

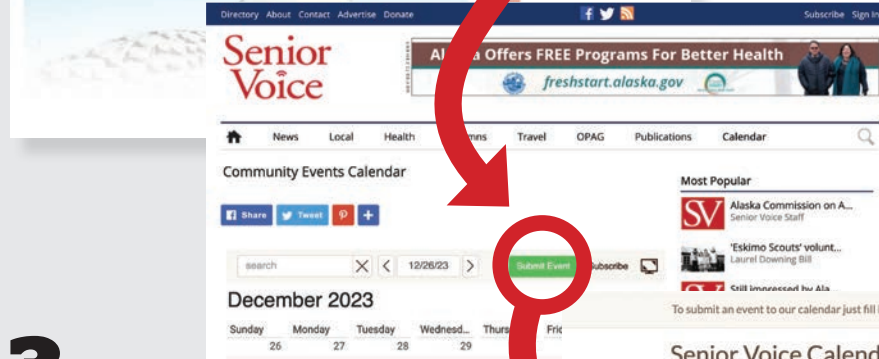
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You will be taken to a forms page where you can quickly enter your details.

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# Senior Voice

Senior Voice is published by Older Persons Action Group, Inc.



# Senior Voice

A publication of Older Persons Action Group, Inc. Free

Serving Alaskans 50+ Since 1978

Volume 47, Number 11 November 2024

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2024  
National Mature  
Media Awards  
Winner



"View from my Grandson's Window," was painted by Evelyn in Fairbanks, a participant in Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska's "Art Links" program. Designed for people living with dementia and aimed at promoting social engagement, autonomy and dignity through the experience of creative self-expression, Art Links sessions are offered once a month at various locations (Anchorage, Mat-Su and Fairbanks) and online via Zoom twice a month. Clients and caregivers may participate in the class. Evelyn painted the watercolor from a photo and it will be featured along with other participant artwork in showcases around the state in November. For more information, visit [alzalaska.org](http://alzalaska.org) or call 907-561-3313.

Photo courtesy Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska







# Senior Voice recognized in national competition

Senior Voice Staff

Senior Voice was recently recognized for excellence, winning eight awards in the annual contest sponsored by the North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA), a nationwide network of publishers focusing on boomer and senior readers. Awards were announced Sept. 11, 2024, at the annual NAMPA conference, held virtually online this year.

Entries were independently judged by a panel including journalists, proofreaders, librarians and geriatric professionals. Senior Voice entries com-

peted in Division A, for circulations below 25,000. Senior Voice won third place in this division's "General Excellence" category.

Longtime Senior Voice reporter and travel correspondent Dimitra Lavrakas won first place in the Travel Column category for her stories "Northern Lights and Fairbanks Nights," and "Kodiak Shines as a Best Place to Visit".

Senior Voice contributor Dr. Emily Kane won second place in the Senior Issues category for her health advice article on supplements.

In the Personal Essay category, contributor Lawrence D. Weiss won

second place for his story, "Fountain Pens Will Make You Smarter."

Contributing writer Jim Lavrakas won first place in the How-To feature category for his article, "Focus Your Pickleball on High Percentage Shots." The judges wrote, "These article are fast-paced and dive right into the art of playing pickleball. His passions and inspiration couldn't come across any stronger, and those who already play or would like to take up this fast-growing sport are already ahead of the game after reading his articles."

Contributing writer Erin

Kirkland won first place in the Topical Issues category for her story on mindful grieving and recovery through yoga. "This enlightening and helpful article on the importance of mental mindfulness during the grief process of a major loss was very well written," judges wrote.

Senior Voice won second place in the Front Cover Photo category for its July 2023 cover, featuring a photo by Vicki Jones of Ina Jones holding an armful of peonies at her farm near Homer.

Senior Voice and Older Persons Action Group, Inc. also earned a first place

award in the Self-Promotion category for the house ad promoting the 2023-25 Directory for Older Alaskans.

Senior Voice is a publication of Older Persons Action Group, Inc., an Alaska nonprofit organization that serves Alaska seniors and their families. OPAG has been publishing Senior Voice for 47 years and is partially funded by a grant administered through the Alaska Dept. of Health.

Senior Voice articles, including the award-winners, can be looked up using the search window on the Senior Voice website, <http://www.seniorvoicealaska.com>.

## A little known community resource for veterans

By STEPHANIE WHEELER

Alaska State Long Term Care Ombudsman

Veterans Day is the day set aside to thank and honor all those who served honorably in the military. Veterans Day is intended to thank living veterans for their service, to acknowledge that their contributions to our national security are appreciated and to underscore the fact that all those who served have protected the freedoms that we enjoy every day.

There are more than 11 million adults age 60 and older alive today who have served in the military. Older veterans face a variety of challenges including health, financial and housing challenges. In the spirit of caring for veterans in our community, this month's column focuses on a little-known government benefit that can help qualified veterans pay the expenses of care-

giving when they become too frail to live without help. This VA benefit program is often referred to as "A & A," which stands for "Aid and Attendance and Housebound Improved Pension Benefits."

Under this program, a qualified veteran can receive up to \$1,881 per month and a qualified veteran with a spouse can receive up to \$2,230 per month. For many families paying for senior care, this income can make the difference between comfort and hardship. "A & A" can pay for the cost of daily senior care, whether it's provided at home, in an assisted living home or in a nursing home. The program has been around for over 60 years.

So, what are the eligibility requirements for "A & A"? Any veteran with 90 consecutive days of active duty and at least 1 day of duty during a period of war is eligible to apply. Eligibility does not depend

## Join our team as a part-time program manager

Older Persons Action Group, Inc.

Are you passionate about supporting Alaska's senior community? Older Persons Action Group Inc. (OPAG) is seeking a dedicated and enthusiastic Program Manager. This part-time position offers the opportunity to forge valuable partnerships and play a key role in improving the lives of seniors throughout Alaska.

As a Program Manager, you will represent OPAG at various community functions, leading outreach for our monthly Senior Voice newspaper

and cultivating relationships with community and funding agencies. You will also coordinate meetings and events, manage our archiving systems, and supervise student interns.

If you are a motivated individual with a passion

for community service and a desire to make a positive impact on the lives of Alaska's seniors, we would love to hear from you. Send your cover letter and resume to the Board Secretary, Yvonne Chase, at [yvonne@alaskalife.net](mailto:yvonne@alaskalife.net).

### Older Persons Action Group, Inc. Annual Meeting

Nov. 25, 2024

Online via Zoom.

OPAG board meets at 11:30 a.m., followed immediately by annual meeting.

Please RSVP with email address to [admin@opagak.com](mailto:admin@opagak.com) or voicemail at 907-276-1059. Zoom code will be provided by email prior to meeting.

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##### Mission statement:

"To work statewide to improve the quality of life for all Alaskans through education, advocacy and collaboration."

##### Vision statement:

"Promote choice and well being for seniors through legacy and leadership."

on having a service-related injury. The veteran (or surviving spouse) must need assistance to perform daily tasks such as bathing, dressing, eating, going to the toilet, or ambulating.

A medical evaluation is necessary to confirm that the veteran or spouse really

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OLDER PERSONS ACTION GROUP

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[www.opagak.com](http://www.opagak.com) [www.seniorvoicealaska.com](http://www.seniorvoicealaska.com)

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# Reliable information about supplements

By **LAWRENCE D. WEISS**

For Senior Voice

I was talking with someone at a social gathering. A wonderful supplement was mentioned that would boost my energy. I didn't write it down but it sounded like Sporkblot, or maybe Batspawn? Well, no matter. I'll just wander over to the local drug store and find it. But I get there and I am faced with 30 feet of shelving overflowing with hundreds of supplements aggressively strutting their stuff. Yikes! What do I do?

Ahhh. I am enveloped in a moment of focused calm.

(Ok, I am not calm. It's an apocryphal story.) I visualize the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS), comfortably housed in the National Institutes of Health. It is no farther away than my favorite device to access the internet. I find ODS at: <https://ods.od.nih.gov/>

"Its mission is to strengthen knowledge and understanding of dietary supplements by evaluating scientific information, stimulating and supporting research, disseminating research results, and educating the public to foster an enhanced quality of life and health for the U.S.

population."

That's all well and good, but what can it do for me and you? Say, for example, that you can't remember the name of a particular supplement, but you want it for brain health or menopause? No problem. Click on the "Health Information" menu on the top of the home page, and you'll see the heading "Supplements for Specific Purposes" featuring a list of common reasons people take supplements.

Click on the condition of interest, say "Immune Function." You'll find an easy-to-understand overview of the immune system

and related supplements. You will also find a list of relevant vitamins, minerals, botanicals and other ingredients that you can explore in depth. For example, is there any scientific evidence that the stuff is safe and effective to enhance the immune system?

On the same page that you find the heading, "Supplements for Specific Purposes," there is another heading, "Dietary Supplement Fact Sheets." These fact sheets are useful if you want to find out about a particular supplement. They are listed in alphabetical order. So, for example,

you might want to know more about astragalus or lycopene. Click on it and you are rewarded with a discussion about how safe and effective it is; how it is used; and how it interacts with drugs, other supplements, and foods.

And here is another cool feature. Click again on the "Health Information" menu at the top of the home page, then click on "Consumer Awareness & Protection." You have struck gold. Here you will find a wide range of topics you can click on for more

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# Brace for all kinds of holiday season scams

By **TERESA HOLT**

For Senior Voice

As the holiday season kicks off, so does a wave of scams targeting those of us enjoying holiday activities. Here are some of the most prevalent scams to watch out for during this festive period.

## Online shopping scams

As legitimate retailers launch their seasonal promotions, scammers are also intensifying their efforts to deceive bargain-hunting shoppers. These criminals create bogus websites and social media campaigns with amazing deals. If it is too good to be true, it is a scam. They impersonate major brands, using fake posts and advertisements to lure consumers into spending money on products they will never receive. Additionally, these "spoofing" sites often distribute malware-laden links or attachments through fake coupons or "order confirmation" emails.

To protect yourself, avoid clicking on links from emails or texts that promise

hot deals. Instead, manually type the web address of the company offering the deal into your browser. The safest way to make online purchases is with a credit card, as it allows you to dispute charges if the transaction turns out to be fraudulent. Be cautious when using P2P (peer-to-peer) payment apps like Cash App, Zelle, and Venmo, as they do not offer the same consumer protections as credit cards.

## Gift card scams

When unsure what gift to get someone, buying a gift card might seem like a safe bet. However, an AARP survey found that 1 in 4 consumers have given or received a gift card with no value. While this could be a gift card error, most often it's due to low-tech in-store tampering or high-tech online draining of card values. To avoid this, purchase gift cards directly from the websites of businesses the recipient loves. You can then send the gift card via email or print it out and mail it. This method ensures the card's value is secure and reach-

es the intended recipient without issues.

## Package delivery scams

As we prepare for holiday giving and celebrations, scammers are ramping up delivery scams.

These criminals send fake messages about upcoming or missed deliveries, pretending to be from Amazon, UPS, FedEx or the U.S. Postal Service. Each year, over 23 billion false emails and texts are sent, hoping you'll click on the link provided.

These links lead to phony sign-in pages asking for personal information or to malware-infested sites. Messages may claim you need to confirm an order or reschedule a delivery.

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Send letters to the editor to Senior Voice, 401 E. Fireweed Lane, #102, Anchorage AK 99503. Maximum length is 250 words. Senior Voice reserves the right to edit for content and length. Space may be made available for longer opinion piece essays up to 400 words. Contact the managing editor at [editor@seniorvoicealaska.com](mailto:editor@seniorvoicealaska.com) to discuss this. Copy deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication.





# Gaining wisdom from those who've lived it

By **KAREN CASANOVAS**

For Senior Voice



**Q:** I recently started a job that involves interacting with older adults, many of whom have led fascinating lives. To learn more about them and deepen our conversations, what questions could help me get to know them better?

**A:** Learning about an elderly person's life can be a fulfilling experience for both parties involved. To facilitate meaningful conversations, it is important to create an environment that encourages openness. This includes using clear and direct communication, asking thoughtful questions, and following tips designed to help you gain wisdom from their experiences.

For a productive interaction that benefits both you and another person, remember that effective communication encompasses both listening and speaking. It is essential to avoid dominating the conversation, allowing space for the other individual to share their thoughts and stories.

### Useful communication strategies

**Practice active listening** by showing genuine interest in their narrative by nodding and making eye contact. Avoid interrupting; let them finish their thoughts before responding.

**Use open-ended questions** and encourage them to elaborate by asking questions that require more than a yes/no answer.

**Be aware of nonverbal cues** in observing facial expressions, body language and gestures to convey empathy and understanding.

**Have patience** and give them time to gather their thoughts, especially if they are recalling memories.

**Use a respectful tone** by speaking in a calm and respectful manner and be mindful of their emotional state.

**Ask about using technology** (if they are comfortable) to record video calls or if text messaging is permissible to com-

municate, especially if long-distance is a factor.

### Sample questions to ask

**Personal history:** Can you tell me about the places you grew up? Were there favorite foods you enjoyed? What were some of the most significant events in your life?

**Careers and interests:** What jobs have you had, and which one did you enjoy the most? Are there any hobbies or interests that you have pursued over the years? What accomplishments are you most proud of?

**Family and treasured connections:** Is there someone who is a favorite relative of yours? What makes them special to you? Was there a person or mentor who influenced your life decisions?

**Life lessons and wisdom:** What is the secret to living a fulfilled life? Are there valuable lessons you learned that you could share with others? What is the best advice you received?

**Cultural and historical insights:** How have you seen the world change throughout your life? What historical events had a significant impact on you? What traditions or customs do you cherish the most?

**Reflections and future:** What dreams or goals do you still have? Who do you wish you could talk to right now? How do you want to be remembered?

### Other ways to gain knowledge

**Ask for stories.** Encourage them to share stories that highlight difficult lessons learned or pivotal moments.



David Rosenthal

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# Better Alzheimer's detection among Alaska Natives

By JOHN C. SCHIESZER

For Senior Voice

New steps are underway to improve the detection and management of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias among American Indian and Alaska Native elders. A \$11.3 million dollar contract has been awarded to specifically train healthcare providers and support patients' families in communities that have little access to such specialized care.

The program will be led by Dr. Dedra Buchwald, a professor of neurological surgery at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle, and it is funded by the Indian Health Service (IHS). She and her team will create and implement instructional programs over the next five years. Jordan P. Lewis, PHD, (Aleut/Sugpiaq, Native Village of Nanknek), who is a professor and director of research at the College of Indigenous

## Digital calendar clock

Assistive Gizmo of the Month

Assistive Technology of Alaska

For some individuals, time orientation can be a struggle and lead to frustration and anxiety. Digital calendar clocks clearly display the current time and part of the day, week, date and month without any abbreviations and in high contrast. Many

of these devices can set daily alarms, customize reminders shown on the screen, change languages, and adjust brightness.

This column is brought to you by ATLA (Assistive Technology of Alaska), a non-profit, statewide resource. ATLA does not endorse this product but shares information on the types of assistive



technology that may benefit Alaskans. For more information or to arrange a free demonstration, visit <http://www.atlaak.org> or call 907-563-2599.

Studies, University of Alaska Fairbanks, will be part of the team along with six American Indian and Alaska Native faculty, staff and consultants.

"The investment by

the Indian Health Service (IHS) demonstrates its commitment to improving awareness of dementia and working in collaboration with IHS clinics and providers to develop culturally,

responsive and culturally, safe resources, diagnostic tools, and education that is reflective of the tribal communities across Alaska

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# Friendsgiving and solo Thanksgivings

By KIMBERLY BLAKER

The long-held tradition of the family gathered around a table for a savory Thanksgiving feast carries fond memories for most. Yet, many will spend the day alone, either out of circumstance or by choice. Whatever the case, there are plenty of ways to enjoy the holiday without family. So whether you go it alone or decide to hold a Friendsgiving, follow these tips to make the most of your holiday.



© Yulianny | Dreamstime.com

**Whether you go it alone or decide to hold a Friendsgiving, follow these tips to make the most of your holiday.**

### Solitary celebrations

The upside of spending Thanksgiving alone is that you can celebrate any way you choose. But be sure to plan ahead so you don't waste it away. Unless that's what you want to do, which is perfectly fine, too.

One of the benefits of

spending the day alone is that you can feast on anything your heart desires. If you like cooking, it's the perfect day to pull out your favorite recipes and treat yourself to a gourmet meal.

If cooking isn't your thing, you can still in-

dulge by eating out. A few restaurants are open on Thanksgiving. Some will even serve a Thanksgiving dinner. Just make your reservation a week or so in advance because restaurants book up early for the holiday.

One thing that doesn't shut down on Thanksgiving is the movie theater. So you can catch a flick and treat yourself to hot buttery popcorn.

If weather permits, get some fresh air and go for a walk or ride.

On the other hand, you can stay in where it's cozy and warm and bask in a home spa treatment. Give yourself a manicure, pedicure, facial, and try out a new hair color.

Thanksgiving is also an excellent day for a trip down memory lane. Pour a glass of wine, play some music from your past, and flip through photo albums.

Is there a book you've been dying to read? Curl up on the couch and spend the entire day relaxing and reading.

It's also the perfect opportunity to call family or

friends you haven't spoken to in a while. So give them a ring and catch up.

Maybe you'd really like to do something good for the soul and others. If so, offer to help at a soup kitchen. Another option is to take up a coat collection. Then on Thanksgiving, deliver the coats to a shelter or distribute them in areas populated by the homeless.

### Friendsgiving

Even if you don't have family around for the holidays, you don't have to spend it alone. In fact, many people opt to spend the day with friends to avoid the hot political climate that all too often erupts at family Thanksgiving gatherings.

Odds are you have friends, co-workers, neighbors or

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# Non-citizens may qualify for Medicare

By SEAN McPHILAMY

### Alaska Medicare Information Office

Medicare can be confusing for anyone. It is easy to misunderstand Medicare eligibility or the best time to enroll in the various parts of Medicare. The factors around Medicare eligibility and enrollment choices can be even more complicated for older people who were born outside the U.S. Im-



migrants may not have as much work history in the

U.S., may have a variety of immigration statuses, or may have limited English proficiency—all making a potentially confusing process even more difficult.

### Non-citizens and Medicare eligibility

If you qualify for Social Security Retirement Benefits, Social Security Disability Insurance, or Railroad Retirement Benefits, you are eligible for Medi-

care. In other words, if you qualify for premium-free Part A, you are Medicare-eligible regardless of your immigration status and residency. To be eligible for retirement benefits and premium-free Part A at age 65, you must have worked at least 40 calendar quarters, or 10 years, in the U.S. and paid Social Security tax; these are known as work history credits. To qualify for premium-free

Part A before age 65, you must meet pro-rated work history requirements that are based on the age you became disabled and when the work was performed. If you don't have enough work history, you may still be eligible based on your spouse's work history. If you aren't sure how many quarters of work history you or your spouse has, you

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ADVERTISEMENT

# Hearing loss strategies for the holidays



By **DONNA R. DEMARCO**  
*Accurate Hearing Systems*

A person with hearing loss symptoms may have difficulty hearing the higher pitched tones of children's (and women's) speech. Missing out on a grandchild's recitation of a wish list, or not being able to contribute to a family conversation about holiday memories can be frustrating for both the person with hearing loss as well as family members who may not be aware of the hearing problem.

There are ways to help. It takes observation, awareness and a healthy dose of patience—communication skills that are useful year-round but may be even more

important when families and friends gather to celebrate.

- ▶ Be sure the person is paying attention before you speak.
- ▶ Speak face-to-face, never from a different room or from behind.
- ▶ Dimly lit situations make it difficult to see facial expressions. Try to have conversations in areas with good lighting like a kitchen or near a window.
- ▶ While speaking, avoid activities like smoking or chewing that make lip reading difficult.
- ▶ Speak at a natural pace and volume level.
- ▶ Try to reduce background noise. Even people who wear hearing aids may have difficulty hearing in noisy situations.

Avoid unnecessary frustrations this holiday season. Make your appointment by simply calling us at 644-6004 and request a free hearing test.

Donna R DeMarco, AAS, BC-HIS, Tinnitus Care Provider.



Alaska law permits a hearing aid dealer who is not a licensed physician or a licensed audiologist to test hearing only for the purpose of selling or leasing hearing aids; the tests given by a hearing aid dealer are not to be used to diagnose the cause of the hearing impairment.

# Best CPAP alternatives for sleep apnea

By **JIM MILLER**  
*Savvy Senior*

**Dear Savvy Senior:** I've been diagnosed with sleep apnea and have been trying to use a CPAP device for the past six months but can't tolerate it. Are there any alternative treatment options you can tell me about? – *Sleepy Sam*

**Dear Sam:** I'm sorry to hear your CPAP mask is keeping you awake at night, but I'm happy to hear that you're addressing your ob-

structive sleep apnea (OSA) problem. Left untreated, OSA is linked to daytime sleepiness and an increased risk of anxiety, diabetes, hypertension and stroke.

For those who aren't familiar, OSA causes your breathing to pause during sleep because something blocks your airway, like your tongue or relaxed throat muscles. Losing weight, quitting smoking, and limiting alcohol can all help ease obstructive sleep apnea symptoms such as

snoring.

The primary treatment for people with moderate or severe OSA is a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine, which keeps your airway open by pumping air through a mask you wear over your mouth or nose when you sleep.

But many people, like yourself, have difficulty tolerating CPAP and don't stick with it. But CPAP machines

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# Medicare

continued from page 5

can contact Social Security to ask. You can also make an online account at SSA.gov to check your number of work quarters online.

Legal permanent residents (LPRs) are non-citizens who are allowed to live in the U.S. indefinitely. A person who has the immigration status of LPR is sometimes referred to as a "green card holder." If you are an LPR who doesn't qualify for the federal benefits just described, you can be eligible for Medicare if you have lived in the U.S. continuously for five years before enrolling in Medicare. The five years begins the day you arrive in the U.S. with the intention of establishing a home, not just for a visit. You can keep your LPR status even if you leave the U.S. temporarily, meaning for no more than six months. These short visits out of the country shouldn't be considered a break in your period of residence in the U.S. for the five-year residency requirement.

To qualify for premium-free Part A, you must be considered "fully insured" by the Social Security Administration. This means that at age 65 you, or in some situations your spouse, must have worked at least 40 calendar quarters (or 10 years) in a job where Social Security taxes were paid. For people under 65, the number of calendar quarters of Social Security credit needed varies based on the age of onset of disability and when those work quarters occurred. Most people who are considered fully insured also qualify for Social Security retirement or Railroad Retirement Benefits.

To discuss your Medicare enrollment options, or to ask any questions

regarding your specific situation, please contact the State of Alaska Medicare Information Office at 800-478-6065 or 907-269-3680; our office is also known as the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), and the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) program. If you are part of an agency or organization that assists Seniors with medical resources, consider networking with the Medicare Information Office. Call us to inquire about our new Ambassador program.

Sean McPhilamy is a volunteer and Certified Medicare Counselor for the Alaska Medicare Information Office.

# Medicare counseling by phone

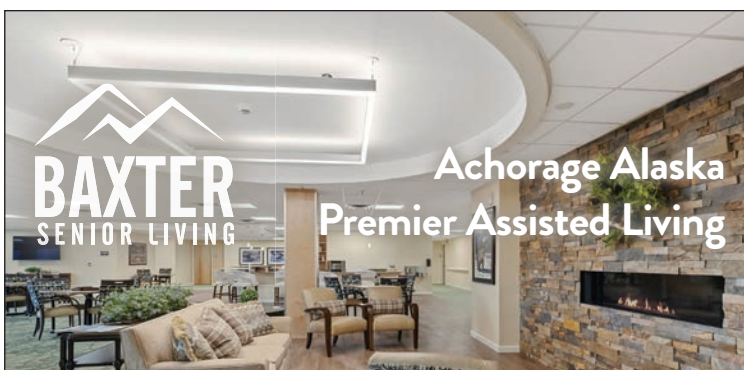
By **LEE CORAY-LUDDEN**  
*For Senior Voice*

I am a Certified Medicare Counselor working under SHIP. My office is in the Soldotna Senior Center, but I serve the state via phone. If you

are local, I can help you as a walk-in.

I am here Mondays through Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Fridays, 8 a.m. to noon.

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The National Council on Aging (NCOA) supports a network of Benefits Enrollment Centers (BECs) that help people find and enroll in benefits programs. BECs are free, private community organizations that can help people with low income, disabilities, or other challenges.

BECs can help people enroll in programs such as Medicare Part D Extra Help, Medicare Savings Programs (MSP), Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

**Senior Center membership is not required.**  
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You may be eligible for one or more of the following programs:

- **Medicare Part D Extra Help/Low Income Subsidy (LIS)** - pays for Part D plan premiums, reduces drug co-pays and eliminates the Donut-Hole
- **Medicare Savings Program (MSP)** - pays Medicare premiums
- **Medicaid** - serves as a supplement to Medicare, pays deductibles and co-pays.
- **SNAP** - Alaska's Food Stamp Program
- **LIHEAP** - Heating assistance
- **Senior Benefit** - receive cash from the State of Alaska
- Additional programs may be available.





# Here are your 2025 Alaska Medicare Part D options

Senior Voice Staff

Open Enrollment is underway for Medicare pre-

scription drug plans (Part D plans). Plans change each year, both in what they will cover and/or how

much they will charge for it. The Medicare Information Office is available to assist you with all your Medicare

questions. If you call, have your Medicare card and a list of your prescriptions available. Call 907-269-

3680 in Anchorage or 1-800-478-6065 Alaska statewide.

PLAN Name & Contract ID	Company Name	Phone Number	With Full Extra Help	Monthly Premium	Annual Deductible
Cigna Healthcare Assurance Rx (S5617-227)	Cigna	1-800-735-1459	X	\$ 4.20	\$ 590.00
Cigna Healthcare Extra Rx (S5617-279)	Cigna	1-800-735-1459		\$ 35.60	\$ 175.00
Cigna Healthcare Saver Rx (S5617-384)	Cigna	1-800-735-1459		\$ 29.80	\$ 590.00
Humana Basic Rx Plan (S5884-116)	Humana	1-800-706-0872	X	\$ 0.00	\$ 590.00
Humana Premier Rx Plan (S5884-180)	Humana	1-800-706-0872		\$138.70	\$ 0.00
Humana Value Rx Plan (S5884-213)	Humana	1-800-706-0872		\$ 33.00	\$ 573.00
SilverScript Choice (S5601-068)	Aetna Medicare	1-833-526-2445		\$ 44.90	\$ 590.00
AARP Medicare Rx Preferred from UHC (S5921-415)	UnitedHealthcare	1-800-753-8004		\$ 84.90	\$ 0.00
AARP Medicare Rx Saver from UHC (S5921-377)	UnitedHealthcare	1-888-867-5564		\$ 81.80	\$ 590.00
WellCare Classic (S4802-096)	WellCare	1-800-270-5320		\$ 74.40	\$ 590.00
WellCare Medicare Rx Value Plus (S4802-237)	WellCare	1-800-270-5320		\$107.30	\$ 590.00
WellCare Value Script (S4802-165)	WellCare	1-800-270-5320		\$ 22.30	\$ 590.00

## Free blood sugar screenings, new tests at health fairs

Alaska Health Fair, Inc.

November is Diabetes Awareness month. Thanks to our partnership with the State of Alaska Dept. of Health (DOH), Alaska Health Fair, Inc. is making it easier than ever to check your blood sugar levels and learn about diabetes and pre-diabetes at health fairs.

Diabetes occurs when your body struggles with insulin production or usage, leading to high blood sugar levels and potential complications. Pre-diabetes is a warning sign that your blood sugar is higher than normal but not yet at diabetes levels. Early detection and intervention can prevent progression to full-blown diabetes.

Common symptoms of diabetes/pre-diabetes include frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, blurry vision, and slow-healing sores. At Alaska Health Fair events, we're offering the \$25 A1C test – a valuable tool in managing your blood sugar levels. The A1C test provides an average of your blood sugar control over the past two to three months, unlike regular tests that measure glucose at a specific moment. It helps you understand how well your current lifestyle choices and treatment plan are working.

This fall we've partnered with the State of Alaska DOH to offer free A1C tests at our events across the state. To qualify:

- ▶ Take our short self-assessment survey at the health fair.
- ▶ If your result indicates a risk and you're not diagnosed with diabetes or pre-diabetes, you're eligible for a free test.
- ▶ The free tests are available to individuals 18 years and older.

### Additional resources

To support your health journey, we've gathered additional resources for you:

**Alaska Health Fair toll-free voicemail:** Call 1-833-800-1292 for assistance understanding your blood test results or with any questions about diabetes/pre-diabetes. A Health Educator and RN will return your call.

**Local and national resources guide:** Download our free guide featuring local and national resources for diabetes, pre-diabetes, and high blood pressure. [https://alaska-healthfair.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/soa-A1C-Resources\\_March2022\\_v1.pdf](https://alaska-healthfair.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/soa-A1C-Resources_March2022_v1.pdf)

**Online programs:** Visit the State of Alaska Dept. of Health's Fresh Start Program at <http://freshstart.alaska.gov> for no-cost online resources to help you manage your health.

### Join us at the health fairs

November is our final month of fall health fair events before we take a winter break. Now is the perfect time to take advantage of affordable blood screenings (pricing below). Walk-ins are welcome, but we recommend scheduling an appointment for quicker service.

**Nov. 2 Talkeetna** Community Health Fair at Upper Susitna Senior & Community Center, 16463 E Helena Dr., 8 a.m. to noon.

**Nov. 5 Anchorage** Credit Union 1 Community Health Fair, 1941 Abbott Rd., 8 to 10 a.m.

**Nov. 9 Anchorage** Community event at Alaska

Pacific University, 4455 University Dr., 8 a.m. to noon.

**Nov. 9 Fairbanks** Community Health Fair at Anne Wien Elementary School Gym, 1501 Hampstead Ave., 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**Nov. 16 Anchorage** Community Fair at St. John Church, 1801 O'Malley Rd., Anchorage, 8 a.m. to noon. \*Note: This will be the final southcentral event of fall season

**Nov. 19 Fairbanks** Alaska Health Fair office draw, 725 26th Ave., Suite 201, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. \*Note: Final northern region event of fall season.

### New blood tests

In addition to our

27-panel of tests, new blood tests are available this season to support your health: **Magnesium** (\$25), essential for energy production, muscle function and bone health; **Uric Acid** (\$25), helps diagnose gout and monitor levels during treatments; **Celiac t-Transglutaminase (tTG)** (\$40), screens for celiac disease, an immune reaction to gluten.

Learn more and schedule an appointment at our website, [www.alaska-healthfair.org](http://www.alaska-healthfair.org). Or call us at 907-278-0234 in Anchorage/statewide; 907-374-6853 in Fairbanks and Tanana Valley, and 907-723-5575 in Juneau and Southeast.

## Wisdom

*continued from page 4*

**Seek their opinions.** Ask for their perspective on current events or societal changes, which can provide valuable insights.

**Be open-minded.** Approach conversations with an open mind, ready to embrace their views, even if they differ from yours.

**Document their wisdom.** Consider keeping a journal of their stories and advice, or even recording conversations (with permission) for future reference.

**Reflect and apply.** Take time to reflect on what others share or think and ways you can apply their knowledge to your own life.

**Build a relationship.** Regularly check in with them, fostering a deeper connection that encourages them to share more over time.

Learning lessons and gaining wisdom from older adults opens the door to a treasure trove of insights that can guide other generations through life's challenges. Their stories of resilience and adaptability not only illuminate paths for personal growth, but also exposes the emotional

fragility of life. By engaging in meaningful conversations and expressing genuine curiosity about their experiences, we can strengthen intergenerational bonds, enriching our lives and theirs in profound ways. Ultimately, connecting with older adults can ignite a deeper appreciation for life and inspire us to approach both personal and societal challenges with greater thoughtfulness and compassion.

*Karen Casanovas, PCC, CPCC, CLIPP is a health and wellness professional coach practicing in Anchorage. If you have questions write to her at [info@karencasanovas.com](mailto:info@karencasanovas.com).*





# The power of gratitude and education in aging

By JOHN SCHIESZER

Medical Minutes

## Goodness gracious, we are so blessed

Showing gratitude may pack some important hidden long-term health benefits. A recent study from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health is suggesting that experiencing gratitude may help older adults live longer.

“Prior research has shown an association between gratitude and lower risk of mental distress and greater emotional and social wellbeing. However, its association with physical health is less understood,” said lead author Ying Chen, a Harvard research scientist in the Department of Epidemiology.

The researchers used data from the Nurses’ Health Study to assess levels of gratitude and mortality among 49,275 older women. In 2016, participants completed a six-item Gratitude Questionnaire. At that time, the average age of the women was 79. Each one was asked whether they agreed or disagreed with statements such as “I have so much in life to be thankful for” and “If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.”

In 2019, the researchers followed up to identify deaths among the study population, noting all-



cause mortality as well as specific causes such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory diseases, neurodegenerative disease, infection, and injury. They observed 4,608 deaths over the course of the study period and cardiovascular disease was the most common cause.

The study found that participants whose gratitude questionnaire scores were in the highest tertile had a 9% lower risk of all-cause mortality over the following four years than those who scored in the bottom tertile. Gratitude appeared protective against every specific cause of mortality studied, most significantly against cardiovascular disease.

To most accurately quantify gratitude’s impact on mortality, the researchers took a “conservative approach” in controlling for sociodemographic data, health history and lifestyle factors. These included social participation, religious involvement and op-

**Feeling grateful can replace anxiety and worrying. It can also help combat negative thinking patterns by keeping thoughts focused on the present.**

timism. These factors often overlap with gratitude.

“Prior research indicates that there are ways of intentionally fostering gratitude, such as writing down or discussing what you are grateful for a few times a week,” said Chen. “Promoting healthy aging is a public health priority, and we hope further studies will improve our understanding of gratitude as a psychological resource for enhancing longevity.”

A review of 70 studies that included responses from more than 26,000 adults found an association between higher levels of gratitude and lower levels of depression. Overall, adults with a grateful mindset reported higher satisfaction with life, stronger social relationships and more self-esteem than those who don’t practice gratitude. Feeling grateful can replace anxiety and worrying. It can

also help combat negative thinking patterns by keeping thoughts focused on the present.

## University classes may help improve care in older adults

The number of aging Americans is projected to more than quadruple over the next three decades from an estimated 101,000 in 2024 to more than 400,000 by 2058, according to projections from the U.S. Census Bureau. The population of older Americans (ages 65 and older) rose by more than 9% from 2020 to 2023 alone. The projections show continued trends in an aging society, with older adults expected to outnumber children for the first time in the U.S. by 2034.

To meet the needs of this unique and growing population, the UTSA Department of Sociology and Demography in San Anto-

nio, Texas created a bachelor’s degree program and a minor in Health, Aging and Society. This program, if widely adopted, could be a good way to make significant advances.

“We built the program to introduce students to the sociological study of aging, health and health care,” said Terrence Hill, program director and professor of sociology at UTSA. “This is the most innovative health program at UTSA. We offer the perfect balance of academic and applied training.”

The program features courses on the intersection of social inequalities and population health, aging as a social process, the failing health care system, and careers in the health and social service professions. Since its introduction in 2022, the program has more than tripled in size, reflecting the number of students wishing to take advantage of this program.

“The Health, Aging and Society program’s interdisciplinary approach allows students to fully

*next page please*



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# Alzheimer's

continued from page 5

and Indian country,” said Lewis.

The primary goal of this new program is to train primary care providers to recognize and improve overall care.

“They’ll be trained on how to manage dementia locally, talk to families, and identify when certain medications are appropriate,” said Dr. Buchwald. “The program will strive to increase the knowledge and competency of primary care providers and staff who

work with American Indian and Alaska Native patients and communities.”

She said there are only a few neuro-psychologists or other specialists within the entire healthcare system serving Native Alaskan elders. “It may take a year to get an appointment, and most patients are many miles from an MRI facility,” said Dr. Buchwald.

The researchers will first develop training modules and then roll them out to primary care providers, nurses and other employees on rural reservations and in urban areas. Trainees will learn to identify early symptoms

of dementia. They will also be offered instruction in screening for conditions that can mimic dementia, such as hearing loss or vision loss.

Dr. Jolie Crowder, a national elder care consultant with the IHS, said the investment in training and support to improve care and services for elders living with dementia, their families and communities has lagged behind other priorities. However, this new commitment to building a partnership with the University of Washington to support the Indian health workforce is a big step toward addressing

these gaps, according to Dr. Crowder.

## Growth and challenges

In 2020, an estimated 38,000 American Indian and Alaska Native people age 65 and older were living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. That number is expected to double by 2030 and quadruple by 2050, according to a study published in August in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. Alaska is a state with very high rates of diagnosed Alzheimer's disease and dementia-related diseases, according to the study.

Lewis said with the

growing recognition of dementia in American Indian and Alaska Native communities, the investment in training of primary care providers, the caregivers and the communities, will assist in increasing awareness and understanding of dementia. The program may help reduce the fear and stigma that still exists in many of the Alaska Native communities, Lewis said.

“While the shortage of healthcare providers who are trained to give a dementia diagnosis is definitely a barrier, there are

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# Gratitude

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investigate how social factors influence health and illness in society,” said Ginny Garcia-Alexander, associate professor of sociology at UTSA. “In addition to training on the social and cultural dimensions of health and aging,

students are trained in health administration and research methods. This dynamic program paves the way for students to help address the nation's challenges in aging, health care and health inequities.”

In this area of study, there are now five social determinants of health (SDOH), which become even more critical as we age. They include economic

stability, social and community context, education access and quality, health care access and quality, and neighborhood and environment. An aging population means a higher use of health care services, a greater need for professional caregivers and puts more of a focus on taking the whole-lifespan approach to healthy aging by using the SDOH as a

guideline, according to the Texas researchers.

“While the aging population presents challenges to the economy, infrastructure and institutions, it also opens up significant job opportunities,” said Zhiyong Lin, assistant professor in UTSA's sociology and demography department. “Pursuing a major in health, aging and society provides students with the

knowledge and expertise to tackle these challenges. It is an ideal time to enter this dynamic and rewarding program to be at the forefront of meeting the needs of our aging society.”

John Schieszer is an award-winning national journalist and radio and podcast broadcaster of *The Medical Minute*. He can be reached at [medicalminutes@gmail.com](mailto:medicalminutes@gmail.com)




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# Friendsgiving

continued from page 5

acquaintances who'll also be spending the day alone. So why not hold a Friendsgiving?

Even if you spend Thanksgiving with family, Friendsgiving is so popular, many people hold a Friendsgiving on Friday or Saturday so they too can enjoy the holiday with their friends.

There are a lot of ways to do your Friendsgiving, which might depend, in

part, on the size of your guest list. If it's only a couple of you, split the grocery list, then plan to cook together that day. You could also skip the hassle and enjoy dinner out. If you choose the latter for Thanksgiving day, make reservations well in advance.

If you'd like to celebrate with several friends, a potluck might be best. Just plan everything ahead so the day will be a success without a ton of work and stress on your part. As the host, you might offer to do the turkey or meat yourself. Then ask each person to

bring one or two specific types of dishes. For example, ask a couple of friends to bring a vegetable dish. Ask them to let you know in advance what specifically they plan to bring so you don't have multiples of the same vegetable. You can assign a couple of other guests to bring dessert, and another to bring dinner rolls and snacks.

For beverages, you could offer to supply soda. But ask everyone to bring their own alcoholic drinks. Or, if you know everyone likes beer or wine, ask each person to bring something to share

so you can all enjoy tasting and a variety.

Additional items you can ask guests to bring include ice, coolers, tableware, serving utensils, folding chairs, folding tables and tablecloths.

In addition to the day's main event—delicious food—you could also plan for some form of entertainment. Put together a variety of music to fit everyone's tastes. You could also play cards or games. If all your guests are football fans, it couldn't get any easier.

Do any of your guests have kids? If so, have a

clean childproof room available where they can play away from the adult ruckus.

Whatever way you choose to spend your day, the most important thing is to enjoy it and know you're in good company—whether it be the company of acquaintances, friends or your own.

Kimberly Blaker is a freelance writer. She also owns an online bookshop, Sage Rare & Collectible Books, specializing in out-of-print, scarce, signed, and first editions; fine bindings; ephemera and more at [sagerarebooks.com](http://sagerarebooks.com).

# Free support, resources for family caregivers

Senior Voice Staff

The Kenai Peninsula Family Caregiver Support Program will hold the following caregiver support group meetings in October. Meeting format is open discussion unless otherwise noted.

**Nov. 1 Soldotna Senior Center** support meeting with presentation, "Holiday Dining with Dementia," by Valerie Flake from Val's Care Coordination, 1 to 2 p.m.

**Nov. 6 Kenai Senior Center**, "Stronger Together" support group, 2 to 3:30 p.m.

**Nov. 7 Tyotkas Elder Center** (in Kenai) support meeting, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**Nov. 21 Sterling Senior Center** support meeting, 1 to 2 p.m.

**Nov. 26 Nikiski Senior Center** support meeting, 1 to 2 p.m.

Support meetings allow you to share your experiences as a caregiver, or support someone who is a caregiver. If you are helping a family member or friend by being a caregiver, learn what kind of help is available. There is no charge for these services and everyone is invited to attend. For information or to offer suggestions on training topics, call Dani Keschull at the Nikiski Senior Center, 907-776-7654 or email [kpfcsp@nikiskiseniorcenter.org](mailto:kpfcsp@nikiskiseniorcenter.org).

**Kodiak Senior Center** hosts the caregiver support group on the third Thursday of each month (Nov. 21) at 1 p.m. Call for information, 907-486-6181.

## Around the state

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska (ARA) organizes caregiver support meetings around the state, including Anchorage, Eagle River, Fairbanks, Homer, Juneau/Southeast, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Mat-Su Valley, Seward, Sitka, Soldotna, Talkeetna, Willow. Call 1-800-478-1080 for details.

ARA also hosts a statewide call-in meeting on the first Saturday and third Wednesday of every month, 1 to 2 p.m.

For information, call Gay Wellman, 907-822-5620 or 1-800-478-1080.

In Southeast Alaska, the Southeast Senior Services Senior and Caregiver Resource Center is available. Call Jennifer Garrison at 866-746-6177.

The national Alzheimer's Association operates a 24-hour help line for caregivers, staffed by specialists and Masters-level clinicians, at 800-272-3900.

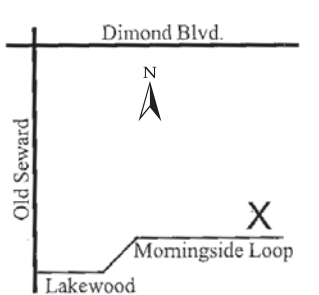
## Online caregiver support for Alaska veterans

The Alaska VA Caregiver Wellness Cafe is held monthly on the first Thursday (Nov. 7) from 1 to 2 p.m. via the Teams software and is an informal virtual place to engage with other caregivers while learning about topics beneficial to your role as a caregiver. Enrollment in Alaska VA Caregiver Support Program (CSP) is not required to participate in the call. For information, call 907-375-2606.


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In 2020 LifeWorks began providing group Day Hab in our art studio for individuals in the ID/D population. ArtWorks has grown over the years and we are now expanding Day Hab services to Palmer!

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# Make a plan to beat the winter blues

By **CHRISTIAN M. HARTLEY**

For Senior Voice



SAD is a type of depression that shows up when the days get shorter and darker. Here in Alaska, where winter nights can seem endless, SAD is pretty common. In

fact, some studies show that nearly one in ten Alaskans experience SAD.

Common signs include feeling down or sad most of the day, having low energy, sleeping too much, craving carbs and gaining weight, and losing interest in activities you usually enjoy. Some people describe it as an overwhelming desire to just "give up" and hibernate for the entire winter. If you notice these symptoms as winter sets in, you're not alone, and there are things you can do to feel better.

One of the most effective treatments is light therapy. This involves sitting near a special bright light for about 30 minutes each day. It might sound simple, but it can really help trick your body into thinking it's getting more sunlight. Some stores carry lights labeled for SAD Therapy lights, but if you can't find any of those, look for lights that are labeled "daylight" or "sunlight" bulbs.

Another great way to fight SAD is to stick to a regular sleep schedule. It's tempting to hibernate when it's dark outside but try to go to bed and wake up at the

same time every day. This helps keep your body's internal clock on track, which can improve your mood and energy.

Getting moving is also super important. That doesn't mean you need to run or chop wood, but even a short walk outside during daylight hours can help. The natural light and exercise can do wonders for your mood and your physical fitness. Bundle up warm and safe, though.

Staying connected with friends and family is another key to beating SAD. It's easy to want to curl up alone when you're feeling down, but reaching out to loved ones can really lift your spirits. Even if you don't have a reason, make it a point to reach out to a good friend or a loved one at least once a day for conversation and checking in on them. Heck, they might be feeling the SAD, and you just make their day.

Good food is the way to a man's heart, and it's also the way to a healthy mood. Eating a balanced diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables and foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (like

salmon) can help support your mental health. Some people find that taking vitamin D supplements helps too, but always check with your doctor before starting any new supplements.

If you try these tips and still struggle, reach out to your doctor. They might recommend talking to a therapist or trying medication to help manage SAD symptoms. Remember, there's no shame in asking for help.

As we head into the winter months, let's look out for each other. Check in on your neighbors and friends, especially those who live alone. By supporting one another and taking care of ourselves, we can make even the darkest Alaskan winter a little brighter. Stay warm, stay active, and stay connected.

Christian M. Hartley is a 40-year Alaska resident with over 25 years of public safety and public service experience. He is the City of Houston Fire Chief and serves on many local and state workgroups, boards and commissions related to safety. He lives in Big Lake with his wife of 20 years and their three teenage sons.

## CPAP

continued from page 6

have become smaller and quieter, with more comfortable options available. And for some people with mild to moderate OSA, less invasive alternatives to CPAP may be worth considering. Here are several to ask your doctor about.

**Dental device.** This is designed to move the jaw so that the tongue shifts toward the front of the mouth to help keep the airway open. It's one of the primary alternatives to CPAP and can also be used with CPAP to help make severe obstructive sleep apnea milder.

A dentist who specializes in sleep medicine (find one at [dentalsleep.org](http://dentalsleep.org)) will be able to customize its fit to help your breathing without causing harm to your bite or teeth. These custom-made oral appliances can cost between \$2,000 and \$4,000 but may be covered by insurance.

There are much cheaper options available online to treat snoring, but experts say these may not help with OSA, and could move teeth out of place or cause jaw issues if they're not properly fitted.

**Position therapy.** For some, sleeping on the back can make obstructive sleep apnea dramatically worse. In these cases, switching to side sleeping – perhaps using pillows or a tennis ball attached to a shirt back – can sometimes help.

**Tongue trainer.** In 2021, the Food and Drug Ad-

ministration approved a tongue-stimulating device for mild sleep apnea called eXciteOSA ([exciteosa.com](http://exciteosa.com)), which people wear for 20 minutes a day for six weeks and then 20 minutes a couple of times a week indefinitely. It costs \$1,650 and is not covered by insurance.

**Surgery.** Those who can't tolerate CPAP could have upper airway surgery to reduce the size of their soft palate or other tissue in their throat. But such options don't always work, have serious potential complications, and cannot be reversed. So, in general, they should not be first-line treatments.

A newer option is a surgically implanted device called Inspire ([inspiresleep.com](http://inspiresleep.com)). Approved in 2014, it stimulates a nerve that moves your tongue to keep your airway open. Inspire can be removed if it is not tolerated, but it should also be tried only if someone is unable to use CPAP, and it is not an option for everyone.

**Drug therapy.** A new study, recently published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, found that tirzepatide—the main ingredient found in type 2 diabetes medication Mounjaro and weight loss treatment Zepbound—helps reduce symptom severity by almost two-thirds in adults with obesity and obstructive sleep apnea. Ask your doctor about this option.

Send your senior questions to: *SavvySenior*, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](http://SavvySenior.org). Jim Miller is a contributor to the *NBC Today* show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

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2030 MULDOON ROAD





# Caps for Cops offer traditions and warmth

By SHARON McCONNELL

For Senior Voice

A unique program is underway in Fairbanks in which local police officers are learning to make beaver hats from Native elders, while learning about Native traditions and cultures.

Hosted by the Interior regional non-profit elder organization Denakkanaaga, the sewing sessions are held over several weeks, with the result being a warm hat the officers can wear while on duty in the winter. Four officers are paired with four elders to make the hats in each session.

This is the second round of the program with more to follow so that, ultimately, all officers will have a hat. The idea for the program was introduced by former Fairbanks police officer Kurt Lockwood to Fairbanks Police Chief Ron Dupee several years ago.

"Programs like this one are important because it allows our officers, especially those who are new to Fairbanks, an opportunity to engage more with those we serve in the community," Police Chief Dupee said.

Denakkanaaga Executive Director Sharon McConnell added, "We're happy that our elders are able to share their knowledge, both on hat making and our Native ways, because it helps build a better relationship with the police department."

One of the officers from the first round, Officer Sean Lai said, "I had such a great time connecting and working with everyone



Denakkanaaga Executive Director Sharon McConnell, Denakkanaaga board member Glenn Carlo, Miranda Wright, Lt. Amy Davis, Marie Yaska, Vernell Titus, Second Chief of Interior Alaska Andy Jimmie, and Fairbanks Police Chief Ron Dupee. Kneeling: Officers Clint Brubeck, Sean Lai and Stephen Hancock.

Photos courtesy Denakkanaaga

at Denakkanaaga. It was such a great experience to learn, work and create my beautiful beaver hat. Miranda Wright was the best teacher I could have asked for. She was so inviting and patient with me throughout the entire process. She treated me like one of her own and we even joked about her being my new grandmother. I got to learn so much about her culture and I got to share a little of my culture with everyone. I even brought my children along with me to get to meet everyone and it's an experience that I will carry with me. I hope this program continues not only with my department but with other departments here in Fairbanks."

Lt. Amy Davis, another officer from the first round, said, "When police officers engage in shared activities with elders from different

cultures, they unravel the threads of misunderstanding and weave bonds of respect. Through these simple yet profound

interactions, they come to know the heart of a community, learning that true service begins with connection and understanding."

Another participant, Sgt. Stephen Hancock said, "What I enjoyed most was

not making the hats, that was just a plus. The best aspect of it for me was gaining a new level of knowledge and respect for the culture and experiences of all the Aunties I got to spend time with."

The elders who are teaching the officers are originally from various Interior Alaskan villages, including Huslia, Minto and Nulato. Hunting, trapping

and making hats, boots and garments were part of their lives growing up in the remote areas. They say they are happy to meet with the officers.

Vernell Titus, who is 83 and originally from Minto, has taught officers in both rounds of the program. She said that she enjoys this opportunity, because "it

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Lt. Amy Davis sews part of her hat with guidance from elder Eliza Winfrey.

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# Dave's Musical Memories worked magic

By **MARALEY MCMICHAEL**

Senior Voice Correspondent

As I walked down the hallway at the Palmer Veterans and Pioneers Home Sept. 14, my heart grew heavy when I noticed two papers in the special glass memorial wall case which notifies the recent death of a resident. It grew even heavier when I saw Dave Brown's face looking back at me. Because my husband Gary has lived in the Pioneer Home for the last two and a half years, I know all the residents by face, if not name, and Dave was very special to us.

Gary had been living in the Palmer Pioneer Home for several months before we heard Dave sing. I'd seen his name listed on the activities calendar a couple of times, but it really meant nothing to me. My husband's transition to his new home was very difficult for both of us. Things actually got worse before they got better and there were injuries and emergency room trips to deal with.

Many activities are provided for the residents and once things settled down, I studied the monthly activities calendar to see what we might do together. We tried a few, but nothing seemed to interest Gary, or he couldn't understand the words. He attempted to watch some of the movies in the "great room," but audio trouble was just too difficult. He got along best with the TV in his own room.

So, it wasn't until an early January 2023 evening that we noticed Dave setting up his elaborate sound system equipment on the stage in the great room. This was during what I call a "walkabout," when I slowly pushed Gary's wheelchair up and down the hallways of all five of the wings, just to get him out of his room for a while. I also noticed a large poster sign advertising "Dave's Musical Memories," lettered in bold blue with a touch of glitter and illustrated with dancing couples and music notes. I suggested we stay a while and check out this activity. Thankfully, Gary agreed.



Dave Brown sings at the Palmer Veterans and Pioneers Home June 12, 2024. His recurring programs had become a favorite at the facility before he passed away this fall.

Maraley McMichael photo

We had no idea what to expect, but we both recognized Dave as a fellow resident. When he turned on his mic and began to sing along to his music, we were spellbound by his voice. He introduced every song and gave a little background, such as who wrote it or who made it famous, or little personal stories as to why each song was meaningful to him. He even referred to one as his wife's favorite.

It was such a surprisingly delightful mix, I ran back to Gary's room and grabbed paper and pen to list the songs to share with our family by email. That cold winter night, Dave sang songs of George Jones, Elvis Presley, Tom Jones, Elton John and even Josh Groban. Some were slow crooning songs, while others were fast dancing tunes. I was impressed and Gary was content to stay until the end. I went up to Dave afterward and told him how much we both enjoyed his singing.

It was such a positive experience, that I made a mental note to attend as often as possible. Dave's hour-long programs were scheduled on Wednesdays from 6 to 7 p.m. twice a month. During one program, I learned he was previously the activities director of an adult day services program in Palmer. Another time, he told us that he had been signing at the Palmer Pioneer Home for almost 20 years, and never dreamed that he would someday be a resident himself. One evening

he told us his age (89).

I think it was the third time we attended that Dave sang what he called "The Rose Program". All 24 songs had the word "rose or roses" in the title. I went up to him afterward and asked if it was possible to get a copy of his playlist. The next time Dave saw me in the dining room, he asked me to wait, went to his room, and brought back the copy he had made for me. Another time his program consisted of all love songs. He used no music sheets—just a list of song titles. He sang from memory.

My routine is to go to the Pioneer Home every other day. When Dave's programs happened to fall on one of my days to stay home, I did not make a special trip. Sometimes because of holidays, Musical Memories was only on the calendar once a month, and there were times that Dave didn't feel well, or his equipment had problems. So, our attendance was rather hit and miss.

By the summer of 2023, Dave's one concession to age was that he sat in a "director's" chair to sing rather than stand the whole hour. He started using a walker and his friend Bill helped with the equipment. At some point, I started making the trip to the Pioneer Home on my days off, if Dave was on the schedule. Other non-residents also enjoyed attending, including his friends, a longtime volunteer, and a kitchen staff lady who brought her daughter and

two granddaughters. The two young girls enjoyed dancing during the music.

One evening in early January 2024, Dave played a song that took me back to my teenage years – "Turn Around, Look at Me". Afterward, I went up and told him how much I enjoyed that song. He said it was by the Vogues, a group I'd never heard of. I found myself thinking about that song all the drive home, and finally realized that Glenn Campbell also sang it on one of the few albums I'd owned as a teenager.

A couple of programs later about halfway through, to my surprise Dave said he had a request and then he sang "Turn Around, Look at Me". I didn't request

it, but I knew he played it for me. When I went up to him afterward and thanked him, he said, "When someone tells me they enjoy a song, I like to do it special for them." It was the first time in my life I'd had a song sung especially for me. He played it again for me in April, saying when he introduced it, something like, "I'm doing this for a special person. You know who you are."

One evening I asked him if he was okay with having our picture taken together. He smiled and replied, "Only if your husband is agreeable."

Gary and I would sit near the back of the audience so that if he wanted to leave early, it wasn't such a big interruption. I would park his wheelchair next to a dining room table, where he could rest his arm. Then I would sit in a nearby chair at the table. One evening, there was enough room for me to draw up a chair along his other side. During that program, I slipped my arm in Gary's or held his hand whenever we weren't applauding. He was never one for showing affection in public, but he didn't seem to mind. After that night, I rearranged the tables enough every program to be able to sit next to him. Dave Brown's Musical Memories became our "date nights".

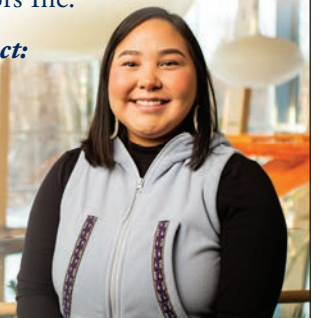
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The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program at APIA has partnered with several non-profits to meet community needs by encouraging and supporting volunteerism for people ages 55 years and older in the Anchorage and Mat-Su region. We are currently looking for elders to volunteer at the following sites (but not limited to): Alaska Regional Hospital, Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home, Alaska Veterans Museum, Anchorage Loussac Library, Anchorage Senior Activity Center, Catholic Social Services, Downtown Hope Center, Mat-Su Regional Medical Center, Prestige Care and Rehabilitation Center, Primrose Retirement Communities, Wasilla Area Seniors Inc.

**If you are interested please contact:**

**Brianne Hunt**  
RSVP Coordinator  
(907) 276-2700 ext. 276  
Or directly (907) 222-4276  
brianneh@apiai.org  
www.apiai.org







# Sustainability and innovation at Whistle Hill

## How a family is revitalizing Soldotna



Left to right, Elan Krull, Henry Krull, Alyeska Garrett, Anton Krull, Mary Krull and Braeden Garrett in front of solar panels that power their hydroponic food growing business on the Kenai Peninsula.

Photos courtesy Henry Krull

By YASMIN RADBOD

For Senior Voice

In a town not much different from the one where they both grew up, orthopedic surgeon and husband Henry Krull alongside his wife, entrepreneur and visionary Mary Krull, have embarked on a mission to bring fresh food, renewable energy and a unique experience to Soldotna, and all of Alaska. Including the talents of their adult children, the Krulls have turned Whistle Hill into a thriving hub for locals and visitors alike, with a combination of innovative farming, dining experiences, local art, bed and breakfasts, and an enduring love for old trains.



The Krulls' family-run business includes Brew@602, a café and coffeeshop housed in a refurbished rail car.

### Rails and roads

The name Whistle Hill comes from Mary's fascination with the preservation of trains, a theme that runs through many of their projects.

"My wife loves trains. She realizes it's an industry past its prime, but there's still a need to make use of them," says Henry.

This passion inspired the creation of Brew@602, a café housed in a refurbished rail car offering homemade buttermilk waffles and fresh coffee. Funny enough, you may have passed this 85-foot double-decker passenger car where it sat at the entrance of Homer Spit for about 15 years.

"I can't tell you how many times I drove by it to go fishing 10 times every summer. Over the years we would make comments like, 'what an eyesore... what are they going to do with it?'" Henry says. After seeing a for sale sign, they decided to take a look. "The interior was perfect. Mary was awestruck."

This kicked off the search for where to place the rail car, eventually securing the property now known as Whistle Hill, with more rail cars added over time, each serving a different purpose.

"It was absolutely meant to be," Henry affirms. Frames and Things local

business owner Brian Erwin heard about what they were doing on the Hill, and the Krulls' coordinated with him to lease a space next to Brew@602, which has been a huge success.

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## Rambles

News from the Grapevine

The Center for Safe Alaskans is giving out free reflective tape by mail again this year. Stick it on backpacks, coats, strollers, dog leashes and helmets. You can also use it on canes, walkers, wheelchairs and other mobility devices. Attaching it to body parts that move, like arms and legs, is most effective. To request reflective tape, call 907-929-3939 or visit the center's website at [https://safealaskans.org/reflectivetape/...](https://safealaskans.org/reflectivetape/)

**Thanksgiving Blessing** "puts faith into action and brings together people of good will for a common goal: provide a Thanksgiving meal for families who might otherwise go without," according to the **Blood Bank of Alaska** website, which publishes the times and locations of churches providing the meals in Anchorage and Mat-Su. The date for Mat-Su distributions is Saturday, Nov. 23, and in Anchorage it's Monday, Nov. 25. Families will be provided a frozen turkey, including pan and gravy, as well as groceries for a holiday meal including stuffing, corn, green beans, potatoes, apples, cranberry sauce, margarine and dinner rolls. All products based on availability. For specific locations and times, visit [https://foodbankofalaska.org/blessing/...](https://foodbankofalaska.org/blessing/)

**Valdez Senior Center** is offering **writing workshops** on Wednesdays, 9 a.m. Elevate your writing skills using NaNoWriMo prep courses. Each week focuses on a different part of story writing and offer a few prompts to get your pen flowing. For information, call 907-835-5032 ...

**Homer Senior Center** has been cohosting a monthly "Second Sunday Shakespeare" event with **Pier One Theatre's Mud Bay Bards and Friends of the Homer Library**, billed as "a free monthly read of the works of the Bard, open to everyone." Reads begin at 1 p.m. in the Silver Lining Café. The text is provided at the read and also available online at [www.opensource-shakespeare.org](http://www.opensource-shakespeare.org). Participation can also be virtual,

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# Rambles

News from the Grapevine

*continued from page 15*

online via Zoom. The Nov. 10 reading will be “Comedy of Errors”. For information, call 907-623-8275 ... **Kenai Public Library** is holding a **DIY Heat Pack** workshop on Nov. 12, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Learn how to make your own reusable heat pack in this fun and easy class designed for teens and adults. All materials provided. Registration is required. Call 907-283-4378 ... **Kodiak Senior Center** hosts **games** in its library, each Wednesday after lunch. Call for more details, 907-486-6181 ... **Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center** will hold its **holiday bazaar** on Saturday, Nov. 9 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The center will again team up with the Chugiak Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization for a fun-filled fundraising event. Call for more information, 907-688-2674 ... The **Kenai Peninsula Independent Living Center** in **Soldotna** holds a free “**Medicare 101**” session on the third Wednesday of each month (Nov. 20), from 10 to 11 a.m. Join to learn more about your Medicare options. The address is 47255 Princeton Ave., #2. Call for more information, 907-235-7911 ... Speaking of Kenai Peninsula, congratulations to the city of Homer for recent completion of a much-needed **sidewalk** on Ben Walters Lane. City council members were joined by the new mayor **Rachel Lord** for a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sept. 30. The \$1.5 million project, funded entirely by the city and years in the making, will improve safety along about half of the street that connects East End Road to Lake Street. “There is still a tremendous amount of work to be done, not only in sidewalks and bike lanes and sharing the road, but also in traffic calming, and that's something that we're continuing to work on,” Lord said in a KBBI news story.

*Rambles is compiled from senior center newsletters, websites and reader tips from around the state. Email your Rambles items to editor@seniorvoicealaska.com.*

# Music

*continued from page 14*

There is no space in Gary's room for me to sit comfortably next to him.

One evening Dave apologized to me, saying that his voice was not up to par. I told him that was okay, we enjoyed his program anyway. Sometimes, he would say “excuse me, I'm losing my vision,” if he messed something up with his equipment and had to start a song over. I assured him that we always enjoyed his program and as long as he continued to sing, we'd come to listen.

Dave was on the schedule in July when our daughter and granddaughter were up from Colorado for a visit and I was very disappointed he had to cancel because of not feeling well. His health became more fragile and it was not surprising that he



**Author Maraley McMichael and Dave Brown. Dave's song selections and his stories and commentaries connected with listeners.**

*Photo courtesy Melody Johnson*

was not listed on the August activities calendar. To see his photo in the glass memorial case in September was not unexpected. I'm thankful that Dave shared his music talent with us as long as he was able. Gary

and I are only two of the many people who miss Dave Brown and his Musical Memories.

*Maraley McMichael is a lifelong Alaskan now residing in Palmer. Email her at maraleymcmichael@gmail.com.*

# Veterans

*continued from page 2*

needs the assistance. In December 2018, the VA set a clear upper limit for applicants' net worth of

\$123,600 not including the applicant's automobile, personal effects and residence. According to [www.VeteranAid.org](http://www.VeteranAid.org), the VA also implemented a three-year lookback period to see if assets were sold below market value or gifted in a way that reduced net worth below the upper eligibility limit. There is also an upper limit on monthly countable income minus expenses such as unreimbursed medical bills.

Applying for this program is time-consuming. There are three main steps in the application process: gather the necessary documents, fill out the correct form to submit to the VA with the necessary documents, and mail your application form and all the documents to the correct pension processing center. You must fill out an application and sign a consent to release your information to the VA. Your DD-214 must be attached. You will also need the medical evaluation from your doctor, a list of current medical issues, a social security statement, banking information, a list of the doctors and hospitals you have visited in the last year, and information about your net worth and net income, along with out-of-pocket medical expenses. If in a skilled

nursing facility or an assisted living community, you may need a statement of occupancy.

For many applicants it takes roughly nine months to get approved, however, do not let this discourage you from applying. And a warning: there are scammers looking to “help” you fill out your paperwork and invest money in their annuity, so you meet the asset qualifications. Their help may cost you more than you realize, so be careful.

Please visit [www.veteranaid.org/faq.php](http://www.veteranaid.org/faq.php) to learn more about the Aid & Attendance program.

This Veteran's Day, we honor and salute all of our veterans. Thank you for your protection, selflessness, and dedication to our country.

The mission of the Alaska Long-Term Care Ombudsman program is to provide resident centered advocacy designed to protect the rights, health, safety and welfare of Alaskans living in a skilled nursing facility or assisted living home. Please feel free to contact our office if you are interested in becoming a volunteer Long Term Care Ombudsman, 907-334-4480 or 800-730-6393.

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# Commission on Aging teleconference focuses on state's senior centers

Alaska Commission on Aging

The Alaska Commission on Aging invites you to join our next teleconference on Tuesday, Nov. 7, from 10 a.m. to noon. This session will focus on senior centers in Alaska and the unique challenges they face across the state. The goal is to gather insights and develop evidence-based recommendations for the governor, legislature and advocacy groups.

We are excited to feature presentations from Pat Branson and Darlene Suplee, followed by breakout sessions for regional discussions. Participants

are encouraged to come prepared with key challenges their region faces in supporting senior centers. Each discussion group will have a representative present the top concerns from their respective areas.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/3C6NOck>. There is a link on the lower left to view and download the information packet that includes the meeting agenda, issue summary, and 2022 survey data.

Join the meeting on Zoom at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9484709363?omn=83991740098>.

For more information, call 907-465-3250.

The Seward High School Honor Society presented posters to the Seward Senior Center last year for Veterans Day. This year, the center hosts its Veterans Day luncheon again on Nov. 11, in partnership with American Legion Post 5 leading the ceremony. The U.S. Coast Guard Mustang Cutter will also be recognized. Starts at 11:30 a.m. Call for more information, 907-224-5604.



Photo courtesy Seward Senior Center

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# Calendar of Events

**Nov. 2 Wasilla** Craft fair at Wasilla Senior Center, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 907-206-8800

**Nov. 3 Nationwide** Daylight Savings Time ends at 2 a.m. Set clock back one hour.

**Nov. 5 Nationwide** Election Day

**Nov. 7-9 Fairbanks** 42nd Annual Athabaskan Fiddlers Association Music Fest, Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall, 1 p.m. to 12 a.m. Food, raffles, special guests, door prizes, more. \$20 admission. Will be streamed live on Facebook. 907-374-9777

**Nov. 9-10 Sterling** Sterling Senior Center Christmas Craft Fair, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Hand made items and crafts, bake sale, contests, prizes, more. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 907-262-6808

**Nov. 11 Nationwide** Veterans Day

**Nov. 13 Homer** Homer Senior Citizens, Inc. board of directors monthly meeting at Homer Senior Center, 1:30 p.m. (Please note date change.) 907-235-7655

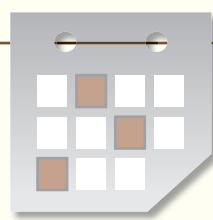
**Nov. 13 Soldotna** "Music and Memory" at the Soldotna Public Library, 2 p.m. Presented by Hospice of the Central Peninsula and facilitated by Ruthann Truesdell, BSN, RNC, Dementia Trainer. 907-262-4227.

**Nov. 16 Palmer** Holiday Bazaar at American Legion Post 15, 1550 Mystic Circle, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Unique craft items, bake sale, silent auction, raffles, more. 907-745-4440

**Nov. 28 Nationwide** Thanksgiving

**Nov. 29-30 Anchorage** "Crafted in Alaska," Anchorage Museum atrium, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Shop in the festive and elegant atmosphere of the museum atrium and purchase directly from Alaska's thriving community of designers, artists and creative makers. Live music and concessions. Free admission both days. [www.anchoragemuseum.com](http://www.anchoragemuseum.com).

**Nov. 29-Dec. 1 Juneau** 2024 Public Market, in Centennial Hall and adjacent Juneau Arts and Culture Center. Hours: noon to 7 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Vendors from every corner of Alaska and the Lower 48 offering jewelry and Alaska Native arts; the latest in fashionable attire and custom made outdoor wear; waterproof knapsacks and duffels; home decorations and original art; Alaska-made pet food and safety apparel for dogs; gift-quality foods—wild berry products, gourmet chocolates, raw Alaska honey, smoked salmon, herbal teas, and kelp and seaweed condiments; holiday gift packages, a selection of toys, classic Alaska photography and recently published books & calendars. Food court and espresso. [www.juneaupublicmarket.com](http://www.juneaupublicmarket.com)



## Send us your calendar items

Send to: Senior Voice, 401 E. Fireweed Lane, #102, Anchorage AK 99503

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Deadline for December edition is November 15.



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# Prospector first to blaze Alaska Highway

By LAUREL DOWNING BILL

Senior Voice Correspondent

While workers completed the last portion of the Alaska-Canada Highway at Beaver Creek on Oct. 25, 1942, the idea to connect Alaska to the rest of the world was born many years earlier.

Donald MacDonald, a locating engineer with the Alaska Road Commission, had dreamed for years of an overland coastal route to Alaska. It would run north from Seattle across British Columbia through the Yukon Territory to Fairbanks.

MacDonald and a group of Fairbanks residents formed the International Highway Association Inc. to sponsor the building of such a road. Citizens of Alaska and Canada lobbied for years without success.

In the early 1930s, MacDonald and the Automobile Highway Association helped finance Alaska prospector and trapper Clyde "Slim" Williams to make a trip over the proposed coastal route.

Williams left Fairbanks with a team of part-wolf dogs in November 1932. Following crude maps drawn by MacDonald, he and his dog team trekked through the wilderness and made their way to Seattle in five and a half months. He then rigged his sled with Model-T wheels and headed east, 2,000 miles, to the Chicago World's Fair, where he and his dogs were a big attraction.

When the fair ended in October 1933, Williams and his dog team mushed on to Washington, D.C., where they camped in a city park and met with Alaska's delegate, Anthony J. Dimond, and other members of Congress. He also briefed President Franklin D. Roosevelt on the proposal for a road.

Years later, Eleanor Roosevelt would say that Williams was a most vocal advocate for the Alaska Highway.

Soon after Williams' visit to the nation's capital, Dimond introduced a bill into Congress for a highway. He found no support.

But in 1938, Roosevelt appointed the Alaska International Highway Commission to make a study of routes through the northwest.

It submitted a favorable report and surveyed several routes, including Route A, MacDonald's coastal route. It started at Prince George and traveled through Atlin, Whitehorse and along the Tanana Valley to Fairbanks. Route B, which also started at Prince George, traveled up the Rocky Mountain Trench to Watson Lake, then on to Dawson City, down the Yukon River and connected to Fairbanks.

But plans for a highway again were tabled due to high construc-

tion costs and concern over what impacts a roadway might have on the northern territories.

Williams again made a trip south in 1939 to gain support for the highway. He and adventurer John Logan, along with their dog, Blizzard, left Fairbanks on May 14 aboard specially modified motorcycles with extra gas cans attached and headed down the same path Williams had traveled a few years earlier.

They followed pack trails, forded streams, and muscled through muskeg to cover 2,300 miles in six and a half months. Williams later said that he and Logan never missed a meal—but sometimes they got a few meals behind.

The team arrived in Seattle in early December. They were introduced at a Chamber of Commerce meeting as the first men to motor across the proposed Alaska International Highway.

Their journey again raised the idea of carving a road to Alaska, but the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese on Dec. 7, 1941, made building that road a reality.

This column features tidbits found while researching Alaska's colorful past for Aunt Phil's Trunk, a five-book Alaska history series written by Laurel Downing Bill and her late aunt, Phyllis Downing Carlson. The books are available at bookstores and gift shops throughout Alaska, as well as online at [www.auntphilstrunk.com](http://www.auntphilstrunk.com).



Clyde "Slim" Williams, left, and John Logan, along with their dog Blizzard, were the first to motor through the wilderness from Alaska to Seattle in 1939.

Courtesy Bureau of Land Management

### Menu Items

#### Across

- 1 Frisbees
- 6 Actor Auberjonois
- 10 Make an impression
- 14 Hells Canyon locale
- 15 Painter Nolde
- 16 Cousin of a bassoon
- 17 Item on a Chinese restaurant menu
- 19 Auctioneer's shout
- 20 Go yachting
- 21 Take stock of
- 23 Henpeck
- 24 About, on a memo
- 26 Way too weighty
- 28 Neighbor of Ger.
- 31 Seafood salad
- 35 Kind of acid
- 37 "You've got mail" co.
- 38 Bill producers
- 41 S. A. rodent
- 42 Vantage point
- 44 Mother of Levi and Judah

- 45 Russian city on the Oka
- 46 Invoice word
- 47 African antelope
- 48 It might be a rack on the menu
- 52 Starr of song
- 53 Brownish orange color
- 55 Hostilities ender
- 57 Eskimo blade
- 58 Birdbrain
- 62 Tasman of New Zealand
- 66 Elders' teachings
- 68 Sweet dessert
- 70 Red ink amount
- 71 Winter pear
- 72 Cameos, e.g.

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- 73 Young newts
- 74 Remote button
- 75 Comment to the audience
- 12 Soft drinks
- 13 Kind of fund
- 18 Teri of "Mr. Mom"
- 22 Old French coin
- 25 Cpl., e.g.
- 27 Onion roll
- 28 Francisco, shortened in Spanish
- 29 Poet Khayyám
- 30 Sausage meat for a sandwich
- 32 Relative of 27 Down
- 33 Chat room chuckle
- 34 Flamenco shout
- 36 Parachute material
- 39 \_\_\_ fide (in bad faith)
- 40 Open carriage
- 42 Broadsheets
- 43 Protein source
- 47 Peacock network
- 49 Novelist Rand
- 50 Pricing word
- 51 Gym equipment
- 53 Gown fabric
- 54 Reserved
- 56 Fiesta fare
- 59 SALT subject
- 60 Biblical pronoun
- 61 Left on a map
- 63 Island east of Java
- 64 Supplemented, with "out"
- 65 \_\_\_-majesté
- 67 Grand Prix feature
- 69 Historical period

Crossword answers on page 26





# Joanne Heywood on “Are You Being Served? Again!”

By NICK THOMAS

Tinseltown Talks

American television audiences developed a fondness for old British sitcoms in the 1980s when PBS began airing reruns of several popular shows. Loaded with oh-so-British double-meaning dialogue, a standout favorite was “Are You Being Served?”, a BBC production that originally ran in the UK from 1972 to 1985. A 1992-93 spinoff series, “Are You Being Served? Again!” (also known as “Grace & Favour”) reunited original cast members Mollie Sugden, Frank Thornton, John Inman, Wendy Richard, and Nicholas Smith, along with writers David Croft and Jeremy Lloyd.

For the new series, the beloved quirky characters moved their misadventures from a London retail clothing store to a rural English hotel and working farm, where three new recurring characters were introduced. Appearing in all 12 episodes were farm manager Maurice Moulter played by veteran British character actor Billy Burden; his innocent farmer’s daughter Mavis played by TV newcomer Fleur Bennett; and sultry Jessica Lovelock portrayed by Joanne Heywood, who was familiar with the original series when hired.

“I remember watching it with my family when I

was very young,” recalled Joanne from her home in North Essex, northeast of London (see [www.joanneheywood.com](http://www.joanneheywood.com)). “I’m not sure I grasped all the humor at that stage, particularly the innuendo, but I do remember thoroughly enjoying it. I can’t remember how the audition came about but I had worked with (director) Mike Stephens on two series of ‘First of the Summer Wine,’ so that definitely helped.”

The addition of new characters to an established TV series ensemble is not automatically welcomed by the original cast or audiences, but Joanne says there was no problem being accepted.

“If there was any negativity toward Fleur, Billy or I, I certainly wasn’t aware of it,” she explained. “I hadn’t worked with any of the original cast previously, so it was quite daunting walking into the rehearsal room on day one. I seem to recall it had been quite a while since some of the original cast had seen each other, so it felt very much like a reunion of friends, and Billy, Fleur and I were



Joanne Heywood, early 2024.

Anna Hull photo courtesy of Joanne Heywood

warmly welcomed into the group.”

Burden, who died the year after the last episode originally aired, was the proverbial scene-stealer, playing a shaggy country bumpkin.

“Billy was a naturally funny man,” said Joanne. “He had funny bones and such a cheeky twinkle, so nobody could ever be put out by his scene-stealing. As we recorded ‘live’ with a studio audience, he was invariably responsible for lots of laughter and re-takes.”

Many of her scenes were shared with Frank Thornton, playing the haughty but commanding Captain Peacock who fancied himself as a lady’s man.

“Frank was a lovely man—a true gent,” she recalled. “We had quite a few giggles and ‘out-takes,’ although, generally, he managed to keep control and I was the one unable to speak for laughter. I loved our dream sequence scene when we found the mummified cat in the attic and that’s definitely my favorite episode.”

Filming on a working farm with livestock inevitably led to unexpected animal antics.

“The sheep proved to be quite an experience,” she said. “Fleur and John (Inman) had to try to round them up into a pen with Frank and I looking on. They were very skittish and it took several takes to get them into the pen. Then,

when Frank and I were trying to get our scene done, they started to make noises that sounded as though they were belching. I’m afraid I got the giggles and Frank had such a mischievous twinkle in his eye that it took me quite some time to compose myself.”

It’s now over a half-century since the original series first aired in the 70s and, together with the short-lived sequel, the appeal of both shows endures due to the vivid characters the actors created and carefully crafted witty scripts.

“Croft and Lloyd were brilliant writers, it was a joy to perform their work,” said Joanne. “All of the cast were so disappointed when a further series wasn’t commissioned. Sadly, we were in the hands of the, then, Controller of BBC1 and, it seems, ‘Grace & Favour’ just wasn’t his cup of tea! But it was such a privilege to be part of something so iconic and I remember it fondly.”

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery, Ala., and has written features, columns, and interviews for many newspapers and magazines. See [www.getnickt.org](http://www.getnickt.org).

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# Downsizing: What are my options?



By **ALLANA LUMBAR**

*Downsizing Alaska*

There are many housing options for seniors when finding you can no longer manage your home. This decision often stems from various factors, including the desire for less maintenance, a need for accessibility, or the wish to be closer to family or community resources.

**1. Adult Communities/Senior Apartments:** Age-restricted apartment communities designed for seniors who want an active lifestyle without the responsibilities of home maintenance.

**2. Independent living facilities:** Option for seniors who are largely self-suffi-

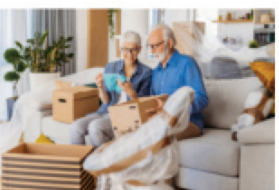
cient but desire a maintenance-free environment. Think meal preparation, laundry services and no more lawn care!

**3. Assisted living facilities:** For seniors who require some assistance with daily activities (bathing, medication management, dressing).

**4. Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs):** Offer a continuum of care, allowing residents to age in place. These communities provide various levels of care, from independent living to skilled nursing facilities. This option is for seniors who want to plan for their future needs while maintaining a sense of community.

**5. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs):** Option for those wishing to remain or move into their family's home. This could include an in-law suite or separate unit on family property.

*Allana Lumbar is a downsizing expert and real estate agent affiliated with Real Broker Wasilla.*



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# Social Security offers video assistance

*Social Security Administration*

The Social Security Administration continues to partner with locations throughout Alaska to offer secure video service, a convenient and no cost service option that allows people to talk directly to a Social Security employee through a secure computer link that includes two-way video and sound.

The video service is available at these locations:

- ▶ **In Nome,** Norton Sound Health Corporation, 1000 Grek Kruschek. Video ser-

vice is available for walk-ins on a first come, first served basis, on the second and fourth Wednesdays, 1 to 4 p.m.

▶ **Kenai Senior Center,** 361 Senior Court, Kenai. Video service is available for walk-ins, first come, first served basis, on the first and third Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

▶ **Kodiak Job Center,** 211 Mission Road, Suite 103. Video service is available for walk-ins, first come, first served, on the second and fourth Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

▶ **Ketchikan Job Center,** 2030 Sea Level Drive, Suite

220. Video service is available for walk-ins, first come, first served, on the first and third Thursdays, noon to 3 p.m.

▶ **Mat-Su Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC),** 777 N. Crusey Ave, Suite 101, Wasilla. Video service is available by appointment. Call 907-373-3632.

The agency strongly encourages people, who can, to use its online services at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), call on the phone, or use the video service option when possible. These service options can save people a long trip to a busy office.

# Kiosks are now ADA-compliant

*Social Security Administration*

We are excited to share that most of our local offices now have new American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant kiosks. These new kiosks are designed to enhance accessibility and ease of use for all visitors, particularly those who are blind or have low vision. They have several features

and benefits to ensure a seamless check-in process, including:

▶ Standardized cabinetry (meeting specific height and width requirements).

▶ Audio headphone jack sockets.

▶ Integrated braille instructions for how to use the kiosk.

▶ Accessible keypads.

▶ Built-In thermal printers and ticket dispensers.

▶ Touchscreen monitors with integrated privacy filters.

▶ Enhanced 508-compatible check-in software.

Additionally, each kiosk includes instructions in braille outlining the process to report any accessibility problems, ensuring that our services remain responsive to the needs of all people.

# Alzheimer's

*continued from page 9*

several other factors that contribute to this challenge in the state. Other significant barriers include the continued fear of dementia, or brain health in general, and these factors prevent individuals from seeking a diagnosis or obtaining additional resources on dementia," Lewis told Senior Voice.

## Addressing fears and misconceptions

Related to this fear is also the stigma associated with having a diagnosis of dementia, which impacts individuals as well as families and communities. "This fear of being stigmatized or having dementia prevents individuals from seeking out a diagnosis. In addition to the lack of healthcare providers, we've also learned from individuals that there is no need, or reason, to seek a diagnosis because there are

no resources or services to support them once they have the official diagnosis. They do not understand why having a diagnosis would make a difference in their lives when there are no resources available for them," Lewis said.

Although age is the greatest known risk factor for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, American Indian and Alaska Native communities are disproportionately at risk for other risk factors such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, physical inactivity and social isolation. These risk factors can contribute to dementia.

"With the growing number of older adults in Alaska and age being the number one risk factor for dementia, there's definitely an urgency to addressing dementia. In addition to age, the increasing number of individuals and other older adults, who have comorbidities placing them at higher risk for dementia, require us to explore interventions and health

promotion programs to reduce risk for dementia," said Lewis.

The program is for providers working in the healthcare systems that serve all 574 federally recognized tribes across America, as well as the 41 Urban Indian Organizations that serve the healthcare needs of Native people living in the United States.

"This \$11 million program from the Indian Health Service is crucial to increasing the education and awareness of dementia among our healthcare providers, our families and our communities. This investment is the first step, hopefully, for a continued investment in this area of work for all of Indian country and make it a priority in our clinics and communities," said Lewis.

*John Schieszer is an award-winning national journalist and radio and podcast broadcaster of The Medical Minute. He can be reached at [medicalminutes@gmail.com](mailto:medicalminutes@gmail.com)*



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# Whistle Hill

continued from page 15

## Growing opportunities

The idea of a hydroponic farm sprouted when Henry realized he could grow a lot more than just enough food for his family. He envisioned a “farm-to-fork” concept which would also supply fresh produce for their restaurant at Whistle Hill, named Addie Camp, which includes a train car dining room, designed by Mary.

“It took a while, but we finally started selling everything we grew,” Henry recalls. Now, the Krulls operate Fresh 365 with three farm containers producing greens, herbs and mushrooms for their restaurant, plus distributing to other eateries and food trucks all the way from Girdwood to Homer. The coffee grounds produced by the espresso bar on site help grow the mushrooms, too. The Krulls’ farm stand is also in the process of becoming SNAP certified.

The farm produces 300 to 400 pounds of fresh produce weekly, and the same goes for mushrooms. Henry explains that one of the challenges of indoor farming is the high energy consumption. “You lose the free sunlight and have to use LED lights, which work well but burn for 18 hours a day, creating a huge electric bill.”

The Krulls’ solution? Solar energy. After a year

of planning and securing USDA grant funding, Whistle Hill’s solar panels went live in December 2022, providing power to the farm and the family’s other businesses. The operation uses 600 panels.

“In the summertime, we overproduce and feed electricity back into the grid, selling power, and in the winter, we rely on the grid.”

The Krulls’ ventures don’t stop at food and energy. The family is also in the process of transforming a historic Alaska Railroad boxcar into a bed-and-breakfast. “We just purchased at auction an Alaska Railroad caboos, which, as promised, completes our train and hopefully our train development!”

## Family and community

Henry credits much of the family’s success to their children, who have all returned to Soldotna to play roles in the business. “We never thought it would be a family affair, but it’s been great,” he says, noting how one daughter manages Brew@602 while another oversees the front of house at Addie Camp.

They are also planning to open a vintage clothing and antique store, inside a renovated train car, of course, next spring. Their son, who studied to be a mechanical engineer, designed the solar farm and now runs Peninsula Solar, a business born from the success of Whistle Hill’s renewable energy efforts

and the initial installation of solar panels at the Krulls’ home and two medical offices.

Despite the many challenges of running multiple businesses, including navigating complex permitting processes and managing logistics, the Krulls have turned Whistle Hill into more than just a local landmark. “Both businesses were really built for the community. We thought it would be a draw for visitors, and it has become a destination, especially in summertime and winter continues to grow,” Henry explains. With around 50 employees and a business generating a significant amount of sales and property tax, the Krulls’ ventures contribute greatly to the local economy.

Henry’s love for his community and commitment to its wellbeing shines through his approach to business. “We wanted good service, good food...and selfishly we’re coffee snobs!” he jokes.

But behind the light-heartedness is a serious dedication to creating something lasting, reflecting on his and Mary’s deep roots in the restaurant industry. Henry grew up

working in his father’s A&W restaurant beginning at the tender age of six. Mary’s background in the industry also spans decades.

“Before we did this, I kind of swore to myself I would never own a restaurant. They’re difficult, profit margins are very low, and sometimes you’re relying on things out of your control,” Henry admits. Nevertheless, they dove in, knowing the risks.

## Staying active

I paused to ask Henry for some advice on aging.

“It’s all about activity,” he states. “There’s a direct correlation between being active and preventing fractures, which I see a lot in my professional practice.

Many elderly fractures could be prevented by maintaining a more active lifestyle.”

As for diet, he is practical. “I’m not a health food addict, but the key is moderation. Eat sweets if you want, but eat your whole grains and fresh foods. Eat locally sourced meat if meat is your thing.”

With plans for further expansions and new projects on the horizon, Whistle Hill is poised to continue growing, just like the crops in Krull’s hydroponic containers. For Henry and Mary Krull, Soldotna isn’t just where they’ve built a business—it’s where they’ve cultivated a community.

*Yasmin Radbod is the Alaska Commission on Aging Rural Outreach Coordinator.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** on the grant used to install solar panels to power the Krulls’ Fresh 365 farm and all of Whistle Hill, please visit Rural Energy America Program (REAP) online at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/inflation-reduction-act/rural-energy-america-program-reap>.

Misty Hull ([misty.hull@USDA.gov](mailto:misty.hull@USDA.gov)) has been a big help to the Krulls and is eager to help others get help with REAP funds. Dan Smith serves as Alaska’s Energy Coordinator at USDA and is available to support businesses and communities in applying for REAP: Call 907-761-7779 or email [daniel.smith5@usda.gov](mailto:daniel.smith5@usda.gov). Dan says he couldn’t do it without Misty, and that they make a great team.



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Additional information is available at:  
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\*Funded by State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. Preference for seniors in social and economic need.





# The peace that comes with understanding

By **KENNETH KIRK**

For Senior Voice



Sometimes people think that the worst clients for lawyers to have must be other lawyers, since they would be second guessing them all the time. In my experience, though, academics are the worst clients. Some of them want to understand every single detail of how this works. That can be time-consuming and taxing.

But most of the time, the opposite is true. Clients don't ask enough questions.

When I have a new client who previously used another attorney for their will or trust, one of the first things I do is summarize for them what they already have. And frequently they are surprised, or even shocked, to find out what is in those documents they had signed. I hear "Are you telling us that if one of us dies, the other one can't change the trust anymore?" or "I thought if one of the kids died, that share would go to their kids?" But that's not what it says.

And usually this is when something comes from another attorney, because I do make a real effort to make sure my own clients understand the main terms of what they are about to sign. But even then, they don't always get it.

Let me take you back to the spring of 2020, in the

first few months of the pandemic. For a while we couldn't have clients come into the office, even if it was just to sign the final documents. Sometimes we could arrange a signing in the parking lot, but sometimes not. Sometimes there was just no way for them to be in the physical presence of two witnesses plus a notary, which is what is required for a regular will.

So I got creative. Alaska statutes allow for a "holographic will" which doesn't require a notary or witnesses. It does, however, have to be written out in the testator's own hand. It isn't quite as good as having a regular "self-proving will," but it is better than nothing.

So I stripped down my will template to the bare minimum of what would be needed. After all, some of my clients have arthritis or tremors, or otherwise can't write a whole lot. In those situations, I would customize the document, putting in the names and other information they had

**We often mistakenly assume that people understand what we are telling them. But estate planning is complicated. And people often do not ask the next question because they don't even understand the previous answer.**

given me, and then email it to them. But I needed to make sure they didn't just print it out and sign it, because then it would not be a valid holographic will, since it would not be in their own hand. I made it a point to tell them that at least twice on the phone, and then I put right on the top of the document: "Do not sign this document. You must copy it out in your own hand".

And nonetheless, quite a few of them just printed it out and signed it.

We often mistakenly assume that people understand what we are telling them. But estate planning is complicated. And people often do not ask the next question because they don't even understand the previous answer.

When I review documents with clients, I am usually in a position to look right at their faces to try to gauge whether they are

"getting it". Some estate planners think that we will eventually be replaced by Artificial Intelligence. I don't think that will ever happen. There is no way for an AI to accurately judge whether somebody is understanding what you're telling them, and then try to explain it a different way so that they do understand.

Heck, most of these AIs can't even narrate a YouTube video properly.

On a separate note: A few months ago in this column I reported on the Corporate Transparency Act, which requires almost anyone with a small business corporation or LLC to file a report with the federal government by the end of this year. This doesn't apply to living trusts, but it does apply to most small business entities, even if they just have a single owner (or even if they're owned by a trust).

When I last mentioned this, a federal judge Outside had just ruled that the CTA was unconstitutional. Given that the deadline for filing is the end of this year, I assumed that by now the issue would be resolved one way or the other. Unfortunately it still isn't. The judge did not enter a nationwide injunction, and the case is being appealed but is apparently still at the circuit court level, which means it is not likely to result in a U.S. Supreme Court decision before the end of the year.

This issue of the Senior Voice should come out about the beginning of November. That means we have one more issue that will be out safely before the end of the year. Next month, Lord willing and the creek don't rise, I will try to update everyone on the issue.

*Kenneth Kirk is an Anchorage estate planning attorney. Nothing in this article should be taken as legal advice for a specific situation; for specific advice you should consult a professional who can take all the facts into account. And if you don't understand this disclaimer, we're both in trouble.*

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# iPhone update, Medication tracker setup, Android 15

By **BOB DELAURENTIS**

*Bob's Tech Talk*

**Q.** My iPhone just automatically updated to iOS 17.7. How do I get the new features advertised in iOS 18?

**A.** There are two kinds of system updates for iPhones, major and minor. Major releases that change once a year, and increase the first number. For example, from 17.0 to 18.0. Minor updates occur throughout the year, and increase the numbers after the decimal point. Your iPhone will automatically update itself with these "point updates" as long as it is plugged in and has a Wi-Fi connection.

Each autumn Apple releases a major new update to the phone software. This year it is iOS 18. (By the time you read this, the latest version will probably be 18.1.)

Major versions do not always install automatically. To update it manually, go to Settings -> General -> Software Update and scroll all the way to the bottom of the screen. If your phone supports iOS 18, which is nearly every model from the last five years, the update button will be visible.

**Q.** I would like to help a family member use an Apple Watch to track her medication, but setting it up is confusing. Can you help?

**A.** Medication tracking on the Apple Watch and iP-

hone is a fantastic feature, but it is confusing to set up initially. Nevertheless, the result is worth the effort. This is how I do it:

The first step is to record the medications along with the dosage and administration times in the Health app on your iPhone. When adding a medication, the camera can scan the bottle and capture at least some of the information. The best way to configure an Apple Watch is to use the Watch app on the iPhone itself.

Start by opening the Watch app on your iPhone. Tap the Face Gallery tab at the bottom of the screen. Scroll down until you see the Infograph faces. Choose one of the color choices. Any one will do, and they can always be changed later.

One tap on the chosen face will open a new screen with the face drawn at the top alongside a button that says "Add." Do not tap that button just yet.

The Infograph face is very dense, with a tremendous amount of information in the form of Watch Complications. Scroll down to see a list of the Complications. Tap each one (except "Sub-Dial Top") and set them to "Off." Then set "Sub-Dial Top" to Medications. Finally, tap the "Add" button. The face will close and you will see the Gallery again.

Tap the "My Watch" tab on the bottom of the screen. Scroll to the far right of

the Faces at the top of the screen and long press on the face you just created until a menu appears. Tap "Set as Watch Face." When each dose is taken, tap the pill icon and tap the medication name to log it. A text banner on the watch face will display the time for the next dose if one is pending today.

I realize this is an intimidating number of steps. I described each step in detail so that nothing was left to chance. However, this article just explains the initial setup. I encourage you to search the Web for help tracking medications with Apple Watch. See the link in the "Wander the Web" box for more information. Once configured, tracking becomes easy in daily use.

**Q.** How do I install Android 15 on my Pixel phone?

**A.** Android 15 has been in beta since last spring, and it officially arrived for Pixel devices on Oct. 15, with support for other devices rolling out in the coming months.

Android 15 requires wiping the device and re-installing the updated operating system. This means

## Wander the Web

Here are my picks for worthwhile browsing this month:

### Medication Tracking on Apple Watch

Learn more about tracking medication with iPhone and Apple Watch.

[support.apple.com/guide/watch/medications-apd3dd24d78b/watchos](https://support.apple.com/guide/watch/medications-apd3dd24d78b/watchos)

### Android 15 Update How-To

Follow the guidance at this link to update your Pixel phone.

[9to5google.com/google-pixel-android-15-how-to-install](https://9to5google.com/google-pixel-android-15-how-to-install)

### Lighthouse Map

All the world's lighthouses on a single map. Each lighthouse is different so that mariners can tell them apart.

[lgedienst.github.io/lighthousemap](https://lgedienst.github.io/lighthousemap)

above all make sure your data is backed up.

Android 15 is also disruptive enough that you may just decide that the new features are not worth upsetting your digital world. Better to stay on version 14.

The specific steps will differ based on the manufacturer of the device. Be

sure to follow their specific instructions when they become available.

In the meantime, remember that Android 15 is for Pixel phones only at this stage. See the link in the box for more.

Bob has been writing about technology for over three decades. He can be contacted at [techtalk@bobdel.com](mailto:techtalk@bobdel.com).

## MOVING? Let us know!

Send your change of address information to  
Senior Voice, 401 E. Fireweed Lane, #102,  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Or call 276-1059 (Anchorage area) or  
1-800-478-1059 (toll-free statewide)



## Free Estate Planning Workshops



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Phone: (907) 334-9200  
[www.akwillstrusts.com](http://www.akwillstrusts.com)

## Discover "The 7 Threats to Your Estate Plan"

It's all about family!

Have you protected them?

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- Additional stress on your family
- Loss of what you spent a lifetime building

Proper Planning Ensures You:

- Maintain control of assets for the sake of the family
- Give control to those you trust when you're not able
- Remain home without stress on the family, should the need for long term care arise
- Keep family business private

### IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS:

**Anchorage Senior Activity Center**  
1300 E. 19th Avenue, Anchorage  
Dec 10 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

No workshops in November

Free initial consultation for those who attend the workshop.  
Book now to protect your loved ones.

To reserve your space call or text (907) 334-9200 or go to [www.akwillstrusts.com](http://www.akwillstrusts.com)

Unable to attend in person? Call to request the link to a recorded webinar.





# A contest, a merger and getaway deals

By **DIMITRA LAVRAKAS**

Senior Voice Travel Correspondent

## Sweepstakes to paradise

Win a four-day, three-night luxury all-inclusive vacation at the Sandals resort of your choice. Airfare is not included.

Sandals operates resorts in the Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Curacao, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent.

Go to <https://www.sandals.com/sweepstakes/> to enter.

## Alaska-Hawaiian airlines merger goes through

There are so many questions about how this merger will affect the Alaskan traveler and their Alaska Airlines benefits.

The good news is your mileage will carry over to Hawaiian Airlines. However if you use Alaska miles on a partner airline keep in mind you use more miles and earn less.

For Club 49 members, your two free bags benefit will stay as both airlines are operating as individual airlines until the both become a single airline.

For those living in Hawaii, there's a new membership similar to Club 49.

Called Huaka'i in Hawaiian, meaning voyage, it will include unique discounts and benefits exclusively for Hawai'i residents. Huaka'i members will enjoy exclusive benefits when traveling interisland, including 10 percent off one booking per quarter and a free checked bag. Huaka'i members who are Hawaiian Airlines World Elite Mas-

tercard cardmembers will receive even more, with 20 percent off one interisland booking per quarter and their existing credit card benefit of two free checked bags. Plus, members will receive access to exclusive, network-wide deals each month. Hawai'i residents will receive an email with a link to sign up for a free membership.

Alaska currently flies every day from Anchorage to Honolulu. Non-stop flights, three times a week, from Anchorage to Kona start Nov. 23 and after Jan. 1, there's a flight a day until Feb. 13. Anchorage to Maui flights are every Saturday, from Nov. 23 to Jan. 4, but after Jan. 4, four flights a week are scheduled.

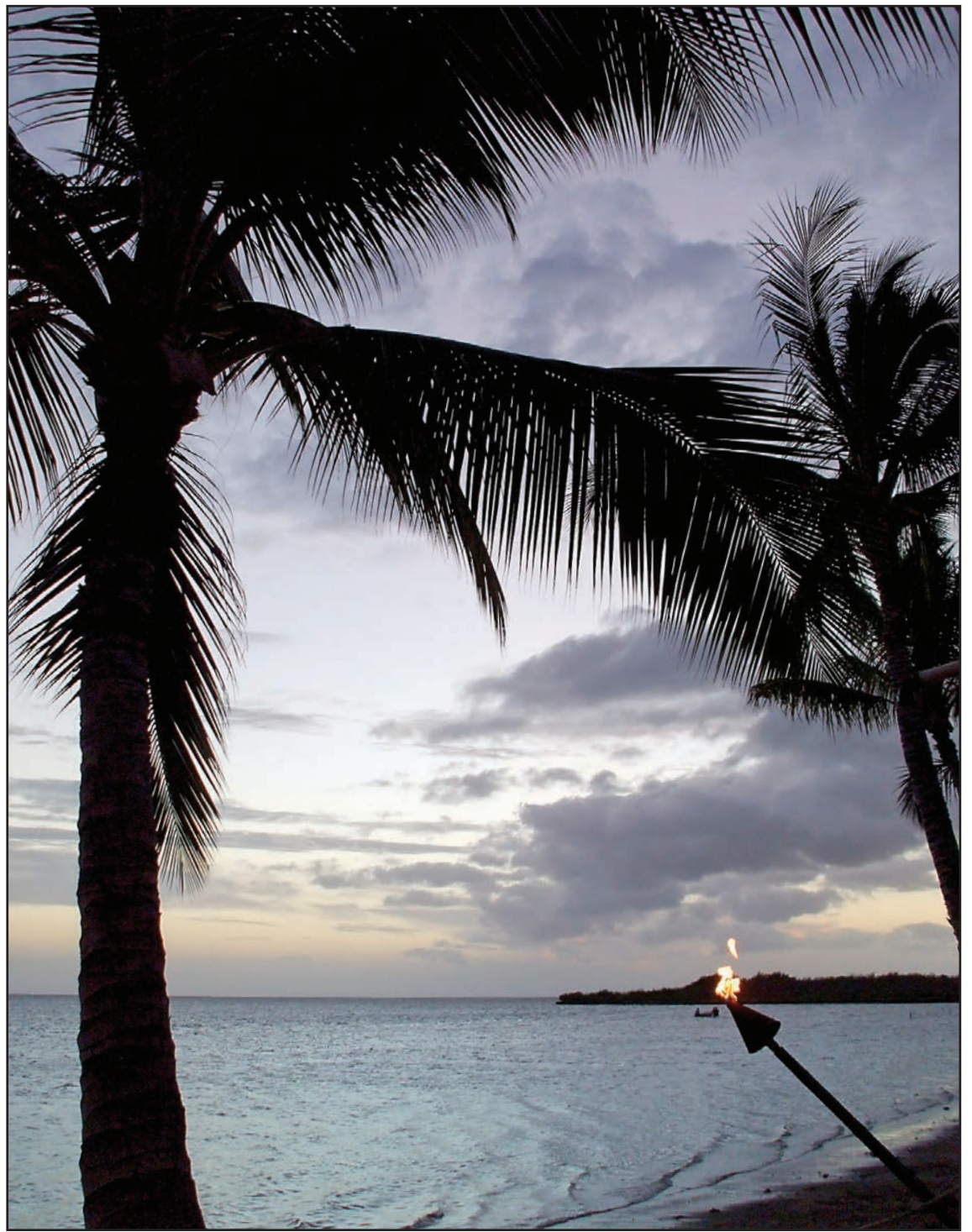
An Alaska news release notes its ultimate goal is to make sure all Alaska and Hawaiian flights are available to book on both airlines' websites. That would include booking both airlines on a single ticket, which would allow passengers to change from one flight on one airline to another flight on another airline without having to gather their bags or check-in again.

For Alaska, Honolulu will become the second-largest hub after Seattle.

My experience traveling with family in Hawai'i is Hawaiians are very family oriented and respond warmly. When I traveled with my elderly mother, they were so kind to her.

## AARP has its rewards

If you like to travel, consider joining AARP. Take a look at the travel packages it offers to discover how much you can save.



The spectacular night sky in Hawaii is punctuated by a tiki torch.

Dimitra Lavrakas photo

When you book your vacation package with the AARP Travel Center, you have access to exclusive AARP member savings on top of some great rates. From an all-inclusive resort in Honolulu to ex-

ploring Miami and some of the most exciting cities in the U.S., the AARP Travel Center offers an extensive selection of AARP vacation packages, including flights, accommodations and car rentals.

Membership is a paltry \$16 a year, but there are sales, like in mid-October when it was \$12 for the first year.

Check out the savings at <https://www.aarp.org>.



For avid birders Hanalei offers a range of waterbirds to view.

Dimitra Lavrakas photo



Win a chance for a luxury, all-inclusive vacation at a Sandals resort in the Caribbean.

Photo courtesy of Sandals Resorts





# Caps

continued from page 13

allows me to interact with them on a personal level, so I get to know them better, and teach them our traditions.” Ms. Titus stated that her mother always told her to help others, so she is carrying that on.

Another elder teacher, 86-year-old Marie Yaska, originally of Huslia, said, “It’s like working with my grandchildren, which I enjoy.” Ms. Yaska said she learned how to sew when she was young, because it was a necessity since they lived so far away from stores and had no money to buy clothing. “It is nice to share my knowledge with them, and that they’re learning from us,” she said.

In 2023, FPD officers Sean Lai, Clint Brubeck, Stephen Hancock and Lt. Amy Davis completed the first Caps for Cops session. Their instructors were elders Marie Yaska, Vernell Titus, Dr. Rev. Anna Frank, Dr. Elizabeth Fleagle, and Miranda Wright. The current session that is underway includes



Elder Miranda Wright with officer Sean Lai.



Elder Marie Yaska works with officer Caleb Reuter.

Photos courtesy Denakkanaaga

Officer Joseph Butler, Officer Jennifer Mathna, Sgt. Caleb Reuter, and Detective Mayra Reyes. The elders teaching them are Miranda Wright, Marie Yaska, Edith Thomas and Vernell Titus.

More sessions are planned, so that ultimately all officers interested in the program can sew a hat.

Sharon McConnell is the Denakkanaaga executive director.



Elder Vernell Titus works with officer Joseph Butler.

## Networking for Anchorage, Mat-Su area providers

Interested in learning more about fellow businesses and agencies providing senior services in the Anchorage and Mat-Su area? Want to get the word out about your own service? The monthly Service Providers Breakfast, sponsored by Older Persons Action Group, Inc., is an opportunity for all the above. Informal, early and

free, the event begins at 8 a.m., second Wednesday, at a different host location each month. Breakfast provided. The next date is Nov. 13, hosted by Alzheimer’s Resource of Alaska.

Call Older Persons Action Group, Inc. at 907-276-1059 for location information and to RSVP for this event and to be added to our e-mail reminder list.



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# Supplements

continued from page 3

info such as:

- ▶ How to evaluate health information on the internet
- ▶ Food and Drug Administration (FDA) safety alerts and advisories
- ▶ How to spot health fraud
- ▶ Federal Trade Commission (FTC) fact sheets, consumer alerts, and articles on weight loss and fitness products.

## Verifying a supplement's contents and purity

But now, the elephant in the ointment. I know, it's

a mixed metaphor, but I think in this case it works. Consumer Reports warns that, "The Food and Drug Administration doesn't verify that supplements contain what they say they do or whether they're contaminated with heavy metals, bacteria, or pesticides before they are sold..."

For example, a study by the California Department of Public Health analyzing FDA warnings from 2007 to 2016 identified 776 adulterated dietary supplements containing unapproved pharmaceutical ingredients. In the case of ephedra, a stimulant linked to numerous deaths and cardiovascular

events, it took the FDA nearly a decade to gather sufficient evidence to ban ephedra-containing supplements in 2004, long after safety concerns had emerged.

So, how can you protect yourself from buying adulterated supplements? First, be sure to check the ODS fact sheets and other info noted above. Second, check the labels for third-party groups that have taken on the verification-of-contents role that the FDA ignores. According to Consumer Reports, these include:

- ▶ U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP). USP is a nonprofit organization that sets what

CR experts say are the most widely accepted standards for supplements.

- ▶ The not-for-profit National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) offers two types of certification: NSF Contents Certified and NSF Certified for Sport.

- ▶ ConsumerLab.com, a for-profit company, regularly tests and certifies supplements.

A final important note. Verifications displayed on the supplement container by the above third-party organizations mean it is likely that the product is not adulterated. It does not mean that you are safe from possible dangerous side effects or interactions

with other drugs you may be taking. You can find out more about these issues on the ODS "Dietary Supplement Fact Sheets." And of course, talk with your health care provider.

Hippocrates, the "father" of western medicine, is thought to have admonished his students to "do no harm" to their patients. An excellent guiding principle. In the case of supplements, take care to "do no harm" to yourself.

*Lawrence D. Weiss is a UAA Professor of Public Health, Emeritus, creator of the UAA Master of Public Health program, and author of several books and numerous articles.*

# Scams

continued from page 3

Scammers rely on the chaos of holiday shopping, hoping you'll mistake their message for a legitimate one.

To protect yourself, keep track of your online orders and their shipping status. Use official websites to track packages or contact customer service. Avoid clicking on links from unsolicited messages.

## Travel scams

You guessed it, as holiday travel ramps up, so do scams targeting travelers. Here are some of the top travel scams to watch out for. First of all, if it seems too good to be true, it is most likely a scam. Scammers send emails and texts offering free flights or stays to steal credit card information or install

malware on your device. Make travel arrangements using trusted websites and pay with a credit card as there are many "spoofed" websites that look like legitimate travel businesses for hotels, car rentals and other services. Always pay for vacation rentals through official apps like Airbnb or VRBO instead of sending money via P2P (peer-to-peer) apps. Unsolicited offers for free trips or great discounts often come with hidden fees so be sure to read the fine print and be skeptical of vague promises.

## Fake charities scams

According to fundraising software company Network for Good, one-third of all charitable giving occurs during the holiday season. However, this surge in generosity also attracts a darker element: fraudulent charities. With the increase in donations, scammers are exploiting your good-

will through fake websites and aggressive telemarketing tactics. These sham charities often mimic legitimate organizations, making it difficult for donors to distinguish between genuine and fraudulent appeals.

Experts advise donors to verify the legitimacy of charities before making contributions using charity checking websites. Here are three great websites which provide information on charitable organizations, including ratings, reviews and financial information:

Charity Navigator, Charity-Watch or the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance.

One last piece of advice, use your credit card for online purchases, buying gift cards, making travel arrangements, or donating to charities. This is the safest way to make purchases as credit card companies allow you to dispute charges if the transaction turns out to be fraudulent.

If you encounter a holiday scam, you can call the AARP fraud specialists at

the Fraud Watch Network Helpline 877-908-3360 (4 a.m. to 4 p.m. Alaska time, Monday thru Friday). They will be able to share information on what to do next and how to avoid future scams. They can also connect victims of fraud with AARP online support groups. You can also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission online or by calling 877-382-4357 or with the FBI Internet Crime Complain Center.

*Teresa Holt is the state director for AARP Alaska.*

## Crossword answers from page 18

D	I	S	C	S		R	E	N	E		E	T	C	H
I	D	A	H	O		E	M	I	L		O	B	O	E
P	E	K	I	N	G	D	U	C	K		S	O	L	D
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# Life-Changing

## No more common sickness

By Doug Cornell, PhD

Most of us live our lives *expecting* to get sick now and then.

It doesn't have to be that way!

Medicine cabinets are full of remedies for *after* we get sick. Wouldn't it be better not to get sick in the first place?

Scientists have found a natural way to kill the germs that cause common illnesses, like colds and flu, *before* we get sick.

### That's life-changing!

Don't just treat symptoms with costly meds. Avoid the symptoms completely.

- Kill the viruses that cause colds, flu, Covid, cold sores and fever blisters.

- Kill the fungus that causes sinus trouble and mold allergies.

- Kill the microbes that steal your sleep with congestion and stuffiness.

- Kill the bacteria that cause pinkeye, styes, thrush, ringworm, and other infections, even after they start.

Scientific studies prove pure copper kills bad germs instantly, just by touch.

That's why ancient Greeks, Egyptians, and Aztecs used copper thousands of years ago to stop sore throats and skin infections and to heal wounds.

Hippocrates, often called the father of modern medicine, used copper Greece to stop infections in wounds and skin ulcers.

Civil War doctors used copper on battlefield wounds. They didn't know about bacteria and viruses, but now we do.

When antibiotics came along, they seemed like the ultimate solution. Soon they were overused, however, and often used against viruses, though they only killed bacteria.

As a result, many disease-causing bacteria have developed resistance to antibiotics. Science is struggling to find more powerful antibiotics, with little success.

That's why the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) turned back to copper in the fight against MRSA, influenza, and other infections that tend to spread in hospitals, which the EPA regulates.

Tests show copper kills microbes, including bacteria, viruses, and fungus, that cause various illnesses. High-power microscopes show germs like the Covid virus start to die **instantly** when copper touches them.

Scientists say the high conductance of copper disrupts the electrical balance in germ cells, destroying them in seconds.

The National Institutes of Health, the EPA, and other authorities now vouch for the power of copper to kill bad germs. It even kills **antibiotic-resistant** germs, which defy even the most powerful antibiotics.

The EPA urged hospitals to use copper for surfaces like faucets and doorknobs. Those

that did cut the spread of bad germs by over half, and saved lives.

The strong proof gave inventor Doug Cornell an idea. He had been getting 2-3 bad colds a year. So in 2012 he made a smooth copper probe with a tip to reach where germs collect in the nostril.

The next time he felt a tickle in his nose which warned him he was about to get a cold,

he touched the copper gently to the tickly spot for 60 seconds.

"It worked!

The cold never started," he exclaimed.

"Now I use it at any warning sign of cold or flu." Since then he's gone more than **12 YEARS** without a single cold.

He asked relatives and friends to try it.

All said it worked, so he patented it, called it a CopperZap® and put it on the market.

Soon hundreds had tried it. Over 99% said copper worked if used right away at any sign of bad germs, like a tickle in the nose or a scratchy throat.

Thousands of people now use pure copper to kill germs that cause sickness.

The handle is curved and textured for lots of contact with your fingers. The whole thing is pure copper, which can kill bad germs you pick up if you touch anything a sick person has touched recently.

Pure copper works for respiratory illness and many other health problems, because so many different health problems are caused by microbes like bacteria, viruses, and fungus.

Customers use pure copper against:

- Colds, Flu, Covid**
- Sinus trouble from germs**
- Cold sores or Fever blisters**
- Canker sores that get infected**
- Sleep loss from congestion**
- Stuffy nose, drippy nose**
- Mold allergies**
- Hay fever worsened by bacteria**
- Strep throat**
- Pink Eye and Styes**
- Skin infections, warts, ringworm**
- Infected sores**
- Cuts and Wounds**
- Thrush and Tongue Infections**
- Getting sick after air travel**

Bad germs spread between people through the air or by touch. They cause respiratory illnesses, like colds, flu, Covid, sinus trouble, and sleep-robbing congestion.

Pure copper kills those germs. CopperZaps® are pure copper.

We have sold over 100,000 CopperZaps®.

Nearly all the reviews are **5-star**, because it works so well. We have over 1000 product and site reviews.

Longtime users say they haven't been sick

ADVERTORIAL

in years. Many families have stopped getting sick from the germs the kids bring home from school.

Users say: "It changed my life!"

"I was skeptical, but it works!"

"I can't believe how good my nose feels."

"I'm thrilled and amazed."

"Is it supposed to work that fast?"

"One of the best presents ever."

"Sixteen flights and not a sniffle!"

"Cold sores gone!" "I love it!"

"It saved me last holidays. The kids all got sick, but not me."

"I am shocked! My sinus cleared, no more headache or congestion."

"You guys have made my Christmas shopping easy."

"So grateful Mom told me about it."

"It's made my quality of life so much better."

"Best sleep I've had in years!"

Use it when you feel any sign of bad germs in your nose or when you are around sick people or people who may be contagious but not showing symptoms yet. Contagion can start before symptoms appear.

Use on your hands and fingers after being around others or in any crowd, gathering, store, restaurant, theater, school, doctor's office, hospital, etc.

When you travel, use it on hands and fingers often during the day and in your nose 3-4 times. Many people have stopped getting sick after air travel. You can take CopperZaps® on board airplanes.

Copper tarnishes naturally, but EPA tests show tarnish does not reduce copper's germ-killing power. The directions tell how to polish it if you want, but it is not necessary.



CopperZaps® are easy to use, easy to clean, and include directions. Carry in purse or pocket, weighs 2.3 oz. Made in USA of pure American copper.

Save on meds. Save time. Cut stress. Sleep better. Probably live longer, too.

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*Statements not evaluated by the FDA. Not claimed to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.*



# Voters 50+ decide elections.

Alaska's general election is Tuesday, November 5.

Our AARP Alaska voter guide has the when, where, and how so you can vote with confidence.

Get the AARP Alaska voter guide at [www.aarp.org/akvotes](http://www.aarp.org/akvotes) or by texting 'AKVOTES' to 22777



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- **Explore** your options for meeting those needs

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### Anchorage

Municipality of Anchorage, Anchorage Health Department  
825 L St., Ste 200, Anchorage, AK 99501  
907-343-7770

[www.muni.org/adrc](http://www.muni.org/adrc)

### Mat-Su Borough

LINKS Resource Center  
777 N. Crusey St., Ste 101, Wasilla, AK 99654  
907-373-3632

[www.linksprc.org/adrc](http://www.linksprc.org/adrc)

### Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak Island, Valdez-Cordova

Independent Living Center  
47255 Princeton Ave., Ste 8, Soldotna, AK 99669  
907-262-6333 | 800-770-7911

[www.peninsulailc.org/adrc](http://www.peninsulailc.org/adrc)

### Fairbanks North Star, Southeast Fairbanks, Yukon-Koyukuk, Denali, North Slope

ADRC North - Fairbanks Senior Center  
1424 Moore St., Fairbanks, AK 99701  
907-452-2551

[www.adrcnorth.org](http://www.adrcnorth.org)

### Southeast Alaska

Southeast Alaska Independent Living Center (SAIL)  
8711 Teal St., Ste 300, Juneau, AK 99801  
1-800-478-SAIL (7245)

[www.sailinc.org](http://www.sailinc.org)

### Western Alaska-Aleutian Islands, Lake and Peninsula, Bristol Bay, Dillingham, Bethel, Kusilvak, Nome, Northwest Arctic

Bristol Bay Native Association  
1500 Kakanak Rd., Dillingham, AK 99576  
907-842-4139 | 800-478-4139

[www.bbna.com/our-programs/social-service-programs/elderly-services/](http://www.bbna.com/our-programs/social-service-programs/elderly-services/)



# 1-877-625-2372

The State of Alaska, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services, administers the ADRC grant in partnership with the regional sites. Contact SDS at 1-800-478-9996 to learn about the grant program.