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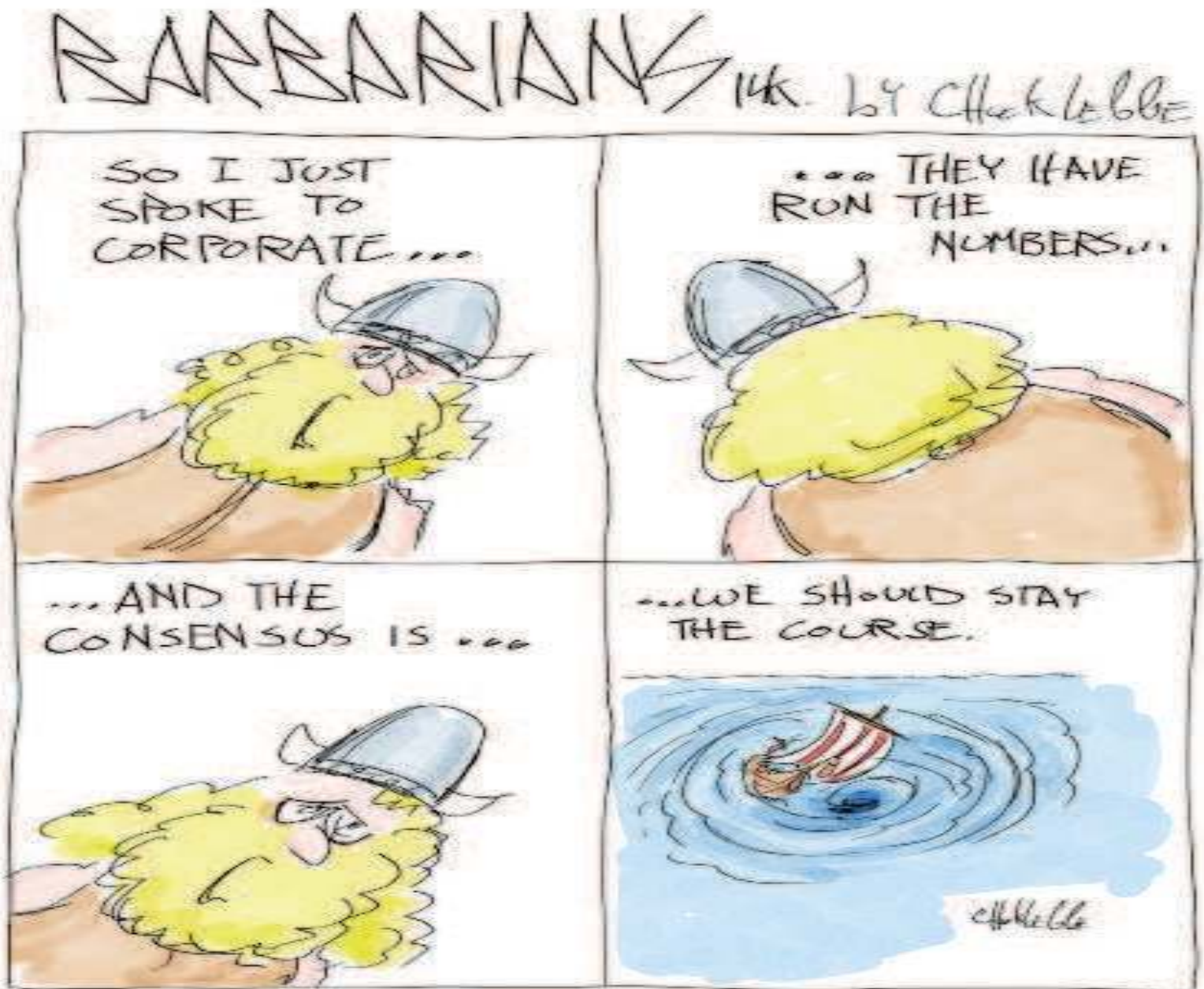
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Of Potholes and Crossword Puzzles

For weeks now, I've been waking up angry. There never seems to be any obvious triggers. Yet, day after day, I wake up, don my invisible armor and go into the office ready to crack skulls. By the end of the day, I've worked myself into such a tizzy that my fitness tracker ecstatically proclaims that I've reached my activity goal for the day. The sad irony is that my daily workout is sitting in a broken chair all day while swearing at my three computer screens.

It wasn't until I received a story pitch from Darren "HarpDaddy" Smith on Tuesday that it started to make sense. It's not that something, in particular, is wrong. It's not that something in particular is wrong. The world has evolved into a hodgepodge of misery that never seems to end.

I think of it like spring driving in Alaska. The roads are no longer covered in easily spottable hazards like ice and snow. They are deceptively clear. That is, until you bottom out your car going through what you thought was a puddle, but instead was a pothole of death that's so deep, you can say "hi" to Beezlebub himself as you exit.

I find it's always easier to accept life's shitty days when you can spot them coming. But these unforeseen potholes masquerading as puddles are so much harder to recover from.

So what do we do to find solace? Well, for a lot of readers, peace comes in the routine of completing a weekly crossword puzzle. Admittedly, I received some fairly heated emails demanding the return of SuperCross. And at first, I was kind of perplexed. (Cue more swearing at my computer screen.) I mean, why would anyone want to add more difficulty to their lives? Surely, the simpler KingsCross would suffice. I even thought, maybe a simpler crossword would even be welcomed as an easy weekly win. But then I started to think about what the SuperCross represents: a reliable routine, a challenge to overcome, and a distraction from this crazy world.

So, to those who find happiness in challenging crossword puzzles, rest assured that the SuperCross is back, and it's here to stay. As for me, I'll keep taking my easy crossword wins where I can get them.

Until next week,
O'Hara Shipe



BY O'HARA SHIPE
MANAGING
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Tshibaka, Dunleavy, Palin accept Trump's lies about stolen election

Former President Trump's so-called "Complete and Total Endorsement" goes only to those candidates willing to smile and swallow Trump's lies that the 2020 election was stolen from him.

In the news coverage of the campaign to replace the late Don Young, Alaska news organizations need to get the candidates on the record about whether they accept Trump's lies that the dozens of recounts and court rulings were all part of a massive conspiracy.

A few weeks ago, Trump showed what it means if a candidate gets out of line when he revoked his Complete and Total Endorsement of right-winger Mo Brooks in Alabama. Brooks claims the election was stolen but said it's time to focus on 2022 and 2024.

"Mo Brooks of Alabama made a horrible mistake recently when he went 'woke' and stated, referring to the 2020 Presidential Election Scam, 'Put that behind you, put that behind you,' despite the fact that the election was rife with fraud and irregularities," Trump said, in removing his political blessing.

"I am hereby withdrawing my endorsement of Mo Brooks for the Senate."

It is also possible that Trump is hereby abandoning another guy who looks to be a loser—Brooks is way down in the polls.

The three Alaska Republican candidates Trump has endorsed, Senate candidate Kelly Tshibaka, Gov. Mike Dunleavy, and former Gov. Sarah Palin, have refused to question Trump's lies or mutter anything about how it's time to move on.

In failing to correct Trump, they are lying to Alaskans.

To no one's surprise, Trump endorsed Palin, claiming she "lifted the McCain presidential campaign out of the dumps despite the fact that she had to endure some very evil, stupid, and jealous people within the campaign itself. They were out to destroy her, but she didn't let that happen."

Palin has eagerly embraced Trump's lies despite the lack of evidence of fraud. She started claiming the election was rigged in late 2020.

A year ago, she gave an unhinged account in an interview on British TV in which she repeated many lies about the 2020 election, refused to answer simple ques-

tions, and rambled at length.

Her technique is to never stop to pause as the words tumble out of her mouth, which makes it almost impossible for interviewers to correct false statements without talking over her. But interviewers have to do that to get at the truth and slow down the litany.

Pressed repeatedly by the hosts to back up claims of fraud, she claimed many dead people voted in 2020. A lie that has been thoroughly debunked. She also claimed there were more votes than voters in "certain districts." That was all she could come up with.

And she would not say that Joe Biden won the election.

Referring to Trump, she said, "The president has been insisting, so many Americans have been insisting, that our elections are run legally and transparently and there were shenanigans obviously—in so many of the polling areas. The president has insisted that we look into where all these votes had come from."

Hosts Piers Morgan and Susanna Reid interrupted her various times to ask if she accepted the election of Biden, but she wouldn't answer.

"This is crazy. You guys invited me to come on. Let me finish, please," Palin said.

"Let me finish. Now I'm talking about elections, and I know that shenanigans do take place in elections. As a governor, I witnessed that also. And we always have to crack down, through the Division of Elections, and the lieutenant governor's office, the bureaucrats who were in charge of it. Because for instance, we had Barack Obama's right-hand man voting in Alaska, and he hadn't been in Alaska about 20 years."

(This was a reference to Obama aide Pete Rouse, who had long connections to Alaska and voted absentee in 2008. Alaska election officials said it was not fraud.)

Morgan said they weren't talking about Obama, and Palin could not filibuster them, and he asked again if Biden won.

"Can we please finish with the topic?" Palin said, referring to Trump's role in the Jan. 6 riots.

Palin continued to refuse to say whether Biden had won the election until the sixth or seventh time it was asked.

"Well, evidently, he did because he's sworn in as our president. But no one will convince me nor anyone else with common sense and a sense of justice, no one will convince us that there were not shenanigans going on. And there was fraud," said Palin. "Numbers prove that. Nobody can argue the numbers."

When Morgan said no one had produced any facts to prove there was widespread fraud, she screamed, "What?"

"No, no, no, no. Piers, now don't interrupt me while I finish this point," she added.

"Where's the fraud?" Morgan asked.

"Listen, how many polling areas had to produce their voter rolls and they showed that there were more votes than there were voters in certain districts," Palin responded. "Is that not a problem right there?"

"Where has a single court in America upheld fraud?" Morgan asked. She didn't answer.

"Ok, you're asking about fraud. I'm telling you where the shenanigans were. What about all the dead people who voted," responded Palin.

Palin said she did not know if "the degree of the fraud was so great that it caused a different outcome."

Morgan said that Palin was talking nonsense, which irritated her.

"How is it nonsense when I'm telling you facts about some voter fraud" she questioned. "Oh, it hasn't been proven, really? Piers, just look into that one issue, just one issue. That being the dead people who voted. And then come back and tell me that no, they didn't vote, or yeah, they legitimately voted from the grave. Just tell me that."

Morgan said she sounded "totally bonkers" and was perpetuating a total load of nonsense.

"How am I perpetuating nonsense when I am telling you examples? Wonderful, great, I am giving you examples though trying to make it easy on you. You guys sound bonkers, to tell you the truth because you won't listen to your guest who is letting you know where the voter fraud was made manifest. It certainly was," she said.

There is no evidence to back up Palin's claims about the stolen election. She began ranting about dead people voting in 2016, echoing Trump's lies and promoting her own brand of nonsense.



BY DERMOT COLE

Kevin Paisley welcomes
Kurt Mentzer MD
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A Tale of Two Conferences: Arctic Encounter and NorthxNorth

BY ART SLEUTH
BY JEAN BUNDY

During the first week of April 2022, two conferences separated by a few city blocks layered poignant conversations. NxN Summit and Festival at the Anchorage Museum and the Arctic Encounter Symposium at the Dena'ina Center delved into topics like aesthetics, de-Colonializing with healing, technological entrepreneurship, ambassadorial camaraderie, political jousting, and fossil fuel production in the age of Climate Change. All reaffirmed how Alaska and Arctic neighbors have soldiered on despite the two-year Covid shutdown, and now Putin's War threatening world security, and the highly sought after Northwest Passage.

This art critic straddled both conferences; here are soupçons gleaned from these venues.

The week began with the Museum premiering the Ted Stevens Foundation's film '50 Years of Promise: The Beginning of ANCSA'. Beginning with Russian colonization, and continuing under US ownership, white Settlers came to Alaska and established towns and businesses without recognizing the historical rights of Indigenous populations. The Alaska Natives Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971 resolved Indigenous land rights by transferring 40 million acres of land to about 200 corporations in which Alaska Natives are shareholders. Because the corporations are businesses and not governments, ongoing disputes between Native villages and Federal and State agencies continue. The film theatrically images the players who made this historic legislation happen. To this art critic, the film represented an undercurrent of trust, discourse, and collaboration felt at both conferences.

It was, however, puzzling that the Anchorage Museum situated NxN in the SEED Lab. Using this reconfigured storefront which was continually bombarded by noisy downtown traffic, forced presenters and listeners to cocoon and intertwine. The warmth of being in close quarters juxtaposed with the discussion of de-Colonializing Western museums that rely on visitors rushing past Indigenous artifacts or misinterpreting tools as pretty trinkets crafted to amuse an 'exit-through-the-gift-shop' public.

Ingeborg Høvik, associate professor at the Arctic University of Norway, presided over presentations and discussions about a greater need for community and respect amongst inhabitants of the eight Arctic countries. Aaron Leggett, the Indigenous curator at the Museum and President of the Native Village of Eklutna, was NxN's interpreter when language barriers mired dialogic threads.

Sugpiaq/Alutiiq Sven Haakanson, professor at the University of Washington and Native American curator at the Burke Museum, spoke on the need to move away from notions of the 'dumb-Native.' After all, ancient cultures thrived, not just survived, he argued. In creating Indigenous exhibitions, museum authorities need to collaborate with the villages where artifacts originated instead of only superficially consulting with them. Haakanson also believes in returning museum pieces (often stolen) to where they were created and used, and in sharing research and discoveries from academic projects. This sharing of knowledge builds relationships and helps restore community insight that had been stolen.

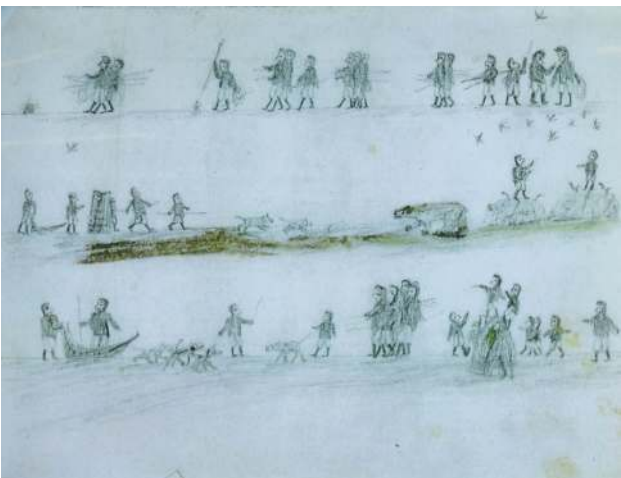
One of his projects has been to study Kodiak kayaks (Angyaaq), which become disfigured after decades in museum storage. Haakanson designed kayak model kits for Kodiak children to assemble. Angyaaq were once symbols of power and transportation, but they were destroyed by Russian traders in the early 1800s. This project led to fabricating and launch-

ing full-size kayaks, complete with rounded bottoms, ballast/rocks, and giant carved steering paddles.

The question, "what does an Indigenous person look like to you" was broached by Inuit graphic designer and tattoo artist Holly Mititquq Nordlum. She reminded attendees that Alaska often disregards maladies that plague Alaska Native people. Her talk also referenced suicides rates that always rise every spring. Nordlum's public art (Raven and Caribou Story) has recently been mounted onto the Anchorage Public Library facade.

Greenland's Kalaallit Inuit scholar Axl Jeremiassen unpacked Inughuit drawings from contact zones. Often dismissed as childlike, Jeremiassen explained how the concentration and patience needed for hunting and fishing was also realized when constructing narrative line drawings about daily life. Western expeditions and explorations have led the drawings to be archived at England's Canterbury Cathedral. From the drawings, it is easy to see the ingenuity of Greenland's Inuit. Like other Arctic cultures, Greenland's Inuit devised ingenious ways to fish and hunt for survival—clothing, and nourishment. Trapping seals was accomplished by enticing the animal to become curious about a hole drilled into an ice sheet. Once harpooned, the seal was pulled out by sinew or rope. Killing polar bears was done by training dogs to surround and disorient them so a hunter could finish the kill.

Leaving NxN, I went sleuthing for Climate Change at the Arctic Encounter session: 'Economic Growth, Environmental Stewardship' moderated by Heather Reams, President



Qalaherriq (died 1856) pencil and crayon on paper, Canterbury Cathedral Archives, UK.

of Citizens for a Responsible Energy Solutions, DC. Reams felt many imagine Alaska as a 'snow globe' to be viewed but not interacted with. She posited that Alaska had to become a leader in Global Warming, as opposed to being the victim, as some have claimed. Climate Change solutions had to begin at community levels everywhere as Arctic pollution permeates globally--Planet, People, Posterity, and Peace summed up this session.

As the Press art critic, I politely shoved past giraffe-esque video tripods at Senator Lisa Murkowski's Arctic Encounter Press Conference. Senator Joe Manchin, ambassadors from Iceland, Finland, Greenland, Norway, Japan and State Department Arctic Region coordinator Jim de Hart were also in attendance. Climate Change, as evidenced by melting permafrost, droughts, forest fires, and landslides, was acknowledged as a crisis in all Arctic regions. But means of defense dominated, as Putin's War was again the elephant in the room. While some Northern institutions are still engaging with Russian scientists,



Senator Lisa Murkowski at Arctic Encounter Symposium April 2022.

everyone felt working with Russians in the future would be problematic.

Nevertheless, all surmised that it is impossible to be Arctic anything without Russia. Climate Change cannot wait for the war to end, even though conversations are indefinitely stalled. Sen. Murkowski reminded everyone of the bullying US fishermen endured when Russian warships forced them out of their rightful North Pacific fishing grounds. No one disputed that Putin's War is forcing a rethinking of the far North including energy dependence and the inevitability of having to work around Russia in the Arctic's future.

The Far North Fashion Show at the Museum Atrium allowed artists, entrepreneurs, and dignitaries to intermingle while experiencing exquisite clothing, boasting generational Indigenous sewing techniques parlayed into modern designs. While guests sipped wine and nibbled hors d'oeuvres, music wafted, and spotlights highlighted Alaska Native women. Headdresses resembling frosted layer cakes dripping with beads and feathers, velvet hooded parkas trimmed with fur gave way to slinky ball gowns, finishing with black leotard figures glittering in bone and beaded jewelry. Again, it is artists who visualize the human story to effect change.



Alaska Native Modelling Parka at The Far North Fashion Show, Anchorage Museum.

These two conferences were a microcosm of the many inhabitants (visitors too) and fields of endeavor that define Alaska. From businesses eager to invest and museums redefining community roles, there is a willingness to connect and share while contributing to a healing process in all Eight Arctic Countries. With Putin's War ongoing, fossil fuels were less on the hot seat. Some suggested conservation and oil and gas development did not have to be strange bedfellows. I just wish there had been more emphasis on potential Climate Change solutions.

Mini Sleuth: Thank you to the Anchorage Museum and Kallander & Associates for helping the Anchorage Press Sleuth.

Jean Bundy, MFA, PhD is a writer/painter living in Anchorage. She is a VP at AICA-Int. and serves on Governance for Pictor Gallery, NYC.

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Aaron Leggett and Sven Haakanson at Anchorage Museum Seed Lab.

Catch Her if You Can

Adventures in Wanderlust with the First Black Woman to Visit Every Country

BY JOE SLOWINSKI

As I talked with Detroit-born Jessica Nabongo, a wave of wanderlust envy flowed over me. I have lived and worked on four continents throughout my life and visited more than 40 countries. But, in this conversation, it was evident that I was a travel novice in comparison. As we discussed her journey and upcoming book by phone, I couldn't help but daydream about my next international destination.

The daughter of Ugandan parents, Nabongo's itch for traveling started early. In 2009, after spending a year teaching English in Japan, she started her travel blog, *Catch Me If You Can*. The blog followed her to graduate school at the London School of Economics, and in 2013, while working for the United Nations, she became a full-time digital nomad after requesting to work remotely. At the time, she was living in Rome.

On October 6, 2019, surrounded by 55 friends and family members, on a visit to the archipelagic island nation of the Republic of Seychelles, she officially became the first black woman to travel to all 195 United Nations recognized countries.

When asked how she felt after completing this epic journey, she paused for a moment to reflect. "I think I felt relief largely because I was really, really exhausted," laughed Nabongo.

From all of these adventures, her number one travel tip for travelers is to have an open mindset that most people are good. "I've never used a safe in a hotel room," the prolific world traveler said. "You know, I feel like a lot of times people when they're traveling, they're like always looking over their shoulder, and they're super scared. But My life has been made beautiful by the kindness of strangers."

These experiences planted seeds that

would eventually bloom with the completion of her epic journey around the planet. While on a visit to Bali, in February 2017, the idea to see the world came to her. She wanted to become the first black woman to visit every country. Thirty-three months later she had traversed the earth and visited 195 nation-states.

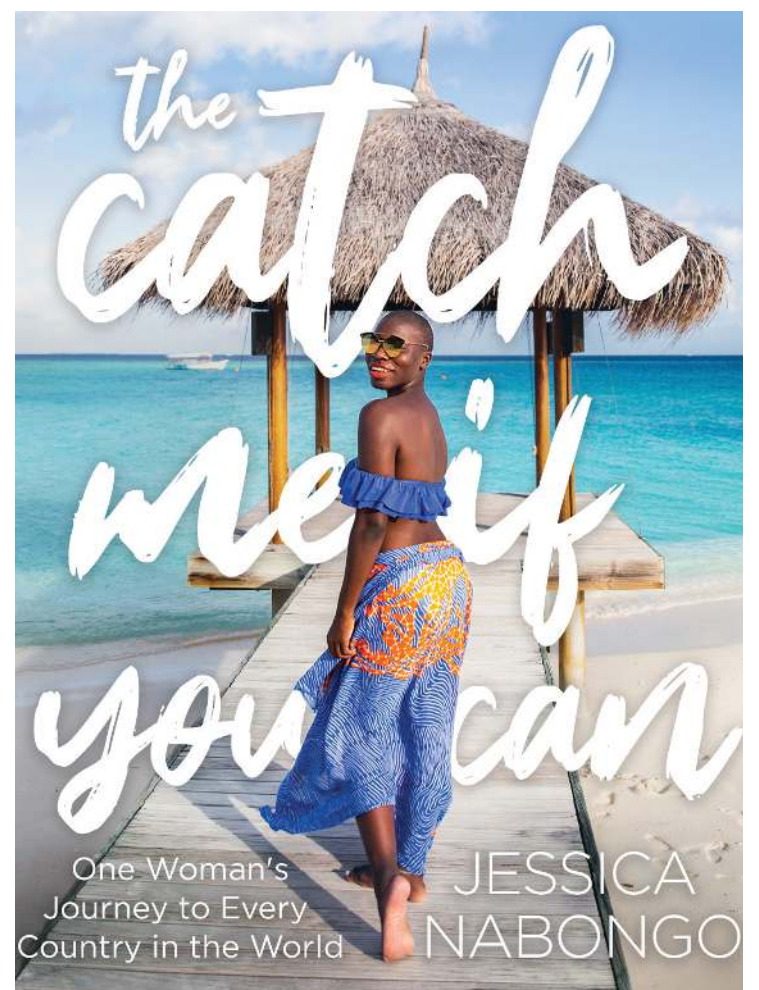
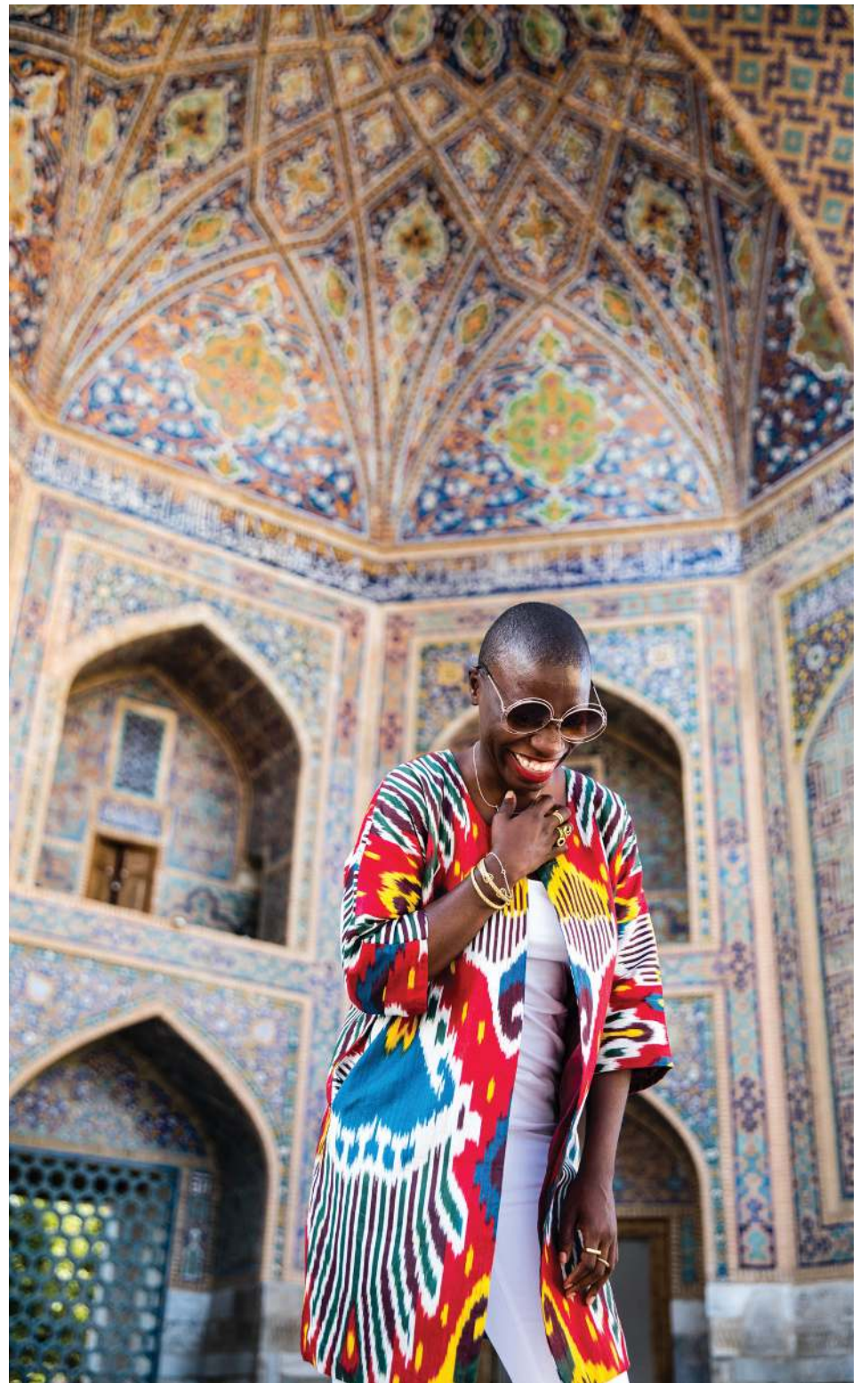
"I'm just a very curious person. I really wanted to see how people live all around the world," explained Nabongo.

Now, she is on the precipice of publishing her first book, *The Catch Me If You Can*. Set to hit bookshelves on June 14, Nabongo's book is filled with over 300 hundred images and 100 stories from 100 countries. According to Nabongo, readers can "expect to laugh, [they] can expect to cry, and [they] can expect to get some travel tips."

When asked how this journey changed her, Nabongo paused to contemplate. "I think I'm more aware of everything around me. I'm more aware of how much plastic I use on a regular basis. I'm more aware of how much I consume in terms of like clothing, in terms of everything. I think this experience has really turned me away from Western ideals of success. And, I think it's made me focus a lot more on my personal relationships and life and what that means," said Nabongo.

Although she could regale an audience with stories about her adventures for hours, Nabongo believes there is a single takeaway--be a good neighbor. "I really think that if we could all get to a place where we could literally treat every stranger like our best friend, that would be a perfect Utopia. When people read the book, I mean, for the most part, I hope that people think differently about the world," said Nabongo.

Nabongo has been featured in National Geographic, New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today, Forbes, CBS This Morning, Good Morning America, and CNN. To read her Catch Me If You Can blog, visit thecatchmeifyoucan.com.



Cheer's everyone and enjoy spring!

It took me a year, and that's a "me-bad," but last weekend, I finally made it to Seward to visit Stoney Creek Brew House and brewer/owner Greg Haas. For the record, Haas is one hell of a nice guy with incredibly strong civic pride, and he's making some damned fine beers that are sought after in the small community surrounding him.

I'd heard of Stoney Creek's one-year anniversary from another brewer — Erik Slater of Seward Brewing Company — who has an excellent relationship with his only other competition in a town that might seem too small for two breweries. These guys actually give each other props like true comrades in foam, rather than adversaries scrabbling for market share.

I left Hope on one of those amazing, crisp, blue-skied spring days. You know, the kind that makes admirers call the area between Turnagain Pass and Seward "Little Switzerland."

I didn't look directions up on my phone prior to the trip; I figured Seward's small enough that a brewery out to stick out. I figured I'd slow down and look around for the obvious when I crossed over something called Stoney Creek. Still, I had to throw the binders on when I just happened to glance at the street sign on my left, six miles out of town.

I left the pavement after crossing the railroad tracks and bumped my way up the traditional Alaska springtime-rutted dirt road a short distance to what looked like a beautiful, somewhat utilitarian Alaska home with a brewery in the garage. Outside, a small gathering of patrons sat at picnic tables. Many were enjoying offerings from Midnight Bento, which was on-site serving hot and tasty food to compliment the seven beers I discovered and enjoyed on tap that day.

I stood in the brewery and conversed back and forth with Haas between his episodic drawing of beers for a quickly growing crowd of people. When someone would come in, I'd step back and make good of my time admiring a new ten barrel brewing system he'd sourced from a COVID-scuttled brewery in Colorado.

I could easily distinguish between the two customer types. One type would start with a firm handshake and a "Greg, I gotta have some of that [beer], and fill me a growler for [mama]; she couldn't make it out today, but passes on her congrats." The other type sheepishly approached the counter with eyes averted up to the two chalk menus behind and above Haas on the wall, contemplating cups. Until Haas boomed out a cheery "Welcome, welcome! What can I get for you today?" Instantly the patron would perk up as if he had belonged there his entire life. Even though I didn't know anyone except Haas there, I felt as welcome as spring standing there that day.

Haas obtained his brewing license on April 7 and calls that his opening day. Although he serviced his first establishment account in May.

When I first talked to Haas last year, his beers were pouring from 10 different taps in five establishments, and all but one of those is still pouring it. "At the end of this year, starting into next year, I'll have maybe two dozen, and am even looking at 40 taps here," says Haas of the popularity of his excellent beer in the community.

I'm not sure if Haas is more passionate about his beer or his community, although unequivocally, they're inseparable. In any small community, beer quickly becomes woven into the fabric that makes up the place's character. People flock to a brewery not to get hammered and escape life, but for the opposite reason: to meet other people and fully engage in it. Stoney Creek is an excellent example.

After a winter hiatus, Seward Brewing Company is also about to open its doors again. This year, Slater is opening May 1, and I'm thinking I might just drive down there for that event, too. Experiences like last weekend have me warming up to the little Hamlet that's been too easy to pass up until now.

Haas made the conscious decision to stay open over the winter. This act isn't taken lightly in Seward, where many other businesses hibernate. His wife Stacy chided him somewhat incredulously at the notion.

"Maybe it was only eight to twelve hours a week that we were open, but we had a steady crowd of people just wanting to get out and about and gather and do something," says Haas of the success.

Again, for Haas, it's all about community, and celebrating winter is a part of that.

"Seward's a year-round town with a summer problem," Haas told me last year. "While the summers are amazing, so are the winters."

Haas knows this through not-so-much purposeful relationship building with an agenda, but from following where his beer's taken him in the community, as more and more locales ask for his beer.



"Each place I tried to go, I wanted to learn about the relationships that establish partnerships over time," says Haas.

An establishment isn't just an owner trying to make a buck. It's a microcosm and best run like a family with a shared vision and goal. These establishments are comprised of both big and small social networks, and getting to know what works best for each individual creates brand loyalty.

Haas has mastered this concept, no doubt. He's never really had to ask anyone to stock his beer. Instead, most clients have come to him screaming, "I want it. Whatever you have, I want to pour it!"

It started with the Cookery & Oyster Bar, and the relationship between Kevin and Stacey Lane started long before Haas even had a license to brew. They waited for his beer and put it on when it first started pouring. Firbrand BBQ's Chad and Stephanie Higgins expressed interest Haas created Bear Mountain Black for them to pair with their Amarillo, Texas-inspired cuisine. Then in quick succession came the Resurrection Roadhouse/Windsong Lodge, the Highliner Restaurant, Exit Glacier Salmon Bake Restaurant and Pub, Freedom Fighters Bar and Grill, the Alehouse, and the iconic Thom's showcase Lounge and Restaurant. Look for a Stoney Creek brew as a feature on the Major Marine excursion boats this year.

Most notably for Haas was the competition — Seward Brewing Company and Erik Slater — approaching him instead of the other way around. "He called me and asked, 'do you have anything you can share with me,'" says Haas. That started an incredible relationship that was already growing between the two. "I would have never asked him to pour a beer of mine;

that's sacred ground," says Haas. "Erik and I make an excellent community team, and I'm indebted to him for all of the help and support he's graciously given me before and since I got started."

What lies ahead for Stoney Creek? "I don't have a long-term strategy other than 'how do I get to be a bigger part of this community,'" says Haas.

Looking back, Haas is unabashedly proud. "Seward's trying to grow as a community and we're grateful that people are coming down to fish, hike, be outdoors. There are great businesses that are starting and growing and people are coming down to give Seward a look. And, we're happy to be a part of it. I'm pretty lucky that I can build this little piece of the community out here."

In a late-afternoon call after I returned from my visit, Haas was tinkering in the brewhouse fussing with getting his bigger brewing system up and running, while modifying the space to make everything fit. Still, he took time out to chat.

"I'm a little overwhelmed and so lucky my wife Janice is so supportive of all of this, and look! My brother took some time off and flew all the way up here to let me show the place off while he's helping me out. It feels good to be in this place, looking back on all of it," he says.

Don't expect Stoney Creek Beers to show up in Anchorage or anywhere outside the cozy confines of Seward. That's where it was born, where it's growing, and where it belongs. It's time for a road trip. Check out Stoney Creek Brew House and Seward Brewing Company early in May. Do it when the weather is as good as what I experienced; you'll love Alaska even more for the entirety of the experience.

GUYANESE Cuisine

*Da J3rk Spot might be the reason
you fall for Caribbean cuisine*

BY RESTAURANT REVIEW
BY JIN CHONG

Ask me what I know about Caribbean food, and you'll be met with a blank stare. All right, how about Guyanese food? I'm sorry—what? As it turns out, the South American country of Guyana happens to be the birthplace of Da J3rk Spot owner Vieannie Wu.

Now, I'm not afraid to admit that I've yet to experience much in the way of Central or South American cuisine. But I relish any opportunity to expand my palate and explore unfamiliar cultures through my tastebuds. I also embrace "l33t speak" to the extent that it reminds me of my feeble attempts at conjuring an edgy username on MSN Messenger in high school.

Da J3rk Spot looks to be a nice change of pace from a lesser-known part of the world that our local dining scene could use more of—I can't be the only one tired of the same rehashed ideas around these parts, can I? So it's with this fervent hope that I drove out to Eagle River in search of something that would help sate my thirst for something fresh and original.

The restaurant boasts a modestly sized yet vibrant dining area. Lining the red-tinted walls are a few pieces of local art for sale that imbue the space with a colorful, creative energy. A steady stream of customers trickled through intermittently for takeout orders, which were all efficiently handled by the friendly and accommodating staff. The in-house ordering system is worth mentioning. Patrons use QR codes to access their menu and subsequently place an order without having to nag an employee. It's a neat touch, especially given that payment is handled remotely as well.

It's not often I go for the most expensive thing on the



menu—okay, well, maybe that's a lie—but the braised oxtail entrée sounded too good to pass up. With hardly any experience in the field of Caribbean cuisine, I was relying on my own intuition here. And my expectations for this dish were that of perfectly rendered meat swimming in an intense braising liquid. My friends, I am thrilled to say that this delivered—and then some.

What took this dish to breathtaking heights was the dark, syrupy, umami-laden sauce reminiscent of the savoriest adobo or Korean BBQ marinade you can imagine. Though just shy of being fall-off-the-

bone tender, the thin cuts of oxtail contained pockets of gelatinized fat and cartilage that were a delight to chew and completely saturated in flavor. To put it mildly, this oxtail might be singularly responsible for kickstarting my newfound love for Caribbean cuisine. It really is that good, and I made every effort to integrate this wondrous sauce with the veritable mountain of rice to extend my mileage.

Guyanese, continued on page A16



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Thursday April 14th

Cyrano’s Theatre – No More Harveys 7p-8:15p
Flattop Pizza & Pool – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-11p
Humpys – SpaffDaddy 7:30p-11p
Klondike Mike’s & the Main Street Grill (Palmer) – Open Mic Night 8p-12a
The Marlin Bar (Fairbanks) – Thursday Night Karaoke with Kellie B.! 7p-10p
The Marlin (Fairbanks) – Karaoke with Kellie B.! 10p-2a
UAA Fine Arts Building – UAA Dance in Performance 8p-10p
UAF Charles Davis Hall (Fairbanks) – UAF Percussion Faculty & Guest Recital 7:30p-9p
Van’s Dive Bar – Blue Grass is back w/ Todd Grebe! 9p-12a

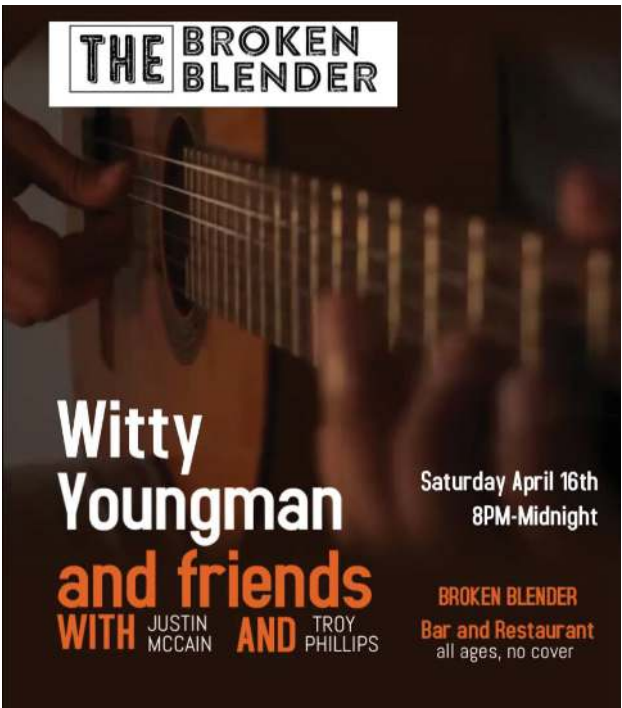
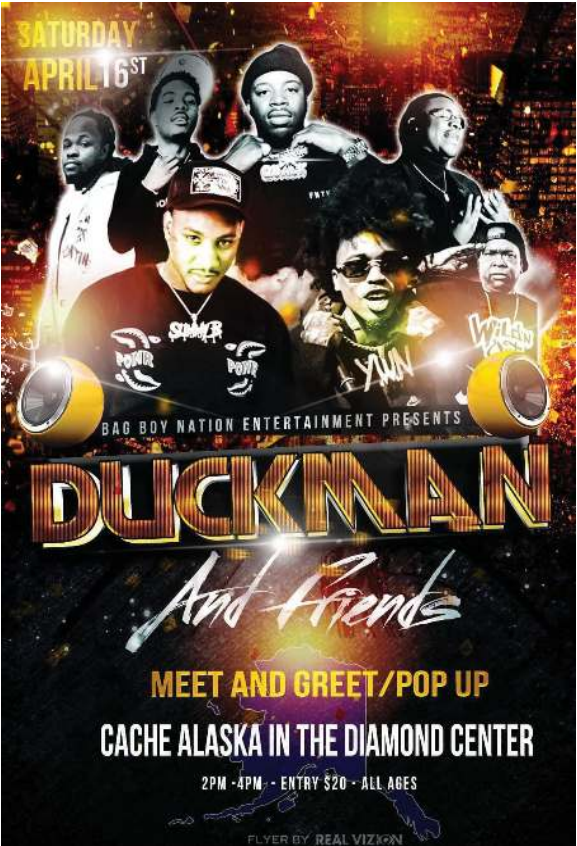
Friday April 15th

The Alaskan Hotel and Bar (Juneau) – “Super Jam Bros” Live 9p-12a
American Legion Post 15 (Palmer) – Friday Night Feast w/ 100 Proof Karaoke 5:30p-9p
American Legion Spenard Post 28 – Acoustic Steak Night w/ J Stevens 6p-8p
Arctic Valley Ski Area – Uncle Jim Live 4:30p-7:30p
Broken Blender – The Acoustic Oosik 8p-12a
Bunnell Street Arts Center (Juneau) - Nathan Hall Concert 7p-9p
Cyrano’s Theatre – No More Harveys 7p-8:15p
Dave & Busters – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 9p-12a
Everett’s (Wasilla) – Comedy Show w/ Reena Calm 7p-9p
Fairview Inn (Talkeetna) – The Hand Me Downs 8p-12a
Floaters (Big Lake) – Open Mic Night 7p-12a
The Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 4207 – Karaoke Friday at the Eagles! 7p-12a
Humpys – Zen Trembles 9p-1a
Koot’s – AK Confidential: Once Upon a Time in Los Anchorage 8p-10p
Koot’s – The Glacier Hoppers 10p-2:40a
Main Even Grill & Catering – The Dawn McClain Experience 8p-10p
The Marlin Bar (Fairbanks) – Singer+ Songwriter Night w/Jacob Bean 10p-2a
O’Malley’s on the Green – HarpDaddy on The Green 6:30p-9:30p
Organic Oasis – John Damberg Jazz Piano Fridays 5:30p-7:30p
PubHouse – Witty Youngman 7p-10p
Sitzmark (Girdwood) – Matt Hopper & Nicole Delores 6p-9p
UAA Fine Arts Building – UAA Dance in Performance 8p-10p
UAF Charles Davis Hall (Fairbanks) – New Music Ensemble 7:30p-9p
Williwaw Social – Breakup Ball with H3 8p-11p
Williwaw Social – Breakup Ball with DJ Fan Service 11p-2a
Van’s Dive Bar – HarpDaddy 11:45p-2a



Saturday April 16th

Alaska Avian Museum – Big Band Bash w/ the Anchorage Jazz Ensemble 6p-10:30p
American Legion Post 15 (Palmer) – Fun and Food w/ 100 Proof Karaoke 6p-11p
American Legion Spenard Post 28 – Saturday Night Karaoke! 9p-12a
Anchorage Moose Lodge – Arctic Outlaws 8p-12a
Arctic Valley Ski Area – Appalaskan Jess-Live 2:30p-5:30p
Broken Blender - Sassy Saturdays Live Cabaret 8p-9:30p
Broken Blender - Witty Youngman and Friends! 8p-12a
The Carousel Lounge – Amy’s Birthday Bash w/ Danger Money 10p-2a
Cyrano’s Theatre – No More Harveys 7p-8:15p
Egan Center – Duckman & Friends w/DJ Joe Brady Opening 7p-11p
The Fairview Inn (Talkeetna) – Evolution of a Thursday 9p-1a
Humpys – Superfrequency 9p-1a
Kharacters Alaskan Bar (Homer) – Hot Mess 10p-2a
Koot’s – AK Confidential: Once Upon a Time in Los Anchorage 6p-8p & 9p-11p
Koot’s – Comedian Reena Calm 7:30p-10p
Koot’s – The Glacier Hoppers 10p-2:40a
Loussac Library – Anchorage Bowl Chamber Orchestra Stage & Screen Concert 7:30p-10p
The Marlin Bar (Fairbanks) – Marc Brown and the Blues Crew 10p-2a
Palmer Alehouse – Nervis Rex Live 7p-10p
The Raven Bar – Easter Underwear Party 9p-2:30a
Schwabenhof (Wasilla) - Rick Brooks Live 7p-12a
Skeetawk (Palmer) – 4th Annual HatcherPalooza 10a-4:30p
UAA Fine Arts Building – UAA Dance in Performance 8p-10p
UAA Grant Hall Theatre – Yup’ik / Inupiaq Spelling Bee 11a-8p
UAF Charles Davis Hall (Fairbanks) – Choir of the North Spring Concert 7:30p-9p
UAF Student Recreation Center (Fairbanks) – Springfest w/ 3OH!3 & Piss Denim 6:30p-11p
Van’s Dive Bar – The 7 Duo & Special Guests at Van’s Dive Bar 9p-1a
Williwaw Social – EDM NIGHT : ALL OF THE LIGHTS - PINEO & LOEB 10p-2a
Yukon Bar (Seward) – Live Music with Ben & JG 9p-1a



Sunday April 17th

American Legion Spenard Post 28 – Primrose Patina-Special Live Performance! 7:30p-9:30p
Anchorage Classical Guitar Society (Online) – ACGS Virtual Open Mic 7p-8:30p
Broken Blender - Rise & Shine Easter Brunch w/ Sweet Cheeks Cabaret 8p-9:30p
The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke Sunday 8p-2a
Cyrano’s Theatre – No More Harveys 3p-4:15p
Humpys - Open Mic Jam 8p-11p
Koot’s – Free Comedy Workshop 8p-10p
The Marlin (Fairbanks) – Sunday Night Karaoke! 6p-12a
UAA Fine Arts Building – UAA Dance in Performance 5p-7p
Van’s Dive Bar – Open Mic! Overlorded by Wash Your Hands 8p-12a

Monday April 18th

Anaya Latin Dance – Beginner Salsa 6p-8p
Koot’s – The Monday Mic at Koots 9p-12a
Van’s Dive Bar – Comedy Open Mic 8:30p-9:30p
Van’s Dive Bar – Mull Over Mondays w/ Ellie Kenealy 9:30p-12a
Yukon Bar (Seward) – Open Jam w/ Ben Sayers 8:30p-12a

Tuesday April 19th

American Legion Spenard Post 28 – Taco Tuesday Open Mic w/ Gary Stedman! 6:30p-9:30p
The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke 8p-2a
Harbor Mountain Brewery (Sitka) – Sitka Tells Tales: Swimming Upstream 7p-8p
Koot’s – The Eternal Cowboys 10p-12a
Organic Oasis – Turnagain Blue 5:30p-7:30p
Trophy Lounge – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 9p-1a
Van’s Dive Bar – Open Jam with Spenard Husband 9p-12a
Williwaw Social – Technologic Tuesdays w/ Lloyds Noize 8p-11p

Wednesday April 20th

907 Alehouse – Tyrone Palmer & Friends 7p-10p
The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke 8p-11p
Catalyst
Eddie’s Sports Bar – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 9p-12a
Good Titrations (Fairbanks) – Alaska Redd O.G.A.R. Album Release 4:20p-7p
Koot’s – Comedy Open Mic 8:30p-10p
Koot’s – KASH Country Night at Koot’s 8p-12:30a
Koot’s – Koots Karaoke 10p-2a
The Marlin (Fairbanks) – Open Mic at The Marlin! 8p-2a
Pioneer Bar – The Eternal Cowboys 10p-12a
PubHouse – Witty Youngman 7p-10p
Schwabenhof (Wasilla) - Open Mic 7p-12a
Sitzmark (Girdwood) – Zero Miles to Empty 6p-9p
Van’s Dive Bar – The Wax Poetic w/ Nikki Now! 7p-9p
Van’s Dive Bar – Karaoke w/ The Milkman and/or The Dairy Queen! 9p-12a
West High School – Large Group Festival Choir 7p-10p
Williwaw Social – DJ GRE’s Slow Whine Wednesday 8p-11p
Yukon Bar (Seward) – Karaoke 9p-2a

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Thu 4/14

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No More Harveys
@ 7pm / \$30

World Premiere at Cyrano's! NO MORE HARVEYS follows the migration of females – both human and animal – against a backdrop of climate change. Cyrano's Theatre Company, 3800 Debarr Road, Anchorage. alexis@cyranos.org



Anchorage Wolverines | April 14

@ 7pm / \$20-\$25
Ben Boeke Ice Arena, 534 East 16th Avenue, Anchorage

Fri 4/15

Featured



Anchorage Wolverines | April 15

@ 7pm / \$20-\$25
Ben Boeke Ice Arena, 534 East 16th Avenue, Anchorage



No More Harveys
@ 7pm / \$30

World Premiere at Cyrano's! NO MORE HARVEYS follows the migration of females – both human and animal – against a backdrop of climate change. Cyrano's Theatre Company, 3800 Debarr Road, Anchorage. alexis@cyranos.org

Sat 4/16

Spring Garden Show
@ 10am

Join us for our annual Spring Garden Show at the mall. Our main mall hallway will be full of plants, garden art and décor, seeds and info from various groups, clubs, nonprofits and Alaskan businesses! 600 E Northern Lights Blvd, 600 East Northern Lights Boulevard, Anchorage. amber@midtownmall.com, 907-602-6225

Featured

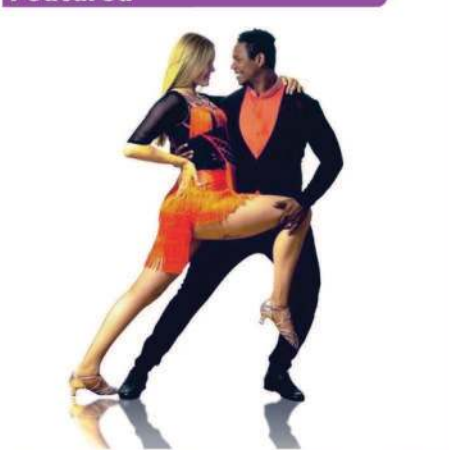


Bag Boy Nation Presents: SOB with Duckman & Friends
@ 7pm / \$50

William A Egan Civic and Convention Center, 555 W 5th Avenue, Anchorage



Featured



Salsa Saturdays at Williwaw Social

@ 6pm / \$10-\$35
Williwaw, 609 F Street, Anchorage



Featured



Comedian Reena Calm
@ 7pm / \$20

Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage



Duckman

@ 7pm
William A. Egan Civic & Convention Center, 555 W 5th Ave, Anchorage

No More Harveys
@ 7pm / \$30

World Premiere at Cyrano's! NO MORE HARVEYS follows the migration of females – both human and animal – against a backdrop of climate change. Cyrano's Theatre Company, 3800 Debarr Road, Anchorage. alexis@cyranos.org

Featured



Sassy Saturdays Cabaret

@ 8pm / \$20
Come see why we have been voted Best Burlesque Show 3 years in a row! Sweet Cheeks Cabaret at The Cheeky Room, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com



Comedian Reena Calm

@ 9:30pm / \$20
Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage

Sun 4/17

Featured



Rise & Shine Easter Brunch

@ 1pm / \$20
He is Risen! Celebrate everything "holy", easter, and springtime with your favorite resurrected deity, Hank Jesus! Sweet Cheeks Cabaret at The Cheeky Room, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com



No More Harveys

@ 3pm / \$30
World Premiere at Cyrano's! NO MORE HARVEYS follows the migration of females – both human and animal – against a backdrop of climate change. Cyrano's Theatre Company, 3800 Debarr Road, Anchorage. alexis@cyranos.org

Wed 4/20

Featured



Collage and Blackout Poetry Workshop Series

@ 6pm / \$25
Local Artist Jesse Rosenstein will lead a 5-week series where participants can make their own blackout poetry and collage board book and socialize safely with neighbors. The Nave, 3502 Spenard Road, Anchorage. info@thenavespenard.com, 907-793-1393



Thu 4/21

Kinder Time April 21

@ 6:30pm
Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 W 48th Avenue, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

Fri 4/22

Williwaw Local Showcase

@ 8pm
Williwaw Social, 609 F St, Anchorage

Sat 4/23

Container Gardening

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Apr 23rd - Apr 22nd
Dr. Lidia Selkregg Chalet, 1600 Lidia Selkregg Lane, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

6 Writing Productivity Myths and Why You Should Stop Believing Them

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6 Writing Productivity Myths and Why You Should Stop Believing Them, presented by author Becca Syme Anchorage. lynnlovegreen@gmail.com, 907-345-5831

Comedian Derek Sheen

@ 7pm / \$20
Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage

Tosca - by Puccini

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A soaring, sensuous saga of love, power and corruption! Puccini's passionate masterpiece is a great date night, perfect for the entire family, first-time opera-goers and lovers of all ages! Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, 621 West 6th Avenue, Anchorage. jberry@anchorageopera.org, 907-279-2557

Sassy Saturdays Cabaret

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Come see why we have been voted Best Burlesque Show 3 years in a row! Sweet Cheeks Cabaret at The Cheeky Room, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com

Comedian Derek Sheen

@ 9:30pm / \$20
Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage

Sun 4/24

Tosca - by Puccini

@ 4pm / \$30.25
A soaring, sensuous saga of love, power and corruption! Puccini's passionate masterpiece is a great date night, perfect for the entire family, first-time opera-goers and lovers of all ages! Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, 621 West 6th Avenue, Anchorage. jberry@anchorageopera.org, 907-279-2557

Tue 4/26

Kinder Time April 26

@ 6:30pm
Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 W 48th Avenue, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

Wed 4/27

Collage and Blackout Poetry Workshop Series

@ 6pm / \$25
Local Artist Jesse Rosenstein will lead a 5-week series where participants can make their own blackout poetry and collage board book and socialize safely with neighbors. The Nave, 3502 Spenard Road, Anchorage. info@thenavespenard.com, 907-793-1393

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We Ain't Hiding Anymore

Anchorage's prodigal son Duckman returns to Anchorage

BY SNARLEY BROWN

The struggle for success has always been an uphill battle for Alaskan musicians. You take our sparse populous, paired with how spread out everything is, and you start to get the picture. After promotion, video shoots, and studio time, you're looking at an end cost that can only be met by selling at least one copy to every single state resident. Except, good luck reaching everyone. The logistics required to reach rural and remote villages are staggering.

The sad truth is that you probably won't make it as a professional musician unless you leave Alaska in search of a larger market with better infrastructure. But even moving outside doesn't guarantee success.

That isn't to say that Alaskan musicians have no chance at success. Indie rocker Matt Hopper and his Roman Candles have pushed into the lower northwest states. 36 Crazy Fists left and signed with Roadrunner, the same label that introduced such major acts into the metal genre as Sepultura and Slipknot. Portugal. the man started from what you could call small-town obscurity. Now you can find a photo taken for Rolling Stone of the guys hanging out with Neil Young while listening to his newest album. Even Yeezus has been photographed rockin' some Portugal apparel.

I can confidently say that recognition for our community of musicians has come a long way from the token notoriety of Jewel. The scene has even created legends like Hobo Jim; may he rest in paradise. However, there is one scene that still lurks in the shadows awaiting mainstream popularity. I'm talking about hip-hop.

Those in East Anchorage grew up knowing the scene and found a hometown hero in Duckman. He's a living product of the wildness that was Fairview and Mountain View back in the early 90s. Growing up in what he clarifies as the "Boniface, Muldoon, and Reka areas," Duckman is a product of disenfranchisement and hustle. He also proves that no matter how long a homie is gone handling business, he's always going to come back.

Born Demar Moultrie, our antagonist actually began his music venture behind the keys.

"I started in this music shit early man," Duck divulges candidly in an interview with online Hip Hop blog The Rap Shack. "I started making beats...[I] knew how I wanted somebody to come rapping on the beat. You know, so I [just] started rapping, was maybe like 15-16 years old...I ain't stopped since."

In a climate full of mumblers, emo rappers, and clout chasers, Duckman remains true to his lane. From his early beginnings with local producer Raw Beats and Out Da Cutt Records, moving on to his personal label Bag Boy Nation Entertainment's distribution deal with Empire Records. His taste in beats is an interesting blend of classic California Bay area artists like Mac Dre, combined with Chicago fame's rhythmically aggressive drill music. He relies heavy on production from local Anchorage producers such as DJ Savvy, Gunnah, Trio, all the while maintaining his roots with Raw Beatz. He doesn't scream into the mic like a lot of these youngsters. Instead, his cadence hits with a clarity comparable to the likes of an early Bobby Shmurda.

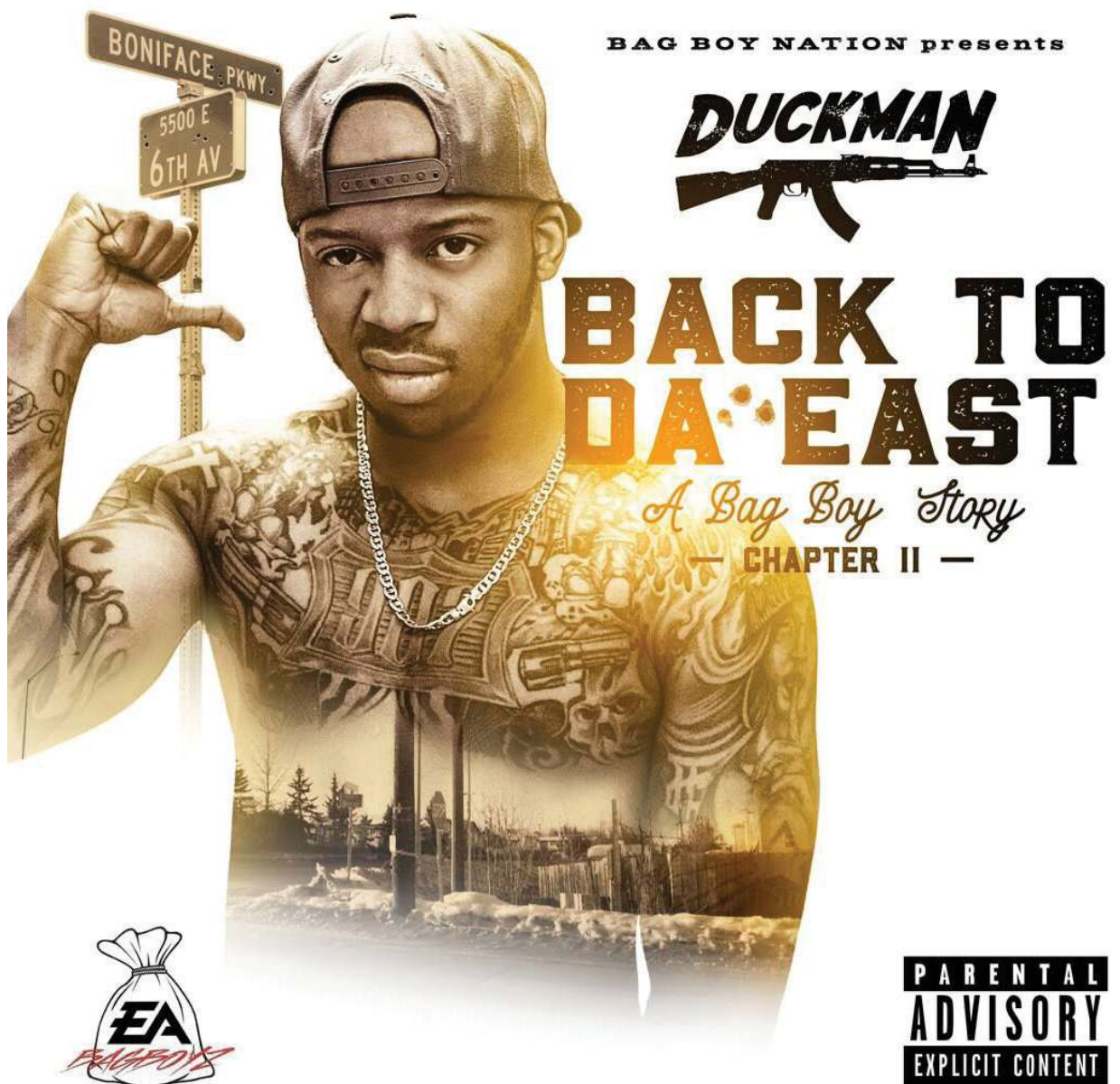
Lyrically, Duckman's music is an authentic nod to his upbringing. From his early mixtape years, to his 2017 *Back To Da East* solo release, life in Anchorage's hoods is represented. We saw more of his love for the community he calls family, on his follow-up release *The Slim Show*. The album was dedicated in memoriam to the loss of his close friend of the same name. His 2019 release *The Adventures of Quack Poppa* build on his success and is a clear illustration of his ability to carry out a solo project with minimal guest artists.

One of the tracks entitled "Young N" features Memphis' own titan in the game Blac Youngsta. Originally recorded with a visual back around 2019, the video premiered on BET and was met with high praise.

But Duckman's victory was short-lived. The loss of Hip Hop great Nipsey Hustle and Duckman's nephew on the same day tainted what was a major success.

"I was on my way back from LA when I got the news," he recalls. "So here I am with a debut, BET world premiere video dropping in two days, and I lose my nephew. I didn't even watch the premiere and I kinda let the record die."

The Hip Hop community was shattered by the loss of Nipsey, with many artists opting to push release dates back as a sign of respect to the lost king. Duckman wasn't even given that option with the video release already receiving a green



light. Between the loss of a hero, and the loss of a loved one, he fell victim to the darkness that followed. "After months of depression, I got invited on a tour the next year."

Pushing his grief aside, Duckman returned with a vengeance by hitting the road with Blac Youngsta and California's SOB X RBE.

"Duck is a rare breed based off the fact he never just wanted to come up. He wanted to come up and bring his city with him," explains local Anchorage producer DJ Savvy.

Bag Boy Nation Entertainment, Duckman's own label, holds true to its mission statement of representing for the city of Anchorage. To quote the man himself, "Nobody is ever gonna try to come save us."

With a year-long break from music while moving around between Vegas, Arizona, and Texas to take care of family and business, Duckman is returning to Alaska. Now on the tail end of his 2020 release *Off the Grid*, an album that masterfully demonstrates more depth and perspective resulting from the artist's journey on his climb to success, he is excited to return home.

"I'm excited for Duckman and his whole team," boasts local hip-hop pioneer and emcee Josh Boots. "It's really a full-circle moment for the city seeing him headline a major event like this! His fanbase has been developed organically throughout a lifetime of hard work, consistency, and dedication to his craft. Through it all, he's always remained authentic and has continued to create music that resonates with the culture."

For those of us who have been with Duckman since the beginning, this Saturday's performance is a well-deserved celebration of his success.

"All I ever wanted was to earn my living and support my family off of music. This is our time now," says Duckman. It's a proclamation that couldn't have been put any more truthfully. After years of shade and misunderstanding, we live in a time where rapping has become part of the largest and most popular as well as fastest evolving genres of music. From the back alleys to the pop charts, hip-hop has made one thing clear; We ain't fuckin' leavin'.

The Egan Center hosts Duckman and Friends: Slimmy B & DaBoii on Saturday, April 16 at 7pm. The show is all-ages, and tickets are available at TicketMaster.com. Fans can also stop by Cache Alaska in the Dimond Mall from 2-4pm for a meet and greet. When the show is all said and done, follow the flow to the afterparty being held at Al's Alaskan Inn and Bar (E 79th Ave).



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The Punniest Comic

Comedian Reena Calm Brings Her Pun-Slinging Road Show to Anchorage on Saturday

BY JOE SLOWINSKI

Reena Calm drives a tricked-out Prius and is the only female comedian who lives on the road as a full-time comedian. Unfortunately, when I first talked to her, she had been in a car accident. “As a road comic, that’s been kind of a major ordeal to sort through,” shares Calm. Luckily, the self-proclaimed pun-slinger is back on the grind and will grace the Koot’s stage this Saturday.

“I have a gift--mental disorder--for puns. I love smart comedy and that perfect zone where smart meets silly or absurd. And obviously, I love wordplay,” she explains.

What should we expect from her pun-laden set? Well, according to her website, her comedy is “autobiographical, silly, and charmingly inappropriate, pulling from a lifetime of questionable choices.” Talking to Calm, it’s clear that her website isn’t just paying lip service to her talent.

Raised in the suburbs of Boston, Calm was mentored through the TV by the cast of Saturday Night Live and the Marx Brothers. Unsurprisingly, her comedic idols include Gilda Radner, Conan O’Brien, the cast of Strangers with Candy, Robin Williams, and Sarah Silverman.

“I was obsessed with comedy and every way, I started doing improv and sketch and then finally started stand up 6 years later,” says the comic who moved to Chicago at 21.

Like many artists, musicians, and comedians, the pandemic shut down her livelihood in 2020. “I had no place of my own or family home, and I had to figure out where I could stay to get through it all,” says Calm. “I had devoted my life to comedy to the point where I didn’t have any other kind of stability. So, there was more stress than relaxation for me.”

Like the rest of us, Calm relied on friends to survive. Though challenging, the break from performing even-



Reena Calm

tually panned out with the creation of new material. “I definitely evolved throughout the last couple of years, personally and artistically.”

“I will say that the people I met from doing comedy are the ones who took the best care of me and helped me the most to keep going,” says Calm. “I was able to generate a bunch of new material doing those horrible zoom shows, and I’m extraordinarily proud of the album I recorded earlier this year.”

A testament to her love of comedy, in July 2020, she wore a Hazmat suit to perform at the Back Door in O’Fallon, Missouri. Then, in November of 2020, she toured performing outdoor shows, and a couple of casino shows on the Oregon coast. By February 2021, she was back in business full time, but audiences were noticeably smaller due to spiking Covid numbers. But that didn’t mean she wasn’t working hard.

“I don’t feel like I’m ever off of this job. I wake up thinking about it and fall asleep tired from it,” shares

Calm. “There is endless work to do with planning future bookings, travel logistics, updating my website, and running non-stop social media. Never enough content!”

In 2018, Calm self-published her book *Once A Pun A Time...: Legend Of A Sighs Queen*. “This joke book is a collection of some of my best pun-liners,” reads her description. “I love that people can enjoy my comedy on their own terms. Whether that’s reading aloud with their friends or alone on the toilet.”

As humans, we need humor to heal as we emerge from our collective den of pandemic isolation. And as Calm explains, comedian healers need us as well.

“I love comedy so much that I don’t even know what shape I would be in without it,” says Calm. “It is what I’m meant to do, And I’ll do whatever it takes to spend the rest of my life making people laugh, feel better.”

Reena Calm takes the Koot’s stage (2435 Spenard Rd) for two shows at 7pm and 9:30pm. Tickets are \$20 at MyAlaskaTix.com.

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A12 PRESS

April 14-20, 2022

Supporting an effort to rename the Suicide Peaks

CITY WILDS
BY BILL SHERWONIT

William Pagaran is a man on a mission, and he doesn't give up easily. Pagaran began his crusade to rename Chugach State Park's North and South Suicide Peaks in 2020. In 2021, his proposal to change their names to North and South Yuyanq' Ch'ex—"Heaven's Breath" in English—was denied by the Alaska Historical Commission. But Pagaran has refused to concede defeat. He recently submitted a new and more substantial application to rename the peaks and hopes that when the commission meets in June, the nine-member Geographic Names board will this time approve his request. That wouldn't be the end of the process, but it's a necessary step along the way.

I only learned about Pagaran's campaign this month, and I'm now among those Alaskans who support his renaming effort. In this column, I'll explain why. I'll also share what I've learned from him and others involved in this issue, which is considerably more complicated than I first imagined.

It's important to note that the renaming of the Suicide Peaks is only one part of Pagaran's effort to curtail suicides in Alaska, particularly within our state's indigenous communities. He's president of Carry the Cure, a non-profit, faith-based organization dedicated to "comprehensive suicide and abuse prevention and healthy lifestyle choices."

Though I've never felt personally offended by the names, I understand why others might be. Especially during a time when there's increased awareness of the scourge that suicide is here in Alaska. I appreciate the desire to seek names that "value life over death."

No doubt some are wondering, as I long did, how North and South Suicide Peaks got their original names in the first place. The most widely accepted explanation is that they were named by local railroad workers, who, the story goes, considered them so intimidating that a person would have to be suicidal to attempt climbing them.

Originally, four peaks were included in the "Suicides" group. But in 1951, the U.S. Geological Survey applied the name to only the North and South Suicide Peaks, which form a recognizable pair even from a distance.

Pagaran, who is part Tlingit and lives in Palmer, first took serious aim at raising awareness of the Suicide Peaks and began his push to change their names in 2020. That summer, he led a circle of Alaskans who discussed the ways suicide had affected their lives, and he then accompanied several people to the top of 5,005-foot South Suicide Peak. Participants spoke of the need to choose life over suicide—and also the need to replace the Suicide Peaks with a more life-affirming and healing name.

To learn what that name should be, Pagaran consulted with members of the Native group that has the closest ties to the local landscape, the Dena'ina Athabascan tribe. He and others did an exhaustive search to find out what, if any, Dena'ina name had ever been given to the pair of mountains. None could be found, so their effort shifted to create a new—and appropriate—name for the peaks.

In the end, an elder named Helen Dick, who speaks the Dena'ina language fluently, suggested the name Yuyanq' Ch'ex—pronounced You-yonk Chech—which translates into English as "Breath from Above" or "Heaven's Breath."

Pagaran also began to seek support for his effort. He contacted some local groups, Native and non-Native, and started an online petition through change.org.

Then he filled out a name-change application and brought



BILL SHERWONIT

North and South Suicide Peaks, seen from McHugh Peak.

it to the state's Alaska Historical Commission. As state historian Katie Ringsmuth has explained to me, the commission reviews any such proposal "to ensure it follows Alaska's Geographic Names Guidelines. If not, we will request additional information."

Pagaran's initial application failed to meet those guidelines, especially in demonstrating local support for the change," Ringsmuth explained.

Though Pagaran had gained some local backing for his initiative, most of it came from Native groups. In other words, he had failed to get a broad enough spectrum of local support.

Additionally, two groups with close and longstanding ties to the Chugach Mountains and Chugach State Park—the Mountaineering Club of Alaska (MCA) and the Chugach State Park Citizen Advisory Board (CAB)—presented a long list of reasons for their opposition to Pagaran's original proposal.

Rather than give up, Pagaran went back to work. Over the past eleven months he's done an immense amount of work to demonstrate why Yuyanq' Ch'ex is a relevant and appropriate name that can make a powerful statement. One that honors the First Alaskans of this region, the Dena'ina, while at the same time removing a name that is derogatory, painful, and inappropriate and doesn't agree with the First Alaskans' view of (these) beautiful mountains.

He has lined up a long list and wide spectrum of local supporters, among them Mayor Dave Bronson; the Anchorage Assembly; several of Anchorage's community councils (especially those that represent neighborhoods closest to the Chugach Front Range); all the Native tribes that live in the area and a variety of other Alaska Native groups; the Boy Scouts of Anchorage; Alaska State Parks Director Ricky Gease; and a group to which I belong, Friends of Chugach State Park.

Meanwhile, the park's CAB agreed to reconsider its position and just this week voted to support the name change. A significant boost to Pagaran's renewed effort, to be sure.

The MCA, meanwhile, remains firmly opposed.

The MCA group's Geographic Names Committee voted unanimously to oppose Pagaran's initial proposal. Steve Gruhn, chair of that committee, recently informed me, "I haven't yet seen any new information since we submitted our comments [in 2021]," nor has the club "received a

request for comment on any revised proposal." "In the absence of any new information, I continue to stand behind the comments [made in 2021]," he adds. I'll note here that the MCA's lengthy comments hold considerable merit. The club's Geographic Naming Committee clearly did its own homework while opposing Yuyanq' Ch'ex on the basis of several criteria, including local usage, descriptive name, historical name, Alaska Native name (however suitable it might be, Yuyanq' Ch'ex has no documented historical use), and rationale for the name change.

The one criterion that unquestionably has changed is that of providing "evidence of local support."

It's also undoubtedly true that for a while, at least, the use of North and South Yuyanq' Ch'ex would likely cause some confusion among those referencing the mountains.

All that said, as one who has a close relationship with the Suicide Peaks (I've climbed the South Peak a few times and have spent many hours on the mountain's flanks while hiking the upper reaches of Falls Creek Valley), I strongly support the name change.

There's also this fact: though their names have officially been recognized since 1951, North and South Suicide Peaks were arbitrarily and, it can be argued, even flippantly named for reasons that have nothing to do with the mountains, their features, or their connection to the local landscape or human residents. Besides that, two of the peaks initially included in the Suicides group have already been renamed Avalanche Peak and the even more strangely named Homicide Peak.

Given our increased recognition of the dark and painful place that suicide has in Alaska's culture, the time is right to give these mountains new names. And what could be more appropriate than poetic names that speak of high places, chosen by a Dena'ina Athabascan elder, someone representing people who lived here long before railroad crews offered their opinions of the mountains?

Despite his work, I think William Pagaran might still be facing an uphill battle.

Though Katie Ringsmuth with the State Historic Preservation Office agrees that Pagaran has "diligently worked to more adequately address the guidelines," especially the requirement demonstrating local support, some of the other criteria seem challenging to meet. And even if the Alaska Historical Commission gives Pagaran a thumbs-up later this year, he still must convince members of the U.S. Board of Geographic Names the change is warranted and meets its principles and policies.

I wish William Pagaran well on his quest and hope that someday, a part of the Chugach Front Range will be blessed by Heaven's Breath, both North and South.

Anchorage nature writer and wildlands/wildlife advocate Bill Sherwonit is a widely published essayist and the author of more than a dozen books, including "Living with Wildness: An Alaskan Odyssey" and "Animal Stories: Encounters with Alaska's Wildlife." Readers wishing to send comments or questions directly to Bill may do so at akgriz@hotmail.com

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Clap Back

Bisexual female in an open/monogamish relationship with a heterosexual male. My partner and I have some friends in the swinging lifestyle that invite us to parties and group sex events. They recently picked up gonorrhea at a hotel takeover and did not find out until after hosting 20 people at a sex party. So, the group is now dealing with a gonorrhea outbreak—mostly oral infections, as we are all very diligent about condom usage for PIV. We are being treated, but I am pretty upset. The thing that



SAVAGE LOVE BY
DAN SAVAGE

bothers me most is how non-chalant they are being about the situation! One person even called this an “inconvenience” and compared it to “the common cold.” (WTF?) While some STIs are easily treated, gonorrhea is treatment-resistant and something like herpes, HPV, or HIV would obviously be a very big deal and permanent. They don’t plan to retest after getting their shots and are already planning group sex events in the next few weeks, which I find concerning. I don’t think I’m comfortable engaging with their group if they are not going to take things

like an STI outbreak more seriously. So, my questions are:

1. My test came back negative (my partner was positive) but shouldn’t they ALL retest after treatment? Especially if it is an STI known to be antibiotic resistant?

2. Am I overreacting or being unfair to our friends? Is this just part of the swinging lifestyle territory that we all have to accept?

3. If we decide to not engage with the group because of their attitude towards STIs, how do we get back into the lifestyle? We are afraid we will lose access to events and people in the scene, as these friends have introduced us to everyone we know in the scene and have gotten us access to all the events we’ve been to before.

— Completely Lost About Panicking

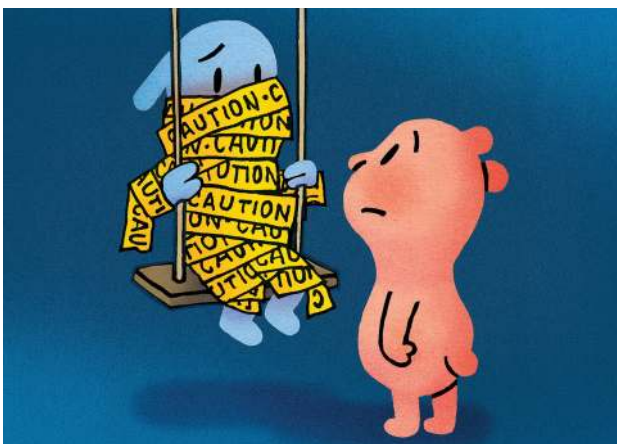
1. “Gonorrhea in the throat is the most difficult to treat,” said Dr. Ina Park. “So, folks that have oral sex and end up with gonorrhea of the throat should get a repeat test in two weeks and abstain from oral sex in the meantime. For rectal and genital infections, the cure rates for gonorrhea are still so high that routine retesting after treatment isn’t recommended.”

Dr. Park is a Professor in the Department of Family Community Medicine at the University of California: San Francisco, CLAP, and also serves as a Medical Consultant for the Division of STD Prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And while she thinks your sex friends who aren’t getting a follow-up test after being treated for oral gonorrhea are making a mistake, she explained that you’re wrong about gonorrhea.

“Gonorrhea can still be easily treated with a single injection of an antibiotic called ceftriaxone, and there is almost no resistance to that drug in North America,” said Dr. Park. Which is not to say gonorrhea is no big deal or that things couldn’t get worse. “Those of us in the business of STI research do worry about an outbreak of multidrug resistant gonorrhea, but luckily it hasn’t yet happened,” said Dr. Park. “The bad news is that over half of the gonorrhea strains circulating in the US are resistant to at least one class of antibiotics, and one-in-five are resistant to two or more classes of antibiotics. We currently only have one antibiotic in the US that can reliably treat gonorrhea. But there is one new antibiotic in late-stage clinical trials, although nothing is immediately available if standard treatment fails.”

Which it hasn’t, CLAP, at least not yet. So, that means you and partner and all your sex friends—if you get treated and tested again in two weeks—can emerge from this experience gonorrhea-free.

2. Your friends are underreacting—gonorrhea shouldn’t be compared to the common cold—but you’re overreacting. While contracting an STI isn’t anyone’s goal at a sex party, whenever you’re having sex outside the bounds of a committed and sexually exclusive relationship, CLAP, you’re running the risk of contracting or spreading an STI. And since people in monogamous relationships cheat, there’s no guarantee you won’t contract an STI in a committed and sexually-exclusive-in-theory-but-not-in-practice relationship either. The only way to elim-



inate your risk of contracting an STI is to never have sex with anyone ever again, CLAP, including your partner.

If the pleasures of attending sex parties aren’t worth the increased risk of contracting an STI, you shouldn’t attend sex parties. You could still have an open relationship, CLAP, but you’ll have to be a lot choosier and make the other people you fuck jump through a lot of hoops. You can ask all prospective new partners to get screened for STIs, provide you with proof of their negative tests, and then refrain from fucking anyone else for a few weeks before meeting up with you. Not everyone is going to wanna jump through those hoops, CLAP, which means you and your partner will have fewer opportunities to fuck other people.

I regret to inform you that the people you wanna fuck could lie to you about abstaining from fucking other people after testing and before meeting up to fuck you a few weeks later, just like people in monogamous relationships sometimes lie. So, to ensure your other partners aren’t fucking other people during that time, CLAP, you’ll have to lock them in your basement.

3. Swapping hosts—going to sex parties and swinger events organized by people who haven’t already given you gonorrhea—isn’t the magic amulet you seem to think it is. Anyone who regularly goes to sex parties to fuck 20 other people is going to be exposed to HPV on a regular basis and is essentially volunteering to be exposed to and very likely contract herpes. (If you aren’t already vaccinated against HPV, get vaccinated.) If you’re using condoms religiously and correctly, and there’s no man-on-man action at these parties (and there usually isn’t at events organized by and for opposite-sex couples), your risk of contracting HIV is very, very low. You can reduce your risk of contracting gonorrhea, syphilis, and chlamydia orally by using condoms and latex barriers for cunnilingus and anilingus, but STIs that are passed through skin-to-skin contact are almost unavoidable when 20 people pile into a living room with a dozen mattresses spread out on the floor.

If you can’t live with those risks or you’re going to fall to pieces if or when you contract another STI, CLAP, sex parties aren’t for you.

Follow Dr. Ina Park on Instagram @InaParkMD. And, hey, it’s STI Awareness Week! I can’t think of a better way to mark STI Awareness Week than reading Dr. Park’s memoir *Strange Bedfellows: Adventures in the Science, History, and Surprising History of STDs*, which is out now in paperback. The New York Times called Dr. Park’s memoir “joyful and funny,” and praised Park for using compassion and humor to “take the stigma out of these infections.” It’s a wonderful book that I would recommend to anyone, but I would especially recommend it to you, CLAP!

I just moved to New York and moved in with a friend from college. He’s gay, I’m a straight woman, we’re both in our 20s. The apartment is small, and I often overhear him having sex. (I assume he’s overhearing me having sex, too.) And again and again, I’ve heard guys call my roommate a “faggot” during sex: “You like that cock, faggot?” “Do gay men just say these sorts of things to each other?” I asked him about it and he shrugged and said, “I love it,” and immediately changed the subject. I’ll take him at his word: He loves it. But why would he love it? I don’t get it.

— Concerned Over Name-Calling Eroding Roommate’s Necessary Esteem Daily

It’s not yours to get, CONCERNED, but I’ll try to explain. . .

When one gay man pulls his cock out of the mouth of his boyfriend or his husband or his Grindr hookup and says, “You’re such a faggot,” it’s not an insult. Like a vaccine with a tiny (and inactive) trace of a deadly virus in it, the word faggot—in the context of two out gay men having consensual sex—obviously has traces of a deeply harmful insult embedded in it. But instead of being terrorized or diminished by the insult, those two gay men are in a sense boosting their immunity to it. Because the word “faggot” not only can’t hurt us when we’re alone together, but it is also ours to use, ours to play with, and ours to enjoy. At that moment, CONCERNED, the word “faggot” is not an insult. It’s an affirmation.

That said, not all gay men enjoy degrading dirty talk, and the fact that some gay men get off on tossing the word “faggot” around during sex does not give straight people license to use it. But if you’re hearing the f-word every time your roommate has a guy over, CONCERNED, you can rest assured: it’s not happening by accident. The men calling your roommate a faggot when they’re fucking his face aren’t suddenly blurting that word out. They’re saying it at your roommate’s request.

questions@savageandlove.net

Love Needs Imagination

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

“I have lived my life according to this principle: If I’m afraid of it, then I must do it.” Aries author Erica Jong said that. Since I’m not an Aries myself, her aspiration is too strong for me to embrace. Sometimes I just don’t have the courage, willpower, and boldness to do what I fear.



BY FREE WILL
ASTROLOGY
BY ROB BREZSNY

But since you decided to be born as an Aries in this incarnation, I assume you are more like Erica Jong than me. And so it’s your birth-right and sacred duty to share her perspective. The coming weeks will be an excellent time to carry out another phase of this lifelong assignment.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

“Sometimes suffering is just suffering,” writes novelist Kate Jacobs. “It doesn’t make you stronger. It doesn’t build character.” Now is your special time to shed suffering that fits this description, Taurus. You are authorized to annul your relationship with it and ramble on toward the future without it. Please keep in mind that you’re under no obligation to feel sorry for the source of the suffering. You owe it nothing. Your energy should be devoted to liberating yourself so you can plan your rebirth with aplomb.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

“I am very much afraid of definitions, and yet one is almost forced to make them,” wrote painter Robert Delaunay (1885–1941). “One must take care, too, not to be inhibited by them,” he concluded. He was speaking of the art he created, which kept evolving. In his early years, he considered his work to be Neo-Impressionist. Later he described himself as a “heretic of Cubism,” and during other periods he dabbled with surrealism and abstract art. Ultimately, he created his own artistic category, which he called Orphism. Everything I just said about Delaunay can serve you well in the coming months, Gemini. I think you’ll be wise to accept definitions for yourself, while at the same time not being overly bound by them. That should ultimately lead you, later this year, to craft your own unique personal definition.

CANCERIAN (June 21-July 22)

As a postgraduate student in astronomy, Cancerian-born Jocelyn Bell Burnell discovered radio pulsars in 1967. Her supervisor, who initially dismissed her breakthrough, was awarded the Nobel Prize for her work in 1974—and she wasn’t! Nevertheless, she persisted. Eventually, she became a renowned astronomer who championed the efforts of minority researchers. Among the 25 prestigious awards and honors she has received is a three-million-dollar prize. I urge you to aspire to her level of perseverance in the coming months. It may not entirely pay off until 2023, but it will pay off.

LEO (July 23-August 22)

“One should always play fairly when one has the winning cards,” wrote author Oscar Wilde. Let’s make that your motto for the next six weeks. If life could be symbolized by a game of poker, you would have the equivalent of at least a pair of jacks and a pair of queens. You may even have a full house, like three 10s and two kings. Therefore, as Wilde advised, there’s no need for you to scrimp, cheat, tell white lies, or pretend. Your best strategy will be to be bold, forthright, and honest as you make your moves.

Astrology, continued on page A16

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- 1 Sore
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10 "Get what I'm sayin'?"
15 Store
19 Prior to, to poets
20 Gofer's job
21 Gut
22 Dana
23 Person born in early October in Benghazi?
25 Family car in Khartoum?
27 Eddie — (leisurewear chain)
28 Carrere of the screen
29 Rock concert booster
30 Make furious
31 Silky cat in Luanda?
34 Beyond city limits
37 Merit badge displays
38 Kazan of filmmaking
39 It precedes omega
40 Clear-minded
41 Lead-in to history

- 44 Chess ploy in Banjul?
47 Ballroom dance in Apia?
53 Ency., e.g.
54 Ancient Central Americans
55 See 112-Down
56 Italian "my"
57 Russia's Alexis I, e.g.
59 Envy, e.g.
60 Dark-haired man in Bandar Seri Begawan?
63 Lumber tool
65 Former Oriole
68 Extremist
69 "Delta Dawn" singer
71 Pathologist's study
74 Long time
75 Mo. in which fall starts
77 Doc in Tijuana?
79 Cinch — (trash bag brand)
81 "Keep this in"
83 Do a fist bump
84 Scandal-ridden
company of 2002

- 85 Japanese brew
88 Old TV's — "Na Na"
89 Tropical devil ray in Valletta?
91 Sleeping garment in San Miguelito?
95 Orig. copies
96 Well out of range
97 Precept
98 Is the right size for
100 "That made no sense to me"
106 People rattling things off
108 Engaged guy in Marseilles?
111 Actress Saoirse
112 Long time
113 Hip-hop producer
Gotti
114 The Beatles' "I — Walrus"
115 Buyable apartment in Brazzaville?
118 Fish eggs in Barcelona?
120 Wine city in California
121 — a million

- 122 Secret recorder disguised as a writing instrument
123 — gow poker
124 Supermodel from Somalia
125 "Check," to a card player
126 Motown's Franklin
127 Lingo suffix

DOWN

- 1 Peach — (desserts)
2 Singer Grande
3 Cleans up, as software
4 NutraSweet developer
5 Website ID
6 Water filter brand
7 Polio studier
Albert
8 Make furious
9 Oklahoma city
10 Polite reply to a lady
11 Coffee pod
12 Drift (off)
13 Pay add-on?
14 Hits the jackpot
15 Piloting guy
16 Gave birth
17 Enthusiasm for Barack

- 18 Word-wit bit
24 Michelle of "Crazy Rich Asians"
26 Erwin of film
29 Opera opus
32 Some vipers
33 Korbuto of gymnastics
34 Secretive viewers
35 B-52 org.
36 Ensnares
42 Meander
43 Arabian ruler
45 Half a bikini
46 Gallic pal
47 Native-born Israeli
48 "What —" ("Ho-hum")
49 Harold's film partner
50 Dodge of old
51 "Hang on —"
52 Boxing event
57 Precept
58 Hades river
59 Go like a fish
61 "May — a favor?"
62 Personal ID
64 Takes in
65 — terrier
66 Dressy tie
67 Pop singer
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70 Verdi's slave
72 With 90-Down, appear that
73 Writer Ferber

- 76 Dismissive remarks
78 Not panicky
79 Partaking of with others
80 Aspiration
82 — Mahal
85 On — with
86 Space that's invulnerable to attack
87 Large boa
88 Joust verbally
89 — Hari
90 See 72-Down
92 Lace town
WSW of Paris
93 Willful insult
94 Sorvino of the screen
99 Potshot taker
101 Heavy vapor
102 Genie houser
103 Like early audiobooks
104 Unstressed vowel sounds
105 — -weenie
107 Chinese ideal
109 Large wader
110 Kick out
112 With 55-Across, she eloped with Ernie Kovacs
115 Caesar's 151
116 Artist Yoko
117 Mo. neighbor
118 Jacuzzi site
119 "Nope"

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LEGALS

Alaska Joint Ventures, LLC is applying under 3AA 306.500(a)(2) for a new Marijuana Concentrate Manufacturing Facility license, license #32807, doing business as Rabble, located at 7801 Schoon Street, Suite L, Anchorage, AK, 99518, UNITED STATES. Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and application information will be posted on AMCO's website at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco>.

Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501.

Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 4/14/22, 4/21/22, 4/28/22

Firetap Tikahtnu LLC, dba Firetap Tikahtnu located at 1148 Muldoon Road, Pad M, Anchorage, Alaska 99504 is applying for a transfer of a Beverage Dispensary AS 04.11.090 liquor license to Firetap Tikahtnu LLC dba On The Border Restaurant located at 1148 Muldoon Road, Pad M, Anchorage, Alaska 99504. Interested persons should submit written comment to their local governing body, the applicant, and to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board at 550 West 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, Alaska 99501 or alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov

Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 3/31/22, 4/07/22, 4/14/22

One Caribbean staple I knew I had to try was their jerk chicken—something I’ve never had a chance to explore until now. It’s available here in several different forms, but I opted for a sandwich that includes shredded chicken, jerk sauce, plantains, and coleslaw. Again, the warm and peppery spices of jerk seasoning were in full force as the

LEGALS

Host Chen ANC FB, LLC dba Sleeping Lady Airport Lounge located at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, 5000 W. International Airport Road, Ste. C3119, Anchorage, AK 99502 is applying for transfer of a Beverage Dispensary Tourism AS 04.11.400 (d) liquor license to Delta Air Lines, Inc. dba Delta Sky Club. Interested persons should submit written comment to their local governing body, the applicant, The Law Offices of Ernouf & Coffey, P.C. At P.O. Box 212314, Anchorage, Alaska 99521 and to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board at 550 West 7th Ave. Suite 1600 Anchorage AK 99501 or alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov
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Super Crossword

Answers

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juicy chunks of chicken grasped my attention and maintained a stronghold. The plantains were another winning element, with a nice starchy texture and combination of fruity and vegetal flavors. Frankly, the only disappointing aspect here was the bone-dry buns. Although they were respectable for simply keeping everything intact.

I decided to continue my Caribbean food education by sampling one of their Jamaican beef patties. They were the last item to arrive at my table as they were baked fresh to order. These aren’t patties in the typical sense—rather, they resemble empanadas down to the flaky, buttery crust and spiced meat filling. As it turns out, the beef had a looser, more minced consistency than I was expecting. It was also relatively mild in flavor. Eventually, I succumbed to relying on the Scotch Bonnet and jerk seasoning hot sauces sitting on the sidelines of the table. Both were tart, fruity and offered ample heat to help bring more life to the pastry, which was otherwise fairly decent on its own.

While it seems I’ve only scratched the surface, I have fully embraced the belief that Da J3rk Spot has led me to discover my favorite new cuisine. Among several stand-outs, the braised oxtail was one of the best bites in recent memory and easily a must-try. I honestly can’t comment when it comes to authenticity. Still, everything was delicious enough to where I’ll be back in no time to work my way through their entire deluge of delectable options. Da J3rk Spot doesn’t just succeed at providing a true taste of the Caribbean—it stands as a pillar of Eagle River’s increasingly diverse food scene and warrants a spot on your regular rotation, no matter the distance.



Astrology, from page A14

VIRGO (August 23-September 22)

“In all the land, there is only one you, possibly two, but seldom more than 16,” said comedian and actor Amy Sedaris. She was making a sardonic joke about the possibility that none of us may be quite as unique as we imagine ourselves to be. But I’d like to mess with her joke and give it a positive tweak. If what Sedaris says is true, then it’s likely that we all have soul twins somewhere in the world. It means that there are numerous people who share many of our perspectives and proclivities; that we might find cohorts who see us for who we really are. I bring these thoughts to your attention, Virgo, because I suspect the coming months will be an excellent time for meeting and playing with such people.

LIBRA (September 23-October 22)

A team of biologists unearthed a fascinating discovery in Costa Rica. When the group planted a single tree in pastureland that had no trees, biodiversity increased dramatically. For example, in one area, there were no bird species before the tree and 80 species after the tree. I suspect you can create a similar change in the coming weeks. A small addition, even just one new element, could generate significant benefits. One of those perks might be an increase in the diversity you engage with.

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)

Smallpox has been eliminated thanks to vaccination, but it was once among the most feared diseases. Over the course of many centuries, it maimed or killed hundreds of millions of people. For 35 percent of those who contracted it, it was fatal. As for the survivors, their skin had permanent scars from the blisters that erupted. As disfiguring as those wounds were, they were evidence that a person was immune from future infections. That’s why employers were more likely to hire them as workers. Their pockmarks gave them an advantage. I believe this is a useful metaphor for you. In the coming weeks, you will have an advantage because of one of your apparent liabilities or imperfections or “scars.” Don’t be shy about using your unusual asset.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarian author Pearl Cleage sets the tone for the future I hope you’ll seek in the coming weeks. The Black feminist activist writes, “We danced too wild, and we

sang too long, and we hugged too hard, and we kissed too sweet, and howled just as loud as we wanted to howl.” Are you interested in exploring such blithe extravagance, Sagittarius? Do you have any curiosity about how you might surpass your previous records for rowdy pleasure? I hope you will follow Cleage’s lead in your own inimitable style.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

“I can never rest from tenderness,” wrote author Virginia Woolf. I won’t ask you to be as intense as her, Capricorn. I won’t urge you to be constantly driven to feel and express your tenderness. But I hope you will be focused on doing so in the coming weeks. Why? Because the astrological omens suggest it will be “in your self-interest to find a way to be very tender.” (That’s a quote by aphorist Jenny Holzer.) For inspiration, consider trying this experiment proposed by Yoko Ono: “Try to say nothing negative about anybody: a) for three days; b) for 45 days; c) for three months.”

AQUARIUS (January 20- February 18)

“I gamble everything to be what I am,” wrote Puerto Rican feminist and activist poet Julia de Burgos, born under the sign of Aquarius. Her gambles weren’t always successful. At one point, she was fired from her job as a writer for a radio show because of her progressive political beliefs. On the other hand, many of her gambles worked well. She earned awards and recognition for her five books of poetry and garnered high praise from superstar poet Pablo Neruda. I offer her as your role model, Aquarius. The rest of 2022 will be a fertile time to gamble everything to be what you are. Here’s a further suggestion: Gamble everything to become what you don’t yet know you must become.

PISCES (February 19-March 20)

Piscean jazz saxophonist and composer Ornette Coleman was a trailblazer. He created the genre known as free jazz, which messed with conventional jazz ideas about tempos, melodies, and harmonies. In the course of his career, he won a Pulitzer Prize, Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, and MacArthur Fellowship “genius” grant. He was a technical virtuoso, but there was more to his success, too. Among his top priorities were emotional intensity and playful abandon and pure joy. That’s why, on some of his recordings, he didn’t hire famous jazz drummers, but instead had his son, who was still a child, play the drum parts. I suggest you apply an approach like Coleman’s to your own upcoming efforts.



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Live-trapping lynx in the far north

NORTH OF COLDFOOT — The lynx looks out from inside a chicken-wire cage. Despite its loss of freedom and the nearby squeaking of boots on cold snow, the wild cat looks calm, as if it might be resting while digesting a snowshoe hare.

Knut Kielland, a professor with UAF's Department of Biology and Wildlife, used to trap lynx for their fur.



NED ROZELL

Here, he has captured this 22-pound female lynx as part of an Alaska-wide project he leads to better understand the ecology of the animal.

He started live-trapping lynx back in 2008, at the Bonanza Creek Long Term Ecological Program in the forest near Fairbanks. Here north of the Arctic Circle, Kielland partnered with Donna DiFolco of the National Park Service in 2014 to study lynx.

Expanding what Kielland started, biologists at both Tetlin and Yukon Flats national wildlife refuges are also trapping and following lynx, as have scientists with Kanuti and Koyukuk-Nowitna refuges.

In hushed tones, Kielland asks for help in preparing a syringe attached to a pole. He measures out a dose of anesthesia that will immobilize the lynx for one hour.

While Kielland works, the lynx stares out, not blinking. This is maybe the same animal that visited this same trap one week ago, after Kielland wired the guillotine-style door open with bait inside.

With the local snowshoe hare population at a low in its cycle and food harder to come by, this lynx returned to the trap in which Kielland hung a roadkill grouse he stopped for on his drive up the Dalton Highway.

The female stepped inside the trap and pressed a broad paw on a rectangle of plywood. That action stretched a wire that pulled a bolt from the trap door, which fell shut.

Kielland approaches the trap with his syringe attached to the 4-foot metal rod.

Through the chicken wire, Kielland pokes the lynx in a rear haunch. The cat jumps, and then settles down. Its tongue darts in and out of its mouth. Kielland knows this serpentine reaction means the drug is working.

After a couple of minutes of silence, Kielland whispers to me.

"Go up and tell me what you see."

I take a few steps toward the trap.

"Looks like it's sleeping," I say.

Kielland waits another minute. He approaches, and then pokes the lynx with a dead spruce branch through the chicken wire. It doesn't move.

He then pulls up the trap door and secures it with the bolt. He reaches in and gently pulls out the lynx, much as he once lifted his sleeping daughters off the couch. He lays the limp cat on a foam pad on top of the cage.

In the 10-degree F air, I pull my hand from a mitten. Here is a rare opportunity to touch a wild living creature. I place my hand on the small of the lynx's back. I feel it breathing, steady and slow. I don't feel heat through its thick, supple fur until I press down.

The trapper/ecologist who lost his taste for killing things like lynx has handled many live animals. He works fast and sure.



He lifts the cat's leg and squints, determining the lynx is a female (he had guessed male, because of her large head and lanky body). He feels the animal's sides and belly.

"She's pretty lean," he says.

He reads the animal's pulse and blood-oxygen level with an instrument attached to a plastic clip that pinches the lynx's tongue. He measures the length of its hind foot and its ear tufts, the latter with his middle finger.

"Some of us are lucky enough to have finger segments that are each exactly an inch long," he says.

He adjusts a plastic collar to the thickness of the lynx's neck by matching up holes in the strap. He secures the two collar bolts with a nut-driver. The block of transmitter and battery on the collar will allow him to see where the animal wanders via satellite. The device also has a timer: the collar will pop off the animal this August and fall to the forest floor.

As the lynx begins to twitch, Kielland performs the final task — installing a small metal ear tag with a specialized pair of pliers. As he squeezes, the lynx looks at me with blazing yellow eyes; I imagine that chilling look as the last thing a snowshoe hare might see.

With the science completed, Kielland returns the lynx gently to the cage.



He wants it to recover from the drug before he sets it free. The anesthesia is wearing off.

Soon, the animal recovers. He lifts the door and it leaves the cage. The lynx wanders toward the frozen creek, disappearing into the spruce forest.

"I sure hope she stays around," Kielland says.

The ideal scenario for him and his fellow researchers is that this female would mate and give birth to kittens here in the blue-and-white valley of the Dietrich River. But several of the lynx collared here — the first lynx in Alaska ever fitted with satellite collars — took off.

Lynx, Continued on page A18

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Empty Nesting

My youngest recently moved out. I thought I was ready to focus on myself more, but I am finding the grief much harder to cope with than anticipated. What can I do?

— Empty nest...



ASK OSKAR BY
OSKAR SAVILLE

back to their smaller days with the desire to freeze life. But it's like holding the ocean in my hands: I can't.

Thankfully my children are still at home, but I already know what it's like to adjust to time by myself. The first year I separated from my husband, I suddenly found myself with five weeks in the summer on my own and not a clue about what to do with that time. I felt a deep sense of longing for my children—that grief you expressed. I loved being with them, and not only did I now not have them, but I also didn't know what to do without them. I had built my world around them, and now I had no world. So I did nothing that first summer. Well, nothing more than work and miss my kids.

As the year went on and plans for the summer came around again, I paused and thought about what I would do with my time without the kids. I started to realize that I felt I was betraying my children if I had a good time while they were gone. It was as if I was saying, "Thank god my kids are gone! Now I finally can have fun!" I was able to see that I thought loyalty meant not going on with my life in order to show my children how much I really loved them. But then the thought came:

Dear Empty Nest,
I am right there with you. Why do children have to leave?!? From the moment I gave birth, I felt the dreaded knowledge that they would have to leave the nest one day. I have pleaded with and begged my three children over the years not to grow, but to no avail. Two of them are now taller than me, and my 9-year-old is on his way. Many times when I can't sleep, I pull out my phone, look back on old pictures, and try to transport myself

Did I want *them* to not have fun when they were away from *me*? No, of course not. I wanted them to have fun, so I gave myself permission to have fun without them.

I took a trip to California all by myself. I got to experience many things in those weeks, like getting a coffee at the airport and being able to people-watch as I waited for my flight; not having to be home at a certain time to take care of someone else; setting my schedule just for me; and finding new talents and interests because I had the space to do it.

I found that during those weeks, I had a greater appreciation of time because it was in direct contrast with what felt like the rest of the year when I was with my kids. I realized that life was short, and I needed to embrace my own life as much as I did my children's. Taking in *my* life the way I took in my children's smiles, faces, and voices, brought me to an important realization: The more I took care of me, the more I noticed that the sadness about my children not being with me went away. It was being replaced with a feeling that my kids were with me more than ever because I was thinking about how I couldn't wait to share every experience I was having with them. Our conversations on the phone became richer, and the kids were just as excited to tell me about what they were doing, too.

By the time the five weeks were over, and my children and I were back together, there was a newfound intimacy between us. My original fear of them leaving—my sense of feeling abandoned, or that *I* was abandoning *them*—was replaced with the knowledge that nothing could sever our bond. Physically together or not, we were *always* together because we are part of each other's hearts.

So now, even on those nights when I go back to my old pictures hoping to stop time, I have a reference point that helps me gently come back to rest in the knowledge that it's safe for my children to move forward and safe for me to move forward, too. It's like my children and I are a tree. Each time we grow, we create a new branch, but we're always connected to the base—that can never be severed. So I wish you to be kind and gentle with yourself as you stretch your limbs and create new branches in your tree of life with your children.

Lynx, from page A18

One wandered to Cape Krusenstern on the Chukchi Sea north of Kotzebue, a place with tundra vegetation that does not nourish snowshoe hares. Another, nicknamed Goldie, roamed from here to Norton Sound, passing near the villages of Koyuk and Shaktoolik before continuing to the mouth of the Yukon River. A third went all the way to British Columbia in Canada, a distance of 1,000 miles.

Lynx have also traveled far from all the other study sites in middle Alaska.

"One thing we learned is their capacities for dispersal," Kielland said. "Not only the sheer distance, but straight across country, sometimes almost on a compass bearing."

The scientists noted was that during peak hare populations, lynx can have lots of kittens.

"Lynx are supposed to have two to four kittens, but we found litters of five, six, seven and eight," he said.

His trail cams, placed near each live-trap, have also captured images of males and females hanging out together at times other than breeding season, and kittens staying with their mothers for nearly the entire first year of their lives. Researchers thought lynx were more solitary than that.

Why do the boreal-forest lynx take off, even to where there are no trees (or their favorite food, snowshoe hares)?

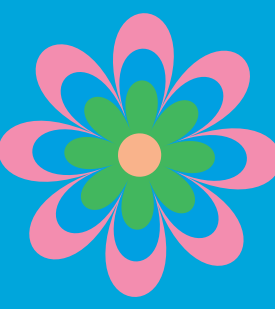
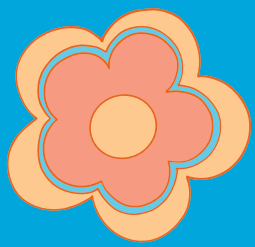
Scientists don't really know that answer yet, but they suspect that hunger is a major driver.

Before his three weeks is over here in the Brooks Range north of the Arctic Circle, Kielland will spend many hours baiting, setting and checking his 20 live-traps along a 56-mile line he accesses by truck and foot along the Dalton Highway. He will capture and collar one more lynx, a male Kielland and his helpers saw on trail-camera images last fall.

He will return home and to his office at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Arctic Biology. There, he will log into his computer and see where the recently trapped female lynx is roaming. As of this writing, she is wandering the hillsides and creek bottoms within a few miles of where she stepped into the trap.

In early June, she may show a tight pattern of location dots in the same area around Wiseman, lingering at a hidden den site on the flank of a mountain. There, she might give birth to the next generation of cats surviving at the limits of the great northern forest.

Since the late 1970s, the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Geophysical Institute has provided this column free in cooperation with the UAF research community. Ned Rozell is a science writer for the Geophysical Institute.



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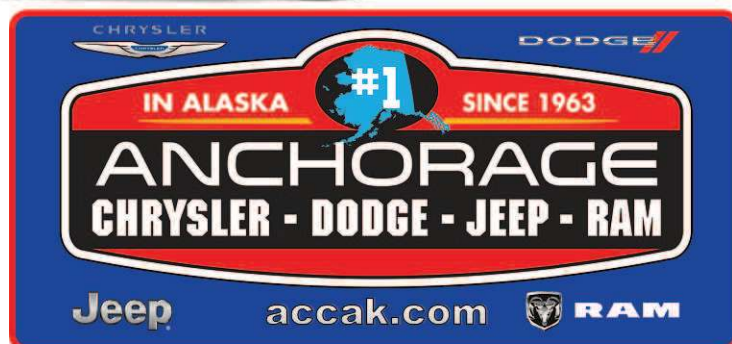
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Tax/DMV extra. Images do not represent actual vehicles. Documentation fees Included. Subject to prior sale. Price after incentives. 0% for 72 months applies to 21 MY Jeep Grand Cherokee (excl. SRT & TH), 21 MY Chrysler 300, 21 MY Dodge Durango (Excl. SRT Hellcat AWD) 21 MY Dodge Challenger + SRT, 21 MY Dodge Charger + SRT For more information, contact your Hometown Dealer, Anchorage Chrysler Dodge Jeep RAM. Sale ends 4_30_2022.



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