuska River I've endured the noise of about 100,000 citizens worth of planes so far this summer. My friend Wayne informs me those bush planes aren't licensed. There is no registration fee for bush planes in this state. You have to register your car every 2 years to the tune of close to \$200 but bush planes get a free ride.

Snow machines and 4-wheelers are required to pay a registration fee if they want to use state land. Boats and trailers have to be licensed. What's so special about bush planes?

I don't think it would be a stretch to assume the bush plane demographic skews toward the upper end of the economic scale. Maybe that's why they're special.

I smell a revenue source that could help plug a hole in the state's budget.

As long as we're on the state budget subject what about a sales tax? We're fed an MSM line about how a sales tax would adversely impact the

poor. Guess who buys the most stuff. The people with the most money would be my guess. It might impact the poor a little, but the impact would be bigger for people who buy a lot of stuff. That extra money would help plug another budget hole and maybe make a poor person's life a little easier.

Like my friend Willie says, "Don't pee on my back and tell me it's raining."

Now, what about subsidies for oil companies? Poor people scramble to make ends meet while millionaires and billionaires walk away with the profit from our resource. I don't buy the line, "if we tax 'em too much they'll leave the state." See ya! We'll pump the crap ourselves or better yet, shut this filthy energy

source down and figure out another way. We are resourceful up here. At least we used to be, till oil money stole our imagination and made us fat and lazy.

I have another idea. When the weather is outstanding, like it has been for most of the summer, tourists have to pay double... I'm just sayin'..

Who writes the rules favors their interests. We have to stop letting corporate lackeys call the shots.

There's enough money out there to fund education, help old people, help conservation and the homeless and pay out a full dividend.

Like my friend Willie says...

Common Purpose Common Sense

Contributed by Carolyn Porter

The Mat-Su Republican Women's Club has been active in the valley beginning in 1947. Our mission includes seeking out, supporting and working to elect conservative Republican candidates. We host numerous events throughout the year as well as operating a booth at the Alaska State Fair in order to bring our goals and mission to fruition.

This has been quite an interesting and contentious year in Alaska. Our club supports Governor Dunleavy in his plan

to bring financial security to Alaska. He was elected on his campaign to cut the budget and protect the Permanent Fund. His actions should be a surprise to no one. Individuals and families cannot spend more money than they bring in without experiencing serious, long-lasting consequences. The same applies to Alaska. The state has a finite amount of money to address infinite needs and wants. A conservative budget is desperately needed. Dialogue is desperately needed. Alaskans have historically been hard working, self-sufficient people. We need to rely on

these attributes, not abandon them. We support the Governor's plan to address needs before wants. This is what responsible people do. And, Alaska can do this if we work together.

We are fortunate to live in Alaska and the Mat-Su. And, we are blessed to have as our legislators, Senator Mike Shower, Senator Shelley Hughes, Senator David Wilson, Representative David Eastman, Representative DeLena Johnson, Representative Mark Neuman, Representative George Rauscher, Representative Colleen Sullivan-

Leonard, and Representative Cathy Tilton. They have been diligent in working for citizens of the Mat-Su and Alaska.

If anyone is interested in working with friendly, conservative Republicans for the good of Alaska, we welcome you. Our next monthly meeting is Saturday, September 21, at 10:00 am. We will meet at Sunrise Grill in Palmer. Our membership includes women and men.

We will have information about the club at our State Fair booth. Stop by, say hello! We have firm faith Alaskans will be able to see past differences and set our state on a stable and prosperous path.

GUN OWNERSHIP

ARTICLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

include ammo. You are a hero one minute and a criminal the next after your visit to the VA. The VA as of August 2011 accounted for 98 percentage of NICS submissions. With the help of the VA, veterans now account for 11 percent of all Americans on the ATF's prohibited list of citizens with mental health issues. I bet that exceeds accepted job performance standards.

While terrorists are being read their rights, given legal consul and health care better than our vets, injured American veterans are being denied one of their civil rights without any adjudication process. After this mental health professional decides a vet is a danger to society, it's up to the vet to

prove otherwise by obtaining a letter from a doctor. Yes, your primary health care provider that works for the same VA as the clerk that put you on the list now has to take you off the list. But wait, you need psychological evaluation services first, which has a backlog (i.e. a waiting list). See the problem? Are you old enough to remember the movie Catch 22?

The veteran is left with an untenable decision: do I need the VA services and pension more than my Second Amendment rights or not? This is soft tyranny at its worst and should not be tolerated. Veterans are not commodities to be used for political nefarious intentions but citizens who have volunteered to defend our country in a time of national need. The progressives have learned their lesson in the

aftermath of Vietnam, which was not to spit on vets anymore. Passive aggressive methods are much better and harder to detect until the damage has been done.

A society that allows our borders to be overrun by drug cartel gang members with no redeeming social values and then allowed to disappear into our communities while at the very same time intentionally denying our veterans basic civil rights is a national disgrace.

It's time for veterans to stand up and tell the elected officials veterans are not some prop for photo opportunities at Fourth of July parades, but are some of the best and brightest individuals this country has ever produced.

I have seen political ads for years about what our elected officials have done for

this vet or that vet in their time of need. If I personally needed a problem fixed, I would not hesitate to use them. But the bigger question is why I should have to get my Senator or U.S. Representative involved in a problem that is systemic in nature and has been ubiquitous since the 1960s.

The nature of employment at the VA and other federal agencies seems to be something that needs visiting.

Oh, if we only had a "Blue Ribbon Committee" comprised of retired federal workers who would convene in our capital for only expenses and per diem, we could solve this problem rather quickly. Fix it and fix it now.

Mike Dryden is a retired Army Major

FAITH / COMMUNITY

Valley Anglican Fellowship - New Meeting Location

Contributed by Fr. Randy Hillman

All those interested in forming an Anglican church in the Mat-Su Valley, that is a Christ-Centered, Biblical and

Family-Friendly Church are invited to an evening of fellowship, prayer and teaching.

We will be meeting at 5:00 pm on

Saturday, Aug. 24, 2019, at Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church (2851 East Bogard Road, Wasilla, AK 99654).

Dinner and child care will be provided.

A mission of St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Anchorage. WWW.STAAC.CHURCH For more information please email questions to Fr. Randy Hillman @ FrRandyHak@gmail.com

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PETS & ANIMALS

The People's Paper

MAT-SU VALLEY, ALASKA PAGE 8

Adopt Gaia & Hela

Contributed by Angie Lewis

These sweet Chihuahua sisters are hoping, with all their hearts, that they can get adopted together.

They have spent their entire young lives (a bit over one year) as a family. They don't want that connection to end.

Gaia and Hela are potty-pad trained – which is fairly typical for little dogs. These girls will be getting spayed, microchipped, and are vaccinated. They have wonderful personalities and are anxious to join a new family. Hela is a bit more energetic than Gaia and would enjoy a fenced back yard for running and playing.

If you would like to learn more about these beautiful girls, call Angie at 841-3173 or email Alaska Animal Advocates at akaarescue@hotmail.com



Emma, Kinley, Roo & Goliath Are All Needing Homes!



Contributed by Sue Fujimoto

These dogs have been looking for just the right home.

They all have very high energy; need consistent training and a home where they will get A LOT of exercise!

Each dog needs to be adopted to people without children or other

animals in the home because of their previous histories. They have all done well at the Shelter but need to find an owner who can work with them on training and manners.

MORE INFORMATION:

To meet and learn more about the dogs, please visit the Mat-Su Animal Care Shelter, Tuesday through Saturday, from 11am to 6pm!

Is Ear Cropping and Tail Docking Humane?

Contributed by Angie Lewis, President of Alaska Animal Advocates

Cropping a dog's ears involves surgically removing the floppy part of the ear, while docking requires the surgical removal of a portion of the tail. It is breed standards for show dogs that dictates the procedure specifics.

Tail docking typically happens when a pup is a few days old, often without anesthesia. Ear cropping is a more complex surgery that can occur anywhere from 6 to 12 months of age and general anesthesia is required.

These procedures are very painful and involve side effects and risks. Post-surgical infection, pain, and scarring are some of the negative results of these practices. Aftercare can be extensive.

Not to mention, the psychological damages that result because of the trauma. This is a lot to put your dog through, for no reason. These are unnecessary surgeries – simply for cosmetic purposes.

More seriously, dogs communicate with their bodies and the ears and tails play a vital role in this communication. This can lead to problems with misinterpreting a dog's efforts at communication.

A dog may look as though she is being aggressive, when in reality, she is not able to express herself adequately without complete body appendages. Dogs who have docked tails and cropped ears often appear more intimidating to people than those that have not been mutilated. In addition, there are many medical benefits to

allowing a dog to keep her ears – such as acupressure, acupuncture, and collection of blood samples from the ear.

Ears help keep debris out of the ear canal and therefore lessen the opportunity for ear infections. Not to mention, that dogs love having their ears rubbed and they use their tails to help with balance. Tails help to determine proper alignment of a dog's spine.

More and more veterinarians are opting out of cropping and docking ears and tails, although the United States is lagging behind Europe and Australia.

Love your dog the way she was meant to look and forego these unnecessary procedures.



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PETS / ANIMALS

MAT-SU VALLEY, ALASKA PAGE 9

Adopt Morris



Contributed by Kelleigh Orthmann

Great BIG gorgeous boy, muscular and competent, Morris is the all Alaskan guy. He is orange and handsome adult kitty.

We haven't had Morris with other cats so not sure how he would do. He is very affectionate with his people, totally mellow and easy to live with. A rural environment is a requirement along with lots of cuddles and pets.

MORE INFORMATION:
Located in Wasilla. Call 980-8898.

Adopt Daisy



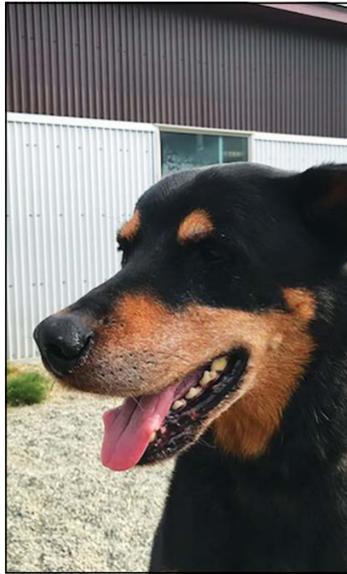
Contributed by Sue Fujimoto

I am a spayed female, orange and white Alaskan Malamute. The shelter thinks I am about 4 years old.

I have been at the shelter since Aug 01, 2019.

MORE INFORMATION:
To meet and learn more about the dogs, please visit the Mat-Su Animal Care Shelter, Tuesday through Saturday, from 11am to 6pm!

Adopt Bubba



Contributed by Sue Fujimoto

I am a neutered male, black and tan Rottweiler mix. The shelter thinks I am about 7 years old.

I have been at the shelter since Jul 12, 2019.

MORE INFORMATION:
To meet and learn more about the dogs, please visit the Mat-Su Animal Care Shelter, Tuesday through Saturday, from 11am to 6pm!

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COMMUNITY

The People's Paper

MAT-SU VALLEY, ALASKA PAGE 9

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska Dream Big 5K

Contributed by Amy Lalor

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska is a one-on-one mentoring program. Our local office in Wasilla matches youth in the Mat-Su with positive adult mentors. In a world of causes, we make a difference by creating professionally supported, one-to-one matches for kids who want to realize their full potential. You don't have to create potential, you just have to defend it. Our purpose is to clear the path to a child's biggest possible future.

Vision: All youth achieve their full potential.

Mission: Create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth

One-to-one matches between Bigs and Littles truly empower youth and strengthen our community. Each match between a Big and a Little is special. Each has its first match meeting, its own obstacles to overcome, and ultimately its own outcomes and impact. Brady and Beau are a local match here in the Mat-Su. They were matched two years ago, these two hit it off from



their very first match meeting. They get together 2 to 4 times a month to do things they both enjoy.

As a personal trainer and motivational speaker through his business, Fearless Fitness, Brady enjoys staying active just like Beau. This match loves playing basketball together, working out, and going on hikes. Sometimes they just get together to play board games or simply hang out. No matter what they do together, just spending time together is what matters.

Beau comes from a big family and having an additional positive adult he can spend time with 1-to-1 is something he looks forward to. Over the past two years, Beau has grown from a quiet

and reserved boy to a young man who has learned to really let his personality shine through. This Mat-Su match was recently chosen to be featured in our statewide campaign to inspire other men to consider applying to volunteer as Big Brothers.

We have a really big need right now in the Mat-Su for Big Brothers! We have over 20 Little Brothers waiting to be matched or enrolled in our program.

You don't have to be a super hero to be a Defender of Potential, you just need be you! Share a little bit of time each month doing the things you enjoy with a local youth. For more info or questions visit our website www.bbbsak.org or give us a call here in Wasilla at (907) 376-4617.

We are able to provide these services here in the Mat-Su in part thanks to community support.

Join us in Defending Potential right here in the Mat-Su by running, walking, or just making a donation to the 3rd annual Dream Big 5K, 2019! The 5k takes place Saturday, September 7th in Downtown Palmer.

Early Bird Pricing through August 7:
Kids/Youth \$10
Adult (18 & up) \$25
(Stroller Riders Free)

This will once again be a mostly paved, flat course through the heart of Palmer, with the start and finish line at the Downtown Palmer pavilion. Great location for seasoned runners or first timers alike!

This year's Dream Big 5K will be the weekend after the Alaska State Fair. It's a great way to get outside and stay active for the whole family! Ribbons will be awarded to all finishers.

Papa Murphy's Palmer will once again be providing FREE PIZZA at the finish line to all 5K participants. Mat-Su Bigs, Littles, and their families will also be joining us at the finish line for pizza and fun for our annual picnic.

Register at Runsignup.com by searching Dream Big 5K or use this link directly: <https://runsignup.com/Race/AK/Palmer/DreamBig5KFunRun>

Find us on Facebook: @BBBSAKMATSU and our event page Dream Big 5K 2019.



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COMMUNITY

The People's Paper

MAT-SU VALLEY, ALASKA PAGE 10

Cardboard City 2019 A Success!



Contributed by Ginger Bear

Mat-Su Valley's Family Promise celebrated their first annual COMMUNITY Cardboard City July 19-20th.

The "Community" included area shelter agencies and their supporters. MYHouse, Knik House, Alaska Family Services Women's Shelter, and Wasilla

Homeless Committee joined Family Promise at the State Fairgrounds ready to build their cardboard box city, to bring awareness about homelessness.

This year's theme was "Are you experienced?", 50 registered participants stretched around "Kari Loop" to claim "property" and create their "City". There was special recognition for Family Promise's retiring Executive Director,

Laurie Kari. The President of the Board of Directors, John Weaver, lead the occasion with inviting Valley area leaders who have worked with Laurie during her 17-year role.

Pam Ratliff presented a uniquely designed plaque, commemorating Kari's years of dedicated service. Ginger Bear presented a signed certificate from the Family Promise's National Office

and a homemade signature quilt. John Rozzi and Ginger Bear assist with the presentation of a special dedication, naming the current Day Center/Office building the Kari House.

The event was touching, emotional, and full of activities to bring awareness about homelessness. Those participants can surely say, "We are experienced" at least for one night!



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