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COURTESY OF MAYFEST

Young the Giant to play Williwaw on Saturday

BY O'HARA SHIPE

A decade ago, a newly minted Young the Giant blasted onto the music scene with their debut album of the same name. At the time, Amazon.com dubbed the album the third-best rock album of 2010. Featuring “Cough Syrup,” “My Body,” and “I Got,” the band’s rookie album is, to date, their most commercially successful. But classic songs never die, and “Cough Syrup” has been enjoying a resurgence on local FM stations.

While Young the Giant’s sophomore album, Mind over Matter, wasn’t released to major acclaim, the New York Times nevertheless suggested that the album was “a sharp, electric album that has the cool reserve of

the Cure matched with the arena mind-set of, say, Muse (though without that group’s mechanical air).” It’s an apt description of the album’s first single, “It’s About Time.” Unlike the pop-forward “Cough Syrup,” “It’s About Time” took on a decidedly heavier tone. Think heavy drum beats and synth-infused vocals.

Their most recent album, Mirror Master, saw a return to the band’s pop-rock roots. As evidenced by 10-million views on YouTube, the album’s second single, “Superposition,” seems to have struck a chord with fans.

On the fence about plunking down \$55 for the outdoor show? Maybe this will persuade you. The forecast is calling for 70+ degree weather and Alaskan favorite, Medium Build, will be kicking off the festivities.

Tickets are available at [EventBrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com), and Williwaw’s (609 F Street) doors open at 5pm.

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Dunleavy removes Brett Huber as deputy campaign treasurer after learning on Twitter it was illegal

Last July, Gov. Mike Dunleavy hired back his 2018 campaign manager, Brett Huber, and created a brand-new \$140,000-a-year job titled “Governor’s Senior Policy Advisor for Statehood Defense.”

Huber had no job duties other than to direct the chorus of complaints about federal overreach and promote Dunleavy.



BY DERMOT COLE

It was a campaign job, paid for with public funds.

Huber first came to state government from the

realm of Dunleavy financier Bob Penney, having run the Kenai River Sport Fishing Association for Penney.

In 2014, Huber worked for Dunleavy in the Legislature and became Dunleavy’s 2018 campaign manager before Dunleavy hired him for a state job in the governor’s office.

By 2019, he displayed such a mastery of the talking points for the Pebble Mine that the project chief of staff called him a “rock star.”

He left his job in the governor’s office in the summer of 2020 to run the campaign against the ranked choice voting measure. He testified under oath in 2020 that he was a volunteer for that campaign.

The following month, however, the campaign paid his company \$45,000 for “campaign management.” That disclosure did not become public until Feb. 15, 2021.

Dunleavy put Huber back on the state payroll on July 6, 2021 for the Statehood Defense make-work job.

This spring Huber disappeared from the state payroll with no public announcement by the Dunleavy administration.

On April 3, the Alaska Landmine quoted unnamed sources as saying that Huber would run the Dunleavy “independent expenditure” group bankrolled with \$3 million from the Republican Governors’ Association.

That money had been quietly deposited into an account on Feb. 25, 2021.

The timing was no accident. Had the Republican group waited three more days, the election reform measure approved by Alaska voters would have kicked in. And that measure would have required identification of the real donors of the money—those who laundered it through the RGA.

There is a chance that some of that \$3 million is from Dunleavy’s brother Francis and from Penney, who spent hundreds of thousands to elect Dunleavy in 2018.

On Tuesday, the Associated Press reported that after Huber left his state job on April 2 of this year, the governor’s office gave him a no-bid \$50,000 contract to perform the same work he had been doing as a state employee.

This is political favoritism at work.

Meanwhile, Huber also went on the payroll of the independent Dunleavy campaign group backed by the \$3 million from the GOP governors. He got an \$80,500 consulting contract on April 29 from the “independent” group, which is supposed to have no



Scott Kendall
@scooterkendall

Look at this... ••

@GovDunleavy’s top political aide is getting:

- 1) \$50k in public \$ to advise state lawyers bc 🧑
- 2) \$80k to run a Dunleavy SuperPAC funded by @GOPGovs dark money; &
- 3) is *still* a treasurer for @MikeDunleavyGov’s official campaign

(Are #2 & #3 legal?)

#akleg

connections to the official Dunleavy campaign.

As a state employee, he was in no position to run this campaign group to promote Dunleavy, so Dunleavy gave him a state contract, which went into effect April 25, the AP said.

The contract should never have been signed. It should be canceled immediately.

Huber told the AP it “made more sense for me personally and for the state” for him to become a state contractor.

Sure. It made a lot of sense for him. He gets \$50,000 for doing nothing.

The claim by the state that no one on the state payroll has the skills to do whatever it was that Huber was doing is laughable. It’s an insult to every state employee with a real job.

One more point in this mess concerns the improper role of Huber in the Dunleavy reelection campaign.

Huber has been a deputy treasurer of the Dunleavy campaign since last fall.

He remained a deputy treasurer of the Dunleavy campaign even after he quit his state job and signed a contract with the allegedly “independent” group bankrolled with the \$3 million.

The presence of Huber on the “independent” group and his role inside the Dunleavy campaign shows that the two are not separate, but joined at the hip. Huber was and is the top political aide to Dunleavy. Under state rules, the two entities are supposed to have no connection.

No one in the Dunleavy campaign seemed to be aware of the legal problem they have created for themselves.

That is, until Tuesday at 12:28 p.m. when Scott Kendall, the former chief of staff for Bill Walker, tweeted about it.

It appears someone on Dunleavy’s campaign saw the tweet and filed a new document with the APOC before 2 p.m., removing Huber from the list of Dunleavy campaign deputy treasurers.

But the damage has been done.

This deserves a state ethics complaint about the absurd no-bid \$50,000 contract and an APOC complaint about the independent group that isn’t at all independent.



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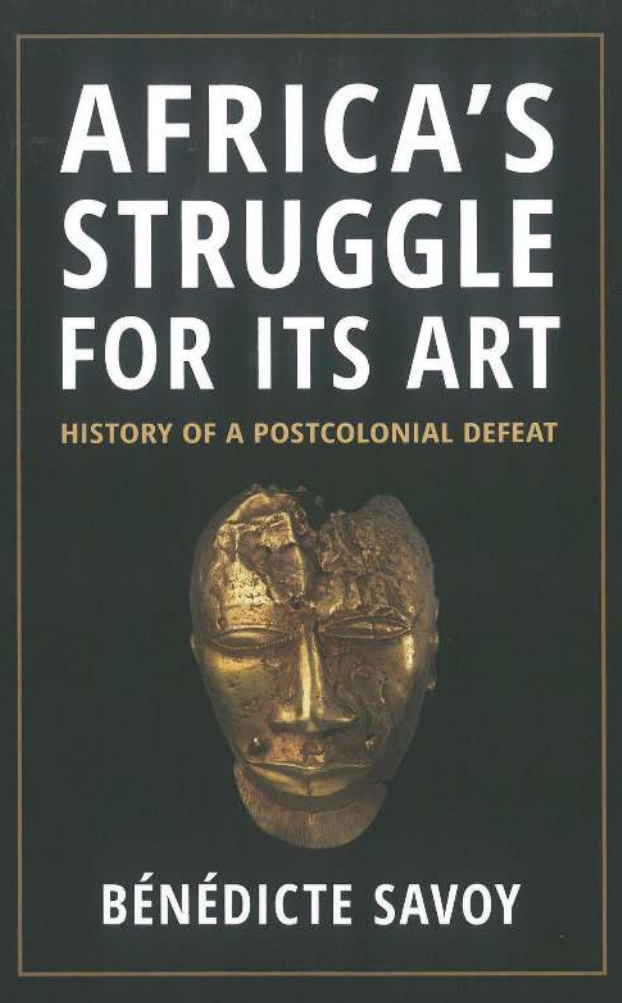
Ongoing Art Restitution Through: ‘Africa’s Struggle for Its Art’

ART SLEUTH
BY JEAN BUNDY

Selfishness fetches up in the art world too. The book: ‘Africa’s Struggle for Its Art’ by Bénédicte Savoy details the sparring between African countries, 1965-1985, who wanted their art returned, and Western institutions which rationalized keeping the works. Savoy writes, “Almost all of Africa’s ancient artistic heritage is now preserved in European countries: in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Vienna, and Belgium. It is difficult to convey the magnitude of this reality in numbers, to physically experience the space it occupies, to imagine the weight it represents, the forces it took to move these pieces (vi).” In 1960, seventeen African countries achieved independence. The Post-war fight to retrieve art began around 1956 at the ‘First World Congress of Black Writers and Artists’ attended by James Baldwin and Frantz Fanon (4). Savoy explains, “Restitution contributes to casting off an outdated, hierarchical structure... and to defining a mutual relationship in accordance with post-racial coexistence (141).”

Returning cultural property has become a worldwide appeal, including in Alaska. Wells Fargo recently gave its Native art to museums throughout the state (ADN, Hughes 04/28/22). Emily Moore writes in ‘Proud Raven, Panting Wolf’, “In 1961, the Forest Service formally transferred supervision of the all the totem parks associated with Native communities to Native control (Moore 182).” The Alutiiq Museum has a sharing/partnership with Musée-Boulogne-Sur-Mer, which acquired masks when Alphonse Pinart traveled to Kodiak, 1875.

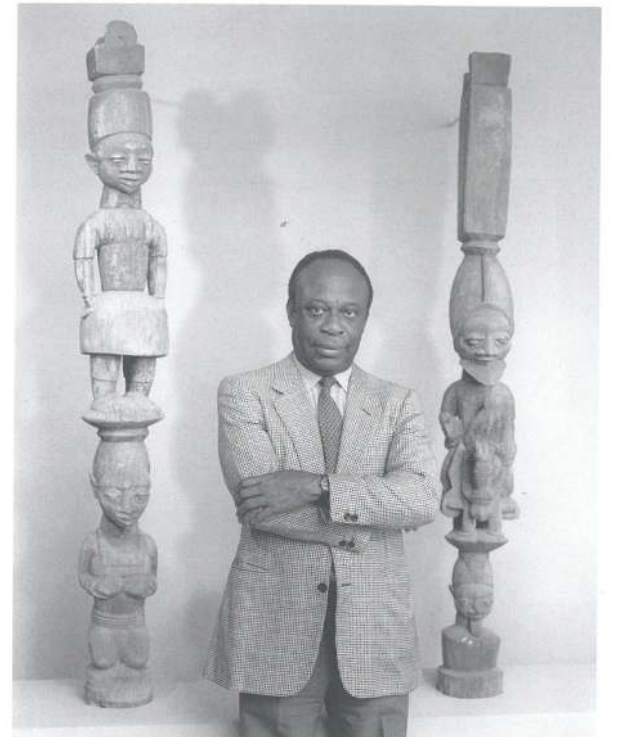
The book: ‘Africa’s Struggle for Its Art’ documents the endeavoring to retrieve art—stolen or bought for a pittance. African museums have requested exhibition borrowing hoping for permanent loaning. In 1963, the British Museum Act of 1902 was amended by Parliament—the museum was prohibited, almost without exception, of disposing of its holdings (6).” Hope sometimes springs, “in 22 March 2021, the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin administration suggested—in what appeared a well-calculated leak—that Germany was committed to returning the famous Benin bronzes looted by the British army from Benin City, Nigeria, and acquired in large numbers by German museums around 1900 (viii).”



Mini Sleuth: ‘Africa’s Struggle for Its Art’ by Bénédicte Savoy and ‘Proud Raven, Panting Wolf’ by Emily Moore are at Amazon. Thank you, Jodi Smith at Princeton Univ. Press.

In 1971, London’s Africa Centre premiered ‘You Hide Me’ by Nii Kwate Owoo, revealing the vast collection of African art in the British Museum, much of which has never been seen (11). Of note: Owoo can be found on YouTube. His remastered film won Best Short Documentary at the Paris Short Film Festival, 2020.

Germany, like the UK, holds vast collections of African art because of their Nineteenth-Century colonial presence in Africa. In 1972, Hans-Georg Wormit, President of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, a former SS member, insisted, “Any yielding to the, initially, ‘moral’, demands of the developing countries would...weaken the legal position of all those museums that possess and legitimately own artworks from other countries (23).” German historian Sarah Van Beurden disagreed, “the older narrative of the ‘civilizing mission’ in which the objects were proof of the need for the transformation of ‘primitive African cultures’ had finally ‘shifted towards a rhetoric or cultural guardianship’ (27).” In 1978, Andreas Lommel retired director of Munich’s Staatliche Museum für Völkerkunde spoke out, “Museums... should really not be treasure houses where trophies are kept from the military campaigns of the colonising past that is forgotten today (86).”



Ekpo Eyo, Nigerian Archaeologist at Houston Museum of Fine Arts 1970s-80s

Rationalizations flourish in this aesthetic tug-of-war. Third World museums have uneducated and corrupt personnel who can’t preserve and present their own history. Africans can always make new artifacts, and besides, they don’t really want this stuff back. There would be a threat to scholarship. Bottom line – we don’t have to give anything back (38, 83).

In 1977, the ‘Pan-African World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (Festac ’77)’ took place in Lagos with Stevie Wonder performing, shadowed by a controversy concerning the 16th century Benin Queen Idia Mask. Although Festac used the ivory image as its logo, the British Museum refused to loan the real deal saying, “Nigerians could regard the object as ‘their own property,’ and therefore neglect to care for it.” The Queen Idia Mask remains at the British Museum, which had acquired the object when England conquered Benin, 1897 (62). Stanford University’s Alma Robinson wrote in a Festac catalog ‘African Art in Foreign Hands’ about the lack of support for UNESCO resolutions and the illegal export of antiquities by dealers, diplomats, airline crews, military experts, and foreign aid professionals (64).

In 1982, the ‘UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies’ in Mexico City was attended by Greece’s Cultural Minister, Melina Mercouri, who had published “Ten Theses on Cultural Encounters and Cooperation with Third World Countries.” Savoy believes Mercouri’s star quality appearance “marked the final end of European solidarity displayed against restitution claims from the

‘Third World’ (122).” Mercouri also addressed returning the Elgin Marbles, displayed at the British Museum since 1816.

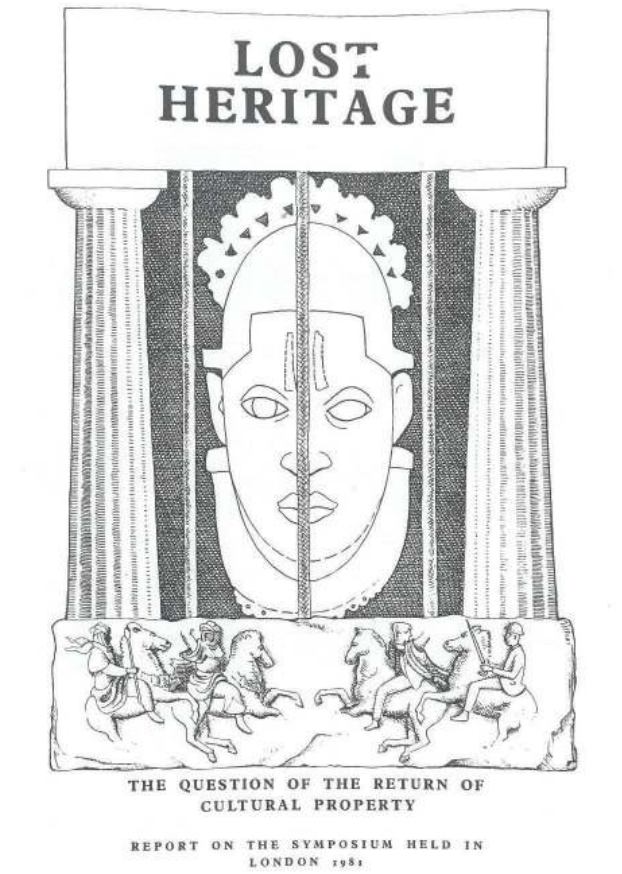
At a 1981 London conference at the Africa Centre, British Museum press officer Jean Rankine insisted, “The British Museum is a universal museum...the museum is not a mirror of national identity but a reflection of the universal heritage of man.” Six days later, the BBC released “Whose Art Is It Anyway?” a documentary collage of restitution interviews and clips (111). In 1983, Labour member of Parliament, Hugh Jenkins tried to have the 1963 British Museum Act changed, desiring “greater institutional flexibility in dealing with restitution claims.” Savoy acknowledged, “The British Museum Act of 1963, still applies today (129).”
Record Cover from Festac ’77.



According to Savoy, “It was precisely the solidarity of the public with the restitution requests of the so-called developing countries and the acknowledgment of the uselessness of keeping the objects in European museum depots that would severely challenge many European museum administrations (43).” Dorian Batycka writes in 2022, “Amid mounting public pressure, Greece and the UK have agreed to a new round of talks about a possible return of the Parthenon Marbles (Artnet 5/18/22).”

Savoy concludes, “But restitution claims from Africa are not a mere footnote in history. The manner in which European museums dealt with cultural demands from former colonised countries since their independence has been shamefulto withhold the cultural heritage of humanity for the purpose of national self-assertion, is not an option for the future (142).” Embedded selfishness is easy to justify but difficult to eradicate.

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Book Cover from Lost Heritage Symposium, London, 1981.

Governor signs bill intended to encourage nuclear microreactors in Alaska

BY YAERETH ROSEN
ALASKA BEACON

Gov. Mike Dunleavy on Tuesday signed a bill aimed at easing the construction of small nuclear reactors, using a signing ceremony on the first day of the Alaska Sustainable Energy Conference to highlight what he characterized as a promising technology to power remote parts of the state.

Microreactors are compact nuclear reactors that can generate up to 20 megawatts of power, though most are scaled to be smaller than that.

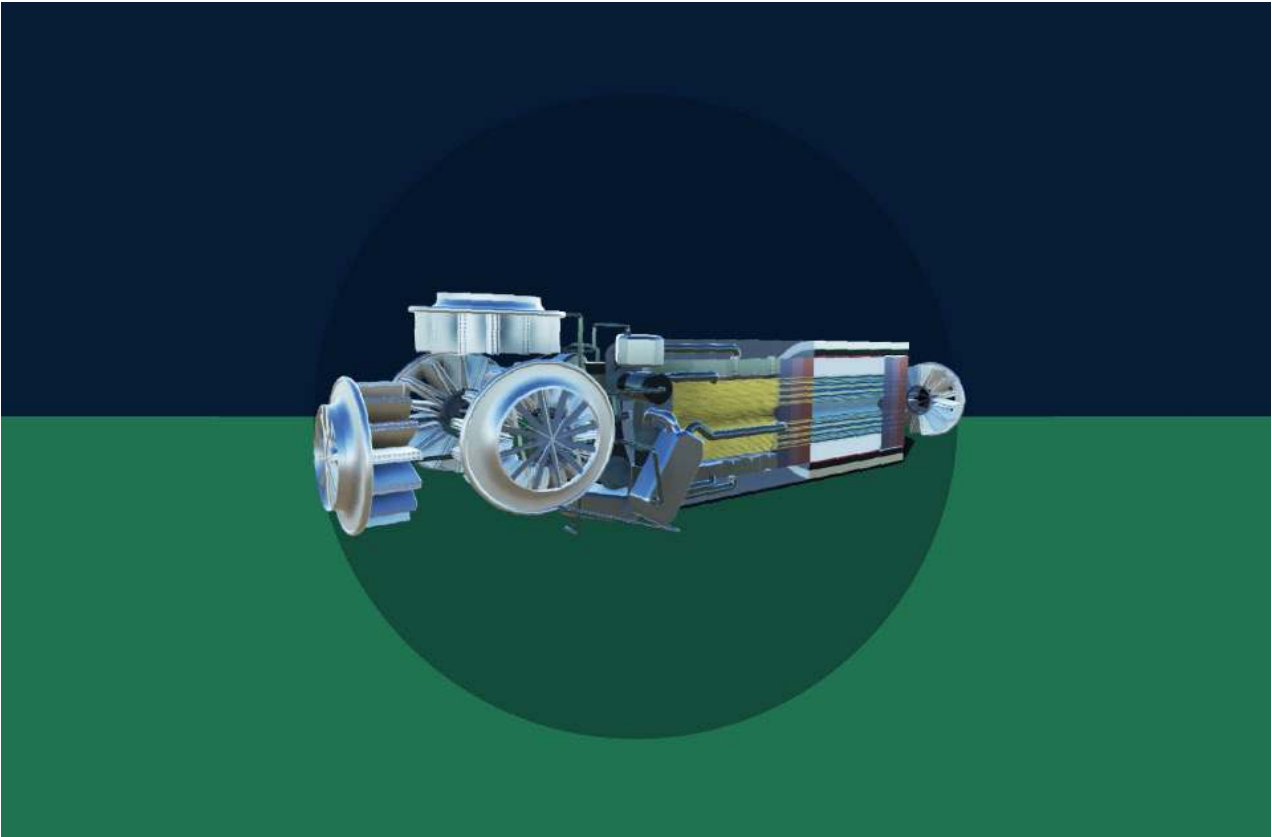
“Micronuclear technology has a potential role to play in providing low-cost, reliable power for communities, remote villages and resource development projects. This bill will update state law to allow us to pursue the possibilities,” the Republican governor said at the signing ceremony, held in the upstairs lobby of Anchorage’s Dena’ina Civic and Convention Center.

The legislation, Senate Bill 177, establishes in state law a precise definition of nuclear microreactors, which are compact reactors – small enough to be transported by truck – capable of producing up to 20 megawatts, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

The just-signed bill removes some of the state regulatory hurdles that were previously required for the approval of nuclear energy. It eliminates the requirement of studies by multiple agencies, such as the Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Labor and Department of Fish and Game.

And it removes the requirement for legislative approval of specific microreactor sites, though the lawmakers would continue to make those siting decisions for any microreactor that would be located outside of any organized borough.

There is only one project currently in development, and it is not subject to provisions in the just-signed bill, according to Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation officials. The U.S. Air Force last year selected Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks to be the site of its first microreactor project. The Eielson reactor, to produce up to 5 megawatts, is intended to provide an alternative to the base’s existing and aged coal-fired power and heat plant. The pilot project is intended to come on line in 2027



and to provide information about whether such microreactors are practical for use at other military sites.

The Copper Valley Electric Association, which serves about 8,000 people in eastern Alaska, has launched a study to examine whether a microreactor is feasible for its operations. The streamlined approach to approval drew some opposition, however.

Pamela Miller, executive director of Alaska Community Action on Toxics, said her group testified against the bill. She is disappointed that it “sailed through” the Legislature, she said.

“It’s really a false solution,” Miller said. A typical core contains the equivalent of 10 nuclear weapons’ worth of nuclear and radioactive material, she said, citing information from the Union of Concerned Scientists. “The idea

that it’s a microreactor has a lot of fundamental misconceptions,” she said.

Community skepticism about nuclear microreactors should be respected, one National Renewable Energy Laboratory expert told conference attendees.

“Can we build a nuclear reactor that will work in remote communities? The geeky engineer says, yeah, sure. It’s a technical question. We can do that,” said Ian Baring-Gould, a research program manager, said during one of the sessions. Whether a nuclear reactor would be cost-effective, deliverable and appropriately serviced depends on “community dynamics” as well as technology, he said.

“Can you do it with community acceptance, safely and at a low enough cost? I think that’s the \$64,000 question,” he said.

LAST-MINUTE ALASKAN CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES



DOCTOR BEAR



RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER

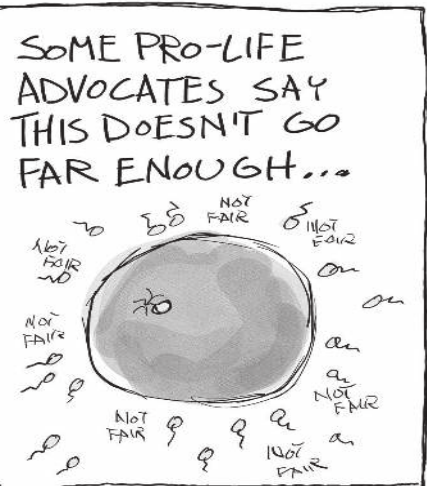
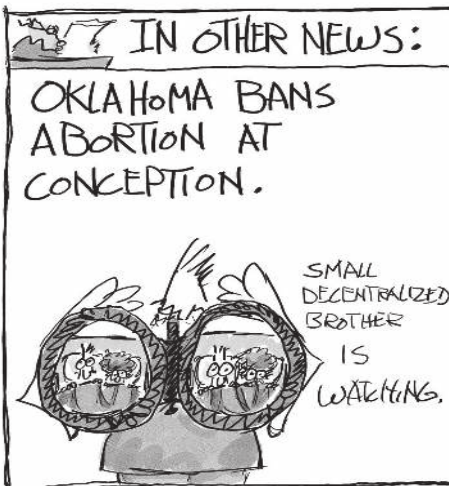


A HALF-THAWED BAG OF DOG POOP



DON YOUNG

OTHER NEWS BY CHUCK LEGGE



You are a fluid process, not a fixed thing

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY
BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Who loves the truth better than you Aries people? Who has the greatest potential to speak the real story in every situation, even when it requires extra courage? Who has more fun than you in discovering and defining and expressing the raw facts? In my Book of Life, you Rams are radiant beacons of candor—the people I go to when I need accuracy and honesty. And all I’m saying here will be especially crucial in the coming weeks. The whole world needs concentrated doses of your authenticity. Now read this pep talk from Aries philosopher St. Catherine of Siena: “Let the truth be your delight; let it always be in your mouth, and proclaim it when it is needed. Proclaim it lovingly and to everyone, especially those you love with a special love—but with a certain congeniality.”

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Before the 20th century, you couldn’t buy a loaf of bread that was already sliced into thin pieces. Then in 1912, the American inventor Otto Frederick Rohwedder developed a slicing machine. But all his work, including the blueprints and the machine prototypes, was destroyed in a fire. He had to seek new funding and begin again. Sixteen years later, his innovation was finally ready for broad public use. Within five years, most of the bread in the US was sold sliced. What does this have to do with you? I am picking up an Otto Frederick Rohwedder vibe when I turn my visions to you, Taurus. I suspect that in the coming months, you, too, will fulfill a postponed dream.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

A blogger named Sweetlikeacherry reminds us, “Some epiphanies are only possible when you put away your phone and go completely offline for a while.” She adds that sometimes you also need to at least partially avoid your phone and the internet if you hope to incubate new visions of the future and unlock important discoveries in your creative work and summon your untamed genius. According to my astrological analysis, all these possibilities are especially likely and necessary for you in the coming weeks. I trust you will carry out the necessary liberations to take full advantage.

CANCERIAN (June 21-July 22)

Poet Carolyn Kizer (1925–2014) won a Pulitzer Prize for her poetry. She was smart! But when she was young and still studying her craft in college, a professor objected to one of her

poems. He said, “You have pigs in this poem; pigs are not poetic.” Kizer was incensed at such ignorance. She testified, “I got up and walked out of that class and never went back.” Judging from the astrological omens, I suspect you may have comparable showdowns headed your way. I advise you to be like Kizer. You are the only one who truly knows the proper subjects of your quest. No one else has the right or the insight to tell you what your work (or play) should be about.

LEO (July 23-August 22)

Leo author James Baldwin said it wasn’t often “that two people can laugh and make love, too—make love because they are laughing and laugh because they’re making love. The love and the laughter come from the same place: but not many people go there.” Your assignment, Leo, is to be the exception to Baldwin’s rule during the coming weeks. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, there’s a high possibility that interesting eros can converge with humorous fun in a glorious synergy. You will have a knack for conjuring up ribald encounters and jovial orgasms. Your intuition will guide you to shed the solemnity from your bliss and replace it with sunny, carefree cheer.

VIRGO (August 23-September 22)

I’m worried you will over-indulge in your pursuit of perfection during the coming weeks. It’s fine to be exquisitely skillful and masterful; I hope you do that. But if you get obsessed with flawlessness, you will risk undoing your good intentions. As an antidote, I offer you two pieces of advice. The first is from actor and activist Jane Fonda. She said, “We are not meant to be perfect; we are meant to be whole.” The second counsel is from philosopher and psychologist William James, who wrote, “Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence.”

LIBRA (September 23-October 22)

Author Mustafa Mahmoud described the signs of love between two people: 1. feeling a comfortable familiarity; 2. having no urge or need to lie; 3. being natural, not trying to be different from who one is; 4. having little or no possibility of being embarrassed in front of the other person; 5. experiencing silence as delicious, not alienating; 6. enjoying the act of listening to the other person. I bring these pointers to your attention, Libra, because the coming months will be a favorable time to define and redefine your understandings about the signs of love. How do you feel about Mahmoud’s ideas? Are there any more you would like to add?

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)

“We do not love each other without changing each other,” wrote author Madeleine L’Engle. Meditate on that gem,

Scorpio. Now is a perfect time for you and your loved ones to acknowledge, honor, and celebrate the ways your love has changed each other. It may be true that some transformations have been less than ideal. If that’s the case, the coming weeks will be a favorable time to correct those trends. As for the positive changes that you and your allies have stimulated in each other: I hope you will name them and pledge to keep doing more of that good work.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

“I always deserve the best treatment, because I never put up with any other,” wrote Sagittarian novelist Jane Austen. Sagittarian politician Stacey Abrams said, “From the moment I enter a room, I am clear about how I intend to be treated and how I intend to engage.” You’ll be wise to cultivate those attitudes in the next seven weeks, Sagittarius. It’s high time for you to raise your self-respect in ways that inspire others to elevate their appreciation and regard for you.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

In 1963, Jim Munro and Alice Munro founded Munro’s Books, a store in Victoria, British Columbia. After being on the job for a few months, Alice found she was not impressed with many of the products they sold. “I can write better books than this,” she told Jim. Five years later, she published her first collection of short stories, *Dance of the Happy Shades*. Fourteen books later, she won the Nobel Prize in Literature. Will the coming months bring your equivalent of Alice Munro’s pivotal resolution? I suspect they could.

AQUARIUS (January 20- February 18)

True love for whatever you are doing is the answer to everything,” proclaimed performance artist Marina Abramovic. Amen to that righteous attitude! I hope you will embrace it in the coming weeks. I hope your heart and imagination will reveal all you need to know to bring tender fresh streams of true love to the essential activities of your life. Now is an excellent time to redefine the meaning of the word “love” so it applies to all your relationships and pursuits.

PISCES (February 19-March 20)

A homeless woman in a wheelchair stopped where I was sitting outside a café. She was pushing her belongings in a small shopping cart. “Would you like to go dancing?” she said to me. “There’s a nearby park that has a great grassy dance floor.” “Maybe another day,” I told her. “My energy is low. I’ve had a lot of personal challenges lately.” I’m sure the expression on my face was less-than-ebullient. “Cheer up, mister,” she told me. “I’m psychic, and I can tell you for sure that you will live a long life and have many more fine adventures. I’ll be in the park if you change your mind.” My mood instantly brightened. “Thanks!” I yelled toward her as she rolled away. Now I predict that you, Pisces, will have comparable experiences in the coming days. Are you willing to welcome uplifting surprises?

Expensed With

SAVAGE LOVE
BY DAN SAVAGE

I’m a 31-year-old queer person living in Europe. I recently met a 46-year-old man. We were visiting the same city for work and met on an app and went on a series of amazing dates. We have a lot of similar interests and work in parallel fields. Now we’re planning a trip to see each other. It’s partly a work trip for him, but we will take a vacation together after the work part of the trip for him is over. To get to the point... he makes a lot more money than I do. He has offered to cover as much of the costs as he needs to. I feel like I’m out of my league here! I really like him and he seems to really like me but I’m struggling to fight feeling like this is a “Daddy and His Boy” situation. Do I need to fight that feeling or lean into it? It’s not a dynamic he said he wants. I don’t mind if we agree that’s what we are doing. But I don’t want to fall into a Daddy/Boy dynamic accidentally because of money and “status.” How do I date him like I would someone closer to my age and income?

—Knowing Economic Position Tenuous

If the Daddy/boy dynamic isn’t something you want (if it doesn’t turn you on and/or you worry it’ll make things weird), and it isn’t something he wants (assuming he didn’t just say that because he thought it was what you wanted to hear), then you definitely shouldn’t “lean into it.” Instead, you should handle the expense of this trip the same way committed couples with large income disparities split the rent. If you were making 50K a year and he was making 150K a year and you wanted to move in together but weren’t ready to merge your finances, you should pay a quarter of the rent and he would pay three quarters of the rent. Same should go for utilities, food, and other expenses.

But you’re not moving in together, KEPT, you’re just going on a vacation, so things can be a little looser. If you can afford to fly coach and he wants to fly first class, he should cover the difference between coach and first-class fares. If he wants to

cover the hotel (a major expense), you should cover meals — maybe not all of them, particularly if he wants to eat in fancy places, but enough of them that it will be clear to you, to him, to your waiter, and to the angels and saints watching from heaven that you aren’t a kept boy. (Nothing will make you feel less “kept” than pulling out your own credit card.)

And the first part of the trip is for business and he would presumably be going with or without you, KEPT, you shouldn’t feel guilty about not paying for meals or the hotel on that leg — a hotel room he would be staying in with or without you, meals he would be putting on his expense account with or without you — but maybe treat him to a surprise excursion on that leg of the trip that you can afford. (Assuming either of you wants to leave your hotel room at this stage of your relationship.)

The kind of disparities you describe — in ages, incomes, and the stages of your respective careers — are something almost all couples have faced — or in the case of income and career advancement, something most couples eventually face. But don’t spend too much time thinking about how you’re going to make this work over the long-term; you just met, you really liked each other, and you’re both willing to travel long distances to keep seeing each other. That should be your focus right now, KEPT. If he wasn’t comfortable covering most of the expenses, he wouldn’t have offered to

do that. He could’ve spent his vacation time in the city where you live instead. Of course, there’s a chance it was a trick offer — he offered to cover the expense of the trip expecting you would turn it down — and he’s going to punish you in some passive-aggressive way for taking him up on it. If that happens, well, you can go back to dating boys closer to your age and tax bracket and/or well-off guys who don’t play games.

Savage, continued on page A19



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The Up-and-Comer

Birch & Alder is reimagining what it means to be a drive-thru

RESTAURANT REVIEW
BY JIN CHONG

Anyone who has driven down the Seward Highway recently may have noticed a brand-new business taking hold of the lone structure right as you enter Indian. The spot, previously occupied by restaurant and coffeehouse Froth & Forage, a renowned eatery, is now the home of a new gastronomic delight. Although Froth & Forage carved a niche for itself and garnered praise for serving up an elevated dining experience, a sudden and unfortunate closure in 2019 left the building awaiting a new tenant.

Birch & Alder has since taken root and arrived with a similar pedigree based solely on the credentials of chef and owner Reuben Gerber — he previously worked as chef de cuisine at Crow's Nest along with a short tenure at Jack Sprat. Now partnered with his wife Christina, the dynamic duo finds themselves pursuing an ideal that most people could only wish for — the perfect amalgamation of work and family life. Ultimately, the pandemic tipped them over the edge and gave them the final push they needed to start this next chapter.

"It's been a ton of work to get this place up and running, but it's been the most fun I've had so far in my culinary career," Gerber said. "My position at the Crow's Nest was always secure during the brutal downturn in our industry and the long shutdowns. But as we started reopening and I was suddenly a homeschool dad by day and a chef by night, with an uncertain future for the restaurant industry, it really opened my eyes to the value of drive-thru and the flexibility of having a business that my son and wife could be involved in with me."

Leaving behind the fine linen and formal atmosphere of upscale dining wasn't all that difficult for Reuben and his family. In fact, apart from an obvious change in scenery, not much has changed when it comes to the Gerbers' desire to bring a refined perspective to deliver "whole-some dining" in a uniquely Alaskan context.

"In my heart, I didn't leave the fine dining scene. I may have stepped out of the city and into the woods, but the mindset doesn't change as far as quality of the ingredients and the attention to detail," said Gerber. Drive-thru surely isn't white tablecloth, but there's as much love in what I'm serving now as I've ever put on a plate."

Gerber's accomplished background is seen through Birch & Alder's seasonal selection of thoughtfully constructed provisions such as babkas, scones, and parfaits, all of which share the common trait of being easily transportable. With extended shelf lives, all dishes are suitable for the long haul or impromptu weekend getaway.

I visited Birch & Alder this past weekend to try a few of their goodies for myself. Their breakfast focaccia is presented as a generously sized, pillowy slab saturated with oil and cooked to form a crisp, crackly crust. While that might be enjoyable enough on its own, they take it to the next level by layering a bed of caramelized onions and roasted sweet peppers to help cut through the rich bread. The crown jewel is a delicately poached, still-runny egg with a yolk that oozes all over.

Their scones, too, deserve praise for being anything but bland or boring. I decided to try their savory version, studded with bacon, chives, and cheddar. The contrast

between the sweet scone batter and the intermittent taste of salty pork was simply addicting, with a texture that wasn't dry or stodgy. There was even a distinct sourness to the batter, alluding to the usage of buttermilk in the composition.

A few special ingredients combined in a neatly packaged to-go cup make their parfait remarkable! I caught a glimpse of goji berries, candied ginger, pumpkin seeds, and thick granola shards. Fresh, juicy berries lined the bottom of the cup, and once everything was thoroughly mixed, I enjoyed spoonful after spoonful of intensely tangy yogurt, which served as a cool base for a wide variety of textures in this refreshing treat.

"Coming to Alaska over 12 years ago was like entering a new playground of incredible ingredients and natural resources, which was such a gift to me as a chef," said Gerber. "We're a scratch kitchen, so everything is made in-house, daily, absolutely no short-cuts. You may see our lights on at 4 AM as our bread is proofing and babkas are rising. It takes an early start to be ready by 8 AM when we open the window."

There's much more than countless hours of hard work and a dedication to high-quality ingredients that define Birch & Alder. The Gerbers also have a deep commitment to sustainability and partnering with local businesses to help perpetuate a cycle of collaboration in the small community they now find themselves nestled in.

"We are committed to environmentally conscious ways of serving our items to-go, using exclusively petroleum/plastic-free, biodegradable cups and lids from Green Alaska Solutions," said Gerber. "This is a particularly fragile environment here where Indian Valley meets the Turnagain Arm, and we want to honor this precious land. We are composting our kitchen waste, and we are partnering with Forget-Me-Not Nursery to turn both food waste and coffee grounds into soil."

Down to the local vegetation from which their name is derived, the core of Birch & Alder's very identity appears to have been shaped out of a desire to celebrate all things Alaska.

"Our restaurant is set among the trees, but the meaning behind Birch & Alder goes much deeper. Using birch and Alder for cooking, as indigenous cultures have done for generations, was one of many small epiphanies that made a big impact on me," said Gerber.

How about this fun piece of intel? "We've also named the two nesting eagles in the trees adjacent to the restaurant Birch and Alder," said Gerber.

While the business has yet to fully take off as it seeks to "reimagine the drive-thru." But, in its current state, what's truly exciting is that the restaurant soon plans to open for dine-in service, further expanding the width and breadth of its creative potential. This next phase is expected sometime in June 2022, and it's clear that there's plenty to be excited about as Gerber transitions



his creation from a roadside stopover to a culinary destination.

To some, like myself, this quaint little eatery has already earned that level of recognition — that being said, it would be wise to plan a trip now before this fledgling business really takes off.

Birch & Alder is located at 27635 Seward Hwy, Indian, AK 99540. The cafe is open from 8am — 2pm Thursday through Sunday.



Thurs 9pm @ Flattop

Jukebox KARAOKE Roadshow

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Live Music Lineup!

Thursday June 2
8:30 Regina & Will

Friday June 3
9:30 The Glacier Hoppers

Saturday June 4
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Get direct links to the event details at AKconcerts.com
Or read below if you just want to know the time & place.

Thursday, June 2nd

Anchorage Town Square – Live After Five: I like Robots 5:30p-8p
Bear Paw Bar & Grill – Danger & Diva Live 7:30p-10:30p
The Crystal Saloon (Juneau) – Open Mic ft. Annie Bartholomew 8p-11p
Flattop Pizza & Pool – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-11p
Garcia’s Cantina & Café (Eagle River) – Glacier Hoppers 8p-11p
Georgeson Botanical Garden (Fairbanks) – Music in the Garden 7p-8p
Goldie’s AK (Fairbanks) – (Open) Mic Check 7p-10p
Goldie’s AK (Fairbanks) – Whiskey Bonfire with Matt Lewis Band 8p-11p
Humpty’s – UKULELE RUSS 8:30p-12:30a
Juneau Dance Theatre – JDT Fusion Dance Team Auditions 6p-8p
Klondike Mike’s & the Main Street Grill (Palmer) – Open Mic Night 8p-12a
Mad Myrna’s – Thursday Vibe w/ DJ Covy 10p-2a
Matanuska Brewing Eagle River – Matisyahu ft. Alaska Thunder Funk 5:30p-10p
The Marlin (Fairbanks) – Karaoke with Kellie B.! 10p-2a
Petroleum Club of Anchorage – Music on the Patio w/ Lil’ Trouble 5p-8p
Pioneer Park (Fairbanks) – Tennessee National Air Guard Band 1p-3p
The Seaview Café (Hope) – Jam Night w/ Andy Mullen 7p-11p
Sheldon Community Arts Hanger (Talkeetna) – John Craigie 8p-10p
Tailgater’s Sport’s Bar & Grill (Wasilla) - The AKoustic Project 7p-10p
Tikishla Park (Anchorage) – The Ed Washington Experience 6:30p-7:30p
Van’s Dive Bar – Albino Mbie & Folk Medicine 9p-12a
Williwaw Social – The Eternal Cowboys Rock the Roof 8p-11p

Friday, June 3rd

2712 Drafthouse (Fairbanks) – DJ Manny’s First Friday 10p-3a
Alaska Center for the Performing Arts – Summer Arts in the Park: The Tap Studio 6p-7p
Alice’s Champagne Palace (Homer) - Two Nights For Tonga: Tyson James & Motown Fever 8p-12a
American Legion Post 15 (Palmer) – Friday Night Feast w/ 100 Proof Karaoke 5:30p-9p
American Legion Spenard Post 28 – Acoustic Steak Night with MusiCal! 6p-8p
Anchorage Museum – Summer Arts in the Park Series: Spenard Jazz Festival 4:30p-5:30p
Anchorage Museum – Free First Friday Music & Art 4p-9p
Big Daddy’s BBQ (Fairbanks) – Tony Taylor The Artist: Snow or Shine Alaska Tour 9p-12a
Broken Blender – Forbidden Desires, Episode 147: Three Way Tango Buy Tickets 8p-9:30p
The Carousel Lounge – The Vintage Retro 9p-1a
Creekbend Company (Hope) - John Craigie 7p-11p
The Creek Street Cabaret (Ketchikan) – K-Funk Pride Kick-Off Party 9p-12a
The Crystal Saloon (Juneau) – First Friday ft. Abbey Lee 5p-7p
The Crystal Saloon (Juneau) – The Knight Show Dance Party 10p-2a
Dave & Busters – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 9p-12a
D Street & 4th Ave (Anchorage) – D Street Pride Block Party 5p-8p
Everett’s (Wasilla) – Comedy Show w/ Greg Morton 7p-9p

Floaters (Big Lake) – Open Mic Night 7p-12a
The Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 4207 – Karaoke Friday at the Eagles! 7p-12a
The Gaslight Bar – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-11p
Goldie’s AK (Fairbanks) – TGIF: Harrison B 8p-11p
Hilltop Ski Area – Under the Tree Music Scene: The Acoustic Oosik 7p-8:30p
Humpty’s – Glacier Hoppers 9:30p-1:30a
Juneau Arts & Culture Center – June First Friday: SHI Juried Youth Art Exhibit 4:30p-7p
Juneau Dance Theatre – JDT Fusion Dance Team Auditions 6p-8p
Koot’s – The More You Know Show 10p-2a
Koot’s – The Stack Live 10p-2a
KONR 106.1 FM – Up North Radio Interview & Performance w/ Roland Roberts Band 10a-11a
Matanuska Brewing (Eagle River) – I Like Robots 6p-10p
Malamute Saloon (Fairbanks) – Steve Brown and the Bailers 7:30p-11:15p
Mean Queen (Sitka) – Queer Karaoke at the Queen 10p-2a
Mountain High Pizza Pie (Talkeetna) – Zen Trembles 7p-10p
Mug-Shot Saloon (Wasilla) – Danger Money Live 10p-2:30a
Organic Oasis – John Damberg Jazz Piano Fridays 5:30p-7:30p
Palmer Alehouse (Palmer) – Roland Roberts Band 7p-10p
PubHouse – Witty Youngman 7p-10p
Roundup Steakhouse & Saloon (Fairbanks) – Round Up Karaoke Weekend Nights! 9:30p-2a
The Seaview Café (Hope) – Jared Woods 7p-11p
Temple Studios Community Center (Seward) – All Ages Silent Disco 6p-10p
Van’s Dive Bar – Lilac & SunDog 9p-1a
Williwaw Social – Stranger Thangs 80’s Dance Party 9:30p-2a
Wonderland Park (Wasilla) – Music in the Park: JunoS-mile 6p-9p
Yukon Bar (Seward) – “Drageoke” with Mad Matty 8p-10p
Yukon Bar (Seward) – Hot Seward Nights 10p-2a



Saturday, June 4th

Alaska Center for the Performing Arts – Summer Arts in the Park: The Tap Studio 1:30p-2:30p
Alaska Raceway Park (Palmer) – Thunder Valley Flag Drags & Rockabilly Festival 1p-10p
Alibi Café & Bar (Homer) – DJ Movement Returns 10p-2a
Alice’s Champagne Palace (Homer) - Two Nights For Tonga: Uncle Salmontooth Bluegrass Band 8p-12a
Al’s Alaskan Inn – Yung Joc Live w/ DJ Joe Brady & DJ Cranked 9:30p-2:30a
American Legion Post 15 (Palmer) – Fun and Food w/ 100 Proof Karaoke 6p-11p
Anchorage Museum – Josh Ritter w/ The Forest That Never Sleeps 7p-10p
Broken Blender – Forbidden Desires, Episode 147: Three Way Tango Buy Tickets 8p-9:30p
The Carousel Lounge – Cabin Fever Hip Hop Showcase 9:30p-2a
Carpenter’s Hall – East Coast Swing and Social Dance 7p-11p



Creekbend Company (Hope) - John Craigie 7p-11p
Cuddy Family Midtown Park (Anchorage) – Belly Dancing Fun 6:30p-8p
The Gaslight Bar – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-11p
Koot’s – Comedian Greg Morton 7p-9p & 9:30p-11p
Koot’s – Local Roots Metal Night 9p-1a
Koot’s – The Stack Live 10p-2a
Matanuska Brewing (Eagle River) – SPIN DOCTORS ft. Woodrow 5p-10p
Mountain High Pizza Pie (Talkeetna) – Hurricane Dave 1p-4p
Mug-Shot Saloon (Wasilla) – Danger Money Live 10p-2:30a
The Nave Spenard – Spenard Jazz Fest Saturday Music Marathon 12p-11p
Palmer Alehouse (Palmer) – Glacier Hoppers LIVE 7p-10p
Peratrovich Park (Anchorage) – Downtown Jazz in the Park: Blue Dixie Combo 4p-6p
Schwabenhof (Wasilla) - The Goddamn Ranch Band 7p-11p
Van’s Dive Bar – Zen Trembles 9p-1a
Williwaw Social – Young the Giant live ft Medium Build 5p-10:30p

Sunday, June 5th

The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke Sunday 8p-2a
The Egan Center – Alaska Scottish Highland Games Piping & Drumming Competition 10a-2p
Humpys - Open Mic Jam 8p-11p
Koot’s – Anchorage Cabarets: One Hit Wonders 7p-8:30p
Koot’s – Comedy Open Mic 8:30p-10p
Mad Myrna’s – Karaoke 9p-12a
Van’s Dive Bar – Open Mic! Overlorded by Wash Your Hands 8p-12a
Yukon Bar (Seward) – Skankin Reggae Sunday with DJ Militant 9p-12a

Monday, June 6th

Koot’s – The Monday Mic at Koots 9p-12a
Peratrovich Park (Anchorage) – Music for Little Ones w/ The Timbre Music Band 12p-1p
Van’s Dive Bar – Comedy Open Mic 8:30p-9:30p
Van’s Dive Bar – Mull Over Mondays w/ Ellie Kenealy 9:30p-12a

Tuesday, June 7th

The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke 8p-2a
Fairview Inn (Talkeetna) – Open Mic w/ Andy Mullen 7p-1a
Klondike Mike’s & the Main Street Grill (Palmer) – The Open Stage 7p-10p
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

Wednesday, June 8th

907 Alehouse – Tyrone Palmer & Friends 7p-10p
Alaskan Hotel and Bar (Juneau) – Karaoke Wednesdays 8p-12a
Anchorage Brewing Company – Alaska Huts Presents Wiley Post on the Deck 6:30p-9p
The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke 8p-11p
Dave & Busters – The Star of Alaska Karaoke Tournament 6p-9p
Humpty’s – Nicholas Holiday 8:30p-12:30a
Koot’s – Comedy Open Mic 8:30p-10p

PRESSING EVENTS

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Thu 6/02

Featured



Matisyahu
@ 8pm

Matanuska Brewing Company, 531 W 3rd Ave, Anchorage



Fri 6/03

Summer First Friday with Cassandra Mirosh

@ 5pm
Fanciful folded paper sculpture by Healy, Alaska artist Cassandra Mirosh. If you have seen her work before, you already know! It is incredible and totally unique! 2 Friends Gallery, 341 East Benson Boulevard, Anchorage. 2friendsgallery@gmail.com, 907-277-0404

First Friday at Dos Manos Gallery with Scott Clendaniel
@ 5pm

Alaskan oil painter, Scott Clendaniel, will be the featured artist at Dos Manos Gallery for the months of June and July. The gallery will be hosting an art opening reception on First Friday. Dos Manos Gallery, 1317 West Northern Lights Boulevard, #3, Anchorage. dos2manos@gmail.com, 907-569-6800

Forbidden Desires, Episode 147: Three Way Tango
@ 8pm / \$25

A tale of true passion, true betrayal, and true pasties! Sweet Cheeks Cabaret at The Cheeky Room, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com

Sat 6/04

Young the Giant

@ 5pm
Williwaw Social, 609 F St, Anchorage

Archery

@ 6:30pm
Kincaid Archery Range, W Raspberry Road, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

Featured



Josh Ritter

@ 7pm
Anchorage Museum, 625 C St, Anchorage



Comedian Greg Morton

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

Featured



Forbidden Desires, Episode 147: Three Way Tango
@ 8pm / \$25

A tale of true passion, true betrayal, and true pasties! Sweet Cheeks Cabaret at The Cheeky Room, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com



Sun 6/05

Featured



Ken Waldman "Alaska's Fiddling Poet" at the Anchorage Museum
@ 4:30pm / \$10

Anchorage Museum, 625 C St, Anchorage



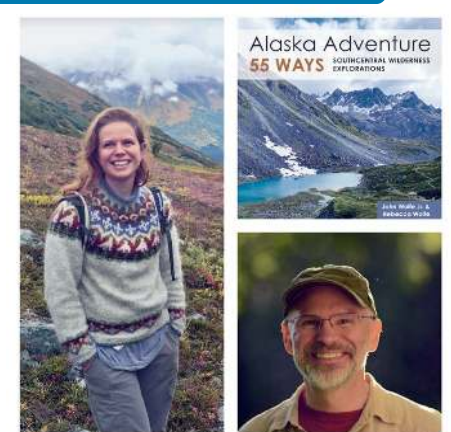
Mon 6/06

Parking Lot Programs - Spenard

@ 9pm
Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 West 48th, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

Wed 6/08

Featured



Alaska Adventure 55 Ways Book Talk & Signing w/ John Wolfe, Jr & Rebecca Wolfe
@ 5:30pm

Please join us in welcoming co-authors John Wolfe, Jr and Rebecca Wolfe for a slideshow and book talk, followed by a signing, to celebrate the release of their new collaboration, Alaska Adventure 55! 1360 W Northern Lights Blvd, 1360 West Northern Lights Boulevard, Anchorage. info@weavebooks.co, 907-278-9283



Parking Lot Programs - Fairview

@ 9pm
Fairview Recreation Center, 1121 East 10th Ave, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

Fri 6/10

Featured



Walk on the Wild Side Annual Alaska Zoo Fundraiser
@ 6pm / \$75

Alaska Zoo annual fundraiser "Walk on the Wild Side" looks back at the zoo's 52-year history and forward to exciting things in our future. Join us for an evening of food, drinks, animals and fun! Alaska Zoo, 4731 O'Malley Road, Anchorage. aom@alaskazoo.org, 907-346-2133



Forbidden Desires, Episode 147: Three Way Tango

@ 8pm / \$25
A tale of true passion, true betrayal, and true pasties! Sweet Cheeks Cabaret at The Cheeky Room, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com

Sat 6/11

Featured



Summer Plant Swap @ Alaska Cannabis Exchange
@ 12pm

Come Swing by the Backyard and let's trade plants. Bring in your propagations or seedlings and trade them out for something new!! Find out more on Facebook by checking out ACE Spenards events! 2906 Spenard Rd, 2906 Spenard Road, Anchorage. jeramy@cannabisace.com, 907-360-8036



Comedian Joe Bartnick

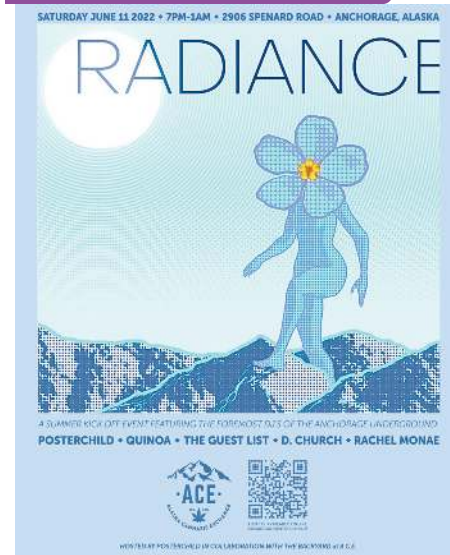
@ 7pm / \$20
Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage

Forbidden Desires, Episode 147: Three Way Tango

@ 8pm / \$25
A tale of true passion, true betrayal, and true pasties! Sweet Cheeks Cabaret at The Cheeky Room, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com

For event details and even more listings visit us online!

Featured

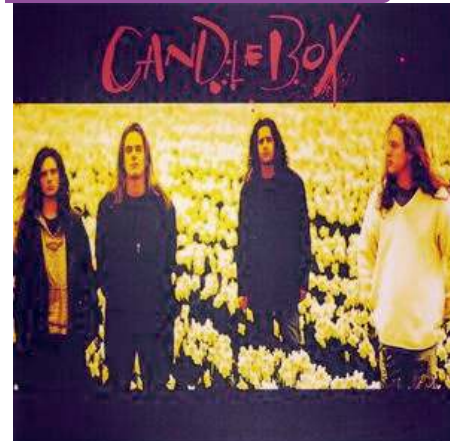


Radiance Undergound Dance Party
@ 7pm / \$20

Radiance is a one-day summer concert event boasting an incredible lineup of DJs that will move an entirely new generation of Anchorage revelers. 2906 Spenard Rd, 2906 Spenard Road, Anchorage. jeramy@cannabisace.com, 907-360-8036



Featured

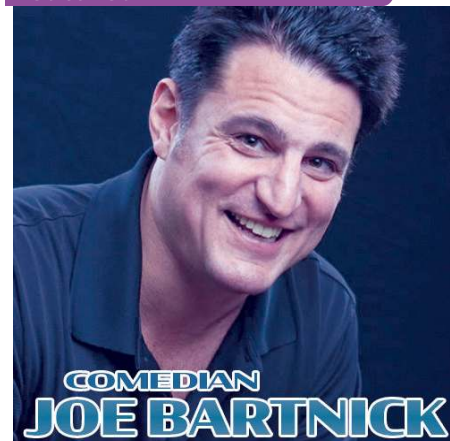


Candlebox

@ 7pm
Matanuska Brewing Company, 531 W 3rd Ave, Anchorage



Featured



Comedian Joe Bartnick
@ 9:30pm / \$20

Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage



Mon 6/13

Parking Lot Programs - Spenard

@ 9pm
Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 West 48th, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

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Pride 2022

Celebrations around Anchorage

BY DREW ERICKSON
PHOTOS BY SHIPE SHOTS

When I was five years old, my father wouldn't let me wear socks with butterflies on them. I wondered, "What's wrong with the way I want to present myself to the world?" And when my best friend in high school was bullied for kissing another boy, I wondered, "What's wrong with the way he loves and who he wants to share his love with?" Now I know that there was nothing wrong with how we wanted to live. That is what Pride is all about. Not only accepting ourselves without shame but embracing ourselves with pride. So this June, I hope that we can all remember that, and live our truths together. Although there will not be an official Pride Fest in Anchorage this year, there will be a good handful of events this month to create safe spaces for us to embrace ourselves with pride.

Friday, June 3, 2022

Stand Up Alaska and Out North will be hosting the Pride Block Party, taking place on D Street, between 4th and 5th Ave, from 5pm - 8pm. This event will include live speakers, a clothing and book swap, LGBTQ+ trivia, free rapid HIV testing, and music from DJ Big Gay Mike.

Thursday, June 9, 2022

Anchorage Community Land Trust will be working with Grow North Farm to host the Pride Artist and Maker Popup Market from 4pm -7pm. Taking place at the Grow North Farm in Mountain View, this market will feature booths for queer artists from around Alaska to share and sell their work.

Sunday, June 12, 2022

Penny Dragful and Lamia Monroe will be hosting the Sunny Side Pride Drag Brunch from 12pm - 4pm at Williwaw Social. This 21+ event will include two drag shows, the first beginning at noon, and the second at 2:30pm. The shows will feature performers Dela Rosa, Golden Delicious, Athena Nuff, and Mars Moanroe, with general admission tickets listed at \$10.

Saturday, June 25, 2022

The Pride Bar Crawl will kick off from Avenue Bar at 4pm, extending to Fat Ptarmigan, Pioneer Bar, and The Gaslight Bar until midnight. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Trevor Project, an organization that provides support and mental health services to queer youth around the United States.

Seward Pride Week

For those wanting to venture outside of Anchorage, Seward Pride Weekend will begin Friday, June 3 at 4pm, and will continue through the weekend until Sunday, June 5 at 7pm. The festivities will include activities such as a hike of Exit Glacier, a cruise of Resurrection Bay, and a community barbecue. On Friday, June 17, Soldotna Pride will be taking place from 5:45pm - 10pm at Soldotna Creek Park. This event will feature vendor booths, live music and speakers, and more.



HEYMI!



On Friday, May 27, 2022, Emma Hill was joined by Nelson Kempf & Thomas Moore at the Spenard Song Circle. The event was catered by Spenard Joe's who provided themed mocktails.



Music fans congregated at Boot's Bison Ranch in Trapper Creek for three days of frivolity in the midnight sun.



SIDEWAYS



Photographs by @ShipeShots @jr2photograph and @akconcert



Valley musician Jerry Wessling discusses his latest efforts

BY JACOB MANN
FRONTIERSMAN.COM

Valley musician Jerry Wessling recently discussed his latest endeavors in the local music scene.

Wessling was recently given an all-new opportunity to perform for Rodeo Alaska over Memorial Day weekend.

“So, it will be my first rodeo,” Wessling said with a laugh.

Wessling was also given the opportunity to play alongside The Ken Peltier Band during the event. He said that it was fun preparing for this show because he got to dive into the country music genre for the first time.

“We had this great meeting and we were just like, ‘man, let’s put together a super group’ and that’s what we did. We’ve just been blasting it out since, and it’s been a great few months putting this together,” Wessling said.

Wessling has been playing music across Alaska for many years. He works as a middle school math teacher, so his summer schedule is packed with performances at venues such as the Palmer Ale House, Tailgaters, and Friday Fling.

“Summertime is when it gets pretty intense. I’m having fun. I’m having a good time,” Wessling said.

Wessling said that his favorite part of

being involved with the Alaskan music scene has always been the people.

“I love playing music with my friends,” Wessling said. “It’s just what I do. I’m super passionate about it.”

Alaska’s most iconic singer and songwriter, James Varsos, better known as Hobo Jim died in October of 2021. Wessling said that he opened for him during his last performance at the Alaska State Fair. He said that Varsos left an irreplaceable and fantastically positive impact on the hearts and minds of Alaskans that will stand the test of time.

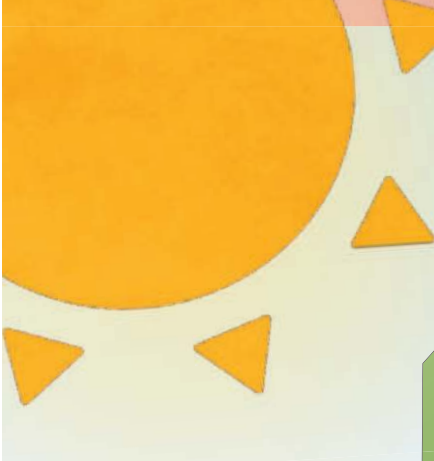
“He wrote songs about what Alaska is,” Wessling said.

Wessling noted that Peltier inherited the rights to Varsos’ songs and truly believes that he is the perfect person to help keep the legacy of Alaska’s Balladeer alive for years to come.

“Ken Peltier is keeping that tradition going, and I think it’s important to keep that tradition going just as an Alaskan,” Wessling said.

Wessling said that it’s encouraging to see the music scene come back to life after so many closures and canceled events throughout the pandemic, but there’s still an underlying need. He said there still needs to be more venues for local singer/songwriters to hone their skills.

“We need to have more working bands in the music community,” Wessling said.



428 G St.

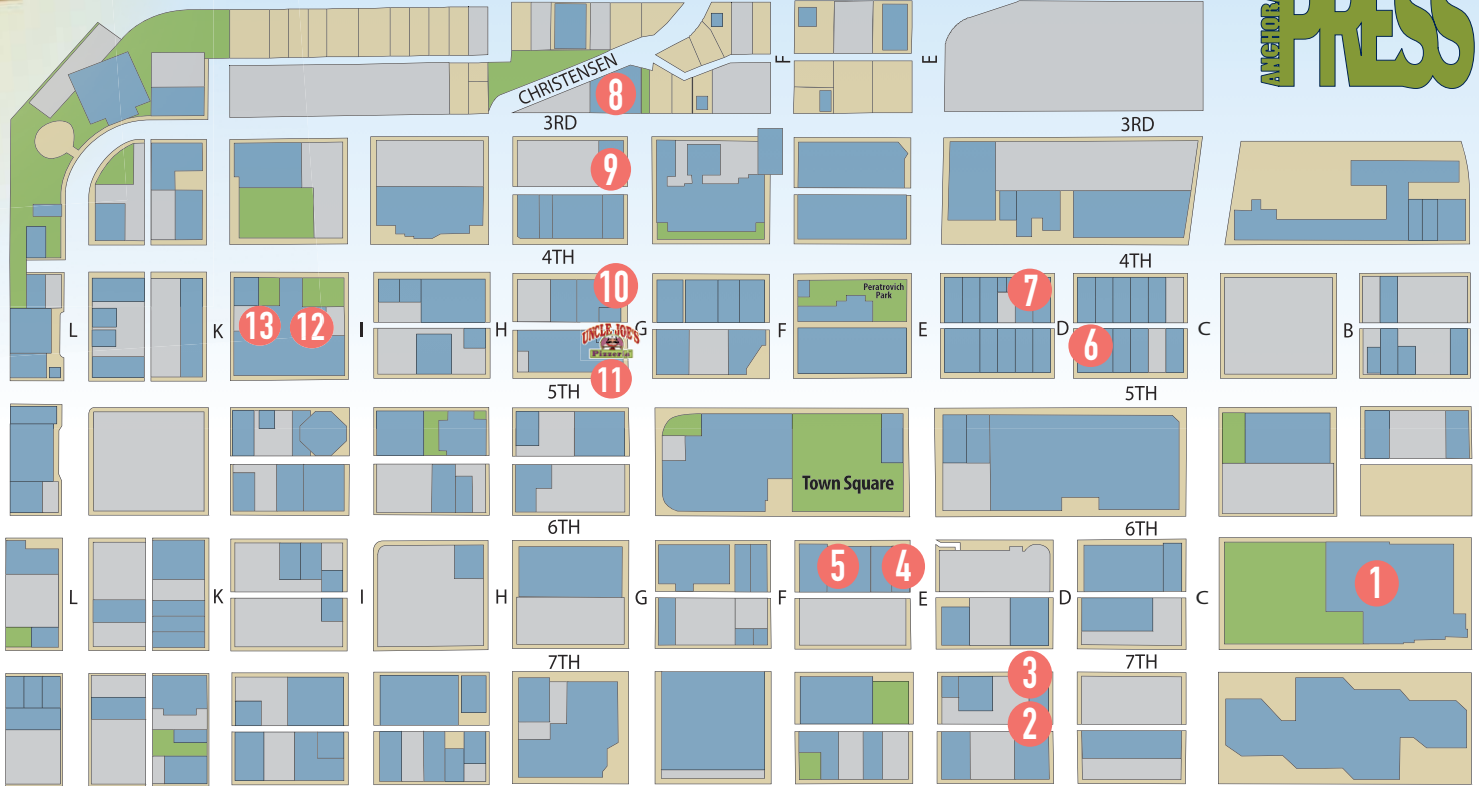
Slice, Side Salad & Fountain Soda \$11.50

Slice, Side Salad & Pint of Local Craft Beer \$14.50

11am-11pm

June First Friday

June 3rd, 2022



1. Anchorage Museum - 625 C St. (10am-9pm)

2. Weather Boutique - 720 D St., Ste. B (11am-6:30pm)

3. Blush Boutique - 720 D St., Ste. C (11am-6pm)

4. Gelatte - 500 W 6th Ave. (12-6pm)

5. Tundra Herb Company - 520 W 6th Ave., Ste. A (9am-11:55pm)

6. IGCA - 427 D St. (5-8pm)

7. Sara's Gift Cache - 408 W 4th Ave. (12pm-8pm)

8. 49th State Brewing Co. - 717 W 3rd Ave. (11am-11pm)

9. Seigny Studio - 312 G St. (10am-9pm)

10. Tiny Gallery - 706 W 4th Ave. (10am-8pm)

11. Aurora Fine Art - 737 W 5th Ave., Ste. E (12pm-8pm)

12. Stephan Fine Arts - 939 W 5th Ave. (6-8:30pm)

13. Captain Cook Coffee Cubby - 939 W 5th Ave. (6-8:30pm)

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Celebrating Coya and Denali, two dogs who changed my life

I've loved dogs for as long as I can remember.

Though I don't recall the details of how or when I fell in love or when I knew beyond all doubt that I was a "dog person." But I'm pretty darn sure it happened before my parents adopted a primarily black, floppy-eared mutt with a white spot above each eye. At least that's how I remember Buttons, who became a family member when I was in the seventh or eighth grade.



CITY WILDS
BY BILL
SHERWONIT

Though officially the family's pet, Buttons really belonged to my brother, Dave. He was the one who pestered and pleaded with my parents to get a dog. So, Dave was assigned the primary responsibility of watching out for Buttons (with my parents' help as needed). Still, I loved Buttons profoundly and considered him my dog in my heart. Decades would pass before I again allowed a dog to enter my life in an intimate way. To be honest, I never seriously considered the possibility of having a dog during those many years between adolescence and middle age because life's circumstances simply didn't seem right. First, there was college, followed by grad school, then a seasonal job in Alaska and several years in the L.A. megalopolis, which turned out to be a place and time of considerable — and necessary — personal upheaval. Then a return to Alaska and a decade of reporting at the Anchorage Times. And in 1990, marriage to a woman who loved to travel.

Through all of that, my life never seemed stable — or settled — enough that I felt ready to take on the challenge of raising and properly caring for a dog. Others might be able to do so, but not me. Not during those times.

Honestly, there were times when simply taking care of myself (and my significant human relationships) seemed a big enough challenge.

Eventually, the marriage to Dulcy ended, and in time I entered a new relationship with a woman named Helene. Through her, I met two dogs, Coya and Blue, and a cat named Kitty Boy. Coya and I quickly bonded, which Helene

didn't mind, because Coya (a rescue like all her animals) had never really warmed up to her.

When Helene decided to take a job in Oregon, she asked if I'd like Coya to stay in Anchorage with me. The suggestion surprised me, and I hesitated (that hesitation lasting a day or two), partly because I'd given up the idea of ever having a dog of my own. I also had other responsibilities, most notably the care of my increasingly frail mother.

After agonizing a bit (something that's part of my nature), I agreed to welcome Coya into my own family life, one of the best decisions I've ever made.

Coya seemed to happily embrace her new circumstances and our bond, already strong, grew even more profound. She became my primary hiking and hill-climbing buddy, and over the next several years, we shared many adventures in the Chugach Front Range, as well as in Anchorage's parks and greenbelts.

During that period, I began staying closer to home, both because of my mom's needs and the fact that I hated to leave Coya behind while going on trips that she couldn't join.

Besides our shared adventures, Coya was a warm, affectionate dog with me. Unfortunately, she could also be one stubborn gal! We had our share of disagreements, but her love — I don't know what else to call it — brightened my life, even as she helped broaden my horizons. She added a new dimension to my world and, in no small way, changed my daily routines and the way I interact with the nature of my adopted hometown. And she deepened my understanding of the strong connections that can be made between species.

Anyone who's had a beloved canine companion knows what I mean when I say Coya became a cherished member of my family.

In early 2012, Coya turned 11, yet I didn't think of her as "old." She still had lots of energy and loved to roam the mountains, even if she had slowed down a bit. Then, in the spring of that year, she got sick.

When her condition worsened, I took Coya to see her doctor. To my great dismay, it turned out she had a rare and virulent, and incurable cancer.

On June 7, Coya and I took a short walk on the Coastal Trail. Much of that walk is now a blur, but I do remember that Coya seemed happy, even eager, to be out exploring a favorite trail.

That night, Coya's condition worsened. She clearly was suffering, and neither one of us got any sleep. Cuddling with

her on the living room couch, I knew it was time.

Coya was euthanized the morning of June 8, 2012, creating a huge hole in my life and, for a time, leaving me inconsolably sad.

Not long after Coya's death, friends encouraged me to get another dog, but I wasn't ready. I needed to grieve. I told them I'd know when the time — and the new dog — was right.

Almost exactly a year later, in the early summer of 2013, Denali came into my life, though at the time she was called "Poppy Dawn" (one in a series of names she'd been given as a puppy).

Poppy Dawn was a rescue, saved from Anchorage's "dog pound" (a story in itself) by the group Kitty and K-9 Connection. A couple of good friends, Wayne and Marilyn, had volunteered to foster Poppy Dawn until a permanent home was found. Soon after taking her in, they arranged a "date" between us.

I told Wayne and Marilyn I'd need some time to make a decision, but I knew right away that Poppy was the one, and it didn't take long before I made her my own. Neither did it take long to settle on a more Alaskan name. This beautiful young mutt — like Coya before her — was forevermore named Denali.

Though the details of her early life were vague, the best we could tell Denali had been born about a year earlier, which meant that she entered this world at about the same time Coya departed it.

I arbitrarily chose June 1, 2012, as Denali's birth date, which means we are celebrating her 10th birthday this week. Yet, at the same time, I am remembering Coya's death one decade ago — can it really be that long?

Like Coya before her, Denali has enriched and expanded my life, even as her presence has, for the most part, kept me close to home. As any longtime reader of this column is aware, Denali is my No. 1 hiking companion. Rarely do I head for the wilds without her company, so mostly we adventure in the Anchorage Bowl and the adjoining Chugach Front Range, where dogs are welcome to roam with their human companions. And that has worked out great.

In recent years, Denali and I have teamed up with another couple — my sweetheart Jan and her dog Guido — who share our passion for nature, Alaska's rich wildness, adventures in the local landscape and, more generally, life, which has further enhanced our joyful explorations.

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Kassandra Mirosh
from Healy

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More than a Pretty Penny

Catching up with Vitus Collective's Zane Penny

BY DREW ERICKSON

For many artists, creativity is born of a self-centered origin; they create because they need to. But most creatives eventually find that what they create can become bigger than they intended. Art, made privately, can be a tool that we use to heal ourselves. But, when made public, art is a form of expression that can reach far beyond its creator. Having recently begun sharing his music with the world, musician Zane Penny is focusing on how he can use his work to bring Anchorage's arts community closer together.

As a songwriter, Penny uses his writing to create pleasure and beauty out of pain and ugliness. "I really believe that when you turn trauma into art, it's not trauma anymore. You just, like, have a cool piece of art. Then I don't look at it as, 'This is a shitty part of my life.' It's like, 'Damn, this is some good material to write with,'" he said.

But through sharing his music, Penny has found that songs have the potential to help the listener as well. "I'll write something really personal, and then have kind of second thoughts about it, 'cause I'm like, 'Do I want people to know this about me?' 'Cause it's like, so incredibly personal. It's just kind of weird to reveal parts about me that my family might not even know. But I think that's what's so cool about it. People you don't know maybe can relate to what you're saying a lot more."

Penny wants the sense of community and connection to reach as far as possible. He is a part of Vitus Collective, a group that aims to host events for people of all ages to enjoy art and music.

"There's no all ages shows here, except for the Nave shows, so, when there's a chance, so many people come out to support."

Currently, most live music in Alaska is performed in bars, which limits the audience demographic. But the col-

lective is working on expanding the scene.

"The lack of alcohol is really dope. I was getting texts from people after the show, like, 'As a person who's sober, it's really nice to be in an environment where that's not, like, kind of the norm.' When kids are there, or people my age, under twenty-one, they want to be included. So, everyone's dancing and everyone's singing. It's such a good environment. It's awesome. It's just so much more fun to get everyone involved," explained Penny.

The communal element of Penny and Vitus' operations is not only applied to their public events but also to their work together.

"Every time I write music, it's super collaborative. All of my friends make music, so I'll kind of just pass it along, and get ideas, and we'll all kind of add our little sauce to it," Penny said.

And this sentiment extends beyond the Collective, across the local music community.

"In LA, everyone's so replaceable, so everyone's scrambling to the top. But in Alaska, you have to make it work with each other. It's not really competitive at all — at least, in my eyes. It's just like, 'I'm throwing a show with the homies,'" said Penny.

Before beginning to write and perform music, Penny was behind the scenes, working with Vitus to film music videos for the other members.

"I started when I was in kindergarten, making the Lego stop-motion shit. And then I kind of got into short films." But he had always wanted to make music of his own. "I was like, obsessed with Justin Bieber. I wanted to be Justin Bieber. So, my first dream was, like, 'I wanna be a pop star.' And then I kind of got into filmmaking and stuff. And then I did that until, I don't know, I joined Vitus and we started throwing shows, and now I'm like, 'I wanna be a pop star.'"

After watching his colleagues perform live, Penny gathered the courage to step into the spotlight and began performing as well.

"Being able to see someone in the position that you want to be in is really empowering. Especially when you can see it in front of you. There's a lot of hope to be given to people, I think," said Penny.

Vitus plans to be very active in Anchorage this summer, with a wide array of artistic endeavors in mind. As well



as producing music, they are working on fashion design, a series of zines, and a podcast. They are also aiming to host all-ages shows every week throughout the summer. As far as Zane's artistic plans as an individual, he intends to release singles every few months while working up to publishing his first full album. For now, we can look forward to his next song, "The Avenue," coming soon.

Check out Zane Penny's work on Spotify, and make sure to follow @VitusCollective on Instagram.



15th Edition

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May 31 - June 5th

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PRESSIFIEDS

Super Crossword

COUNTRY
MUSIC

- ACROSS**
- 1 Chartbusters
8 Farthest point in an orbit
14 Uncommon
20 Salary reductions
21 Child raiser
22 Add insult to injury, maybe
23 Question in 1 Corinthians 15:55
26 Europe-Asia border river
27 Wood splitter
28 Ski lift part
29 Prefix with lock
30 Supplicate on behalf of
35 — polloi (commoners)
37 Sermon topic
38 Suffix with Sudan
39 Massage
40 Old booming jet, for short
41 “— changed man!”
43 Designer Geoffrey
45 Salon colorists
47 “Is this actually happening?”
50 Oviedo locale
53 Situated over
56 Brine source
- 57 New Hampshire academy
58 “I’m going through the same thing!”
61 Shipping charge, e.g.
62 Steering part on a ship
63 Long (for)
64 Vikings’ org.
66 Refusing to be cheerful
71 Regarding
72 Agree
76 Pop’s mom
77 Actress Amy
79 SSNs, e.g.
80 Pressing tool
81 Fig treat from Nabisco
83 Seeming eternity
85 DNA-studying partner of James Watson
87 “My turn is coming right up”
91 He KO’d many rivals
93 Ball- — hammer
94 Forrest Gump player
95 “Quantum Leap” actor
98 Bend down
100 Abrupt
101 Body pouch
- 102 Secretive U.S. gp.
105 She bleats
106 Part of UCLA
109 33rd prez
110 Restaurant bill addition
112 Crucial component
116 Long (for)
118 Boyfriends, in Paris
120 Dir. opposite 7-Down
121 Viking org.
122 Tune whose opening lyric, and lyricist, begin eight answers in this puzzle
128 Motion detector part
129 Agee of the old Mets
130 Small eating alcove
131 Waiters take them
132 Like training at the location itself
133 Occupy fully
- DOWN**
- 1 Wedded partner
2 Chennai, before 1996
3 “Sure thing, cap’n!”
4 La — (Milan opera house)
5 Crude abode
6 Biblical verb suffix
7 NYC-to-Miami dir.
8 High points
9 Peeling tools
10 Raw metal
11 Allstate rival
12 Put into a hall of fame
13 Kett of old comic strips
14 — Gyra (jazz fusion band)
15 Prefix with gender
16 Utah ski spot
17 Slide in again
18 Go on with
19 Train operator
24 Barn feed
25 Cymbal pair in a drum kit
31 Nathaniel Hawthorne’s Hester
32 Feel remorse over
33 James — Garfield
34 Consumer protection agcy.
36 Wild Alpine goats
42 Soccer great Hamm
44 Summer, in Soissons
45 Royal crown
46 Worried
48 E-cig’s lack
49 Busy insect
50 Its capital is Damascus
51 16 ounces
52 Lindley of “The Ropers”
54 NYC stage awards
55 Small bunch of flowers
59 Spock and Seuss: Abbr.
60 Alternative to “his” or “her”
61 Go by plane
64 Nary a soul
65 Backyard borders
67 Open, as a present
68 Language of “mea culpa”
69 Be a rapper?
70 BoSox rivals
73 Freud’s “one”
74 Ensnare
75 “Cannon” has three
78 The Brady kids, e.g.
82 Restated
84 Gambling parlor, briefly
85 Chick- — -A
86 Prefix with lock
87 “No kidding?”
88 Artist known for illusions
89 Boston area with the Paul Revere statue
90 UFO crew
91 Alias abbr.
92 Find by chance
96 In line with
97 One or more
99 Be indebted
103 “Belt out that tune!”
104 She founded the U.S. Shakers
106 Crude abode
107 First phases
108 Long looks
111 Letter-shaped girders
113 PSATs, e.g.
114 “No kidding!”
115 Deep-seated
117 To be, to Claudius
119 Regarding
123 Blue Jays, on scoreboards
124 Abbr. for someone with only one given name
125 34th prez
126 Firewood box
127 Repub. west of Zambia

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LEGALS

Hidden Farms LLC is applying under 3 AAC 306.400(a)(1) for a new Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility license, license #33144, doing business as Hidden Farms LLC, located at 10263 Nigh Road #6, Anchorage, AK, 99515, 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 to be 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 5/19/22, 5/26/22, 6/02/22

Kit the Labrador, LLC is applying under 3 AAC 306.400(a)(1) for a new Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility license, license #32198, doing business as North Country Farms, located at 101 Post Road, Anchorage, AK, 99501, 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 to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and a copy of the application will be posted on AMCO's website at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco>. Objections should be sent

LEGALS

to AMCO at
marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to
550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600,
Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney
Jana Weltzin, Esq. At
jana@jdwccounsel.com or JDW, LLC,
901 Photo Avenue, Second Floor,
Anchorage, AK 99503.
Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 5/26/22, 6/02/22,
6/09/22

Manifest Destiny LLC dba BurgerFi
located at 600 East Northern Lights
Boulevard #118 Anchorage, Alaska is
applying for a transfer of a restaurant
eating place AS..11100 liquor
license. The change of ownership
involves the ownership interest
transfer from Raymond Kizer, 1%
interest to Richard Hobbs 51%
interest. Interested parties should
submit written comment to their
local governing body, the applicant,
and to the Alcoholic Beverage
Control Board at 550 West 7th
Avenue Suite 1600 Anchorage,
Alaska 99501 or
alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov
Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 5/19/22, 5/26/22,
6/02/22

R.A. Levinsohn LLC dba Kincaid Grill
located at 6700 Jewel Lake Road
Suite 16 Anchorage Alaska is
applying for transfer of Restaurant or
Eating Place AS. 04.11.100 liquor
license. The change in ownership
involves the ownership interest
transfer from Alan Levinsohn,
84.03% interest to Christopher
Johnson, 100%. 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 AK
99501 or
alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov
Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 6/02/22, 6/09/22,
6/16/22

NORTHERN HOSPITALITY GROUP
II, INC is making application for a
new package store, AS 04.11.150
package store license doing business
as Prospectors Provisions located at
2415 C St, Anchorage, Ak, 99503.
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 AK 99501 or
alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov.
Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 5/19/22, 5/26/22,
6/02/22

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the Estate of Donna L. Snitzler,
Anchorage, deceased. All claims
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verified by statutory declaration
and with particulars and valuation
of security held, if any, must be
sent to the undersigned before the
24th of September, 2022.

Tyra L Blanchard and
Neil D. Snitzler, executors.
501 Oceanview Dr. Anchorage,
AK 99515
Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 5/26/22, 6/02/22,
6/09/22

YELLOWSTONE INVESTMENTS,
LLC located at no premises is
applying for transfer of a Beverage
Dispensary AS 04.11.090 liquor
license to NORTHERN HOSPITALITY
GROUP II, INC. dba Prospectors
Pizza located at 2415 C St,
Anchorage, Ak, 99503. 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 AK 99501 or
alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov.
Anchorage Press
Publish Dates 5/19/22, 5/26/22,
6/02/22

Top Shelf Herbs of Alaska LLC,
doing business as Top Shelf Herbs
of Alaska LLC, Located at 901 Photo
Ave Anchorage ,AK 99503, is
applying under (3 ACC 306.045) for
Transfer of controlling interest in a
Retail Marijuana Store.
(3 AAC 306.300) license #22150.
The transfer involves a change in
ownership percentages from Mark
Fazio 50% and Chism Leimbach 50%
to Mark Fazio 100%.
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 less than 30 days after director
has determined the Application to be
complete and has given written
notice to the local Government. Once
an Application is determined
Complete the objection deadline and
copy of the application 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.
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6/16/22

— King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

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The worst fire year we can remember

BY NED ROZELL

In a gorgeous warm May this year, we have not yet sniffed the bitter scent of flaming spruce. When we do, some of us will think back to a year that still haunts us.

In summer 2004, a Vermont-sized patch of Alaska burned in wildfires. That hazy summer was the most extreme fire year in the half century people have kept score.

Here’s how it happened.

May 2004 was warmer than average in Interior Alaska, ground zero for Alaska’s fires for two reasons: Its summer heat and abundance of black spruce, which a fire-fighter once described as “gasoline on a stick.”

But that May was also wetter. Fairbanks received 2 inches of rain, more than three times normal.

The first hint of something unusual came May 31. On that day, the Alaska Lightning Detection System recorded 7,876 lightning strikes. Peppered from the Kobuk River to the upper Yukon, the lightning was the highest total ever recorded for a single day in May.

All that lightning meant thunderstorms. The rain that came with them perhaps hid some of the fires that started that day, wrote Michael Richmond, formerly of the National Weather Service Fairbanks, in a paper about that extraordinary summer.

June was a warm month throughout Alaska. For example: Kivalina registered a temperature of 96 degrees F on June 29. The normal high for Kivalina, way north of the Arctic Circle on the Chukchi Sea coast, is in the low 50s. Temperatures in the Interior were 6 to 10 degrees warmer than the June average.

In late June and early July came an unusual five days of dry winds wheezing from the Brooks Range and the uplands of the Yukon River. The fires, born of lightning strikes in May and June, “were fanned into conflagrations,” Richmond wrote.

Fairbanks was then in the soup. Giant fires burned in all compass directions. The sun was an orange disc you could look at without destroying your eyes. Visibility dropped to less than one quarter mile. People looked for areas on Alaska’s road system where they could escape for a smokeless weekend, with no luck. It was hot, but could have been hotter — the haze was so thick it scattered the sun’s rays.

“High temperatures were often 10 to 20 degrees (F) cooler than they would have been under clear sky conditions,” Richmond wrote.

The firestorm of 2004 continued with a record 9,022 lightning strikes July 15. That summer’s total of 147,642 lightning strikes was more than twice the amount of any other year.

And it didn’t end in July. August is usually a wet month in Interior Alaska, when a change in the jet stream shoves moisture from the southwest between the Alaska



BY NED ROZELL

The Akasofu Building on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus is bathed in smoke during the dramatic summer of 2004.

Range and Kuskokwim Mountains. That mechanism seemed broken in 2004. Fairbanks had its driest August in more than a century of records. It rained three-tenths of an inch on the first day of the month, but not a drop for the next 30 days.

Fires burned well into September that year. By the end of the 2004 fire season, 6.2 million acres of Alaska had burned. That broke the former Alaska record set in 1957,

and not by a little. The 1 million more acres that burned in 2004 than in 1957 equates to a fire scar the size of Rhode Island.

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. A version of this column ran in 2006.

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Family Vacations

I'm a single and kinky gay man, doing mainly vanilla dating at the moment. Recently, I got dumped by a guy because I fessed up to being kinky. I also told him I believe in God. I realize that might appear contradictory, but I don't see why both can't coexist. He told me he can't date anyone who's sexually deviant who also believes in "fairies at the bottom of the garden." Both were equally problematic for him: my belief in God and my kinks. I wasn't expecting to be both kink-shamed and God-shamed in the same breath. Are there such things as kinky Christians? Where can I find my tribe?

—Frustrated About Insultingly Terminating Hookup

One of the kinkiest guys I ever met — dungeon-in-his-basement kinky, flog-you-until-you-are-screaming kinky — was an episcopal priest. So yeah, FAITH, there are kinky Christians out there. But instead of sitting at home alone wondering where your tribe is, get out there and find your tribe. Get on kinky dating apps, go to leather/fetish events, date some non-vanilla guy, make some non-vanilla friends. If you find a welcoming tribe and it turns out you're the only believer, so long as no one judges or shames you, FAITH, join that tribe. If you meet guys who have a problem with your faith, they don't get to be a part of your tribe.

As for the guy who called you a sexual deviant... what the hell does he think he is? Without deviation from the norm, there wouldn't be "normal" gay guys for that asshole to date at all. Some of us may deviate more than others, FAITH, but that's as true for gay people as it is for straight people.

A man I very casually "dated" for ONE MONTH more than FIFTEEN YEARS AGO — a man I have maintained a friendship with ever since — tells his new girlfriends that I am his "ex-girlfriend." This disclosure causes a lot of unnecessary awkwardness between whoever his current girlfriend might be and me. I've told him he shouldn't do that because I was never officially his girlfriend. For 99.999% of the time I've known him, we've been friends, compared to the .001% of the time when we were very casually dating. He says he doesn't want to lie?!? But it's not a lie to say we are friends! I hate the awkwardness that it causes between me and the women he dates now. They never have a chance to get to know and trust me. Help me explain this to him so he finally gets it!

—Never His Girlfriend

He gets it, NHG. The awkwardness he's creating between you and his girlfriend-of-the-moment — the awkwardness you see as unnecessary and avoidable — is exactly what he wants. Introducing you as his ex makes things awkward with his current, and his current girlfriend's intuitive sense that he's either intentionally or thoughtlessly making things awkward makes him a less appealing partner. He doesn't want a commitment or anything long-term, and instead of being honest about that, he's weaponizing your existence to erect barriers between him and whoever he's dating at the moment. He may not be doing it knowingly, but he's doing it just the same, and it's a shitty thing to do to a friend.

And the next time he does it, NHG, object and object loudly: "Don't be ridiculous! I was NEVER your girlfriend!"

Hey, Everybody: The Southern Baptist Convention, the largest protestant denomination in the United States, has always been terrible. It was founded in 1845 by supporters of slavery and the organization is racist to its core still. Leaders, churches, and preachers in the Southern Baptist Convention have also been the loudest anti-gay voices in the country for decades, and lately they've been loudly promoting the lie that gay and trans people — by simply existing — are somehow grooming children. Well, it turns out the groomers were in the building all along. In their buildings, in their megachurches, in their leadership — and they weren't waving rainbow flags or reading from "Heather Has Two Mommies." They were waving Confederate battle flags and reading from Leviticus. A blockbuster report released last week documents decades of sexual abuse committed by pastors and leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention. The same preachers who were accusing gays and lesbians of 'coming for your kids' were the ones coming for your kids. And in them. As with all power-obsessed social conservatives, as with all Trumpers (and the Southern Baptist Convention is now a Trump property), every accusation — of corruption, of rigged elections, of sexual abuse — is an admission of guilt. questions@savagelove.net



ASK OSKAR
BY OSKAR SAVILLE

Now that summer vacation is coming up, I want to plan some little trips. Not everyone in the family is going to want to do the same things. How do I manage that so I can have a relaxing time and not just worry about making everyone in my family happy?

—Summer Fun

Dear Summer Fun, I love this question! There is nothing I love more than a family vacation! I see family vacations as a time to explore the things that my kids and I are interested in.

Some of my family's interests are traveling, food, meeting new people, and exploring different cultures, so those things have informed our family vacations. My three kids and I have traveled on four-hour long bus rides through China, 12-hour long train rides in Asia, long haul flights across continents and oceans, cross-country road trips, boats across seas, bike rides, and inner-city trips (and that's not even everything!). I have been stopped countless times on these travels by people asking me how we all seem so peaceful. The key has been what my bass player in one of my bands used to say: "There's no 'I' in Team." I believe that adding WE to the planning of anything with more than one person brings more "Wheee!" to the event.

Growing up, I rarely went on family vacations. When we did, it was whatever my mother wanted to do. I felt like an extra piece of luggage that my mother had to bring along. That experience informed me and changed me. From the time my kids were little, I always included them in the planning to:

- 1) Give them a sense of empowerment
- 2) Let them know that their opinions counted

I always start planning a trip by buying maps. I know, so old-fashioned! But I think it brings a sense of tangible reality to an adventure and begins unfolding the unknown into the known. From there, I start to share with my kids some things I know about the place we are going to — or if I don't know anything, we go to the internet and start exploring. Once we have more info, I ask them what they're interested in doing. For example, when we went to Japan, my son (who was four at the time) heard that the fastest train in the world, the bullet train, was there, so I made that part of our journey. We took that train from Tokyo to Kyoto. I might never have even thought of that if not for him.

So, if you are planning on taking some little trips, I would suggest having a family meeting and presenting the idea to everyone. Ask questions like: What are some things that you would love to do on the trip? What goals would you like to achieve on the trip — Eat something you've never eaten before... Try to hold your breath underwater for one minute... Build a giant sandcastle... Go through 10 drive-throughs? Not every request has to be filled, but having open minds to other people's needs already starts creating the harmony needed for everyone to have a good time.

As for making sure everyone is happy, I have taught my kids through example that group happiness is more important than individual happiness. Good relationships always require a give-and-take — sometimes you're the one giving, and sometimes you're the one

taking. For instance, when my kids were small and on a family vacation, I had to give up my want of walking around a new city for hours, because that wasn't good for the greater good. I mean, who wants tired, cranky kids? Instead, I found a way to fulfill my want by paring down my exploration to a two-block radius, having a great coffee, and finding an amazing playground in every place we have ever visited.

As my kids got a little older and were able to explore more, I could use things I knew they loved to get them excited about going on trips. One year, we traveled by car all over Italy, and I told the kids the goal was to find the best ice cream. I got to see the country's amazing sites, all under the guise of seeking out great gelato.

From a more practical perspective, it's important to be accepting of where you are. Being a parent is a full-time job—there's no summer break from that. You will still have to feed, guide, and help your kids. Some of my relaxation now comes from simple things like not cooking. In my vacation spending plan, I budget money for eating out twice a day so someone else can cook and clean up for me. During the summer of 2020, when COVID-19 had its first hold on us, I took the kids to a simple water park that had a motel connected to it. It wasn't MY dream vacation, but I felt relaxed being in a place where the kids could let go and have some fun. It turned out this waterpark had a trapeze and zipline park attached, and I had a ball there! I wouldn't have had that experience had I not been open to the greater good of the group.

By taking the time to include my children in vacation planning, I have created a very team-oriented family without even trying. Now that they are 16, 14, and 9, the idea that we can all get our needs met is something natural for all of us. This summer, we will be taking a trip to explore the Pacific Northwest because my eldest will be spending a few months there for school. It was a natural progression — her solo exploration gave rise to our group exploration.

Taking the time to enjoy and invest in a family vacation is like planting oak trees. In 30 years, when your kids are big, you will all be able to rest among the beautiful memories. For me, that is the most relaxing thing I can imagine.

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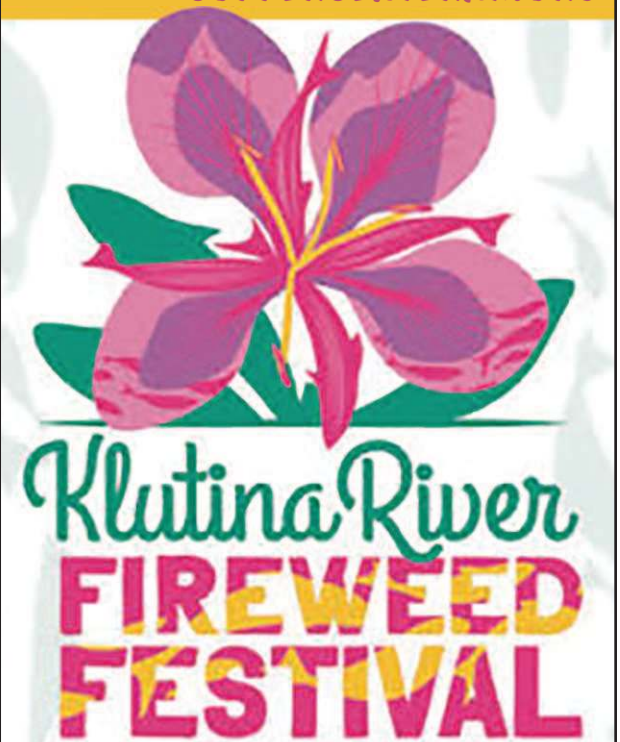
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