

Get word out about your upcoming event!

Publicize a program or class. Post an invitation to a new Zoom offering. The Senior Voice online calendar is here for you.

It's easy to post your events to seniorvoicealaska.com – and it's **FREE**.

1 Go to the Senior Voice website: seniorvoicealaska.com Click on the “Calendar” tab in the upper right corner

2 You will see the list of upcoming events. To add your own event, click the “Submit Event” button on the upper right.

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

In addition to the date, time, location and description, you can include other items:

- Photos, fliers and other images
- Links to your website
- A button linking to the event and your site
- Zoom, Skype and other conferencing links
- Your email and other contact information

TRY IT NOW.

Our website readers are all around the state, and beyond. If you run into problems, call 1-800-478-1059 or email editor@seniorvoicealaska.com

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 9 September 2024



The importance of Elder justice: An interview with Fairbanks' Karen Eddy. – page 3

Election workers appreciate civil service (and tasty cookies) – page 4

MASST: Matching older workers with savvy employers. – page 23

Travel: Wedding destinations for late bloomers. – page 28



Northern pintails fly wing-to-wing in an autumn setting, perhaps pondering their upcoming long-distance trip. Most winter in California, but some migrate to Asia. Read more on page 16 about how these dabbling ducks and other Alaska migratory birds spend summers in Alaska and their amazing navigational skills.

Rob Tappana photo courtesy Bird TLC



OPAG, Senior Voice recognized in national awards contest

Senior Voice Staff

Older Persons Action Group, Inc., earned honors for its monthly, statewide publication Senior Voice in the 33rd annual National Mature Media Awards Program. The program, presented by the Mature Market Resource Center, a national clearinghouse for the senior market, recognizes the nation's finest marketing, communications, educational materials and programs designed and produced for older adults.

Entries were judged by a panel of mature market experts from across the

United States for overall excellence of design, content, creativity and relevance to the senior market. Awards were announced in late July, 2024.

OPAG and Senior Voice won five awards:

- ▶ Bronze Award to attorney Kenneth Kirk for his columns on legal issues.
- ▶ Merit Award to Juneau physician and writer Emily Kane for her columns on senior health topics.
- ▶ Bronze Award in the Best Newspaper/Newsletter category for the July 2023 edition
- ▶ Merit award to correspondent Leslie Shallcross for her article, "Not-so-

genius Hacks for Keeping Food Fresh," published in the March 2023 edition.

- ▶ Bronze award to contributing writer and photographer Jim Lavrakas for his "Tapping Paddles" photo that accompanied his article, "Pickleball Etiquette: Know These Basics," in the Jan. 2023 edition.

Older Persons Action Group, Inc. has been publishing Senior Voice for 47 years, funded by reader subscriptions, advertising and a federal and state grant managed by the State of Alaska. Senior Voice also publishes its editions to its website at www.seniorvoicealaska.com.



Congratulations to Jim Lavrakas, who won a bronze award for his "tapping paddles" photo, which appeared with his story on pickleball etiquette in the January 2023 Senior Voice.

Misleading Social Security ads and communications

Social Security Administration

Social Security works with our Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to protect you from scams that use Social Security as bait. Section 1140 of the Social Security Act allows OIG to impose severe penalties against anyone who engages in misleading Social Security-related advertising or impostor communications.

OIG may impose a penalty against anyone who:

- ▶ Mails misleading solicitations that appear to be from or authorized by Social Security.
- ▶ Operates an impostor website or social media account designed to look like it belongs to or is authorized by Social Security.
- ▶ Sends emails or text messages or makes telephone calls claiming to be from Social Security.
- ▶ Sells Social Security's free forms, applications and publications without our written approval.
- ▶ Charges a fee for a ser-

vice that Social Security provides free of charge without providing a clearly visible notice that Social Security provides the service for free.

If you receive a misleading or suspicious Social Security-related advertisement, phone call or email, you should let us know right away. Try to capture as many details as you can.

Here's what you can do:

- ▶ For suspicious websites or social media accounts, please take a screenshot of

the page. Note the website address or social media link—and how you came across it.

- ▶ For emails and text messages, capture the entire message and any links or attachments.
- ▶ For mail, retain the complete communication, including the outside envelope and all inserts.
- ▶ For telephone solicitations, note the caller identification phone number and any company name or call back number provided by the caller or recorded message.

You can help us stop misleading advertising

and communications. We encourage you to report possible scams to the OIG at oig.ssa.gov/report. You can also call our fraud hotline at 1-800-269-0271 or send an email to OIG.1140@ssa.gov.

To learn more, check out our publication, "What You Need to Know About Misleading Advertising," at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10005.pdf. You can also review Section 1140 at www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title11/1140.htm.

Please share this information with friends and family and help us spread the word on social media.

Commission on Aging meets Sept. 11

Senior Voice Staff

The Alaska Commission on Aging will hold its quarterly meeting on Sept. 11 in Kotzebue. The meeting can be accessed via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81651990145>. A public comment period is scheduled for 1 p.m., during which community mem-

bers are invited to share thoughts and concerns.

The quarterly meeting will focus on addressing the needs and challenges faced by Alaska's senior population, with a special emphasis on the unique circumstances in Kotzebue and the surrounding region. Prior to the meeting, the commission will host

an Elder Listening Session on Sept. 10 at 2 p.m. at the local long-term care facility. This session provides an opportunity for Kotzebue's senior community to voice their concerns and share their experiences directly with the commission.

For more information, call 907-465-4793.

OLDER PERSONS ACTION GROUP

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."



OLDER PERSONS ACTION GROUP

3340 Arctic Blvd., #106 Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Phone 907-276-1059 Toll free 800-478-1059

www.opagak.com www.seniorvoicealaska.com

SeniorVoice, established in 1978, is published monthly by Older Persons Action Group, Inc., a statewide non-profit corporation serving the interests of all older Alaskans.

Partially funded by a grant from the Alaska Division of Senior and Disabilities Services.

Subscription price is \$30 a year to Alaskan residents. All subscriptions outside Alaska are \$35 a year.

Copyright © 2024 by Older Persons Action Group, Inc. ISSN 0741-2894

For advertising information please call (907) 276-1059. The printing of ads in Senior Voice does not constitute endorsement by Older Persons Action Group, Inc.

OPAG BOARD MEMBERS

Sharon White-Wheeler (Emeritus), Beth Goldstein, Leonard T. Kelley (Emeritus), Eileen Lally, Amanda Biggs, Eileen Hosey

Board President Dylan Webb

Vice President Gail Opalinski

Treasurer..... Joan Haig

Secretary..... Yvonne Chase

Executive Director.....David Washburn

EDITORIAL

EditorDavid Washburn editor@seniorvoicealaska.com

Correspondents.....Laurel Bill, Dimitra Lavrakas Maraley McMichael

Advertising sales.....Anne Tompkins A.Tompkins@seniorvoicealaska.com

Page design Rachel Gebauer, Gebauer Design



The importance of Elder justice: An interview with Karen Eddy

By **YASMIN RADBOD**
For *Senior Voice*

In the heart of Alaska, Karen Eddy, the director of Community Services for the Fairbanks Native Association (FNA), has dedicated nearly a decade to championing elder justice. A retired educator originally from Sitka, Karen's journey is one marked by a deep commitment to her community and heritage. Her

Native name is Sh'tanaax, such an old name it doesn't have a meaning anymore. Karen's ancestral ties are to the Taku River. She embodies a profound respect for cultural traditions and elder rights, just ask her. "Elder justice refers to the efforts and initiatives aimed at preventing, detecting and intervening in elder abuse, neglect and financial exploitation," Karen explains. Her role at

FNA involves a multifaceted approach to ensuring the dignity, safety and rights of elders. This includes legal, social and healthcare considerations, all aimed at protecting vulnerable populations from harm and mistreatment. "Every individual, regardless of age, has the right to live with dignity and freedom from abuse," Karen asserts. "Quality of life is crucial for our elders.



*Karen Eddy, the director of Community Services for the Fairbanks Native Association (FNA).
Yasmin Radbod photo*

As Alaskans, we have a responsibility to protect our elders because they're citizens. We know there is

significant economic impact due to the exploitation of elders. We need to focus on reducing their financial burden and ensuring every
page 22 please

AARP is advocating for residential utility customers

By **MARGE STONEKING**
AARP Alaska

AARP formally intervened in the Chugach Electric Rate Case currently before the Regulatory Commission of Alaska to fight for fair treatment of residential customers. AARP is the only party in this case who is fighting specifically on behalf of residential customers. AARP argued that the way Chugach has proposed to allocate costs and design rates favors commercial customers and significantly shifts costs and higher rate increases to residential customers.

Utility bills contribute to overall housing costs, which are already soaring in Anchorage. Utility rates are an essential pocketbook issue for older Alaskans and their families, many of whom struggle to pay their utility bills and other household expenses like food and medicine. We know that the proposed rate increases would most impact those on fixed and/or low incomes.

AARP's expert witness testified that the cost allocation method proposed by Chugach would treat residential electric customers

unfairly, requiring those customers to subsidize the larger commercial customer classes. The Chugach proposed method is both unreasonable and uses less data than AARP's proposed method, because it only analyzes one hour of the year, the highest demand hour of the year. This is unfair because the utility must plan for all hours of the year. Residential energy use fluctuates seasonally, and the Chugach cost allocation method favors large general commercial customers who use the transmission network more consistently throughout the year.

AARP is instead recommending that the Regulatory Commission of Alaska employ a method that looks at the highest peak energy demand hour out of each of the 12 months. Factoring in 12 data points through the year reflects seasonal energy demand fluctuations and more reasonably and accurately reflects cost causation for all customer classes.

Chugach also proposed to increase the customer charge—the monthly fee customers pay before even turning on the lights – for most residential customers by more than 70%. Seniors

tend to live in smaller households and tend to use less electricity, which means that this proposed increase to fixed charges disproportionately impact them.

AARP recommended a lower fixed customer charge with energy usage charges making up the difference. This rate case is a follow-on case to an acquisition by Chugach Electric Association of the

Municipal Light and Power, with one of the goals being to unify rates across the legacy districts. Currently North district legacy customers pay \$13.62 and South pay \$8 in monthly fixed charges. Chugach proposed a unified fixed charge of \$13.68 across both legacy service areas. AARP instead recommended \$10 as a compromise to unify the customer charges while keeping them low.

Low fixed charges treat low-usage customers more fairly and allow customers more control from a cost or conservation standpoint. AARP will report back on the final outcome of this rate case when it is announced. The Regulatory Commission of Alaska has set a deadline of Sept. 25 for their final decision on the Chugach Rate Case. *Marge Stoneking is the AARP Alaska Advocacy Director.*

Send us your letters

Send letters to the editor to Senior Voice, 3340 Arctic Blvd., #106, 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 to discuss this. Copy deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Senior Voice SUBSCRIPTION

Just pick up the phone and call 276-1059 or toll free, 1-800-478-1059 to start your Senior Voice subscription today or subscribe at www.seniorvoicealaska.com. The QR code below will take you to the subscription page.

Or complete and mail this form to:
Older Persons Action Group, Inc.
Publisher of the Senior Voice
3340 Arctic Blvd., #106
Anchorage AK 99503

Your subscription includes your OPAG membership.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

New: One year - \$30
 Renewal: One year - \$30
 Out of State: One year - \$35
 Address change
 My donation (donations help fund the Older Persons Action Group's programs and services, including the publication and distribution of Senior Voice to low income seniors.)

Gift subscription: One year - \$30
 Gift subscription: Out of State - \$35
 Other _____
 Low income

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Email _____ Phone _____

PAYMENTS

Credit Card Visa MasterCard other _____
 Name on card _____
 Address _____ Zip _____
 Card# _____ Exp _____ Sec code _____
 Check # _____ Amount \$ _____
Make Checks Payable to Senior Voice



Election workers support democracy and eat cookies

By LAWRENCE D. WEISS

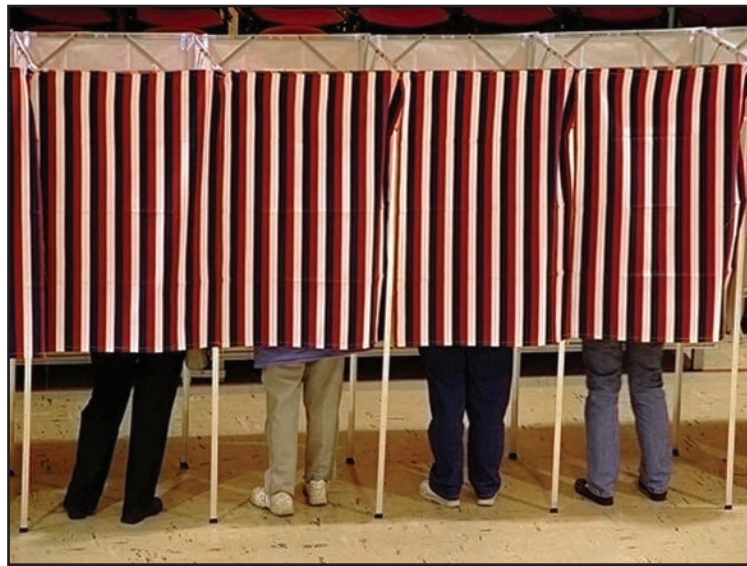
For Senior Voice

On a recent Friday a few friends and I gathered at a favorite breakfast place in Anchorage to gossip, discuss the news, exchange views, and eat the salty fatty breakfast versus the healthy one. The question of preserving democracy came up, and that led to a discussion about voting, and that led to reminiscing about being an election worker.

I was a little surprised to find out that three or four people around the table had worked as election workers in the past. I never have, but I was thinking about doing it this year. Civic duty and all that. I was settling in for a discussion about the ins and outs and wacky experiences of being an election worker when the chatter veered off in an unexpected direction.

One of the guys said, "What I remember the most about being an election worker are the cookies. Some little old blue-haired ladies brought in piles of wonderful homemade cookies for us." There was a brief burst of acclamation around the table among the former election workers about the heavenly cookies. In the momentary silence that followed, a quiet voice said, "Why thank you. I was one of those 'little old blue-haired ladies' that brought the homemade cookies."

That was a little awkward. But we're all friends.



Mark Goebel, Wikimedia

ward. But we're all friends.

Let's call the cookie lady, "Bea." Since I was sitting next to Bea at the table, and our breakfast companions had moved on to other topics, I started talking with her about my interest in being an election worker. I recounted that two or three months ago I had filled out a form on the Division of Elections website to be an election worker, but the completed form was not acknowledged and I never heard back from anyone.

Then a few weeks ago I thought, "Time for direct action!" With some effort I found a telephone number associated with the Division of Elections, called it, and connected with a friendly person on the other end. I told her I wanted to be an election worker. She took down some contact information and told me to report for training on a particular day and time at an address...in Juneau.

"But, um, I live in Anchorage." She apologized for not asking me at the outset where I lived and told me that she would forward my information to another person who would contact me about election work in Anchorage.

A few days later I got a call from another nice person from the Division of Elections who again took my contact information and told me to report for training on a particular day and time at an address...in Fairbanks. I clarified, she apologized, and now I was waiting again for another call from another nice

person from the Division of Elections. But, as I told Bea, I was getting a little discouraged, and we were just days away from Primary Election Day.

Bea, an eminently practical person, advised me to go from breakfast directly to the State Division of Elections building in Midtown (2525 Gambell St., phone 907-522-8683) where I could both vote early and talk to an actual knowledgeable person in Anchorage about election work. And so I did.

Two days later, Sunday afternoon, I found myself back in that same building on Gambell sitting in a classroom for four hours going over every page of the Alaska Poll Worker's Manual. It was intense, detailed, procedural, and a bit overwhelming, but very interesting.

I came away with a tremendous appreciation for how the Division of Elections has built a complex system that safeguards the right of people to vote, protects the privacy of their vote, and has multiple layers of protections for the integrity of the system as

a whole. Moreover, they have developed a system that trains and supports total newcomers to do their assigned job well. Pretty impressive. And we get \$20 an hour. I thought it was a volunteer job.

I am now the proud owner of an Election Official Appointment Agreement to work on Aug. 20 and Nov. 5 as an election worker in Anchorage. My position is "Stand-by," so I am not certain I will work on those days, but I am ready if needed.

If you are interested, there are also other positions available for a couple of weeks on both sides of those dates doing things like staffing early polling sites, counting ballots, and so forth. You get paid, you work with nice people, you are a staunch supporter of democracy, and maybe in the back room you'll find a platter of homemade cookies.

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.

Senior Farmer's Market checks for fresh produce

Senior Voice Staff

The Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program check booklets, available at local senior centers and other agencies, are eligible for use through Oct. 31, 2024. Each booklet includes \$40 worth of checks for buying fresh Alaska-grown fruits, vegetables, fresh-cut herbs and honey at participating farmers' markets, authorized farms, and roadside

stands within Alaska. Applicants must be at least 60 years old and meet low-income eligibility guidelines.

Links to program information, booklet distribution locations and a downloadable application are at <https://bit.ly/3BfGvLV>. Or call your local senior center or meal program for details. There's also a proxy application form that allows someone to apply on behalf of someone else.

Your support helps

Older Persons Action Group continue its mission. Call 1-800-478-1059 to donate.

THEY DON'T NEED TO LEAVE HOME TO LIVE BETTER

Going on vacation?
Need a break
to run errands?
We can help!

- Respite Care
- Companion Care
- Chronic Disease Care
- Parkinson's Certified
- Demetia and Alzheimer's Certified
- Personal Hygiene Assistance
- Appointment Transportation
- Light Housekeeping & Meal Prep
- Daily Activities & Hobbies

Experienced
Caregivers
Available
24/7



907-337-5972 SENIORHELPERS.COM
1142 North Muldoon Rd. Ste 116, Anchorage



Enhancing mental health support for seniors

The role of 988 and other resources

Alaska Dept. of Health

As the Alaskan population ages, the mental health of our seniors has become an increasingly important issue to our state. With many older adults facing challenges such as loneliness, chronic illness, and loss of independence, mental health concerns among seniors are more prevalent than ever. In response, the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline has emerged as a critical resource, offering immediate support for individuals in distress or

just looking for more information on how to combat loneliness or depression.

Understanding the 988 Lifeline

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, launched in 2022, provides a vital support system for anyone experiencing mental health crises. This three-digit number connects callers to an Alaskan at Alaska Careline. 988 is available 24/7, offering immediate emotional support, crisis intervention and guidance.

Why 988 matters for seniors

Immediate access to support. Seniors in crisis often feel isolated and overwhelmed. 988 offers a direct line to compassionate professionals who can provide immediate assistance and connect them to local resources if needed.

Reduction of stigma. The simplicity and accessibility of 988 help reduce the stigma associated with seeking mental health support. For seniors who may

page 29 please

Delicious grapes are now considered a ‘functional food’

By JOHN C. SCHIESZER

Medical Minutes

Grapes often get a bad rap as being too sweet or sugary, but they are a nutrient-dense fruit and pack a host of health benefits. Eating grapes can help support brain and heart health. Further, the vitamins and minerals in grapes may provide an immunity boost and more.

There are so many health benefits from eating grapes



© Hasan Can Balcioglu | Dreamstime.com

that they are now classified as a “functional food.”

Grapes are a rich source of bioactive molecules, which contribute to the health benefits. Grape consumption is linked to reduced incidence of cardiovascular disease and its major risk factors, including high blood pressure. When a food is referred to as being a

pressure. When a food is referred to as being a

Sonic Alert Home Aware alerting system

Assistive Gizmo of the Month

Assistive Technology of Alaska



Photo courtesy ATLA

Alerting systems provide notifications of a variety of alerts around your home. There are many different brands of alerting systems available, however, each system has unique transmitters that communicate with the main receiver to provide notifications to the user. There are many transmitters, such as phone calls, doorbells, fire alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, baby cry sensors, and more.

When a notification comes through, the alerting system’s receiver will provide flashing and vibrating alerts along with an easy-to-read description on the face of the receiver. For example, if someone is at

your doorbell, the main receiver will flash, its bed shaker will vibrate, and the receiver will read “doorbell,” so the user knows where the notification is coming from.

This column is brought to you by ATLA (Assistive Technology of Alaska), a nonprofit, 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.

“functional food,” it means it can be considered a form of medical nutrition therapy. As such, grapes may be part of a “food as medicine” prescription to help those with high blood pressure.

Studies have shown that

consuming grapes results in a reduction of inflammatory markers around the liver and kidneys. Some of the bioactive phytochemicals of grapes include phenolic compounds such

page 10 please

Common enrollment notices from Medicare

By SEAN MCPHILAMY

Alaska Medicare Information Office

For those of us enrolled into Original Medicare (Parts A and B), most of us have also enrolled into one of Medicare’s Part D Prescription Drug Plans (PDPs). Each year, we may make changes to this prescription coverage during Medicare’s Open Enrollment period, which runs from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7, for changes which will then go into effect from Jan. 1 onward. Leading up to this Open Enrollment, you will start to receive notices with information



relating to any changes in your plan for the coming year. It is important to read and understand these notices, as they can help you decide if you should make changes to your coverage during Open Enrollment.

Annual Notice of Change and Evidence of Coverage

If you have a Part D prescription drug plan, you should receive a notice called an Annual Notice of Change (ANOC), and an Evidence of Coverage (EOC). Your plan should send you these notices by Sept. 30. If you do not receive these notices, contact your plan to request copies. There are three kinds of annual plan changes to look for in an ANOC or EOC:

First, look for changes to your plan’s deductibles and copayments, which can change each year. For example, your plan may not

have a deductible in 2024 but could have one in 2025.

Second, look for changes to the plan’s pharmacy network. Plan networks can change each year, which means your pharmacy may not be in your plan’s network for 2025. Your preferred in-network pharmacy options may not be the same. If you obtain your prescription from an out-of-network pharmacy, your co-pay will likely be greater.

And third, look for changes to the plan’s formulary, which is the list of drugs the plan covers. Formulary changes can happen from year to year,

meaning your prescription drugs may not be covered in 2025 even if these are covered during this year. Even if still on the plan’s formulary, the cost of your drugs may have changed. After reading about the changes to your coverage for 2025, decide whether your plan will still be able to meet your needs in the upcoming year. If not, I encourage you to review your options during the Open Enrollment period. The certified Medicare counselors in the Medicare Information Office will be glad to help you complete

page 6 please



ADVERTISEMENT

Buy your hearing aids from a hearing professional



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

Today's hearing aids are precision instruments, utilizing advanced digital technology that can and should be customized to fit your specific hearing loss and your unique lifestyle needs.

Better Hearing Institute, a nonprofit center for hearing advocacy, published a consumer warning against "do-it-yourself hearing care," writing:

"The process requires a complete in-person hearing assessment in a sound booth; the training and skills of a credentialed hearing healthcare professional to prescriptively fit the hearing aids using sophisticated com-

puter programs; and appropriate in-person follow-up and counseling. This is not possible when consumers purchase one-size-fits-all hearing aids over the internet or elsewhere."

Consumers should be cautious about purchasing hearing aids online. Any upfront cost savings will likely be used toward after-purchase costs like maintenance, cleaning, reprogramming, or purchasing a new hearing aid from a hearing care professional, because the internet one never sounds right or works well.

Hearing professionals will test you with proper equipment to determine the type of hearing loss you have, and show you the best solutions to fit your unique needs and lifestyle. If you think you may be suffering from hearing loss, don't hesitate to contact me at Accurate Hearing 907-644-6004 today for a free hearing consultation.

Donna R. Demarco, AAS, BC-HIS, CDP, Tinnitus Care Provider, holding a Certification from the International Hearing Society.



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.

Medicare

continued from page 5

a prescription drug plan review to find the lowest cost plan for you.

Plan Non-Renewal Notice and Consistent Poor Performance Notice

In October, plans leaving the Medicare program in the coming year send out a Plan Non-Renewal Notice to people enrolled in the plan. If you receive this notice, you should make sure you are covered in 2025. You can choose to enroll in a new Part D plan during Open Enrollment, which again is Oct. 15 through Dec. 7. If you receive this notice, you may also enroll in a new plan up until the last day in February. You will be disenrolled from your previous plan starting Jan. 1, though, so if you do not pick a new plan by then you will likely experience a gap in coverage until you enroll in a new plan.

In late October, Medicare will also send a Consistent Poor Performance Notice to people enrolled in a plan that has received a low rating for three or more years in a row. A low rating is three stars or fewer out of five. The notice encourages you to complete a Part D Prescription Drug Plan review and choose another plan which has better service and support, and fully

In late October, Medicare will also send a Consistent Poor Performance Notice to people enrolled in a plan that has received a low rating for three or more years in a row. A low rating is three stars or fewer out of five. The notice encourages you to complete a Part D Prescription Drug Plan review and choose another plan which has better service and support, and fully meets your prescription drug plan needs.

meets your prescription drug plan needs.

Medicare Summary Notice

Every three months, you should receive a Medicare Summary Notice (MSN), which provides a summary of the services and items you have received and how much you may be billed for them. Reading your MSN is important for detecting potential Medicare fraud, errors or abuse. Keep the following tips in mind:

- ▶ Review your Medicare statements as soon as they arrive.
- ▶ Keep notes of your medical appointments and compare these to your statements.
- ▶ Confirm that everything listed on the statement is accurate — in other words, that you actually received all listed services or items.
- ▶ Contact your health care provider if you have questions or notice any mistakes.
- ▶ Contact our office for a My Health Care Tracker (which helps you keep track

of your appointments) or to receive assistance reading your Medicare statements.

To discuss any of these notices, 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

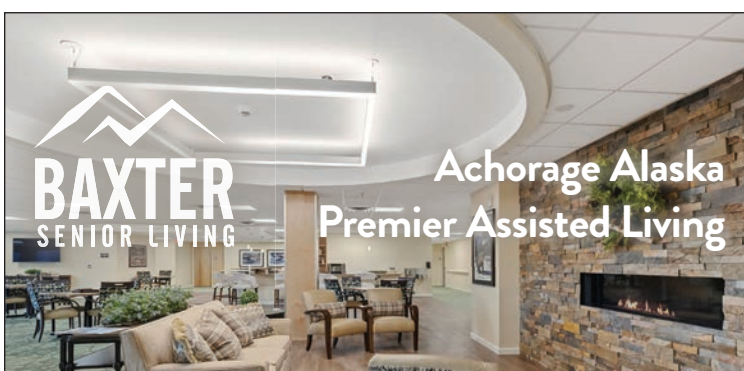
I am a Certified Medicare Counselor working under SHIP. My office is

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.

Call with your Medicare questions, 907-262-2322.



ASSISTED LIVING | MEMORY CARE | ASSISTED LIVING + | RESPITE STAYS

Home is not the house you live in. Home is the memories we make with those around us.

(907) 865-3500

baxterseniorliving.com

info@baxterseniorliving.com





Anchorage Senior Activity Center

MEDICARE & BENEFITS ENROLLMENT CENTER

Take Advantage of these FREE services!

ELIGIBILITY SCREENINGS FOR:

- MEDICARE BENEFITS
- MEDICAID BENEFITS
- COMMUNITY RESOURCE PROGRAMS TO ASSIST WITH FOOD, UTILITIES AND MORE

MEDICARE APPLICATION ASSISTANCE & COUNSELING

- APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE BY PHONE, COMPUTER OR IN-PERSON

FRAUD EDUCATION

907-770-2000 | ANCHORAGESENIORCENTER.ORG







How wildfire smoke endangers brain health

By **NICHOLAS HART**

Alzheimer's Association

As the frequency and intensity of wildfires continue to rise globally, including in places like Alaska, Washington and Canada, so does the threat posed by the smoke they produce. For many, the immediate concerns of wildfires are the destruction of homes, the loss of natural habitats, and the harmful effects on respiratory health. However, recent research highlights an equally alarming risk: the impact of wildfire smoke on brain health, particularly the heightened risk of dementia.

At the Alzheimer's Association International



© Vladimir Polikarpov | Dreamstime.com

Conference (AAIC) 2024 in July, researchers presented a groundbreaking 10-year study involving over 1.2 million participants that brings to light the significant dangers that wildfire smoke poses to cognitive health. This research underscores the need for

greater awareness and preventative measures, especially among older adults, who are already at a heightened risk for dementia.

The unique dangers of wildfire smoke

Air pollution has long

Not all air pollution is created equal. This recent study found that particulate matter from wildfire smoke is far more dangerous to brain health than similar particles from other sources, such as motor vehicles and industrial emissions.

been recognized as a factor contributing to various health problems, including heart disease, respiratory issues, and more recently, cognitive decline. However, not all air pollution is created equal. This recent study found that particulate matter from wildfire smoke, known as PM2.5, is far more dangerous to brain health than similar particles from other sources, such as motor vehicles and industrial emissions.

PM2.5 is fine particu-

late matter that is about 30 times smaller than the width of a human hair. These tiny particles can easily be inhaled deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream, eventually making their way to the brain. What makes PM2.5 from wildfires particularly concerning is its composition. Wildfire smoke is produced at higher temperatures, resulting in particles that are smaller

page 13 please

Health fairs return with fall schedule

Alaska Health Fair, Inc.

September is an active month for Alaska Health Fair with numerous opportunities to participate in health education and affordable blood and health screenings. We invite you to join our staff at any of these community-based events across various regions of the state, whether you attend to receive services, volunteer to help us serve the public or share a mission by exhibiting. To learn more about these free events and to see the schedule for later this fall, visit our website at www.alaskahealthfair.org.

Southcentral

Sept. 7 Anchorage St. Johns Methodist Church, 1801 O'Malley Rd., 8 a.m. to noon

Sept. 7 Nikiski Community Recreation Center, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sept. 14 Chugiak Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center, 8 a.m. to noon

Sept. 21 Soldotna Soldotna Regional Sports Complex, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sept. 28 Palmer Palmer Depot, 610 S. Valley Way. 8 a.m. to noon.

Southeast

Sept. 27-28 Juneau Nugget Mall, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sept. 27, 8 a.m. to noon on Sept. 28

Tanana Valley and Northern regions

Sept. 5 Fairbanks Access Alaska Disabilities Fair (everyone is welcome), 3399 Peger Rd., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sept. 10 Fairbanks Alaska Health Fair office draw, 725 26th Ave., Suite 201, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sept. 21 Fairbanks University Park Elementary School Gym, 554 Loftus Rd., 8 to 11 a.m.

Sept. 24 Fairbanks Alaska Health Fair office draw, 725 26th Ave., Suite 201, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Details of fall events are subject to change, so verify dates and locations on our website before traveling to events. Calling an Alaska Health Fair office

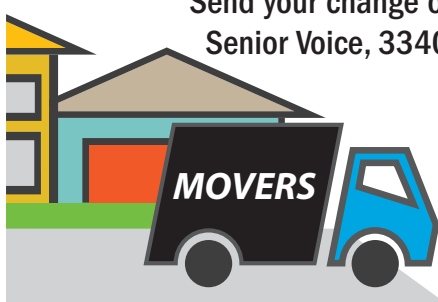
to pre-schedule your appointment is highly recommended. We are taking walk-ins this season, as space and time permits at most venues, but it is always best to pre-schedule.

We are excited to announce that we have added three more tests to our

blood test roster: Celiac disease, magnesium and uric acid. See our website for the complete roster of affordable, private tests.

Call and speak with one of our team at Anchorage/statewide, 907-278-0234; Fairbanks, 907-374-6853; Juneau, 907-723-5100.

MOVING? Let us know!



Send your change of address information to Senior Voice, 3340 Arctic Blvd., Suite 106, Anchorage, AK 99503

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



OPHTHALMIC ASSOCIATES

BRINGING ALASKA INTO FOCUS SINCE 1972



**542 W. 2ND AVENUE
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501
(907)276-1617
(800)270-1617
www.akeyedoc.com**



As daylight wanes, take time to enjoy—and prepare

By **KAREN CASANOVAS**

For Senior Voice

Q: It is getting cooler outside. What should I be doing as winter approaches?

A: As temperatures drop and the yellow leaves signal the arrival of autumn, it is time to start prepping for winter by tackling basic household chores. If unable to do these tasks alone, consider contacting neighbors or volunteers for assistance. Though it may only be September, some mountain ranges are already receiving early snowfall. By preparing now, you can alleviate stress when the snow eventually arrives.

Tackle fall chores

- ▶ Have winter essentials such as warm clothing, boots, grippers/cleats, hats, gloves, and scarves ready for use.
- ▶ Prep for cold weather by checking for drafts, insulating windows and doors, and ensuring your heating system and oil, wood, or electric stoves function safely.
- ▶ Get the vehicle serviced and equipped with an emergency kit, blankets, a snow shovel, and other essentials.
- ▶ Stock up on non-perishable food, water and emergency supplies. (See Christian Hartley's column on page 14.)
- ▶ Have a plan in place for any potential unplanned emergencies.
- ▶ Consider investing in a generator or alternative heating source in case of a power outage.
- ▶ Clean gutters, chimneys and rooftops, trim trees and clear debris from the yard or driveway.
- ▶ If you live in a group home or large community facility, ask what emergency preparedness measures are in place, and learn where to gather or shelter during a crisis.
- ▶ Stay active and maintain a healthy lifestyle to boost your immune system and stock up on cold/flu supplies for the upcoming months.

Pick your own vegetables and fruits

Some locations around the state for U-pick produce: **Soldotna** Jackson Gardens, 48195 Johns Road.



Open April through October, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, closed on Sundays. Available produce, greenhouse fruits and vegetables, berry bushes. www.jacksongardensalaska.com

Delta Junction Bormans Farm, 3123 Tanana Loop Extension. Open July through October. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Available produce including potatoes, broccoli, carrots, beans, peas, zucchinis, starwberries and much more. www.facebook.com/bormansfarm

Palmer Pyrah's Pioneer Peak Farm, 4350 Bodenbug Loop Road, May through October. Check website for hours and produce availability. www.pppfarm.net

Wasilla Sundog Orchard, 2000 N. Douglas Drive. Call ahead to make an appointment, 907-357-6510, Alaska Haskap and honey berries.

Store winter foods

Here are some guidelines for storing different foods.

Root vegetables: Potatoes, carrots, beets, turnips, and onions can be stored in a cool, dry place for several months. Potatoes, specifically, should not be refrigerated. It increases the amount of sugar they contain, which can lead to higher levels of a chemical called acrylamide. For more info on acrylamide, visit <https://tinyurl.com/3jyktuc5>.

Apples: Granny Smith, Fuji and Honeycrisp can be stored in a cool, dark place for several months. You should wash apples only before you're about to eat them. Washing apples ahead of time will dramatically reduce their shelf life.

Citrus fruits: Store oranges, lemons and grapefruit in the fridge for several weeks. You can freeze oranges and lemons for up

If unable to do these tasks alone, consider contacting neighbors or volunteers for assistance.

to a year. Whole grapefruit can last two to three weeks in the fridge.

Cabbage: If bruising is prevented, store in a cool, dark place for three weeks up to two months. Damage to cabbage degrades its vitamin C content.

Winter greens: Kale, collard greens and Swiss chard can be stored in the refrigerator until the leaves turn brown or look wilted.

Fall sightseeing

Be sure to find time for enjoyment as the season transitions, both indoors and outside.

Aurora Borealis: with shortened daylight, the Northern Lights are visible more frequently.

Hiking: fewer people on trails make traversing easier.

Glacier day tours: Prince William Sound and Kenai Fjords National Park are less crowded.

Fishing: fish for rainbow



A field of fall colors, viewed during a trail walk in central Anchorage last September.

David Washburn photo

trout, Dolly Varden, arctic grayling, steelhead trout, silver salmon (coho).

Alaska Railroad: ride to Fairbanks viewing scenic autumn colors, or a day trip to Hurricane, one of the last whistle-stop trains in America

The Anchorage Museum: visit fall exhibits "How to Survive," "Northern Boarders," "Lines of Sight: Comic Art and Storytelling in Alaska," and "Arctic Sculpture: Ivory Carvings."

The crimson, copper and

gold colors reflect the signs of autumn. Blueberries and cranberries dot the landscapes, and the air is crisp. Foliage changes and the tops of fireweed let us know winter will soon be upon us, but take time to enjoy fall day trips or lakeside treks and appreciate Alaska's undeniable beauty.

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.



HomeWell
CARE SERVICES

Personalize Your Home Care with HomeWell™ of Anchorage

Home care is never a one-size-fits-all solution. Our holistic approach to home care provides a personalized experience based on individual needs—ensuring a better quality of life. Get the professional assistance you need and the peace of mind your family deserves, no matter where you call home.

Call HomeWell of Anchorage today at 907-868-3100

Trusted Care. True Compassion.™ | homewellcares.com

©2020 HomeWell Senior Care, Inc. All rights reserved. Rev0320



YOU'RE INVITED

TINNITUS IN THE LAST FRONTIER

The Early Treatment of Tinnitus and Hearing Loss with Modern Treatment Plans

➔ **September 24th** ⬅



Doors open at 10:00am
Symposium starts at 11:00am



Aloft Hotel

310 West 36th Avenue and C Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Limited Seating • RSVP Required

Who This Event Is For:

1. If you have experienced Tinnitus, or ringing/buzzing/chirping in the ears
2. If your doctor has ever told you that you were diabetic
3. If you have high blood pressure
4. If you sometimes have difficulty hearing
5. If your balance is off
6. If you forget more than you used to, or are having more memory lapse
7. If any of the above apply to you, a loved one, or neighbor we look forward to seeing you and them at this Dementia Education Event

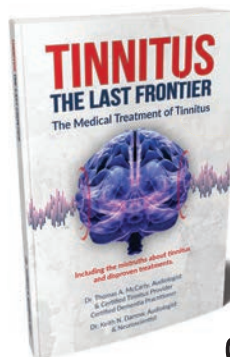
Learn From Guest Lecturer
**Harvard Medical & M.I.T. Trained
Neuroscientist and
Certified Dementia Practitioner**

Dr. Keith Darrow, PhD, CCC-A

M.I.T. and Harvard Medical Trained
Neuroscientist and Clinical Audiologist

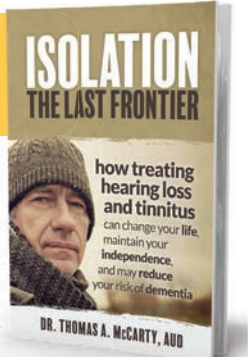


Amazon #1 New Release & Best-Selling Author
Spokesman, Excellence In Audiology
Expert in Speech and Hearing Bioscience and Technology
Professor at Worcester State University
Nationally Recognized Speaker, Trainer, and Researcher
Research Associate at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary
His publications and research cited over 1000 times



FREE GIFT FOR ALL ATTENDEES

FREE Copy of
Dr. McCarty's Best Selling Book,
'Tinnitus The Last Frontier'
or **'Isolation The Last Frontier'**



Reserve Your Seat at: audassociatesliveevents.com
or Call (907) 312-2578



What your smart watch says about 'heart rate variability'

Also: Weight loss drugs and diabetic smokers' health

By JOHN SCHIESZER

Medical Minutes

Watches commonly monitor 'heart rate variability'

Wearable clothing can measure several aspects of health, including heart rate variability. So, what does it mean if your heart rate variability is high or low? Cardiologist Dr. Elijah Behr with Mayo Clinic Health in London said that oftentimes your watch or wearable device is measuring the balance of nerve activity in the body and the way it relates to your heart rate and blood pressure.

The nerve system that heart rate variability relates to is called the autonomic nervous system. It can be thought of as the balance between the effects of adrenaline in the body



and the other part of the nervous system.

"From beat to beat, or over periods of time, heart rate variability can be measured in different ways to try to assess this balance within the autonomic nervous system," said Dr. Behr. "In general, people who have higher heart rate variability are more likely to have better cardiovascular fitness. Athletes tend to have a very high heart rate

variability, for instance."

Older adults with lower heart rate variability may be more likely to lack cardiovascular fitness or to have underlying heart disease.

"Heart rate variability by itself isn't likely to give you a good view of your likelihood of suffering a heart attack or heart rhythm problems. Ignore it as a standalone measure. Do use it as a way of pushing you toward being a bit healthier in your lifestyle," said Dr. Behr. "Watch blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, and exercise. If you're worried about your heart rate variability, you should be worried about these. They are more tangible risks that can be acted upon and that we know will have an impact on your longevity."

Ozempic and its chemical cousins ushering in a new era in battling obesity, heart disease

GLP-1 agonists, a class of medications such as Ozempic and Wegovy, can help manage diabetes and obesity, and are ushering in a new era for combating obesity and heart disease. Keerthana Kesavarapu, a professor from the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, helps lead the Rutgers Center of Metabolic Health and Weight Management and said we have been losing the fight against obesity for the past 50 years.

"I think we're finally gaining ground. With the advent of GLP-1 agonists like Ozempic, we're seeing weight loss results almost comparable to bariatric

surgery, but with fewer risks and side effects. This is a game-changer," said Kasavarapu. He noted that bariatric surgery still has its place, but these medications are going to be playing an increasingly prominent role in obesity treatment.

New use of Ozempic was associated with a lower risk for medical care related to smoking in adults with type 2 diabetes compared with seven other anti-diabetes medications. Those who used Ozempic were less likely to have a medical encounter that included a diagnosis of smoking that was so pronounced they would be prescribed a smoking cessation medication or smoking cessation counseling. These findings have been published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

next page please

Grapes

continued from page 5

as hydroxycinnamic acids, anthocyanins, proanthocyanidins and stilbenes.

"Grapes contain a key nutrient called resveratrol that might offer a lot of health benefits including protecting against eye problems, cardiovascular disease, cancer, improving microbiome diversity (in the gut), and other health conditions," said Dr. Vijaya Surampudi, an associate professor of medicine at UCLA Health, Los Angeles.

A clinical study published in the scientific journal *Nutrients* found that consuming grapes significantly increased the diversity of bacteria in the gut, which is considered essential to good health overall. Additionally, consuming grapes significantly decreased cholesterol levels, as well as bile acids, which play an integral role in cholesterol metabolism.

The findings suggest a promising new role for grapes in gut health and reinforce the benefits of grapes on heart health. In this study, healthy subjects consumed the equivalent of one and a half cups of grapes per day for four

When referred to as being a "functional food," it means it can be considered a form of medical nutrition therapy. As such, grapes may be part of a "food as medicine" prescription to help those with high blood pressure.

weeks. After four weeks of grape consumption, there was an increase in microbial diversity as measured by the Shannon Index, a commonly used tool for measuring diversity of species.

Among the beneficial bacteria that increased was *Akkermansia*, a bacteria of keen interest for its beneficial effect on glucose and lipid metabolism, as well as on the integrity of the intestinal lining. Additionally, a decrease in blood cholesterol was observed including total cholesterol by 6.1% and LDL cholesterol by 5.9%. Bile acids, which are linked to cholesterol metabolism, were decreased by 40.9%.

Dr. Surampudi, who helps run the UCLA Medical Weight Management Clinic, said red and green grapes have similar nutritional benefits, but do have some differences.

"Darker grapes may have more antioxidants than green grapes. Red grapes contain anthocyanin, quercetin, and catechin,

which have anti-inflammatory properties and may help prevent cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Green grapes contain flavanols and polyphenols," said Dr. Surampudi.

You can eat grapes daily, but she cautioned that for some people it can worsen acid reflux or increase blood gluces depending on the person and their medical history. So, a half cup to 1 cup of grapes daily is what she recommends for adults 50 and older.

She noted that grape juice might increase how quickly the liver breaks down some medications.

"Grape extract might slow blood clotting. Taking grape extract or high amounts in grape juice along with medications that also slow blood clotting might increase the risk of bruising and bleeding," said Dr. Surampudi.

Eating whole fruits in moderation clearly is better. However, the most important thing is considering your dietary pattern.

"One fruit or vegetable

cannot provide all its benefits in the setting of an unhealthy dietary pattern. It has to work together with your overall diet. Whole foods like vegetables and fruits are always more beneficial to your health partnered with a healthy dietary pattern," said Dr. Vijaya Surampudi, who also is the co-creator of the newly developed Adult Nutrition Support Services Program at UCLA.

Grape consumption may benefit eye health in older adults

In a recent randomized, controlled human study, consuming grapes for 16 weeks improved key markers of eye health in older adults. The study, published in the scientific journal *Food & Function*, looked at the impact of regular consumption of grapes on macular pigment accumulation and other biomarkers of eye health. This was the first human study on this subject, and the results reinforce earlier studies where consuming grapes was found to protect retinal structure and function.

As a person ages, the risk of eye disease and vision problems increases significantly. Key risk factors for eye disease include oxida-

tive stress and high levels of ocular advanced glycation end products (AGEs). AGEs may contribute to many eye diseases by damaging the vascular components of the retina, impairing cellular function, and causing oxidation. Dietary antioxidants can decrease oxidative stress and inhibit the formation of AGEs, with possible beneficial effects on the retina, such as an improvement in Macular Pigment Optical Density (MPOD).

In this study, 34 older adults consumed either grapes (equivalent to 1 and a half cups of grapes per day) or a placebo for 16 weeks. The grape eaters showed a significant increase in MPOD, plasma antioxidant capacity, and total phenolic content compared to those on placebo. Those who didn't consume grapes saw a significant increase in harmful AGEs, as measured in the skin.

There is a variety of foods that benefit eye health and only recently have studies been done looking at red and green grapes. "Grapes are a good source of vitamins, minerals and fiber. However, eating grapes daily cannot undo a dietary pattern that includes a lot of ultra processed foods," said Dr. Surampudi.



Medical

continued from page 10

Previous reports of reduced desire to smoke in adults taking Ozempic had raised interest about its potential to help adults who want to kick the habit. Researchers from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health and Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine compared the effectiveness of Ozempic versus the use of seven other anti-diabetes medications. The researchers found that it was associated with a lower risk for smoking-related healthcare utilization when compared to the other anti-diabetes medications.

Preventing pancreatitis with new medications

GLP-1 receptor agonists may lower the risk of acute pancreatitis recurrence in people with obesity and those with type 2 diabetes, according to a new study. Acute pancreatitis is a sudden inflammation

of the pancreas and can be very painful. Doctors have been cautious about prescribing these medications in patients with a history of pancreatitis due to the potential risk of worsening the condition.

Dr. Mahmoud Nassar, with the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at the University at Buffalo in Buffalo, New York, said there is even a warning that is included in prescribing information.

"Our research highlights the safety and the potential for GLP-1 receptor agonists to reduce the risk of acute pancreatitis recurrence in individuals with obesity and type 2 diabetes, challenging previous concerns and offering new hope for effective disease management," said Dr. Nassar.

The researchers used data from a large database called TriNetX, which contains information from about 127 million patients across 15 countries. They identified 638,501 individuals with a history of acute pancreatitis.

The researchers wanted to see if certain medi-

cations for diabetes and obesity (specifically, GLP-1 receptor agonists, SGLT2 inhibitors and DPP4 inhibitors) affected their risk of getting pancreatitis again. Their analysis covered a wide range of medications within each category to understand how these types of treatments might affect pancreatitis risk. They also looked closely at different patient characteristics, such as age, gender, body mass index (BMI) and blood test results, to better understand overall risks.

The researchers tracked how many patients developed pancreatitis within five years of starting their medications. When the GLP-1 group was compared with patients taking SGLT2 inhibitors, the GLP-1 group showed a lower risk of acute pancreatitis recurrence (15.2%) compared with 24% in the SGLT2 inhibitors group.

When GLP-1 patients were compared with those taking DPP4i drugs, the GLP-1 group's recurrence risk was 14.4%, compared with 23.3% in the DPP4i group. When GLP-1

patients were compared with those not taking any of these medications, the GLP-1 group's recurrence risk was 14.5%, compared with 51.6% in the comparison group.

"This study provides critical insights that could change the treatment landscape for patients with obesity and type 2 diabetes, particularly those with a history of acute pancreati-

tis," said Dr. Nassar. "The possibility of using GLP-1 receptor agonists more broadly offers hope for better managing these conditions, improving patient outcomes and enhancing quality of life."

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.

Virtual resource fair for veterans, Sept. 11

Senior Voice Staff

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is hosting its 4th Annual Resource Fair on Wednesday, September 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This virtual event is designed to provide valuable tools and resources for veterans and their families.

Participants can look forward to a variety of sessions, including "VA Benefits for Survivors 101," by the Office of Survivors

Assistance, and "Home Modification and Home Fit Guides," by AARP. Additional resources will be available from the VA Office of Community Care and legal services. There will also be a special segment on "Self-Care for the Caregiver."

The event is free, and attendees can join via Microsoft Teams. For the link and other information, contact 907-375-2606.



**Elevators, stairlifts,
wheelchair lifts, and more.**

www.alaskastairlift.com

(907)245-5438

toll-free 1-877-884-5438



Authorized dealer for Bruno stairlifts, vehicle lifts,
wheelchair lifts – all made in U.S.A.



**Free estimates
Statewide service
Medicaid-Insurance-VA billing**

Creating accessibility solutions for your home and business since 1998



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 September. Meeting format is open discussion unless otherwise noted.

Sept. 6 Soldotna Senior Center, joining with the Alzheimer’s Association for presentation, “Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors,” 1 to 2 p.m.

Sept. 4 Kenai Senior Center, joining with the “Stronger Together” group, 1 to 2 p.m.

Sept. 19 Sterling Senior Center, 1 to 2 p.m.

Sept. 24 Nikiski Senior Center, 1 to 2 p.m.

Sept. 26 Tyotkas Elder Center (in Kenai). Find out about direct care services with local care agencies, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Sept. 26 Homer Senior Center, 1 to 3 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 Kebschull at the Nikiski Senior Center, 907-776-7654 or email kpfcsp@nikiskiseniorcenter.org.

Kodiak Senior Center hosts the caregiver support group on the third Thursday of each month (Sept. 19) 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 (Sept. 5) 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.

Family caregiver tip: Meeting transportation needs

By LISA GREENLEAF

Kenai Peninsula Family Caregiver Support Program

Caregivers provide for a full scope of tasks throughout the lives of their loved ones. Today we are looking at the challenges of providing safe transportation when caregiving. The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center

(nadtc.org) offers tips for planning and providing safe and reliable transport for people with disability challenges and Alzheimer’s or dementia related disorders.

Whether you are transporting a loved one to an appointment or scheduling rides with a senior center or public transport, here are some important things to consider.

► Allow extra time. Being

prepared for an appointment with ample time for travel and a little extra time for the unexpected may reduce stress.

► Speak clearly with a normal tone and speed unless requested otherwise. With a person experiencing dementia, you may be asked to re-orient the recipient during travel. Smile, listen and show respect.

► Provide simplified versions of information; consider making information available to the recipient in various formats including print, visual and auditory

► Seek out transportation services in your community. If a care recipient needs an escort, caregivers usually ride free of charge with taxi, bus systems and senior center transportation. Getting a ride may free you up as a caregiver and reduce stress. Local senior centers and Independent Living Centers can connect you with options.

► Identify the needs of the passenger and ensure

ease of access to assistive devices, such as walkers, wheelchairs, door assistance when entering or exiting the vehicle. Most transport services will help you with equipment.

Plan ahead. Make a schedule for activities, appointments and outings. Schedule rides in advance and consider making a transportation plan. Utilize planning tools and have local information on hand. “My Transportation Options” is a simple, effective way to manage information, and can be downloaded with no cost. Learn more at www.nadtc.org.

Disability and Aging Summit, Oct. 8-9

Senior Voice Staff

“Inclusive Aging in Alaska: Thriving and Growing Together,” is the theme for the 10th Annual Alaska Disability and Aging Summit hosted by the Alaska Disability and Aging Coalition, Oct. 8 and 9 in Anchorage. The summit will be hybrid again this year, with attendees joining in on Zoom and in person at the Special Olympics Alaska Jim Balamaci Training Center and Campus at 3200 Mountain View Drive.

The goal of the summit is to bring Alaskans together to further discuss the national and state trends regarding the aging population to include individuals with intellectual disabilities and how it relates to Alaska.

The increased life expectancy of individuals with intellectual disabilities marks a positive shift in societal attitudes and advancements in health care. Historical mistreatment and unethical practices have given way to improved life expectancies. This is a huge development that has now increased the gap in care for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD). This gap highlights the need for increased education, training and research on how to care for aging adults with IDD. The Disability and Aging Summit is a way for people to come together and explore the factors that have contributed to the improved life expectancy of individuals with IDD and to identify the challenges that remain in caring for this population as they age.

The two-day summit will include presentations on multiple topics including a keynote presentation on advocacy from Jennifer Keelan-Chaffins, known for her participation in the Capitol Crawl at just eight years old. There will also be sessions discussing disabilities and relationships, dementia, innovation in senior housing, advocacy in the hospitals and navigating end of life care. There will also be an action panel with local representatives and senators, and an elder panel discussing topics regarding the aging process and what they have done to age well. Additionally, a vendor fair will offer networking opportunities and resources for attendees from over 20 organizations from across the state.

For information, call 907-222-7625 ext. 612.

Why Short-Term home health care insurance from GTL?



BENEFITS PAID DIRECTLY TO YOU



3 PLANS TO CHOOSE FROM



SUPPORT FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS



BENEFITS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS



RIDERS TO CUSTOMIZE COVERAGE

GTL GUARANTEE TRUST LIFE



Troutman's Peak Benefits
Linda Rodeheaver Troutman

REPRESENTATIVES



LINDA TROUTMAN
Account Executive / Owner
Office / Direct: 907-748-1796
Linda.Colonial@hotmail.com
Your total Health Care Provider!



LUANN DAVIS
Luann.davisdga@gmail.com
Cell: 509-579-6398



Smoke

continued from page 7

in diameter and contain a higher concentration of toxic chemicals compared to PM2.5 from other sources.

According to the study, every increase of just 1 microgram per cubic meter (µg/m3) in the three-year average exposure to wildfire PM2.5 led to a 21% increase in the odds of being diagnosed with dementia. In contrast, non-wildfire PM2.5 exposure was associated with only a 3% increase in dementia risk for every 3 µg/m3 increase. These findings highlight the urgent need to address the specific threat posed by wildfire smoke to brain health.

The vulnerability of certain populations

The study also revealed that the risks associated with wildfire smoke are not evenly distributed across

all populations. Individuals from racially and ethnically minoritized groups, as well as those living in high-poverty areas, were found to be at greater risk. This disparity is likely due to a combination of factors, including limited access to healthcare, fewer resources for protective measures, and a higher likelihood of living in areas more prone to wildfires.

For those living in low-income communities, the ability to protect oneself from the harmful effects of wildfire smoke can be severely limited. Many may not have access to air filtration systems, may be unaware of real-time air quality conditions due to a lack of technology, or may work in jobs that require them to be outdoors even when the air quality is poor. These challenges exacerbate the health risks posed by wildfire smoke, making it even more crucial to find community-wide solutions that address these disparities.

What you can do to protect your brain health

Given the growing evidence of the dangers posed by wildfire smoke, it's essential to take steps to protect brain health, particularly for older adults and those at higher risk of dementia. Here are some practical measures that can help mitigate the effects of wildfire smoke:

Update home air filtration systems. Whenever possible, invest in high-quality air filtration systems that can effectively remove PM2.5 from indoor air. This is especially important in regions prone to wildfires.

Monitor air quality. Keep an eye on the Air Quality Index (AQI) using weather apps or local news sources. An AQI of 100 or higher indicates unhealthy air quality, and it's best to stay indoors when levels are high.

Wear an N95 mask. When outdoor air quality is poor, wearing an N95 mask can help filter out harmful particles, including PM2.5, and reduce the risk of inhalation.

Stay indoors during poor air quality days. If possible, avoid outdoor activities on days when wildfire smoke

is present, particularly when the AQI exceeds 100. Closing windows and doors can also help reduce indoor exposure.

Addressing the broader issue

While individual actions are essential, they are only part of the solution. The findings from the AAIC 2024 study highlight the importance of enacting policies that prevent wildfires and mitigate their impact when they do occur. Public health initiatives should focus on educating communities about the risks of wildfire smoke and providing resources to help protect vulnerable populations.

In addition, more research is needed to fully understand the mechanisms by which wildfire smoke affects brain health. This knowledge will be crucial in developing more effective interventions and policies to protect public health as the incidence of wildfires continues to rise.

Resources for further information

For those seeking more information on how to protect themselves and their loved ones from the dangers of wildfire smoke,

the Alzheimer's Association offers a variety of resources, including tips on safety and preparing for emergencies. Visit www.alz.org or call their 24/7 helpline at 1-800-272-3900 for support and guidance.

Additionally, organizations like the American Red Cross and Ready.gov provide valuable information on how to prepare for emergencies, including wildfires, and where to find shelter and supplies in case of a disaster.

As the risk of wildfires continues to grow, so too does the need to recognize and address the hidden dangers they pose to brain health. The evidence presented at AAIC 2024 is a stark reminder that we must not only focus on the immediate physical dangers of wildfires but also consider the long-term cognitive effects of exposure to wildfire smoke. By taking proactive steps to protect ourselves and advocating for broader public health measures, we can work towards reducing the risk of dementia and other brain health issues in the face of this increasing environmental threat.

Nicholas Hart is a researcher for Alzheimer's Association.

An age-friendly Anchorage success

Anchorage Age-Friendly Leadership Team

For the last two years, the Age-Friendly Anchorage team—comprised of AARP Alaska volunteers, community partners and Anchorage community leaders—has been collecting input from the community on ideas for actions that would make Anchorage a more age-friendly place to live. While working to collect community input, the Age-Friendly Anchorage team conducted several walk audits to learn more about potential improvements for pedestrian safety in several areas of concern in the city. One of these

walk audits has been a major step toward community involvement, pedestrian safety, and public-private partnership.

A walk audit at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center highlighted the challenge that pedestrians face while crossing from Chugach Manor/Chugach View senior housing and the senior center without a crosswalk. The walk audit report was presented to staff at the Municipality's Traffic Engineering Department to explore potential solutions. Proposals included a raised crosswalk with a visual pedestrian-

page 24 please



Ready, set, slow! Bikers line up for the slow bike race last month in Anchorage. Last across the finish line wins!

Photo courtesy AARP Alaska

ALASKA NATIVE OWNED & OPERATED

Alaska's Source for wheelchair vans and all mobility solutions.



(907) 290-9177

6051 Burlwood St., Anchorage, AK 99507

arcmobilitysolution.com

We treat you like our own loved ones!



All Wheel Drive Wheelchair Accessible Vans
 ADA Accessible Vans
 Full Size Vans
 Mini Vans

Home Accessible Upfits
 Stairlifts
 Ceiling Lifts
 Vertical Platform Lifts
 Modular Ramps

Auto Adaptive Upfits
 Hand Controls
 Lifts/Hoists
 Transfer Solutions

Mobility Scooters
 Power Wheelchairs
 Lift Recliners
 Full-Power Home Care Beds
 Wheelchairs







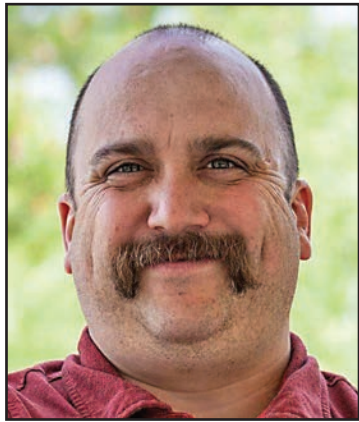




Pantry planning: Stocking up for peace of mind

By **CHRISTIAN M. HARTLEY**

For Senior Voice



If Alaska has taught us anything, especially over the past few years, it's that life throws unexpected curveballs. That's why it's crucial to have a well-stocked pantry, especially in case of emergencies. Let's discuss how to prepare your pantry for unforeseen events and create a manageable plan to build your emergency food supply, but without a huge upfront cost.

First, the importance of shelf-stable foods is paramount. These are items that can last for extended periods without refrigeration. When choosing these foods, think about nutrition, variety, and comfort. Canned vegetables, fruits and meats are excellent options. Don't forget about dried foods like pasta, rice and beans, which can form the base of many meals. For quick energy and comfort, consider items like peanut butter and crackers. Check the "best by" dates—products with the longest usefulness are the best for the pantry.

Water is critical. Store at least one gallon per person per day for a week. This might seem like a lot, but remember, water isn't just for drinking. It's also for cooking and basic hygiene. You can buy bottled water, or you can bottle your own

in a food-grade container. Better yet, do both and use bottled water for drinking and collected water for hygiene.

The idea of stocking up to last for a week might seem overwhelming because some of us can't afford to buy a week's worth of supplies at a time. Don't worry, here's a simple plan to build your emergency supply gradually over two months. Each week, focus on gathering one day's worth of supplies for a specific category. This is set to skip a week if you need to, and still get it done in two weeks.

In the first week, start with water. The most essential resource for survival. Get seven gallons per person in your household. The second week, focus on protein sources like canned tuna, chicken or beans. Don't get just one: get seven meals per person. That will give you at least one meal each day for the week.

For the third week, gather canned fruits and

vegetables to ensure you have a balanced diet. I am not talking about fresh fruits which have a shorter shelf life, but canned or freeze-dried. The fourth week is all about grains and starches. Stock up on items like pasta, rice and instant potatoes.

In the fifth week, add some comfort foods and snacks. These could be crackers, sweets, granola bars, or your favorite canned soups. For the sixth week, think about cooking essentials. This includes items like cooking oils, salt and any spices you frequently use.

In the last week, get those non-food necessities like can openers, matches and basic first aid supplies. Make sure you have at least eight cups of pet food for each pet you have.

Remember, pantry planning isn't just about emergencies. It's also about convenience and saving money. When you have a well-stocked pantry, you'll make fewer trips to the store and always have ingredients on hand to whip



© Gazed | Dreamstime.com

The idea of stocking up enough to last for a week might seem overwhelming because some of us can't afford to buy a week's worth of supplies at a time. Don't worry, here's a simple plan to build your emergency supply gradually over two months.

up a quick meal. If you can't afford this schedule, spread it out further but focus on gathering a pantry.

As you're building your pantry, check expiration dates. Place newer items at the back and older ones in front. This way, you'll use things before they expire. Every few months, go through your pantry and use or donate items

that are approaching their expiration dates.

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.




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



16th Annual Mat-Su Emergency Preparedness Expo

Saturday September 28, 2024 10 am - 3 pm
 Menard Sports Center, 1001 S. Clapp St. Wasilla





Free event with exhibits & activities for all ages

First 200 adults receive a bag of safety items





- NEW Indoor/outdoor exhibits
- Youth Poster contest
- Earthquake Simulator
- Door prizes & Giveaways
- Live Demonstrations
- Vendors & Food trucks





• Learn how to prepare for earthquakes, wildfires, floods and more!
 • Plus- CPR, First Aid and Backcountry safety

www.ready.matsugov.us




Check the website or Facebook for a schedule of presentations











Rev. Dr. Chief Anna Frank: Wisdom, resilience, cultural preservation

By **ATHENA ELISE BARBER**

For Senior Voice

Reverend Doctor Chief Anna Frank is a name synonymous with unwavering dedication to her community. At 82, she continues to inspire and lead, drawing on decades of experience as a health educator, community leader and spiritual guide. Her story is a powerful testament to the strength of the human spirit and the enduring importance of cultural traditions.

Born and raised in Old Minto, Alaska, Anna Frank's journey began in a small village where she was deeply influenced by her aunt, the first health aide in their community.

"I learned early on the importance of caring for others," she recalls. "It was more than a job, it was a calling, something that was deeply rooted in our culture."

Despite the challenges of balancing work and education, Anna earned her GED through night school, a significant achievement at a time when educational opportunities for Native women were limited. Her perseverance paid off when she became the first health educator and supervisor at the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC). This role was just the beginning of a lifetime dedicated to service.

Journey to priesthood

Anna's journey took a significant turn when she was ordained as a deacon and later as a priest, making history as the first Native woman to hold such a position in the Episcopal Church in the United States.

"When the opportunity came, I asked my late husband, Richard, for his thoughts. He said, 'If you don't do it, who will?' That was all the encouragement I needed," she recalls with a smile. Richard's unwavering support was a cornerstone of her decision, and she often reflects on how his belief in her mission helped her navigate the challenges of leadership.

However, her journey to priesthood was not



Rev. Dr. Chief Anna Frank, with the Minto Flats in the background, returns home in 2023, the first time since the onset of Covid in 2020. It is the place she has cherished for many years.

Athena Barber photo

without obstacles. There was resistance, especially from those who questioned a woman's role in such a position. But Anna's faith and determination were stronger. "I always believed that if something is meant to be, no one can stand in its way," she says. Her ordination was not just a personal victory but a significant milestone for indigenous women everywhere.

Anna's faith has always been a guiding force in her life, particularly during times of personal hardship. Later in life, she battled stage 4 cancer in her stomach and lungs. The diagnosis was grim, and doctors did not expect her to survive. Anna's faith, coupled with the unwavering support of her community, played a crucial role in her recovery, she says.

"I believe in the power of prayer. The doctors said it was a miracle, but I knew it was the strength of my people's prayers that pulled me through."

The power of community is a recurring theme in Anna's life. "In our culture, we don't face challenges alone. We come together, and we support each other. That's how we survive," she explains.

Sharing and healing

One of the most critical aspects of Anna's work has been her focus on trauma healing, particularly for Alaska Native women.

Drawing from her own experiences with trauma—ranging from the lasting impacts of boarding school to her own family dynamics—Anna has developed a

holistic approach to healing that emphasizes the importance of talking about the hurt.

"You can't heal what you don't acknowledge," she says. Her workshops, which often include storytelling, drawing, and burning ceremonies, provide a safe space for participants to confront their past and begin the healing process.

'Our culture is our strength'

Anna's commitment to preserving and passing on cultural values, traditions and language is another cornerstone of her life's work. She believes that these elements are essential to maintaining a strong sense of identity, particularly for younger generations. "Our culture is our strength. It's what grounds us, especially in difficult times," she says. Anna encourages young people to take pride in their heritage and to understand the importance of where they come from. "You have to know your roots to stand strong," she adds.

Ongoing advocacy

In her retirement, Anna

page 21 please



Experience the Finer Things in Life at our Vibrant and Diverse Community!

Riverview Senior Living offers Independent, Assisted Living and Memory Care to the elders of the area. We offer a vibrant community with purposeful programming that allows passionate, playful, and intentional living for our residents.

As you engage in the activities and social life that are meaningful to you, we take care of the chores. Keeping your independence is important to us, and how you choose to spend your time, and find your joy, is always your choice.

Please contact Allysa Fernandez at afernandez@northstarsl.com or 206-761-0809 for a complimentary lunch created by our own Chef Roberto Dominquez.



RiverviewSeniorLiving.com
3041 Clinton Dr. • Juneau, AK 99801
206-761-0809
License #101548





Making and consuming bone broth for better health

By **MARALEY McMICHAEL**
Senior Voice Correspondent

The “pop” of the lids on the jars as I lifted them out of the pressure cooker was music to my ears. It’s always a relief to know that the last of the many steps to “canning” my bone broth is successful. Although if one or two jars don’t seal, it really is no big deal. I just use them first or freeze them until needed. Ten pint jars of caribou bone broth stood cooling on the counter in August 2020.

Making and canning bone broth is a rather new endeavor for me. Bone broth came to my attention only after I turned 60, but once I learned about it and understood its contribution to good nutrition and good health, it became very important.

I’ve gradually developed the habit of consuming an ice cube size portion of bone broth daily, along with ice cube size portions of pureed raw beet, assorted wild berry pulp, and four to five rose hips. Each morning I take these items out of the freezer, put them in various small containers, and line them up on the kitchen counter to consume before day’s end. When bedtime comes, if anything remains, and I don’t want to eat or drink something that late, I put it in the fridge until the next



Author Maraley McMichael strains moose bone broth, April 2021.

Maraley McMichael photos

day. It took some experimenting, but this system works for me.

I grew up in Glennallen in a family where fall hunting was a given. We ate salmon, moose and caribou on a regular basis and other things like Dall sheep, ling cod, and grayling less often. Because of that, I’ve participated in most all aspects of processing meat and fish, but making bone broth was never one of them.

After our move back to Palmer in 2011, and with my husband, Gary, no longer able to hunt and fish like he did during his younger years, my sister and brother-in-law (who live in Glennallen) generously offered some of their bounty. In 2015, when my sister asked me if I wanted any bones for soup, I thought, “Why not?” The Ziploc bags of meaty bones arrived shortly after I’d read an article about the benefits of



Making individual portions of caribou bone broth, August 2020.

bone broth, so I did some research and found a recipe on the internet I liked.

I had to double the recipe to accommodate the 12 pounds of bones, which were to cook at a low simmer for 24 to 72 hours. Using two of my largest stainless steel pots, I turned them off before going to bed and then turned them back on as soon as I got up the next day. Twice. All that for a total of only 24 hours. (Nowadays, I don’t simmer the bones even that long.)

Eventually lifting the bones out of the broth, the meat literally fell off. Once cooled, I packaged the tender meat into sandwich bags and froze for convenience food. I pulled all the marrow out, ate some of that delicacy, and packaged it separately. I learned to be careful of the fat, which will make a greasy mess if given half a chance. I never let any go down the drain and, of course, any fat on the rim of the canning jar

will prevent a seal. A little ends up in each pint jar. I’m sure the fat has some other good uses, but I have not explored that aspect yet, and may not ever.

Always a big project, it takes two days at the minimum, even if I don’t can the broth. I usually cool the broth, put it in the freezer, and then bring it out (sometimes months) later to can. But all that effort is so worthwhile—right up there with canning salmon. Judging from the notes on my recipe, I’ve made at least six batches of bone broth since 2015. In September 2022, twenty-two pounds of bones resulted in just over six pounds of meat and 18 pint jars of broth.

A pint of canned broth is perfect for soup base. Freezing the broth in ice cube trays creates a perfect daily portion size. Or I grab two bone broth ice cubes whenever I decide to make

page 30 please

The end of summer signals birds to migrate

By **LISA PAJOT**
For Senior Voice

As Alaska’s brief summer winds down, the daylight hours lessen and the weather is more often blustery and rainy. This change signals the migratory birds who spent the summer in Alaska finding mates, defending territories, building nests, and raising young, to begin their journey south.

Migratory birds face many challenges along their route. They may become disoriented by light pollution and collide with the windows of tall buildings. They have to avoid predators when they stop to refuel and rest. They face adverse



The varied thrush, whose song sounds like a raspy whistle, is a shorter-distance migrant, wintering in Oregon and northern California. They may start leaving Alaska as early as August.

Rob Tappana photo

weather conditions.

Migratory birds are masters of navigation,

using multiple aids to guide them to their wintering destinations. They use

the sun, stars, polarized light of sunsets, and the earth’s magnetic field for directionality. Experienced adults benefit from their knowledge of the flyways, including landmarks and stopover sites.

Three species of birds who migrate to and from Alaska each year have experienced steep declines over the last few decades: Yellow warbler, varied thrush, and Northern pintail.

Yellow warblers, small songbirds weighing just 10 grams, are named for their bright yellow plumage. They are long-distance migrants who spend their winters in Central America or northwestern South America. Similar to many

other songbirds, they primarily migrate at night, but can also fly during the day, and travel in same-species flocks.

The varied thrush, whose song sounds like a raspy whistle, is a short-distance migrant. They may start leaving Alaska as early as August. They migrate in large flocks and spend their winters in the same location. Alaska’s varied thrushes migrate further south than those that nest in central and southern parts of the Pacific Northwest. The Alaskan thrushes essentially leap-frog over other varied thrushes to reach their wintering sites

next page please



Migrate

from page 16

in Oregon and California.

The Northern pintail, a dabbling duck, are long-distance migrants. They spend time on molting grounds, typically in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, to grow new feathers in preparation for their flight south. Pintails gather in large staging flocks, gathering more members as they migrate in wavy lines with some ducks flying alongside each other. Pintails fly mostly at night with adult males and unsuccessful females moving south first followed by the young and successful females. Pintails have high fidelity to their wintering locations. Most that nest in Alaska spend their winters in California but some opt to go west and winter in Asia.

The Bird Treatment and Learning Center, based in Anchorage, is permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to rehabilitate any species of bird protected under the Migratory Bird



Yellow warblers, small songbirds weighing just 10 grams, spend their winters in Central America or northwestern South America.

Jane Tibbetts photo

Treaty Act (MBTA) that was signed into law in 1918. The MBTA “provides that it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, possess, sell, purchase, barter, import, export, or transport any migratory bird, or any part, nest, or egg of any such bird, unless authorized under a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior. Some regulatory exceptions apply.” The species protected under the act must “occur in

the United States or U.S. territories as the result of natural biological or ecological processes.” The MBTA is essential to the conservation of wild birds. Bird TLC’s rehabilitation program supports conservation efforts by caring for injured, ill or orphaned migratory birds with the goal of returning them to the wild.

Lisa Pajot is an ornithologist and Bird Treatment and Learning Center volunteer.

Sealaska sponsors fall lecture series

Senior Voice Staff

Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) will sponsor a free fall lecture series featuring talks on diverse topics, ranging from Tlingit property law and Indigenous knowledge and art to the history of glacial movements in Southeast Alaska. The lectures will be held at the Walter Soboleff Building in Juneau and live streamed on SHI’s YouTube channel at noon Alaska time. Recordings of the talks will be saved to the institute’s channel immediately after.

The lecture series schedule for September:

Sept. 4 Our Submerged Past: Exploring Inundated Late Pleistocene (10,500–17,000 year ago) Caves in Southeast Alaska with SUNFISH by Kelly Monteleone and Kristof Richmond

Sept. 10 Indigenous Southeast Alaskan Wolf

Knowledge by Steve J. Langdon

Sept. 12 Indigenous Knowledge by Jeffrey Brooks

Sept. 17 Eagle’s Journey with Raven by Preston Singletary

Sept. 19 Tsimshian Art by David A. Boxley

Sept. 25 The Meaning of Haida Title by Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson

Sept. 26 Haida Art by Robert Davidson

Sept. 30 Unlocking the Potential of Generative AI by Auryan Ratliff

For the full schedule, including October and November lectures, visit sealaskaheritage.org/news/.

SUBSCRIBE TO SENIOR VOICE
Call 276-1059
in Anchorage
or 1-800-478-1059
toll-free statewide

AARP Alaska Tech Webinars

AARP
Alaska

AARP’s mission is to allow people to choose how they live as they age. Since using technology has become part of our daily lives, staying up to date is of great importance for personal safety, connectedness, and convenience.

Virtual workshop sessions will include how to protect your personal information online, use AI, using online payment services, and even how to take a virtual tour of museums from around the world.

AARP Alaska Technology Series

Selected Fridays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Starting September 6!

For more information and to register, visit
aarp.org/ak





Rambles

News from the Grapevine

Anchorage Senior Activity Center is holding a series of **grief support group** meetings for “**Ambiguous Loss**,” Mondays from 1 to 3 p.m., Sept. 16–Oct. 21. Led by chaplain and grief coach **Kris Green**, the ambiguous loss group is for non-death grief, which could be from estrangement, job loss or loss of independent living, to name a few examples. Call for more information, 907-770-2000... Although early **registration** is over for **OLLI** courses in **Fairbanks**, anyone interested can still sign up right up to the first day of class, Sept. 9 (space available basis). OLLI stands for Osher Lifelong Learners Institute, which, notes their website, “offers learning opportunities to adults 50 and older in the Fairbanks, North Pole, and neighboring communities. Led by our membership, we offer stimulating non-credit courses and lectures that are stress-free and exciting.” For information, visit 907-474-6607 or email uaf-olli@alaska.edu... Along the same line, in **Anchorage**, the **OLE** program (Opportunities in Lifelong Learning) begins its fall semester classes Sept. 30. Browse the different offerings and register online at www.oleanchorage.org... Attention Anchorage area **Christmas tree ornament makers**: This year, the Alaska region of the Forest Service has been selected to provide the Christmas tree for the U.S. Capitol, and up to 10,000 handmade ornaments are needed to decorate it and the companion trees that will be displayed in federal buildings throughout Washington, D.C. The **Anchorage Museum** will host an **ornament-making session** in its Discovery Center Art Lab on Friday, Sept. 6, from 6 to 8 p.m. Help make ornaments using provided materials, no need to bring anything. All ages are welcome, children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information about the project, visit www.uscapitolchristmastree.com. *Rambles is compiled from senior center newsletters, websites and reader tips from around the state. Email your Rambles items to editor@seniorvoicealaska.com.*

Old, new, gifted: It’s all material

By **SHEILA TOOMEY**

For *Senior Voice*

I’m a fabriholic. I admit it. But I’m not alone. I buy fabric, allegedly to make quilts. But I would have to live to be 300 to use all the fabric I have. And I’m certainly not alone: According to the latest data, there are 22 million quilters in the U.S. and that number is growing by about 4% per year. The average age of a quilter is 63—about 65% are older than 45. And since most of them have been quilting for a while, their fabric collection—known as a “stash”—is now worth nearly \$6,000. What does it all mean? Well, for one thing, it means more than 100 fabric creations by Anchorage quilters will be on display Sept. 14 and 15 at the First United Methodist Church in the annual Great Alaska Quilt Show. It’s the largest quilt show in the state—free—put on by Anchorage Log Cabin Quilters, one of Alaska’s 26 quilt guilds. But more to the point, it means all us aging quil-



Pat Sims, who calls herself a “fabric facilitator,” assesses a particularly nice piece of donated cotton.

Stan Jones photos

ters with all that fabric, so much more than we need, have saddled a friend or daughter, or a legal executor, or even ourselves, with one day having to figure out how to get rid of those shelves and boxes of beautiful cotton.

Notices of yard sales, or simple giveaways, proliferated this summer, sometimes asking as little as \$1 per yard for fabric

that costs \$14 per yard in a store.

But, the fact is, much of this excess is simply given away, usually to charities or to people who use it to make quilts for service organizations. In this world, Pat Sims, who has been with the Guild since the late 1970s, is a well-known “fabric facilitator.”

“I can’t tell you how many thousands of fabrics have passed through my hands,” said Pat, whose closets are jammed with shelves and boxes of donated material on the road to being re-donated.

“I love all this sharing,” she said.

Sims isn’t sure how it all started. She made her first quilt when she was pregnant with her first child. She’s always been willing to help move fabric and other sewing necessities from someone who doesn’t

Great Alaska Quilt Show
Sept. 14-15
 in Anchorage,
 First United Methodist Church
 725 W. 9th Avenue,
 on the Park Strip

page 30 please



Log Cabin quilter Joan Brewer's “reduced” stash.

Wasilla Area Seniors, Inc.
 1301 S. Century Circle, Wasilla

it's time to get
Moving

Free classes: Tai-Chi, Strong Seniors, Bingocize®

WASI * Mid-Valley Senior Center * Willow Community Center *
 Meadow Lakes * Good Shepard Lutheran Church

More information +907-206-8807
 email us at: club50@alaskaseniors.com



Future Interior Alaska veterans cemetery



Verdie Bowen Sr., State of Alaska Veterans Affairs Director, talks with Governor Mike Dunleavy prior to an open house ceremony at the future site of the Interior Alaska Veterans Cemetery near Salcha on July 29. The site, pictured below, is a 257-acre expanse located on a hilltop off Johnson Road, about 30 miles south of Fairbanks on the Richardson Highway. Veterans from the surrounding Fairbanks communities and the 168th Wing attended to witness the ceremony and see the new cemetery site.



Alaska Air National Guard photos by Senior Master Sgt. Julie Avey



Alaska Chamber Singers
DAVID HAGEN, Conductor

Haydn
The Creation

October 4 & 5, 2024 7:30 p.m. Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Christmas
with Alaska Chamber Singers
Sponsored by Alaska Pacific Leasing

December 13 & 14, 2024 7:30 p.m. St. Patrick's Parish
December 15, 2024 4:00 p.m. St. Andrew Church (Eagle River)

Songs of Spring

March 22, 2025 7:30 p.m. Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe
March 23, 2025 4:00 p.m. St. Andrew Church (Eagle River)

Save these dates. Be sure to join our email list (on our website) and follow us on social media for up-to-date information.

TICKETS ON SALE | **263-ARTS**
centertix.com

Alaska Chamber Singers is funded, in part, by Atwood Foundation, Richard L. and Diane M. Block Foundation, Carr Foundation, M.E. Webber Foundation, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, Rasmuson Foundation, and through the generosity of many individuals and corporate community leaders.

Calendar of Events

Sept. 7 Kodiak Third Annual Downtown Block Party, noon to 4 p.m. Presented by Kodiak Arts Council. Exhibitors, live music and cultural performances, more. Contact Brianna at kodiak@alaskacf.org.

Sept. 8 Nationwide National Grandparents Day

Sept. 10 Homer Zumba Gold classes return to Homer Senior Center, Tuesdays at 2 p.m. Call to register, 907-235-4555

Sept. 11 Nationwide Patriot Day

Sept. 12-15 Cordova Cordova Fungus Festival. Expert presentations and guided forays, arts and culture exhibits, Fungus Feast, kids activities, much more. www.cordovafungusfest.com or call Cordova Chamber of Commerce, 907-424-7260.

Sept. 19 Kenai Cybersecurity workshop at Kenai Senior Center, 1 p.m. Explore online safety and how to protect yourself from fraudsters. Learn to visit websites, create passwords and respond to email with confidence. Presented by Kenai Community Library. 907-283-4378.

Sept. 20 Fairbanks Potluck social at Mary Siah Recreation Center, 2 to 4 p.m. Bring a dish to share. 907-459-1136

Sept. 17 Anchorage "Age Smart" forum night returns to Anchorage Senior Activity Center. Alaska Premier Auctions & Appraisals will be on hand to appraise attendees' unique collectibles, followed by a presentation on estate planning and liquidation of assets. Appraisals are limited to one item per person and will take place at 4 p.m., followed by the presentation at 5:30 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres and refreshments sponsored by AARP Alaska. Call for more details, 907-770-2000.

Sept. 21 Soldotna Harvest Moon local food festival at Soldotna Creek Park, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Kenai Peninsula's biggest one-day farmers market and local food celebration, with all sorts of local grown foods and locally-made wellness products, educational booths, vendors, kids and family activities, live music, pie-baking contest (registration and \$5 entry fee required), much more. Free admission. www.kenailocalfood.org

Sept. 22 Anchorage VegFest at Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fourth annual wellness event focusing on plant-forward lifestyles, featuring expert speakers, classes, cooking demos, food samples, vendors, workshops, more. This year's theme: "Dispelling the Myth: Unlocking Plant Protein Potential." www.anchoragevegfest.com

Sept. 29 Anchorage Accessibility Awareness Day at Anchorage Zoo, 4731 O'Malley Road, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Hosted by ATLA and Relay Alaska in partnership with Deaf Awareness Week, event is an opportunity to learn about accessible technology and services specifically designed for people who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled. Free prize drawings donated by exhibitors during event. American Sign language Interpreters provided. Complimentary tickets available. RSVP at alaskarelay.com/zoo or email akrelay@atlaak.org.

Sept. 26 Soldotna Book sale at Soldotna Public Library, 2 to 6 p.m. 907-262-4777

Sept. 28 Nenana "Dancing in the Streets" at Nenana Civic Center, 5 to 10 p.m. Celebrate recovery with friends and dancing. Dinner and desserts provided. All are welcome. Presented by Railbelt Mental Health and Addiction, and the Nenana Student Living Center. Call Bethany Jones, 907-378-1443.

Send us your calendar items

Send to: Senior Voice, 3340 Arctic Blvd., Suite 106, Anchorage AK 99503
editor@seniorvoicealaska.com

Deadline for October edition is September 15.



OLE! Opportunities for Lifelong Education



Stimulating Courses for Curious Learners

In-person and zoom classes, local tours and trips

No tests, no grades, just fun!

Courses begin Sept 30

Register now at oleanchorage.org

(907) 231-0095

Membership includes as many courses as you like for 1 year





Exploring Alaska, while the U.S. was being born

By LAUREL DOWNING BILL

Senior Voice Correspondent

While the First Continental Congress presented its Declaration of Rights and Grievances to King George III in 1774, the Spanish government ordered Juan José Pérez to explore the west coast of America to latitude 60 degrees, “but not to disturb the Russians.”

The Russians were already in Alaska. Emilian Bassov, a sergeant of the military company of lower Kamchatka, and Andrei Serebrennikov, a merchant from Moscow, had formed a partnership in 1743 to hunt for sea otter along the Aleutian Chain. In 1745, more Russians landed at Agati and Attu. By 1758, the year before Maj. Gen. James Wolfe captured Quebec, a Turinsk merchant named Stepan Glottof had made it as far as Umnak and Unalaska in search of fur.

By 1763, the year that King George III prohibited colonists from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains, Glottof had reached Kodiak, running into stiff fighting from the fierce Koniags. And about the time the colonists were writhing under the Stamp and the Townsend acts levying duties on paper, glass, paint and tea, the Russian brigantine Chichagof was planning to explore Bering Straits.

The Boston Tea Party occurred the year before Pérez sailed. He managed to escape confrontation with the Russians, for his voyage was far to the south of theirs. In 1775, when the battle of Lexington and Concord started the Revolutionary War, Pérez discovered Mount Edgcumbe and Shelikof Bay.

As the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence in 1776, another explorer headed north. Just eight days after the signing of the famous document, Capt. James Cook sailed from England on his epic voyage. And as Cook lay at anchor in Portsmouth harbor at the beginning of his adventure, three transports also prepared to sail, loaded with English and Hessian troops to suppress the American rebels. Cook’s vessels, however, were exempt from capture by the enemy by special convention because of the international benefits expected from his expedition to discover the Northwest Passage.

English and other European explorers, as well as Russian fur traders, gathered knowledge of Alaska during the Revolutionary War years. While the Philadelphia Convention drew up the Constitution—later ratified by all 13 states—“Englishmen under the English flag, Englishmen under the Portuguese flag, Spanish and Russians

were cruising around, often within a few miles of one another, taking possession for one nation or the other of all the lands in sight,” according to Hubert Howe Bancroft in “History of Alaska, 1730–1885.”

As the United States struggled to become a nation after throwing off the yoke of colonialism, Alaska, which later became its northernmost state, was being explored, exploited, and taken over by western nations. Its colonization began just about the time the colonization of the United States came to an end. 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.



Capt. James Cook embarked on his voyage to explore Alaska as the Declaration of Independence was being signed in 1776.

Alaska State Library Portrait File, ASL-Cook-James-1

Bird Watching

Across

- 1 Ranch crew
- 6 Like some salts
- 10 Air force heroes
- 14 Indigenous Canadian
- 15 Oodles
- 16 Reindeer herder
- 17 Wild duck valued for sport and food
- 19 Small buffalo of the Celebes
- 20 Biblical boat
- 21 Argus
- 23 Gray shade
- 26 Bigwig
- 28 Writer LeShan
- 29 Batiking need
- 30 Old French coin
- 31 Throws off
- 33 Paper measures
- 35 Rolais rival
- 37 ___ culpa
- 38 “Lulu” composer
- 39 Soprano Gluck
- 40 True heath
- 42 Teased mercilessly
- 45 Route for Ben-Hur
- 47 Hide-hair connector
- 48 Potting need
- 49 Breathing problem
- 51 Observe Yom Kippur
- 53 Blubber
- 54 Woodpile item
- 55 Bank statement abbrs.
- 57 Bagel topper
- 58 Prior to, to Prior
- 59 Partridge
- 62 F.D.R. program
- 64 Pelvic bones

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
			20				21			22				
23	24	25		26		27		28				29		
30				31			32			33	34			
35			36		37				38					
39					40			41			42		43	44
			45		46			47			48			
49	50					51				52		53		
54				55	56			57				58		
59			60				61		62		63			
64					65			66				67	68	69
70					71					72				
73					74					75				

Copyright ©2024 PuzzleJunction.com

- 65 Pigeon relative
- 70 Egghead
- 71 Lab item
- 72 Part of U.S.N.A.
- 73 Bookie’s quote
- 74 Come across as
- 75 Had a shot
- 9 Appealed
- 10 “Woe is me!”
- 11 Honker
- 12 Name derived from a person
- 13 Outpourings
- 18 Gull-like seabird
- 22 Sight from Bern
- 23 Hammett hound
- 24 Music genre
- 25 Thornbill
- 27 Fishing locale
- 32 Slangy denial?
- 34 Misses the mark
- 36 Fill beyond full
- 38 Bird of Minerva
- 41 “Neato!”
- 43 Stylish gown
- 44 Dresden’s river
- 46 Apiece
- 49 White rat, e.g.
- 50 Shared
- 51 Sharp as a tack
- 52 Lay out
- 56 Marriage and others
- 60 Bankrolls
- 61 River to Donegal Bay
- 63 Shevat follower
- 66 Tartan cap
- 67 Egg cells
- 68 Moving option
- 69 Wapiti

Crossword answers on page 30



Peggy March's monster 60s hit still follows her

By NICK THOMAS

Tinseltown Talks

With a catchy melody, simple lyrics, and an unforgettable repetitive chorus, Peggy March's "I Will Follow Him," possessed all the ingredients to create a classic 60s hit. And it did. Released in early 1963 and showcasing the singer's impressively mature 14-year-old vocals, Little Peggy March's song soared up the Billboard Hot 100 chart in just three months to reach the Number 1 spot.

Since then, she's performed the song thousands of times and today remains especially popular in Europe.

"I was in school when I signed with RCA," recalled March in a Zoom interview from Marburg, Germany, where she spends several weeks each year when not in Florida. "They sent me all over the world to promote the record which became hugely popular in Germany. The country essentially adopted me and I've been part



Peggy March signing some CDs for fans 2020.

Courtesy Peggy March

of the German recording industry ever since."

Just exactly when she first performed the song live in public remains a bit hazy. "Probably at one of the record hops I was doing," she said, "In the 60s, a lot of high schools

had dances and I would do those occasionally as a way to promote the record." But she does recall the original studio recording and initially not being keen on the song.

"When I walked into my producers' office, they

played it and said, 'Peggy this is your next hit,'" she recalled. "My sister remembers vividly that I didn't like the song because it was too repetitive. But I was clearly wrong! We all know now that is its great hook."

However, there was a time when she almost left the business. "I was very young when I started—14 when I recorded the song and 15 by the time it went to Number 1," she said. "By my early 20s, I was tired of being on the road and really didn't think I wanted to do this anymore. But, I got over it."

Although March followed her big hit with other singles and continued to have modest chart appearances in the U.S. with songs such as "Hello Heartache, Goodbye Love," she could never recapture the commercial success of her first hit. Today, however, at 76, she still travels the world cranking out her popular tune to enthusiastic audiences.

In 2013, exactly 50 years after the release of her 1963 hit on January 22, she even recorded an anniversary video of "I Will Follow Him" in Holland, her voice just as strong and perhaps even richer than her youthful rendition.

"We updated the original to make it a little more interesting, but didn't want to change too much," she explained. "It was one of the shortest songs I've ever recorded, around two and a half minutes, so we made the new version a little longer. Instrumentally it's pretty much the same except there's a key change, but I really like it."

(Portions of the author's interview originally appeared in Florida Currents magazine in 2022.)

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.

Frank

continued from page 15

continues to be active. She often advises elders on end-of-life care, stressing the importance of

dignity and respect. She is also a vocal advocate for Native self-governance, land rights, and ensuring that Native voices are heard in decision-making processes that affect their communities.

"We have to be our own

advocates. No one knows our needs better than we do," she asserts.

Anna's wisdom also extends to the broader challenges facing Native communities, including the housing crisis for elders, the lack of moti-

vation among youth, and the impacts of climate change. On the latter, she shares a particularly poignant insight: "Climate change is happening, and it's happening fast. But we have the knowledge to adapt. We've been doing it for generations. It's about teaching the younger ones to be strong and to adapt positively."

Her dedication to mentorship remains unwavering, particularly when it comes to her own family. She is currently mentoring her grandson, teaching him leadership skills and preparing him to carry on her legacy.

"It's important to pass on what we know. That's how our traditions survive," she explains.

Anna's life and work have not gone unrecognized. In 2019, she was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, a fitting tribute to her decades of service. "It was a great honor," she says, "but the real reward has always been the ability to serve my people."

Anna also spent sev-

"Climate change is happening, and it's happening fast. But we have the knowledge to adapt. We've been doing it for generations. It's about teaching the younger ones to be strong and to adapt positively."

— Rev. Dr. Chief Anna Frank

eral years serving on the Alaska Commission on Aging, encouraging more engagement with rural communities.

"Life is about service," she says. "It's about giving back to your community and ensuring that the next generation is equipped to carry on the work. That's how we survive, and that's how we thrive."

We wish Rev. Dr. Chief Anna Frank a wonderful birthday. If you are interested in connecting with her, email neverlandvisions@gmail.com.

Athena Elise Barber is an MFA student and writer living in Fairbanks.



Rev. Dr. Chief Anna Frank teaches the time-honored process of catching, cleaning and hanging fish by their tails to dry, creating traditional salmon jerky.

Athena Barber photo.



ADVERTISEMENT

Why downsize?

The art of downsizing: Simplifying your life and space



By **ALLANA LUMBARD**

Downsizing Alaska

Financial benefits. One of the most compelling reasons for downsizing is the potential for significant financial savings. Smaller homes generally come with lower mortgage payments, reduced property taxes, and decreased utility costs. This can free up funds for savings, travel or other pursuits that might otherwise be constrained by a larger financial burden.

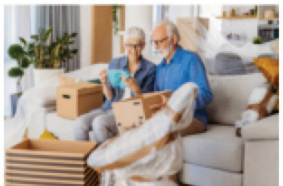
Reduced maintenance. Larger homes and properties often require more maintenance, from lawn

care to cleaning. Downsizing to a smaller home or apartment can reduce these responsibilities, allowing you more time to enjoy hobbies, spend with loved ones, or simply relax.

Simplification. Downsizing forces a reevaluation of what is truly important. By decluttering and organizing, individuals can focus on the essentials, making daily life less overwhelming and more manageable.

Lifestyle changes. For many, downsizing is a way to embrace a new lifestyle, whether it's moving to a walkable urban area, opting for a low-maintenance property, or transitioning to a retirement community with amenities and social opportunities.

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



DOWNSIZING ALASKA

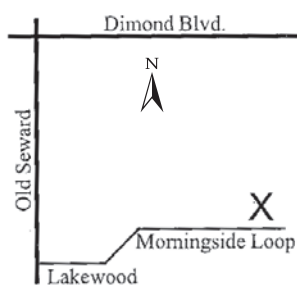
907-671-2663

downsizingalaska@gmail.com

DELUXE SENIORS COMPLEX

Tour our property and view our Quiet & Spotless Apartment Homes

- For Seniors 62+ years old.
- Income eligibility required.
- Keyed access bldg. w/elevator.
- Washer/dryer in each unit.
- Security Deposit \$200.
- Pets upon pre-approval.
- Pet deposit \$50.
- Convenient to shopping.



Southside Apartments

9480 Morningside Loop 522-6393



Elder

continued from page 3

individual has access to the resources and protections they need."

Elder justice has a profound impact on younger generations. It shapes societal values and influences how future generations perceive their elders.

"As young Alaskans witness the treatment of elders, they absorb new cultural norms. It's about ethical standards regarding care, attitudes and behaviors of young people, contributing to a more compassionate and connected community."

Intergenerational ties

A cornerstone of FNA's elder justice initiatives is the intergenerational Saakkaay (children's) program, which recently completed its fifth year at Pearl Creek Elementary. Jesse Hensel, kindergarten teacher at Pearl Creek, was recognized in 2021 with a Governor's Arts and Humanities Award for his efforts to create intergenerational community with FNA. The program has seen participation from 46 elders, who engage with students in various traditional and cultural activities such as berry picking and storytelling.

"Elders feel valued and appreciated, experiencing a sense of accomplishment," Karen notes. "They learn new things alongside the youth, fostering mutual respect and understanding."

There was one time when an elder from Kiana wanted to teach the children about traditional "Eskimo yoyos." Karen remembers. "She tried all kinds of mediums, wanting to get it just right for the kids. So, I said, 'Just let me

know what you need.' She showed up with balloons and string, and we ended up with people of all ages and families making yoyos. It was so creative. These activities not only educate but also dispel inaccurate and negative stereotypes, promoting the transmission of cultural traditions and values."

Communication and teamwork

Working with elders who are victims of crime, Karen and her team focus on building the elders' strength—physically, mentally and socially—through interactive and intergenerational opportunities. Respecting and honoring Alaska Native culture drives everything FNA does.

"We are mindful that every human being comes from their own set of values and ways," Karen says. "We work hard to provide the resources an individual needs. Communication is key—being transparent with your team and open with those you work with."

This collaboration is essential to the success of the program. Karen's team meets regularly with partners and holds quarterly roundtable gatherings with elders to discuss ongoing issues and strategies.

"I work with talented, motivated professionals and thrive in this environment. We have really fostered a sense of community."

In the last quarter alone, FNA provided victim services to 59 unduplicated elders age 60 or older, with 23 new cases. The types of victimization reported included physical assault, sexual assault, family violence, elder abuse, vehicular incidents, robbery, and stalking. Many victims reported multiple victimizations. "Our in-

take specialist conducts a pre-screening process. Elders, like any victim, can receive support with advocacy, case management, crisis intervention, and basic and emergency assistance," Karen explains.

Workshops for elders are a significant aspect of FNA's services. "Art as Therapy is very popular, along with knitting, crocheting, beading, and other cultural activities. We do a once a month 'Lunch 'n Learn' gathering for our elders. We provide emergency housing, counseling, other client support services and often involve legal services in elder abuse situations."

Call to action

Taking on her role nearly 10 years ago, Karen knew she needed to surround herself with professionals. Dr. Ellen Lopez, University of Alaska Fairbanks, was one such person. Linda Thai (LMSW), a professor and trauma therapist who has conducted trainings and talking circles with victimized elders was another support crucial to the team's success. Officer Elzey, Fairbanks Police Department, assisted Karen in understanding the legal aspects of the program.

"There were five key people, and I did a lot of research to ensure we were well-versed in the topics we wanted to address," Karen said. "I knocked on many doors, introduced myself, and learned what I needed."

Despite the daily exposure to tragic stories, Karen and her team remain resilient. "We say, 'Okay, what are the issues, how do we resolve them, and move forward.' We paint, craft, laugh, and enjoy each other's company."

Karen concludes with a call to action for the broader community: "We all have rights, including the right to live without abuse. As citizens, we need to educate ourselves on elder abuse and how we can make a difference. Supporting and understanding Adult Protective Services (APS) is crucial. By educating ourselves, we set an example for young people and rebuild intergenerational respect."

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

ADVERTISE IN

Senior Voice

Alaska seniors have buying power!

Senior Voice advertising representative

Anne Tompkins

can help you reach our readers.

A.Tompkins@seniorvoicelaska.com

or call 907-276-1059

toll-free 1-800-478-1059



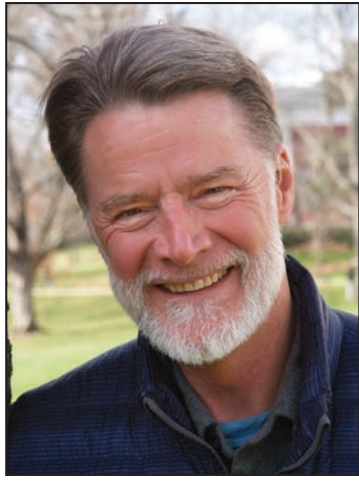
Matching older workers with savvy employers

By **JIM WARREN**

For Senior Voice

National Employ Older Workers Week, held annually the last full week of September, recognizes the vital role of older workers in the workforce. It also showcases the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which provides on-the-job skills training to individuals age 55 or older with limited financial resources. Since its inception, SCSEP has helped over one million older Americans enter the workforce. In Alaska, we call SCSEP by another name, Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST), but the goals are the same across the country.

Over the past 20 years, the percentage of workers over the age of 55 has risen to 25%, nearly twice the number in the year 2000. It's clear that this growth will continue, along with the fact that more and more



Jim Warren, Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST) program.

Photo courtesy Jim Warren

seniors are delaying their retirement or re-entering the workforce after a brief retirement. Economics aren't the only factor driving these trends; older workers enjoy new possibilities in employment and find new paths to meaningful engagement in their communities.

The MASST program promotes community engagement at the same time that it helps seniors learn new skills and polish old ones. We know that employers value older workers for their punctuality, judgment and experience, and

MASST values and develops those same qualities.

Pairing agencies and trainees

For the past year, I have been learning how to coordinate the MASST program in the Northern and Interior regions of the state. It's a huge geographical area, and while it is difficult to reach elders in the northlands, many have found their way to Fairbanks. In a way, I'm an example of a senior who is finding a new path in the employment world. After 40 years as a teacher, I'm learning how to manage senior participants and match them up with host sites that need their help.

In Fairbanks, we have a number of nonprofit agencies who regularly take on MASST participants in

training assignments. The Community Food Bank, the Central Recycling Facility, and Forget-Me-Not Bookstore are three stalwart agencies, but there are a dozen more who accept one or two seniors for training. For many participants, this means remembering the skills you already have. The Baby Boomers may imagine that everyone knows how to be polite, listen attentively, put the customer or client first, meet them where they are, and respond with flexibility and care. But it turns out that seniors actually know these things better than most folks.

A lifetime of experience

One insight my MASST participants have given me is that we can't always keep the hours and the energy we had when we were 25 years old. Sometimes I tell them about the summer I worked with my uncle on his dairy farm in Michigan. My uncle had been in poor

health, and he was 35 years older than I was, a healthy 20-year-old student. But when we would use pitchforks to muck out stalls, I would be only halfway done with my stall when I started hearing my uncle's pitchfork ringing against the concrete floor of his stall. He was smaller and older, but he was skilled and experienced. And he could pace himself through a long day, before sunrise to after sunset.

MASST seniors have a lot of those skills and experience. Many have had full careers in the workforce, and now they find themselves cutting back and retooling because of physical limitations or family obligations. I'm thinking of one of my amazing participants who works at the Fairbanks DMV. She uses an electric wheelchair to get around in, and she manages her schedule so that she can also care for her

page 24 please

Call Now!

Opus Memoria
The Work of Memories
Compassionate Care for Those with Dementia

Preferred Care at Home

- Meal Preparation
- Dress/ Hygiene Assistance
- Housekeeping/ Laundry
- Holiday & Vacation Coverage
- Live-In Services & More

We are committed to making your choice possible with quality services at affordable prices.

Preferred Care at Home

Call For Your Free In-Home Assessment

Daily activities are in place to keep the residents safe, active and living out their memories through all senses. Caregivers are on staff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year

- Private rooms
- Fenced one acre property
- One caregiver for every three residents.
- Specialized training on caring for seniors with dementia. Staff is required to complete continued education for Dementia and Alzheimer's.
- ADA compliant

To schedule a personal tour or to receive additional information please contact us today.

Lynetta Hagel-Grant, Owner
907.868.1919
 LynettaH@PreferHome.com | PreferHome.com/alaska

Suzanne Hickel, Owner
907.677.1919
 Hickel@OpusMemoria.com | www.OpusMemoria.com



Success

continued from page 13

initiated crossing signal, speed limit and “pedestrians crossing” signage and the addition of speed humps. The Traffic Engineering Department staff agreed to initiate studies to determine the appropriate traffic calming measures. The Anchorage Age-Friendly team was advised that the study would take at least one year before any project could be considered and funded.

AARP Alaska considered this to be the perfect opportunity to host an event for the community to provide training and share ideas on how to build a temporary ‘pop-up’ to initiate lasting change. To that end, AARP Alaska partnered with America Walks for a two-

day workshop, including training on transportation best practices and a how-to on walk-audits, pop-up events, and community celebrations. As part of this effort, a pop-up temporary crosswalk between the senior housing and the senior center was planned. As fate would have it, the municipality installed a permanent crosswalk and pedestrian-crossing sign just two weeks before the scheduled event.

AARP Alaska and the Anchorage Senior Activity Center hosted a crosswalk celebration on July 17 on the closed street next to the new crosswalk. Partners joined from Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, Bike Anchorage, Aging and Disability Resource Center, the Dept. of Transportation, Anchorage Senior Center and more. Community members used their ar-

tistic talents to create a temporary crosswalk on the senior center property using chalk, planters full of flowers and delineator posts. As an example of a pedestrian buffer, garden planters were filled to establish a separation between the sidewalk and the main driveway of the senior center.

As a grand finale, Walk America conducted a s-l-o-w bike race where the purpose of the race was to come in last, that is, to be the slowest biker in the group. It was a nail-biter of a race, but Alexa Dobson of Bike Anchorage was clearly the slowest, and the champion! Thank you to all who attended and participated in the celebration. If you would like to learn more about Age-Friendly Anchorage, please contact Patrick Curtis at 907-268-7919 or pcurtis@aarp.org.

Anchorage Veteran Stand Down, Sept. 20

Senior Voice Staff

The Ted Stevens International Airport North Terminal will be the site of this year’s Veteran Stand Down event in Anchorage on Sept. 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The annual event aims to support veterans in need by providing essential services and resources.

Veterans attending the event will have access to cold weather gear, hot meals, flu shots, community resources, and more. Various organizations, including VA participants like the Veterans Justice Outreach and HUD-VASH

veterans supportive housing, will be on-site to offer assistance. Community participants such as Alaska Housing Finance Corp., Catholic Social Services, and the Alaska Department of Labor will also be present.

Veterans are encouraged to bring their proof of service (VA Medical ID or DD214) to access these services. The event is organized by Stand Down, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping veterans. For more information, veterans can contact Stand Down, Inc. via email at standdowninc@gmail.com.

Senior Voice Alaska.com

Employers

continued from page 23

preschool great-grandson. Yes, great-grandson. Or a tiny woman who was a cashier at the army base for 30 years. She uses Van Tran to get to her assignment at the Fairbanks Rescue Mission, where she trains as a receptionist and administrative assistant.

Both of these participants attend a digital literacy class I offer in the Job Center on Thursday mornings. They are excellent students, developing the skills they need for the world we live in nowadays.

Challenges, not barriers

Sometimes I look at my participants and think about the obstacles or barriers they face in our

community. But for most of them, they show me that they try to find possibilities, even in problems. They see the challenges, but they don’t give up. One of my favorite stories is the participant whose hearing was so bad that he really was not following the instructions at the host

agency, simply because he couldn’t hear them. But we found him a match at another host site, where he operates a cardboard baler like the expert he is. He is in the process of upgrading his hearing aids and expanding his duties at the host agency. Meanwhile, he and I get together pe-

riodically to talk about job prospects in the area. He is really good at what he does, and the host agency staff love him, and I am hoping to move him into regular employment before the first frost.

Jim Warren is the MASST Coordinator for Alaska’s Northern and Interior Regions.

Regional MASST offices

Anchorage Region: Midtown Job Center
A'isha Jackson
3301 Eagle St., Suite 103, Anchorage, AK 99510-99503
(907) 269-2029 or 907 269-4805, Fax (907) 269-4876

Gulf Region: Peninsula (Kenai) Job Center
Laurie Cowgill
11312 Kenai Spur Highway, Suite 2, Kenai, AK 99611
(907) 335-3005, Fax (907) 335-3050
lauriec@serrc.org

Mat-Su Region: Mat-Su Job Center
Melanie Pitka
877 Commercial Drive, Wasilla, AK 99654-6937
(907) 433-7424
melaniep@serrc.org

Northern and Interior Regions: Fairbanks Job Center
Jim Warren
675 7th Ave., Station B, Fairbanks, AK 99701-4531
(907) 451-5918, Fax (907) 451-2919
jimw@serrc.org

Southeast Region: Southeast Regional Resource Center
Stacy Kimbrough
210 Ferry Way, Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 433-7402, Fax (907) 463-3811
stacyk@serrc.org

LEGACY FUNERAL HOMES & CREMATION SERVICES

WWW.LEGACYALASKA.COM ALASKAN OWNED FUNERAL HOMES



WE ARE HONORED TO SERVE THE STATE OF ALASKA FOR OVER 40 YEARS. IT IS OUR PLEDGE TO OFFER THE VERY BEST SERVICE AND VALUE TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

JARED DYE ~ OWNER

- Witzleben Legacy Funeral Home • Anchorage • 907-277-1682
- Legacy Heritage Chapel at Angelus • Anchorage • 907-336-3338
- Kehl's Legacy Funeral Home • Anchorage • 907-344-1497
- Alaskan Memorial Park & Mortuary • Juneau • 907-789-0611
- Chapel of Chimes Funeral Home • Fairbanks • 907-465-5566
- Fairbanks Funeral Home • Fairbanks • 907-451-1110
- Kehl's Palmer Mortuary • Palmer • 907-745-3580
- Wasilla Heritage Chapel • Wasilla • 907-373-3840

ANCHORAGE 907-277-1682



Health insurance options for early retirees

By **JIM MILLER**

Savvy Senior

Dear Savvy Senior: I'm going to retire in a few months and need to get some temporary health insurance until I can enroll in Medicare at age 65. What are my options? —*Early Retiree*

Dear Early: There are several places early retirees can find health insurance coverage before Medicare kicks in, but the best option for you will depend on your income level, your health care needs and how long you'll need coverage for. Here's where to look.

Affordable Care Act. For most early retirees who aren't yet eligible for Medicare, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance marketplace, also known as Obamacare, is the best option for getting comprehensive health coverage. And you won't be denied coverage or charged extra for preexisting health conditions.

And, if your income falls below the 400 percent poverty level after you retire — anything below \$60,240 for a single or \$81,760 for a couple in 2024 — you'll also be eligible for a subsidy that will reduce your monthly premiums. The ACA also ensures that at least through 2025, households with incomes above that 400 percent poverty level will not have to pay more than 8.5 percent of their income for a benchmark policy.

To see how much subsidy you may be eligible for, use Kaiser Family Foundation subsidy calculator at www.kff.org/interactive/subsidy-calculator.

To shop for ACA plans in your state, visit www.healthcare.gov or call 800-318-2596. Or, if you want some extra help, contact a certified agent or broker at www.healthcare.gov/find-assistance.

COBRA. Another temporary health insurance option you may be eligible for is the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). Under this federal law, if you work for a company that has 20 or more employees, you

can remain on your employer's group health plan for at least 18 months—but could last up to 36 months. But be aware that COBRA isn't cheap. You'll pay the full monthly premium yourself, plus a 2 percent administrative fee.

To learn more, talk to your employer benefits administrator or contact the Employee Benefits Security Administration at www.askebsa.dol.gov or 866-444-3272.

If, however, the company you work for has fewer than 20 employees, you may still be able to get continued coverage through your company if your state

has "mini-COBRA." Contact your state insurance department to see if this is available where you live.

Short-term health insurance. If you can't find an affordable ACA plan and COBRA is too expensive, another possible option is short-term health insurance. These plans, which are not available in every state, are cheaper, bare-bones health plans that provide coverage for up to three months with a one-month extension available. But be aware that short-term plans don't comply with the ACA so they can deny sick people coverage, they don't cover preexist-

ing conditions and they can exclude coverage essentials like prescription drugs.

To find and compare short-term health plans, try sites like eHealthInsurance.com or PivotHealth.com.

Healthcare sharing ministries. If the previously listed options don't work for you, another temporary solution could be healthcare sharing ministries (HCSM). These are cost-sharing health plans in which members — who typically share a religious belief — make monthly payments to cover expenses of other members, including themselves.

HCSMs are cheaper than paying full out-of-pocket costs for traditional health insurance but be aware that HCSMs are not health insurance. They don't have to comply with the consumer protections of the ACA, and they can also reject or limit coverage for having pre-existing health issues and limit how much you'll be reimbursed for your medical costs. Preventive care typically isn't covered either.

To look for these plans, comparison shop at the three largest providers — Samaritan Ministries

page 26 please

NOW HIRING

Program Manager Part-time

Join us as a Program Manager at Older Persons Action Group Inc. (OPAG), where you'll forge partnerships with community and funding agencies.

OPAG is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to improving services, developing programs, educating, promoting, and implementing changes to help Alaska seniors live healthy, productive lives. Represent OPAG at events, lead outreach for our "Senior Voice" newsletter, coordinate meeting and event materials, supervise student interns, and manage our archiving systems.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Develop relevant partnerships with community agencies & funding agencies.
- Represent OPAG at community functions & provide presentations when required.
- Provide outreach to prospective sponsors & donors for financial support of OPAG's monthly newsletter, the "Senior Voice".
- Participates in community relations activities and special projects.
- Coordinates preparation of material for meetings and community events.
- Maintains archiving and filing systems, including hard copy and computer files.
- Supervise student interns.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Associate or bachelor's degree with relevant experience.
- Computer skills, including working knowledge of WORD, EXCEL, and other commonly used office software
- Strong organizational skills.
- Communicative and friendly personality.
- Able to multi-task and organize special projects.

If you are interested in this position, please send a cover letter and resume to the Board Secretary, Yvonne Chase:

ychase@alaskalife.net

We look forward to hearing from you!

OPAG **Senior Voice**



It's always important to build in some flex

By **KENNETH KIRK**

For Senior Voice



Do you remember the big earthquake? No, not the big, big earthquake in 1964. I'm talking about the fairly big earthquake of November 2018. The '64 Good Friday Quake was a 9.2. The Point McKenzie quake six years ago was only a 7.1. Still, enough to shake a lot of people up, including yours truly.

One important lesson the architects and engineers learned over the years was the importance of flex. At this point I had better pause to note that for younger readers, the word "flex" has a different meaning. To them, if you flex on someone, you're showing off. It comes from flexing your muscles, but can mean bragging about

just about anything.

But to most Senior Voice readers, flex means flexibility. And that's what the architects and engineers discovered. If a building, or a bridge, or whatever you're designing, doesn't have enough flex, it is more likely to be damaged in an earthquake. Most people think that if something is rigid, it's less likely to

break. In truth, if it's too rigid, it can be brittle. It may withstand a small shake, but in a big one it will shatter. So nowadays they design structures so they can move a little bit, and as a result they're more-or-less earthquake-proof.

The same principle applies to estate plans.

I occasionally get people who come in with overly inflexible plans. Everything is specifically directed. This kid gets the house, this other kid the cabin, the third kid gets the bank account, the IRA goes to a favored charity. And about all that is left is a few hundred bucks in a checking account, and some furniture.

There is no flexibility in that kind of plan. If anything goes wrong, the whole plan shatters. For instance, if there are unexpected expenses, where does the money come from? It can't just come from the bank account, because that is going to one specific heir. Everybody has to contribute proportionately. But the other kids are getting real estate, which means that unless they want to sell it right away, they would

have to come up with cash out of their own pockets to pay their portion of those unexpected expenses.

Ironically, it was the 2018 earthquake which shook loose a lot of these problems. I saw a number of estates where there wasn't a whole lot of cash to go with the house, and now the house needed \$50,000 or more in repairs and restructuring before it could be sold. If none of the heirs was able—or willing—to loan money to the estate, the house just sat there unoccupied, accumulating debt for property taxes and utilities and the like.

People often underestimate the costs that may come up. And sometimes when I point out that there may be unanticipated costs which could throw this proposed plan into chaos, the clients push back. They insist, in response to each example I give, that "that's not going to happen because..." Well, folks, I've seen those kinds of things happen. If you don't have any flexibility in your plan, those kinds of things can be devastating.

On the other hand, there

is such a thing as too much flexibility in an estate plan. Sometimes people say, "I'll just leave everything to Junior, and he'll split things up among the others as he sees fit". That can also go wrong about six ways from Sunday. If Junior dies, or is in the middle of a divorce, or is having financial problems, or maybe has a spouse who doesn't want him to give up the money, it will cause a huge mess (and a lot of family disharmony). A plan like that is the equivalent of one of those big display balloon things you see outside of car dealerships, where the balloon goes up and flops down as the air blows through it.

Or maybe it's like a building with a cinderblock foundation but no cement between the blocks. You can pick your metaphor. Just don't do it.

Kenneth Kirk is an Anchorage estate planning lawyer. 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. Then you can flex on your friends (young people version).

Insurance

continued from page 25

(SamaritanMinistries.org), Medi-Share (MyChristian-Care.org), and Christian Healthcare Ministries (Chministries.org).

Editor's note: The state of Alaska Division of Insurance has posted some consumer guidance on short term health insurance and healthcare sharing ministries, with the caution that while these plans are not scams, there are some copycat companies that

have been scammers. Consumers should carefully review any offering and seek to fully understand what they are purchasing.

www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/11/pub/INS_ShortTermHealthInsurance.pdf

www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/11/pub/INS_HealthCareSharing-Ministries.pdf

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



Broadening horizons and engaging minds since 1999!

Celebrating 25 years of serving Anchorage and the Mat-Su Areas!

- We offer door-to-door transportation and chef-prepared meals.
- Integrating members into the community with daily field trips!
- Music, art, games, daily exercises
- Half-day and full-day options.
- Call to schedule a free trial.

www.LifeWorksAK.com

907-644-0480



Premier Assisted Living in Anchorage, Alaska!
Where You Are Family

- 48-apartment community all with private fully accessible bathrooms
- 14 apartments on a secured floor for memory care and special needs
- RN on staff during business hours and on-call 24/7 to triage concerns
- Activities Coordinator provides recreational opportunities
- Restaurant-style Dining • Utilities and DISH TV • Secured Entry System
- Resident Call Buttons • Wi-Fi in Common Areas • Microwave & Refrigerator

www.MarlowManor.com **907-338-8708**

Providing your loved ones with privacy, dignity and individualized care.





Archive voicemail, AI image generators, fast local delivery services

By **BOB DELAURENTIS**

Bob's Tech Talk

Q. How do I move my mobile phone voicemail messages to some kind of permanent storage?

A. Mobile phones have become the most personal computing device in our lives. That makes them a treasure box of cherished memories.

Precious voicemails are simple to keep—do not delete from the inbox. But that approach is fragile. If you switch carriers, they will almost certainly be lost.

Inboxes have limited space, and if you save too many messages, messages have to be deleted to allow future calls. Fixing “mailbox full” messages can lead to accidentally deleting a special voicemail. If a voicemail is special enough to linger in your inbox more than a week, it's best to move it to someplace safe.

On an iPhone, tap on the voicemail entry, use the Share Square (the small square icon with an upward facing arrow), and send it to the Notes application by tapping on the Notes icon. Android phones depend on different controls, but the basic idea is the same. Open the specific message, tap on the “share” icon (which is usually a circle with three dots) and save it someplace other than the device, like Google Drive.

After you confirm the

If a voicemail is special enough to linger in your inbox more than a week, it's best to move it to someplace safe.

audio recording is preserved in cloud storage, it is safe to delete it.

Q. I can usually tell when an image was created with Artificial Intelligence, but I wonder if that will always be true? They seem to get better every year.

A. The future arrived this month. Meet Image Generation by Gemini, one of Google's marquee features for its new Pixel 9 Pro phones. This AI tool has just gotten into the hands of reviewers, and the results are stunning, in every sense of the word.

There is no question that this new tool is going to allow more people than ever to fix their family snapshots, but it will also enable the creation of exceptionally deceptive images as well.

It is far too early to make firm opinions on this new development, but I feel it's important for my readers to know about this new wave of digital manipulation now. The bottom line: for the foreseeable future the number of impossible or very hard to detect deceptive images will grow.

Q. I live across the country from an ailing relative. What tech recommendations do you have for me?

A. So much depends on

the problem you wish to solve, but I do have one universal suggestion. This is partly personal, since I just experienced this situation myself.

My spouse's sister lives 800 miles away and is recovering from a significant hospital stay. She lives alone and cannot drive during her recovery, and avoids driving at night in any case. And while this is hopefully a temporary situation for her, for many people restrictions like this can be a part of everyday life.

Recently she was suffering and needed over-the-counter medication at 9 p.m.

Here is where tech steps makes an appearance. I began using a service called DoorDash during the pandemic, and I still keep an account for those times when my spouse and I are unable to leave the house. For my sister-in-law, from my sofa hundreds of miles away, I was able to ar-

Wander the Web

Here are my picks for worthwhile browsing this month:

Decorating with Color

Color is everywhere. Colors.co comes in handy more than you might expect based on its name. Use it the next time you need to find the perfect color.

<https://colors.co>

Political Cartoons

This venerable site has been around for decades, and has something for everyone.

<https://politicalcartoons.com>

Pete the Irish Pilot

@petetheirishpilot delivers a hearty helping of witty musings about aviation as only an insider can. Also on YouTube. Search for “Pete the Irish Pilot” or type in this long URL to go straight to it.

youtube.com/channel/UCgYIQ5JlaVRSqBquMRY-KrA

range a late night pharmacy-to-home delivery. This miracle happened because I was already familiar with DoorDash, and knew how to use it effectively in a less than obvious manner.

My tech-advice is to learn which services such as DoorDash, Uber and others provide almost real-time pickup and delivery

in the areas that have people you care about.

Set up accounts now, while time is not of the essence. Learn how the apps work, and what the services can do. Make a few practice runs. Many can deliver hot meals from restaurants, grocery or pharmacy

page 29 please

Hospice of Anchorage



A caring community of help, hope and comfort.

- In-Home Support
- Case Management
- Grief Support
- End-of-Life Education
- Bereavement Support
- Community Information, Outreach, & Assistance
- Durable Medical Equipment Loan Closet
- Resource Library

907-561-5322

www.hospiceofanchorage.org

2612 E. Northern Lights Blvd. - Anchorage, AK 99508

This ad is sponsored by a grant from the Municipality of Anchorage's Assembly and Mayor's Office.

Free Estate Planning Workshops



Law Office of
Constance A. Aschenbrenner, LLC
P.O. Box 140842
Anchorage, Alaska 99514
Phone: (907) 334-9200
www.akwillstrusts.com

Discover “The 7 Threats to Your Estate Plan”

It's all about family!

Have you protected them?

If Crisis Strikes, You Risk:

- Losing control
- 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
Sept 9, Oct 8 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Wasilla Senior Center

1301 South Century Circle, Wasilla
Sept 17, Oct 15 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Palmer Senior Center

1132 South Chugach Street, Palmer
Sept 10, Oct 7 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

WEBINAR: Nov 5, Nov 12 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

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

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



Wedding destinations for late bloomers

Senior organizations offer discounts

By **DIMITRA LAVRAKAS**

Senior Voice Travel
Correspondent

So, you're walking down the aisle again or for the first time and wondering how to pull it off simply in a simply beautiful setting.

Myself, I chose a civil ceremony in a judge's chamber with close family. It was certainly cheap, but it did lack that Disney Happy Ever After touch.

But rejoice Alaskan lovers, a wedding in paradise is just a flight away.

Hawaii, just because

Like kissing cousins on the map, Hawaii is the right fit for 49ers.

There's nothing so refreshing in winter as a week in the sun, eating fresh fruit while being fanned by fresh sea breezes.

For Alaskans, it's recommended to travel there in the winter for a break from the cold, and also to avoid school vacations when reservations may be scarce.

As a wedding destination, nothing can beat it with sunsets that blaze, or a full moon reflected on the water

Bargains are waiting for you

If you are a member of AARP, do investigate their travel services. I keyed in Nov. 1 to Nov. 8 as a travel date. For flights alone,

Delta and United run from \$537 to \$515 round trip from Anchorage to Kona. Although if you leave on a Monday, the price drops \$70, so check out all the days for the best deal.

No matter, though, the flights will be long, averaging 13 to 17 hours because of layovers.

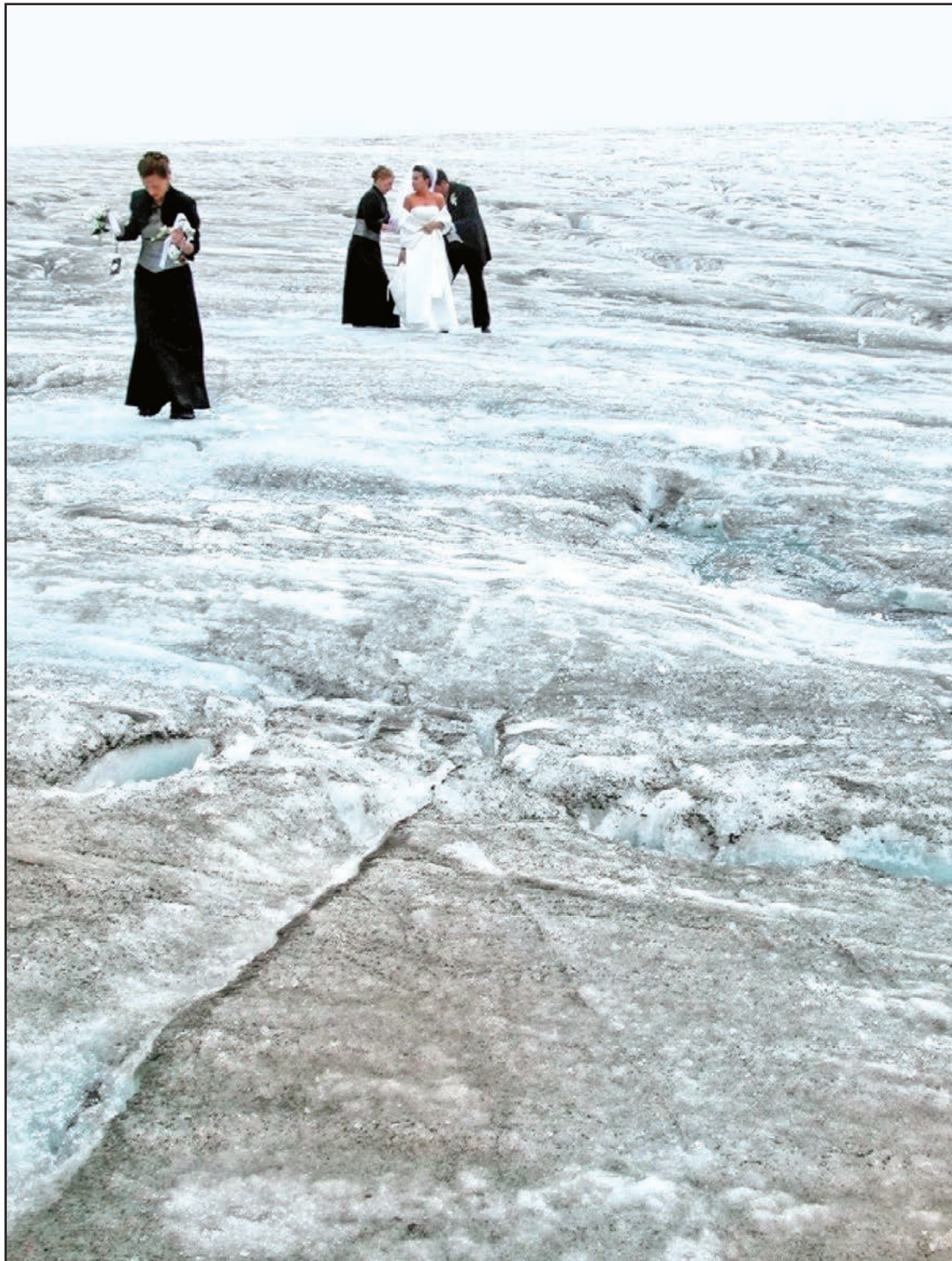
Vacation packages provide everything

Holua Resort has many amenities and is close to a golf course and beaches, as well as 10 outdoor tennis courts, six outdoor pools, a gym, and a spa tub on its grounds. Both the tub and pool are wheelchair accessible, but the building does not have an elevator.

All of this for an amazing \$1,674 per person for the flight, car and lodging.

With a reception hall, a ballroom, and an elevator, the OUTRIGGER Kona Resort is a great place to have a wedding, especially if children will be involved. They get a kiddie pool with a slide, and you get 18 holes of golf, a poolside bar, grocery/convenience store, spa tub, the on-site Waialele Cafe, yoga classes and fitness classes, gift shopping, a coffee shop/cafe, and a playground. In addition to dry cleaning/laundry services, guests get free in-room WiFi.

The Kona coast is one of the only places in the world where you can view



Glacier wedding: High above Skagway on the Lawton Glacier a brave bride prepares for her wedding.
Photos By Dimitra Lavrakas

giant manta rays up close. See these majestic creatures in Keauhou Bay right from this oceanfront resort when they come out to feed on plankton. You can also join a manta ray night snorkeling tour for an unforgettable Hawaiian experience.

The perfect place for a wedding, it features spectacular wedding venues, including an oceanfront chapel and breathtaking outdoor spaces for photographs.

This is \$1,592 per guest, but again, it includes flight, lodging and car.

If you have your own officiant, who is called a performer in Hawaii, go to <https://health.hawaii.gov/>

Palm trees and sweet sunsets lure you to a Hawaii wedding.

vitalrecords/marriage-licenses. But this is pretty complicated, and perhaps using the services of the resort might be less stressful.

The OUTRIGGER also has a mid-week special for weddings at www.outrigger.com/hawaii/hawaii-big-island/outrigger-kona-resort-and-spa/weddings.

Closer to home

The most spectacular wedding can be had in Talkeetna with views of nearby Denali. It would also be cheaper than Hawaii, and more guests would be able to come.

The Talkeetna Alaska Lodge offers all the services needed for a smooth wedding from the service to the reception to the cake.

Go to www.alaskacollection.com/groups-meet-

[ings/weddings/talkeetna-alaskan-lodge/](http://www.alaskacollection.com/groups-meet-ings/weddings/talkeetna-alaskan-lodge/) for more information.

And as a former wedding photographer, I have shot weddings on glaciers. Definitely memorable.

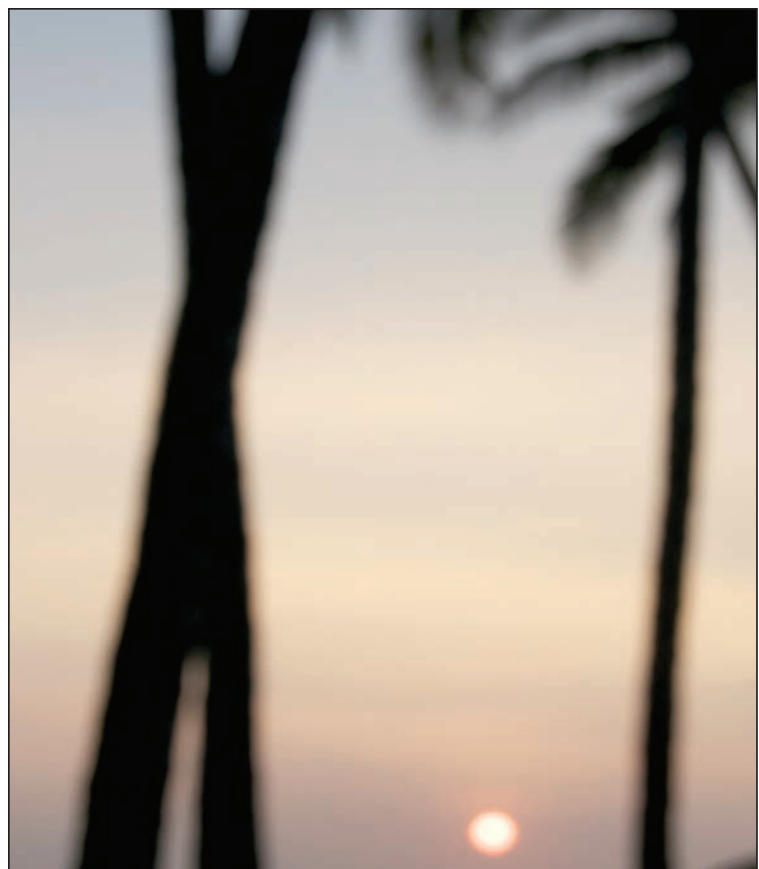
Having a friend or relative officiate

Here is the rule for a person to officiate at a wedding in Alaska.

► Any adult private citizen may get an appointment as a marriage commissioner. The appointment will be limited to performing a ceremony for two specific persons on a specific day at a specific place within the judicial district.

► The appointment order is valid only for these specifications.

next page please





Weddings

from page 28

- ▶ If any fact changes, such as the date or place of marriage, the commissioner must get a new appointment order. Every ceremony done by a marriage commissioner requires a separate appointment order.
- ▶ The cost to appoint a marriage commissioner is \$25.
- ▶ The request must be made in person at the court, by the person wishing to be appointed. The commissioner does not need to be an Alaska resident.
- ▶ Photo ID may be required.

- ▶ The court will provide an instruction sheet for completing the marriage certificate after the ceremony.
- ▶ The court also has sample marriage ceremony scripts available upon request.
- ▶ No particular format, words or ritual is required. The only legal requirement is that the two parties must agree and declare that they intend to be married, in the presence of each other, the person performing the ceremony, and at least one other witness.
- ▶ Multiple ceremonies: If the parties are doing both a religious and a civil ceremony, only one license is needed.



Frolic in the Pacific Ocean after a winter wedding.

Photo By Dimitra Lavrakas

988

continued from page 5

have grown up in an era where mental health issues were stigmatized, knowing there is a confidential and easy-to-access service can be reassuring.

Customized assistance.

The counselors at 988 are trained to handle a variety of issues, including those specific to older adults. Whether dealing with grief, chronic pain, or the stress of aging, seniors can receive tailored support that addresses their unique needs.

Family and caregiver support. 988 also serves as a resource for family mem-

bers and caregivers. They can call for guidance on how to support their loved ones and navigate complex emotional situations, enhancing the overall care environment for seniors.

And then there's 211

Community support is also equally crucial. Alaska 2-1-1 is a vital resource for seniors seeking community support and services, offering a free, confidential helpline that

connects them with essential resources. Whether it's finding affordable housing, accessing healthcare services, or obtaining assistance with daily activities, Alaska 211 provides comprehensive information tailored to seniors' unique needs. By simply dialing 211, older Alaskans can navigate a broad network of local services and programs designed to enhance their quality of life and ensure they receive the support

they need.

Spread the word

Awareness is key. Now that you know about these resources, share them with a friend. You never know who may need these services. Often times those who are dealing with depression don't show any outside signs to friends or family. By talking about these resources, you never know whose life you might touch or even save.

Tech

continued from page 27

deliveries, and more. Most of the services have subscriptions, but they also offer pay-as-you-go pricing. So there is no charge to maintain an active account.

For someone not used to the cost of these services, you may experience sticker shock at first. However, the cost can be well worth the relief it provides during stressful situations.

Bob has been writing about technology for over three decades. He can be contacted at techtalk@bobdel.com.

Free Legal Services for Seniors!

Alaska Legal Services Corporation provides legal assistance for seniors* (60 and older) with housing, government benefits, wills, healthcare, and more!

Call your local ALSC office to learn more:

Anchorage..... 272-9431 **or** (888) 478-2572

Utqiagvik..... 855-8998 **or** (855) 755-8998

Bethel..... 543-2237 **or** (800) 478-2230

Dillingham..... 842-1425 **or** (888) 391-1475

Fairbanks..... 452-5181 **or** (800) 478-5401

Juneau..... 586-6425 **or** (800) 789-6426

Kenai..... 395-0352 **or** (855) 395-0352

Ketchikan..... 225-6420 **or** (877) 525-6420

Kotzebue..... 442-3500 **or** (800) 622-9797

Nome..... 443-2230 **or** (888) 495-6663

Palmer..... 746-4636 **or** (855) 996-4636

Additional information is available at:
www.alsc-law.org

*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.



Enjoy your Retirement!

Chester Park is a safe, secure 55+ Adult Community. Our Member-Owners enjoy all the benefits of home ownership with none of the hassles. **DON'T WAIT! UNITS SELL QUICKLY!**

Safe, Secure Senior Living

For more information or a tour please call:

907-333-8844

www.chesterparkcoop.com





Broth

continued from page 16

my version of pho, which is another thing I did not eat until after age 60. My son introduced me to it several years ago when I was visiting him in Denver and came down with a cold. He brought home takeout —broth in one container and other components in another—and combined them in front of me. After

all the hype over pho, I was surprised to find that it was just soup. But, what exotic soup! Now, I consider it a convenience food. Once I decide I want pho for a meal, I can have it ready to eat in 10 minutes.

As I look at the bone broth cooling on the kitchen counter, so hot the bubbles are still rising up through the pint jars, I know there will some good eating in my future. I'm glad I learned about bone broth and hope its good

nutrition will continue to help keep me healthy. I only wish I'd learned about it earlier. I'm also thankful that I live in Alaska where it is possible to eat bone broth made from moose and caribou, and for family that provides the main ingredients.

Maraley McMichael is a lifelong Alaska currently residing in Palmer. Email her at maraleymcmichael@gmail.com.



Pint jars of moose bone broth, April 2021.

Maraley McMichael photo

Quilt

continued from page 18

need them to someone who does. She often brings bags—full to guild meetings and says she usually goes home empty-handed.

Joan Brewer belongs to another category of quilters needing to recycle: She calls herself a “destasher.”

She and her husband were ready to downsize. The children were gone. It was time to move to a smaller house—with no room for what was ad-

mittedly a massive fabric collection.

“I would say that I had thousands of yards,” Brewer admitted. “I had entire bolts that I gave away.”

About 15 years ago, when bits of Brewer’s fabric started showing up in every room of their old house, her husband built her a shed, a twin to his tool shed. But at the new place, there isn’t room for two sheds so the “destashing” began in earnest.

“I told myself, ‘OK, I won’t use this in my lifetime,’ so I passed it on.”

Much of it has gone to Log Cabin guild members who donate about 300 quilts to charities

each year, not counting hundreds of Christmas stockings and small quilts wrapped around stuffed animals that go to small children in various kinds of public care.

A bunch goes to re-MADE, the repurposing enterprise on Old Seward Highway in Anchorage. The Anchorage Senior Center gets some, and finished quilts go everywhere.

Stashes have “nothing to do with need,” said Sims. She’s currently working with the family of a dementia victim seeking help recycling 80 boxes of fabric.

Plugging in to the world of quilters opens a new view of Anchorage. Recyclers have to deal with cosmic

questions: How small a piece of fabric is too small for a quilter? (No such thing.) Or, is there a piece of old calico so ugly no one will want it? (Probably not).

It’s a city of sewing rooms full of quilters cutting expensive cloth into small pieces then sewing those pieces together, of roads full of quilters delivering carloads of fabric to new owners, who will likely one day deliver it to yet more new owners.

One result of all this industry will be on display at the September 14 and 15 Quilt Show—a show, not a sale. First United Methodist is at 9th Avenue at the Park Strip.



A group of Log Cabin quilters checks out donated fabric.

Stan Jones photo

Crossword answers from page 20

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

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 Sept. 11, hosted by the

Thomas Center for Senior Leadership.

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



Anchorage Senior Activity Center
"A Place to Stay Young!"

- ✓ MEDICARE INFORMATION & BENEFITS ENROLLMENT
- ✓ FITNESS CENTER, TAI CHI, CHAIR YOGA and more!
- ✓ HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAMS
- ✓ BILLIARDS ROOM & LIBRARY
- ✓ ARTS & CRAFTS CLASSES, CARD GAMES
- ✓ SOCIAL EVENTS & DISCUSSION GROUPS
- ✓ ARCTIC ROSE CAFE (breakfast and lunch)



907-770-2000



AnchorageSeniorCenter.org



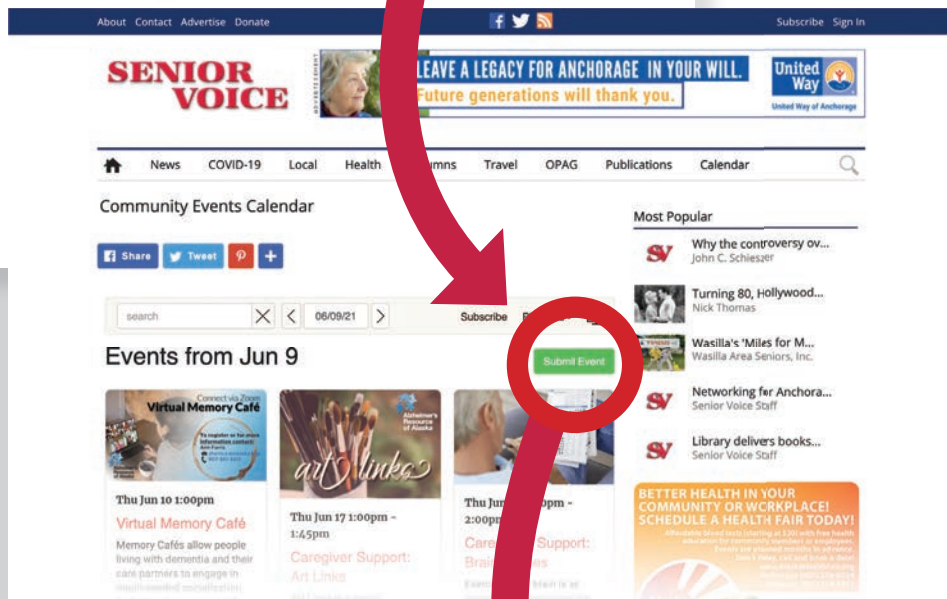
Get word out about your upcoming event!

Publicize a program or class. Post an invitation to a new Zoom offering. The Senior Voice online calendar is here for you.

It's easy to post your events to seniorvoicelaska.com – and it's **FREE**.



1 Go to the Senior Voice website: seniorvoicelaska.com. Click on the “Calendar” tab in the upper right corner.



2 You will see the list of upcoming events. To add your own event, click the “Submit Event” button on the upper right.

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

In addition to the date, time, location and description, you can include other items:

- Photos
- Fliers and other images
- Links to your website
- A button linking to the event and your site
- Zoom, Skype and other conferencing links
- Your email and other contact information

A screenshot of the 'Senior Voice Calendar of Events' form. The form includes fields for 'Your Name', 'Your Contact Email', 'Private notes for the calendar owner (not shown with your event)', 'Event Title', and a checkbox for 'Add a button linking to the event website'. A green 'Check and Submit' button is located at the top right of the form.

TRY IT NOW.

Our website readers are all around the state, and beyond. If you run into problems, call 1-800-478-1059 or email editor@seniorvoicelaska.com

Senior Voice

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

We Must Preserve and Expand **SOCIAL SECURITY**

Mary Peltola
for CONGRESS

ONLY YOU, CAN VOTE FOR YOU.

2 WEEKS LATER



Don't Miss Election Day!

[See Voting Information](#)



MARY.VOTE/VOTER

- ✓ Find Your Polling Place
- ✓ Election Timelines
- ✓ Voting FAQ's

2024:
BEST CHOICE
for Seniors

Mary Has Been Working Hard To:

- ✓ Save Social Security
- ✓ Bring Down High Costs
- ✓ Stop the Fred Meyer - Carrs Merger
- ✓ Pass Development Projects Like Willow
- ✓ Invest in the Railbelt Energy Grid

Mary Peltola
for CONGRESS

PAID FOR BY MARY PELTOLA FOR ALASKA

Follow Along!

[f](#) [X](#) [@](#) @MaryPeltola