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ANCHORAGE PRESS

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The Anchorage Press is a news, opinion, features, arts, entertainment and recreation paper. Established in 1992, the Press is printed weekly on Thursdays and distributed throughout Anchorage and the surrounding area.

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An open letter to our readership

BY ANCHORAGE PRESS STAFF

Established in 1992, The Anchorage Press has an award-winning history of covering metro feature stories, politics, arts, entertainment, and recreation. As a community paper, we've made it our mission to fight for equality within the Anchorage community. We have been honored with a Sigma Delta Chi Award and Bronze Medallion by the Society of Professional Journalists for recognition of distinguished service to the American people. We have also been recognized by Identity Inc., for the groundbreaking publication of Prism Press – and LGBTQIA+ focused magazine – created by the late RJ Johnson.

Despite our successes, we, like many in the community, have been greatly affected by the pandemic and economic downturn. Additionally, the rapidly rising cost of materials and services that support our print and digital content platforms has financially challenged the paper. And, to be perfectly honest, we need to be profitable in order to support our editorial and marketing staff in creating an organization that serves and grows a robust core audience.

So, we find ourselves at a critical juncture and are looking to the community for support.

First, we hope to find a scrappy professional to join our marketing and sales team as a General Manager and Advertising Director. The right person will be someone who ardently believes in the importance of the Anchorage Press and wants to be a part of a team dedicated to helping the paper thrive. If you have the vision, drive, and sales experience to be a critical part of the Press team, we want to hear from you! Send your resume and cover letter to editor@anchoragepress.com and kim.benedict@wickcommunications.com and let's get to work.

Secondly, we want to hear from you, our readers. Moving forward, what do you want to see in the paper? It is our goal to continue to serve the community to the best of our ability and we feel that it's high time we get feedback about what is most important to you. With this in mind, we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity by scanning the QR code below to fill out a brief survey, or by emailing us directly at editor@anchoragepress.com.

We look forward to hearing from you and embarking on the next chapter of the Anchorage Press!



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The magic returns with The Nutcracker this Thanksgiving Weekend

Young Alaska dancers and Anchorage Symphony Orchestra perform with Eugene Ballet

BY THE ANCHORAGE CONCERT ASSOCIATION

The Nutcracker returns after a three-year hiatus to bring the holiday magic back this Thanksgiving weekend. For over 30 years, The Nutcracker has become a beloved Anchorage tradition that reminds people to dream bigger, leap higher, and experience the wonders of being a kid again.

For the 31st presentation of this cherished tradition, Anchorage Concert Association is bringing back the elegant Eugene Ballet to perform with young Alaska dancers and Anchorage Symphony Orchestra.

Eugene Ballet's production features fantastical sets, costumes, and special effects that leave audiences spellbound and cheering for more, accompanied by live music from the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra and more than 80 local children coordinated by Alaska Dance Theatre. With Willam Christensen's historic choreography and Tchaikovsky's beloved score, many families will kick off the holiday season with this timeless classic.

Since its founding in 1978, and under the leadership of award-winning Artistic Director and Resident Choreographer, Toni Pimble, Eugene Ballet has grown to become one of the West's busiest and most versatile professional dance companies. Built upon an engaging repertoire of full-length classical ballets, contemporary works, and accessible family programs, Eugene Ballet continues to collaborate across multiple cultural disciplines to create innovative new pieces, as well as with timeless classics like The Nutcracker.

ConocoPhillips Alaska sponsors The Nutcracker and supports a community dress rehearsal for clients of local social service organizations. More than 1,000 people will experience the magic of this treasured ballet for free, thanks to support from ConocoPhillips.

Experience the joy and wonder of The Nutcracker with Eugene Ballet, Nov. 25-27 in the Atwood Concert Hall at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Presented by Anchorage Concert Association. Sponsored by ConocoPhillips Alaska. Tickets available at the CenterTix box office (263-ARTS) and anchorageconcerts.org.

The Nutcracker by the numbers:

- 31 years Anchorage Concert Association has presented The Nutcracker at the PAC
- 82 social service organizations invited to the community dress rehearsal

- 1,000+ social service clients attending ConocoPhillips Community Dress Rehearsal for free
- 82 Alaska dancers ages 8 to 18, (alongside 36 professional dancers with Eugene Ballet)
- 70 Alaska musicians with Anchorage Symphony Orchestra
- 20+ Alaska stagehands working on The Nutcracker behind the scenes with Eugene Ballet artistic and production staff
- 70+ Anchorage Concert Association volunteers and staff who contribute their time to lobby activities and souvenirs and gifts during the dress rehearsal and public performances
- 95+ Alaska Dance Theatre staff and volunteers who contribute their time with the local dancers
- 10,000+ estimated total attendees at The Nutcracker presented by Anchorage Concert Association in 2022

Anchorage Concert Association Upcoming Events

Portland Cello Project Holiday Show, Dec. 2 & 3, 2022, Discovery Theatre

Blue Man Group, Dec. 6-11, 2022, Atwood Concert Hall

Recycled Percussion, Jan. 21, 2023, Atwood Concert Hall

Laura Cortese & The Dance Cards, Jan. 27, 2023, Discovery Theatre





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East Anchorage House candidates Democrat Donna Mears, left, and Republican Forrest Wolfe, right, appear in a photo composite. Mears took the lead over Wolfe in an updated vote count on Tuesday, Nov. 15. (Mears photo by Andrew Kitchenman/Alaska Beacon; Wolfe campaign photo provided by Wolfe)

With more votes counted, Alaska House races are split 20-20 between Republicans and others

No state Senate or statewide races changed leaders, but Murkowski and Tshibaka are closer

BY JAMES BROOKS
ALASKA BEACON

Democratic candidate Donna Mears overtook Republican candidate Forrest Wolfe in a closely watched Alaska House race as the Alaska Division of Elections counted 27,178 early, absentee, and questioned ballots, about three-fifths of the number outstanding from the November 8 general election.

Additional absentee ballots are expected to arrive in the coming days. The Division of Elections' next scheduled count is Friday.

With Mears taking the lead, the 40-seat Alaska House is split exactly in half. In 20 seats, Republicans lead. In the other 20, Democratic or independent candidates are leading.

Since 2016, the House has been led by a predominantly Democratic coalition that includes independents and moderate Republicans. If Mears and other non-Republican candidates maintain their leads, the odds of a continued coalition increase.

Subsequent vote counts, including Alaska's first-of-its-kind ranked choice sorting on November 23, are expected to change some results and could alter the split in the House.

In northern Anchorage, for example, Rep. David Nelson, a Republican, leads two Democratic challengers. In the ranked-choice sorting process, preliminary results indicate that one of the Democrats will be eliminated. However, ranked-choice voting allows supporters of the eliminated candidate to put their support to a second candidate, likely the other Democrat.

Elsewhere in Anchorage, the sorting process may benefit Republicans. Democratic candidate Denny Wells has 46% of the vote in the House seat representing Anchorage's Taku-Campbell Anchorage, but two Republicans in the district have a combined 54% of the vote.

In the district surrounding the Alaska Zoo, nonpartisan candidate Walter Featherly has 45% of the vote but two competing Republicans have more than 55% of the vote combined.

Elsewhere in the state, Tuesday's ballot counts did not result in any lead changes.

Statewide, incumbent Republican Gov. Mike Dunleavy has more than 51% of the vote in the race for governor, precluding the need for a ranked choice sorting process that involves his challengers.

In the race for the U.S. House, Democratic candidate Mary Peltola has more than 48% of the vote, less than the combined totals of her two Republican challengers, Sarah Palin (26.1%) and Nick Begich (23.8%), but in the August 16 special general election that featured all three candidates, many of Begich's supporters did not list

Palin as a second choice.

For the U.S. Senate seat on the ballot, Republican challenger Kelly Tshibaka saw her lead over Republican incumbent Lisa Murkowski dwindle to just 565 votes, or two-tenths of 1 percentage point.

Many Democratic voters are expected to back Murkowski as a second choice when ranked-choice sorting takes place on November 23, and Democratic candidate Pat Chesbro is eliminated.

Among state legislative races:

Sen. Scott Kawasaki, D-Fairbanks, now has more than 50% of the votes in his re-election contest against Republicans Jim Matherly and Alex Jafre. That margin means the race will likely not go through ranked choice sorting on November 23 and Kawasaki is much more sure of victory.

Rep. Andy Josephson, D-Anchorage, extended his 86-vote Election-Day lead over Republican challenger Kathy Henslee. Josephson now leads by 215 votes out of 5,400 cast.

In South Anchorage, a three-way state Senate race among Republican incumbent Roger Holland, Republican challenger Cathy Giessel and Democratic challenger Rose-lynn Cacy is divided almost exactly equally. Giessel had 33.7% of the vote Tuesday night, Holland had 33.3%, and Cacy 32.7%. Giessel is expected to have a majority of the second-choice votes from Holland and Cacy supporters, meaning that she would win as long as she remains out of third place and is not eliminated first in ranked choice sorting.

The lead of Republican Frank Tomaszewski (pronounced Thomas-shefsky) over Democratic incumbent Grier Hopkins, D-Fairbanks, has dropped to just over 6%, with Tomaszewski's share of the ballots dropping to 49.1%. That means the race will go through ranked choice sorting on November 23. Tomaszewski is still the favorite: The third candidate in the race is Republican Nate DeMars, and many of his voters are believed to have picked Tomaszewski second.

Sen. Mike Shower, R-Wasilla and one of the leading conservative members of the state Senate, likely locked up re-election after early and absentee votes failed to diminish his lead over former Alaska Wildlife Troopers leader Doug Massie in a Republican-Republican head-to-head contest.

Justin Ruffridge, a Soldotna pharmacist who ran as a moderate alternative to Rep. Ron Gillham, R-Soldotna, appears likely to defeat the incumbent. With early votes and absen-tees through November 11 counted in that district, he leads by six percentage points.

The Division of Elections did not add votes from its Nome office, but there was a slight adjustment in the totals in the race between Rep. Neal Foster, D-Nome, and Alaskan Independence Party challenger Tyler Ivanoff. Foster's total went up by three votes, and Ivanoff's fell by one, which increased Foster's lead from six votes to 10. It's the closest race in the state, and if Ivanoff were to win, he would be the first AIP candidate to serve in the Legislature.



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Dagnabit!

Dale & Sherri

BY MIKE GORDON

Dale was smarter than the average guy and one of the best bartenders I had at the time, but boy was he a handful. It was somewhere around the late ‘70s or early ‘80s. I don’t believe I had yet added the Spenard Bingo Hall building to the north side of Chilkoot Charlie’s, doubling the size of the club.

One of my persistent security and management problems in those days, in addition to theft, shrinkage, absenteeism, drug sales, drug usage, on premise sex, over-imbibing on the job, and workers’ compensation claims, was making sure that my employees didn’t use the place as a private after-hours club when we officially closed down at 5:00 a.m.

Dale Prairie, aka Prairie Dog, was as likely as anyone on the payroll to take advantage of any kind of breach in club security in order to indulge in such activity, and our security staff made sure he exited the building after he’d finished counting his banks. One morning, however, still in the mood to party and dissatisfied with being ushered outside, Dale decided to take matters into his own hands.

We had a shoulder-high Lexan window at the security station next to the main entrance. Dale pried it open and crawled in through it. The security staff was having a meeting, discussing the events of the previous evening, and here comes Dale again, a little disheveled from his creative reentry but ready to party nonetheless. He was caught and held hostage until a cab could be directed to take him home. Lots of people at the time, not just my employees, had difficulty recognizing when the party was over. Many never did figure it out and are probably still partying in their graves. The pervasiveness of cocaine was a large part of the problem.

There was a pretty Alaska Native girl named JoAnne who worked as an exotic dancer. JoAnne was not only very good-looking, she was also a contortionist, so you can imagine her popularity at the Bush Company, a strip joint on International Airport Road that was doing a land office business at the time. JoAnne was high-spirited and liked to party every bit as much as Dale Prairie and they dated for a while.

I still had my condo on the top floor of the Royal Kahana on Maui and arranged for Dale and JoAnne to use it for a vacation. I was to occupy the unit immediately after them and arrived the day they were vacating. They had gotten into a big brawl and Dale had thrown JoAnne’s suitcase from my tenth-floor lanai. Bras, panties and makeup bags were strewn all over the lawn and Joanne was in banshee mode.

One time we had Herbert Butros Khaury (1932-1996) entertain on the north side of the club. You might know him as Tiny Tim. Tiny Tim had made “Tiptoe Through the Tulips” a novelty hit in 1968 with his quavery falsetto voice and ukulele. I personally remember him appearing on the Steve Allen Show and Steve telling him he had better save his money, the implication being that he was destined to be a momentary celebrity.

Tiny Tim’s celebrity lasted longer than Steve Allen’s prediction. He played in night-clubs all over the country singing songs like “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” accompanied by the ukulele he carried in a brown paper shopping bag.

When he married Vicki Budinger, a 17-year-old fan he referred to as Miss Vicki, on the “Tonight Show” in 1969, it was watched by 21.4 million households—that show’s largest ever audience.

During Tiny Tim’s celebrity period women would shower him with tulips during his performances and, true to form, they packed the north side of Koot’s and brought armloads of tulips for him. In the lead-up to Tiny Tim’s performance, we held a variety show with customer participation called Stupid People Tricks, a take-off on the television show, Stupid Pet Tricks. He appeared on our stage with Tommy Rocker on one side, him on the other, and JoAnne in the middle.

Tommy Rocker played guitar and emceed and Tiny Tim played ukulele while JoAnne, practically naked, turned herself inside out and backwards while balanced upside down on one hand like a tantric yogini. Poor Tiny Tim could not take his eyes off of her. He looked like he was witnessing the birth of the universe or the “second coming.”

Following his performance, Tiny Tim stayed on the stage for at least an hour, signing autographs and receiving armloads of tulips. Afterwards, Shelli and I took him to dinner, where he talked a lot about JoAnne, calling her “pretzel girl.”

Tiny Tim cut quite the figure: He was dressed in a white sort of loose-fitting tuxedo outfit with purple lapels and black musical notes all over it, a tie, and his dyed, black, scraggly hair at shoulder length. His face was highlighted with mascara and lipstick and he wore more than a stack of pancake makeup. He was very polite and rather withdrawn. He told us that when he wasn’t on the road, he lived in a hotel room by himself. He asked for a wrapped straw to drink his beer and wrapped plastic tableware to eat his meal. He’s the only entertainer I ever took to dinner who asked me, “Mr. Gordon, may I have dessert?”

One time, “Prairie Dog” and I and a few other guys traveled to Thailand together. We partied hard before boarding our China Airlines flight. Dale and I were properly “tooted up” and could have probably partied the entire lengthy flight but at a certain point, when all the lights on the plane but ours were turned off, the Chinese stewardess, when we ordered yet another round of drinks, bent down to our level and said forcefully, “We got no mo likka!”

We were in Thailand for about a week, but from the time we got to our hotel to the time we left, I never saw Dale once. I was told he had spent the entire week in an opium den. That was a bridge too far, even for me.

Dale was well regarded in spite of his craziness. I’m not sure if he got fired for one or more of his shenanigans or just decided to move on, but I was told he wound up in Florida, where he was killed in a motorcycle accident.

Which reminds me. The best employee I EVER had was in the early ‘80s. Her name was Sherri A. Jaussaud (1960-1983). She was barely old enough to legally consume, much less bartend, but she was dedicated to her job and thanks to her purity and honest dedication, she literally held a whole clientele and workforce of people together better than I could do on my own. She was everyone’s good example, and, heaven knows, we all needed one. Everyone loved Sherri, from the loser who usually could have cared less to the hardened biker who generally shunned exhibitions of emotion that didn’t involve the loud rumble of a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

Incidentally, on vacation in Hawaii, Sherri had an affair with Guy Maynard, the Okinawan bartender at the Chart House Restaurant that had let me use his registration to



run the Honolulu Marathon. Sherri was in love and Guy was planning to travel to Alaska to spend some time with her.

I haven’t cried much writing this sequel but I’m crying now. I just googled Sherri. That’s all it took. There was her lovely young face. She was so beautiful. It may seem a stretch but in my mind she was Spenard’s “maiden,” Spenard’s Joan of Arc, sent by God as an inspirational gift. France needed a “maiden” to save Orleans during the medieval Hundred Years War with England, and like Joan of Arc, Sherri was our fearless guiding light and, like Joan, she came to a tragic end.

I am not casting aspersions, holding anyone responsible or making any moral judgments, but I did not like it or approve of it when I learned that Sherri was buying a motorcycle and that key personalities and employees around the bar were encouraging, tutoring and helping to equip her with appropriate riding gear and apparel. I let my feelings be known. I had a foreboding. I just did not feel she had the physical strength to handle a big, heavy Harley Davidson cycle. But she was so excited. Friends and employees assured me she’d be fine. Sometimes I hate it when I’m right.

One afternoon Sherri was out riding with some of those friends. I don’t remember who the friends were, but I’m sure I knew them all. Sherri got sucked under the sixteen wheels of a truck and trailer. Her shocking, grizzly departure left each and every one of us who knew and loved her indelibly imprinted with a lifelong commitment to being a better person.

Sherri was survived by her daughter, Renee, who was raised by Sherri’s mother, who brought her as a young girl into the bar to show her the memorial display we hung on the wall, which, to the best of my knowledge, is still there. I personally promised Renee and her mother I would never remove it.

Dagnabit! is a new column by the infamous former owner of Koot’s, Mike Gordon. This nostalgic romp through pre-statehood Alaska, tells the little known stories of the rough-and-tumble 70s, and the few years of the 80s Gordon refers to as the Glory Days, when anything was possible and money was no object.

SOME STORIES ARE TOO BIG FOR JUST WORDS!

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ARIES: Virginia Woolf wrote a passage that I suspect will apply to you in the coming weeks. She said, “There is no denying the wild horse in us. To gallop intemperately; fall on the sand tired out; to feel the earth spin; to have — positively — a rush of friendship for stones and grasses — there is no getting over the fact that this desire seizes us.” Here’s my question for you, Aries: How will you harness your wild horse energy? I’m hoping that the self-possessed human in you will take command of the horse and direct it to serve you and yours with constructive actions. It’s fine to indulge in some intemperate galloping, too.

TAURUS: “The failure of love might account for most of the suffering in the world,” writes poet Marie Howe. I agree with that statement. Many of us have had painful episodes revolving around people who no longer love us and people whose lack of love for us makes us feel hurt. That’s the bad news, Taurus. The good news is that you now have more power than usual to heal the failures of love you have endured in the past. You also have an expanded capacity to heal others who have suffered from the failures of love. I hope you will be generous in your ministrations!

GEMINI: Many Geminis tell me they are often partly awake as they sleep. In their dreams, they might work overtime trying to solve waking-life problems. Or they may lie in bed in the dark contemplating intricate ideas that fascinate them, or perhaps ruminating on the plot developments unfolding in a book they’ve been reading or a TV show they’ve been bingeing. If you are prone to such behavior, I will ask you to minimize it for a while. In my view, you need to relax your mind extra deeply and allow it to play luxuriously with non-utilitarian fantasies and dreams. You have a sacred duty to yourself to explore mysterious and stirring feelings that bypass rational thought.

CANCERIAN: Here are my two key messages for you. 1. Remember where you hide important stuff. 2. Remember that you have indeed hidden some important stuff. Got that? Please note that I am not questioning your urge to lock away a secret or two. I am not criticizing you for wanting to store a treasure that you are not yet ready to use or reveal. It’s completely understandable if you want to keep a part of your inner world off-limits to certain people for the time being. But as you engage in any or all of these actions, make sure you don’t lose touch with your valuables. And don’t forget why you are stashing them.

LEO: I know I don’t have to give you lessons in expressing your sensuality. Nor do you need prods and encouragement to do so. As a Leo, you most likely have abundant talent in the epicurean arts. But as you prepare to glide into the lush and lusty heart of the Sensuality Season, it can’t hurt to offer you a pep talk from your fellow Leo bon vivant, James Baldwin. He said: “To be sensual is to respect and rejoice in the force of life, of life itself, and to be present in all that one does, from the effort of loving to the breaking of bread.”

VIRGO: Many Virgos are on a lifelong quest to cultivate a knack described by Sigmund Freud: “In the small matters, trust the mind. In the large ones, the heart.” And I suspect you are now at a pivotal point in your efforts to master that wisdom. Important decisions are looming in regards to both small and large matters. I believe you will do the right things as long as you empower your mind to do what it does best and your heart to do what it does best.

LIBRA: Social media like Facebook and Twitter feed on our outrage. Their algorithms are designed to stir up our disgust and indignation. I confess that I get semi-caught in their trap. I am sometimes seduced by the temptation to feel lots of umbrage and wrath, even though those feelings comprise a small minority of my total emotional range. As an antidote, I proactively seek experiences that rouse my wonder and sublimity and holiness. In the next two weeks, Libra, I invite you to cultivate a focus like mine. It’s high time for a phase of minimal anger and loathing—and maximum reverence and awe.

SCORPIO: Scorpio author Sylvia Plath had a disturbing, melodramatic relationship with romance. In one of her short stories, for example, she has a woman character say, “His love is the twenty-story leap, the rope at the throat, the knife at the heart.” I urge you to avoid contact with people who think and feel like that—as glamorous as they might seem. In my view, your romantic destiny in the coming months can and should be uplifting, exciting in healthy ways, and conducive to your well-being. There’s no need to link yourself with shadowy renegades when there will be plenty of radiant helpers available.

SAGITTARIUS: I like Sagittarian healer and author Caroline Myss because she’s both spiritual and practical, compassionate and fierce. Here’s a passage from her work that I think will be helpful for you in the coming weeks: “Get bored with your past. It’s over! Forgive yourself for what you think you did or didn’t do, and focus on what you will do, starting now.” To ensure you make the most of her counsel, I’ll add a further insight from author Augusten Burroughs: “You cannot be a prisoner of your past against your will—because you can only live in the past inside your mind.

CAPRICORN: How would you respond if you learned that the \$55 t-shirt you’re wearing was made by a Haitian kid who earned 10 cents for her work? Would you stop wearing the shirt? Donate it to a thrift store? Send money to the United Nations agency UNICEF, which works to protect Haitian child laborers? I recommend the latter option. I also suggest you use this as a prompt to engage in leisurely meditations on what you might do to reduce the world’s suffering. It’s an excellent time to stretch your imagination to understand how your personal life is interwoven with the lives of countless others, many of whom you don’t even know. And I hope you will think about how to offer extra healings and blessings not just to your allies, but also to strangers. What’s in it for you? Would this bring any selfish benefits your way?

AQUARIUS: Aquarian philosopher Alfred North Whitehead wrote, “The silly question is the first intimation of some totally new development.” He also said, “Every really new idea looks crazy at first.” With these thoughts in mind, Aquarius, I will tell you that you are now in the Season of the Silly Question. I invite you to enjoy dreaming up such queries. And as you indulge in that fertile pleasure, include another: Celebrate the Season of Crazy Ideas.

PISCES: A disproportionately high percentage of the entertainment industry’s stories are sad or tormented or horrendously painful. They influence us to think such stories are the norm. They tend to darken our view of life. While I would never try to coax you to avoid all those stories, Pisces, I will encourage you to question whether maybe it’s wise to limit how many you absorb. The coming weeks will be an excellent time to explore this possibility. Be willing to say, “These sad, tormented, painful stories are not ones I want to invite into my imagination.



DAN SAVAGE’S SAVAGE LOVE

This is a preview of this week’s Savage Love. The full version is now exclusively available on Dan’s website savage.love.

My ex-girlfriend and I had a good relationship, but the sex was bad. When we had sex, it would eventually become clear that nobody was going to climax, or that she was tired or bored, and we would stop. I decided to let her take the lead and stopped initiating. I began to feel like not even my emotional needs were being met and that’s when she revealed what felt to her like the mother of all secrets: she may be asexual. She said she felt a lot of shame and confusion about it and had been withdrawing for that reason.

We agreed to explore her sexual identity together and try new things that could potentially work for both of us. The first time we tried it went horribly. I felt insecure and uncomfortable, and I ended things early, as she had so often done. She started initiating trying things when we went to bed and I kept it to cuddling, then went to the bathroom to “finish myself off” after she fell asleep. She heard me come back to bed, asked what I was doing, and I told her the truth. She got out of bed, sad and angry, and I tried to apologize but we never got past this.

Several months later, I’m still confused. I feel guilty about rejecting her only to sneak away to the bathroom after she fell asleep. At the same time, I don’t understand how what I did became such a deal breaker. I was raised in a religious home and spent a decade freeing myself from sexual shame and I feel like some of that work was undone here. Through the course of the relationship—and particularly that fateful evening—I felt ashamed of my sexual desire for her, which was clearly much more intense than hers towards me. She’s an athlete with a perfect body, while I had been stress eating my way through the pandemic, which contributed to my feeling undesirable.

I would like to move past my feelings of guilt but I’m not sure how. I’m afraid that being in a relationship with someone who identifies as asexual has had a lasting effect on me. The situation is too personal to be able to discuss it with anyone.

- Healing Eludes Lesbian Pondering Messy End

“I don’t think HELPME should blame herself for this relationship ending,” said Dr. Ela Przybylo, “and she definitely shouldn’t think the breakup was the result of going to finish off in the bathroom that one night.”

Dr. Przybylo, who is an Assistant Professor of English and Core Faculty in the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at Illinois State University, has identified at various points along the asexual spectrum over the last 15 years. The label that best fits her now, she says, is gray asexual. (Gray asexuality is both a point along the asexuality spectrum and a spectrum unto itself—our spectrums contain spectrumtudes—but to put it simply, a gray asexual person is someone who rarely experiences sexual attraction.)

So, if you’re not to blame, HELPME, and slipping away to rub one out after your ex-girlfriend fell asleep isn’t to blame, that would seem to leave us with just one other blamable option: your ex-girlfriend. Or—hear Dr. Przybylo out—maybe forces larger than you and/or your girlfriend are to blame.

“Being asexual, or ‘ace,’ can be very confusing because we live in a culture where sex is presented as compulsory, necessary to intimacy, and central to romantic relationships,” said Dr. Przybylo. “And while it’s hard to hear, it’s possible HELPME’s partner never wanted to have sex but did it because she either thought she had to in order to maintain a relationship, or because of societal pressure, or both.”

It’s also possible your ex-girlfriend believed she wanted to have sex, HELPME, and believed she wanted to have sex with you. Being taught from an early age that sex isn’t just normal, but universal, and that all human beings have sex, no exceptions, can put a huge zap on someone’s head. Just as it used to be relatively common for homosexuals to enter into heterosexual relationships before realizing they were gay, asexuals sometimes enter into relationships with allosexuals (non-asexuals) before realizing they’re ace. And just as some gay men go through the heterosexual motions in a desperate attempt to make their straight marriages work (which can be confusing and hurtful for their wives), some asexuals go through the sexual motions to make their relationships with allosexuals work (which can be confusing and hurtful for their allo girlfriends). At the same time, ace people can and do have sex, even if they don’t experience sexual attraction, making it even more complicated.

“While a person’s sexuality is about them and their journey, it can and does affect others,” said Dr. Przybylo. “In this sense, HELPME’s ex probably didn’t intend to make her feel any which way. She was doing her best in a situation that was probably confusing and overwhelming and anxiety-producing for her too.

If there was more awareness of the existence and legitimacy of asexuality, HELPME, your ex-girlfriend may have realized who she was sooner. And if she’d known she was ace before you met, she might have chosen to be your friend instead of your romantic partner. Or if she wanted a romantic relationship but not a sexual one—or wanted a minimally sexual one, which some asexual people do—you could’ve decided together whether that was something you both wanted.

As for that awful night, HELPME, it sounds like your ex-girlfriend may have felt bad about being asexual, which was why this relationship ultimately couldn’t work, but instead of owning up to the reason this relationship wasn’t going to work—she’s ace, you’re allo—she seized an opportunity to pin the blame on you. If you manage to circle back and salvage a friendship from the wreckage, your ex-girlfriend may come to see that, admit to it, and apologize for making you feel ashamed about having that wank.

In the meantime, HELPME, Dr. Przybylo thinks you should concentrate a little less on what didn’t work—what couldn’t work—and more on what did.

“HELPME should hold on to the joyous elements of the relationship and forgive her ex and herself for the sex not being what she wanted or imagined she wanted,” said Dr. Przybylo. And it will be easier for you to make that pivot, HELPME, if you “recognize asexuality is a sexual orientation and that her ex’s asexuality has nothing to do with HELPME or whether she’s desirable.”

And finally, HELPME, telling yourself you’re not desirable because your asexual ex-girlfriend didn’t wanna fuck you... is just as crazy as it sounds. I mean, of course your asexual ex-girlfriend didn’t wanna fuck you. She doesn’t wanna fuck anybody.

Indigenous Airman celebrates being among first to receive religious hair accommodation

BY STAFF SGT. ELORA J. MCCUTCHEON
341ST MISSILE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE, Mont. (AFNS) -- For most, the days and hours leading up to their basic military training departure are filled with excitement and anticipation for what's to come in the next four to six years. For others, the feelings are tainted with fear and anxiety.

For Connor Crawn, the day before he shipped off to boot camp was one of the worst in his life.

The 18-year-old graduated high school only six months earlier as the class of 2020, eager to enlist in the U.S. Air Force but curious about whether he could keep his hair long in accordance with his Kanien'kehà:ka faith.

When Crawn decided to speak to a recruiter his dark, neatly braided hair draped straight down the length of his spine.

For the Kanien'kehà:ka, Crawn explained, keeping the hair long reflects spiritual strength, protection and resilience. Certain styles, like braids, signify even greater strength.

His recruiter took the steps necessary to request a religious accommodation and Crawn went through military entrance processing successfully, but his BMT departure date continued to get pushed as he waited for an answer about his hair.

"I was at the point where I couldn't wait any longer," Crawn described of the hurry-up-and-wait process. "I had to get out of my situation."

Crawn agreed to cut his hair if it meant getting an earlier departure date. He kept his hair long until the last minute, hoping approval would arrive at the last-minute to spare him from the trauma of severing his symbolic strength. He waited, fruitlessly, until the day before he left for BMT.

"My dad and I cut our braids together," Crawn began, eyes saddening. "I wish I never had to go through that. I felt like a part of me died when I lost my braid."

Now officially branded as an Airman, the next chapter in Crawn's life began: BMT and technical training simply became two obstacles to overcome before the fight for accommodation resumed.

In July of 2021, Crawn was stationed at the 341st Missile Wing as part of the security forces group. Before he was even assigned a flight, his priority was visiting the base chapel to begin the request process all over again.

Capt. Trevor Wilson, one of the chaplains on duty at the time of Crawn's visit, cemented himself as an ally and quickly went to work figuring out the requirements of a process that, just one month earlier, had been introduced to the Department of the Air Force.

The duo spent hours together during that first meeting, poring over instructions, regulations and guidelines for a reality Crawn hoped would soon come to fruition.

According to the process for religious accommodation, as lined out in the DAF Instruction 52-201, the timeline from request to approval was supposed to take no longer than 60 days. Considering the overwhelming number of religious requests being vetted at that time due to COVID-19 pandemic, though, goalposts had to be moved and Crawn's request would not be approved until October of 2022.

"I knew it was going to take longer than expected," Crawn explained. "But as the time dragged on, my hope started to waver a little bit. After a year passed, people used to joke that it would be the end of my contract before I heard anything—and honestly, that's what I was beginning to expect."



Airman 1st Class Connor Crawn, 341st Missile Security Operations Squadron convoy team leader, wears a traditional Iroquois ribbon shirt, bracelet, earrings and medicine pouch in a display of his Kanien'kehà:ka heritage at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont. on Nov. 8, 2022. Crawn was recently authorized to wear his hair in accordance with the female regulations in Department of the Air Force instruction 36-2903, Dress and Appearance, after receiving an approved religious accommodation request. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Mary A. Bowers)



Airman 1st Class Connor Crawn, 341st Missile Security Operations Squadron convoy team leader, stands in front of a ballistic engineered armored response counterattack truck on a flightline at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont., Nov. 8, 2022. Crawn, member of the Kanien'kehà:ka Tribe, went against his faith and cut his hair to join the Air Force in 2021. After nearly two years after requesting a religious accommodation to grow his hair long again, Crawn was granted approval in October. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Mary A. Bowers)

Though the timeline dragged on like a heavy-burdened traveler, Crawn's case was carefully corralled through coordination by Wilson.

"I know how hard his leadership and the wing worked to get his package up," Wilson shared. "I had to ensure his request would not get lost or overlooked in the bulk of all that [COVID-19] paperwork. I regularly followed up and tracked his request, because part of my role as the chaplain is to be an advocate."

Nearly halfway into his contract is when Crawn finally

received the good news that he could grow his hair out in accordance with his faith. For him, this was not just a personal win, but a Department of the Air Force-wide win for all his native brothers.

With the approved accommodation, Crawn was authorized to abide by female standards in DAFI 36-2903, Dress and Personal Appearance.

"It was incredible," he chuckled. "I mean, I thought I was dreaming for the next few days. I kept thinking I would wake up and learn it wasn't real."

Crawn's excitement did not end with reception of the news; immediately after learning about the approved accommodation, the first thing he did was call his family to share. Then, he decided to share with the world.

"My first thought after calling my family was, 'I gotta let other native men know that it's possible,'" Crawn eagerly said, grin widening to meet the corners of his eyes. "I could not find a single person who received a religious accommodation like mine as I was going through the process, so I wanted to put the information out there. It wasn't until I made a TikTok video about it that I began to hear from other people."

Crawn's video went viral, sparking an important conversation for U.S. military members and those interested in joining. His statement served as a spark of hope for a demographic who, previously, was uncertain that their organization would be true to their word.

Through DAFI 52-201, Religious Freedom in the Department of the Air Force, the DAF maintains an environment in which members can realize their highest potential. For Crawn, this environment was established when he felt that the leadership around him was willing to fight for something he cared about deeply.

Wilson, spearhead for Crawn's request, felt pride knowing other Airmen would be encouraged to use their voice to be a beacon of change.

"Crawn chose to speak up, to ask for something he believed in, to place trust in the process, and it worked," Wilson enthused. "The Air Force cannot help if Airmen's needs are not communicated, and if you share your concerns and requests professionally, you can often get the results you need."

Col. Barry Little, 341st MW commander, praised Crawn's dedication as an example of the direction that the total force needs to continue moving toward.

"There has never been a time where what our Airmen do for this country has been so important," Little said. "Creating an environment of dignity and respect is critical to winning the strategic competition for talent. Our Airmen chose us once; the environment we create must encourage them to choose us again."

Little's message, targeted to leaders, is partnered by Crawn's sentiments to fellow Airmen looking for motivation in times where they may feel defeated by bureaucracy.

"I think it's all about the person and how much they fight from the start," he encouraged. "I think that [attitude] really shows your leadership and the people around you how dedicated you are. I never gave up; I never shut up about it to anyone who asked."

Two years into his career, Airman 1st Class Connor Crawn has some time before needing to decide which direction he prefers the next chapters of his life to go in. Currently, he serves as a convoy team leader with the 341st Missile Security Operations Squadron, and with a recent win in his back pocket, he is optimistic about a future in uniform.

"I might as well stay in, now that I'm able to grow my hair," Crawn chuckled. "I'm definitely considering it. It's incredible being able to express my heritage in uniform."



Tuesday Night Trivia!

Live Music Lineup!

Thursday November 17
7:30 Lisa, Lisa & That Guy

Friday November 18
8:30 I Like Robots

Saturday November 19
8:30 Cold Fusion

Wednesday November 23
7:30 Shaun Pacarro



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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, November 17th

Bear Paw Bar & Grill - Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-11p
The Broken Blender – Cellar Dweller Comedy Show-case 7:30p-11p
The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke 8p-2a
Grace Christian School – The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood 7p-9p
Humpy’s – Lisa Lisa & That Guy 9:30p-1:30a
Koot’s – Grace C Elliot 9p-12a
Mad Myrna’s – The Rocky Horror Show 6p-9p
The Nave – Sonic Celebrations w/ High Femmes, Medium Build, The Ed Washington Experience, & SunDog 6:30p-10p
Sullivan’s Steakhouse – Live Music from Melissa “Jazz-mom” Fischer 5:30p-8:30p
Tailgater’s Sport’s Bar & Grill (Wasilla) - The AKoustic Project 7p-10p
Williwaw Social – Local Showcase feat: Jamie Whiteman & Wash Your Hands 9p-12a



Friday, November 18th

Akela Space – Pass the Bucket: Ruth & Kengo 7:30p-10p
Alaska Dance Promotions – Friday Night Dance Lounge 9p-1a
American Legion Post 15 (Palmer) – Friday Night Feast w/ 100 Proof Karaoke 7p-10p
American Legion Spenard Post 28 – Acoustic Steak Night with J.J. Shockley! 6p-8p
The Broken Blender – Sassy Saturday Slightly off Broadway Show! 8p-9:30p
Cafecito Bonito – Band Building Workshop w/ Sundog & Open Mic 6p-10p
Everett’s (Wasilla) – Comedy Show w/ Robby Slowik 7p-10p
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 – The Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-11p
Grace Christian School – The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood 7p-9p
Humpy’s – I Like Robots 9:30p-1:30a
Kharacter’s Alaskan Bar (Homer) – Hot Mess 10p-3a
Koot’s – Velvet La La 10p-2:45
Mad Myrna’s – The Rocky Horror Show 6p-9p
Mad Myrna’s – Mad Myrna’s Diva Variety Show 9p-11:30p
The Mug-Shot Saloon (Wasilla) - The Glacier Blues Band 10p-3a
O’Malley’s on the Green – Silver Train 6:30p-9:30p
Roundup Steakhouse & Saloon (Fairbanks) – Round Up Karaoke Weekend Nights! 9:30p-2a
Schwabenhof (Wasilla) - Hand me Downs Live 8p-2a
Sullivan’s Steakhouse – Live Music from Tom Bargelski 5:30p-8:30p
Williwaw Social – Blackwater Railroad live at Williwaw Social with Wiley Post! 7p-10p



Saturday, Noveomber 19th

907 Alehouse – Student Showcase 2p-5p
Alaska Center for the Performing Arts – Anchorage Symphony’s Kaleidoscope 3.0 7:30p-9p
Anchorage Moose Lodge – Woodrow Live at the Moose 8p-12a
The Arctic Rec Center – 2nd Wakanda Ball: Celebrating Black Excellence & Culture 7p-10p
The Broken Blender – Sassy Saturday Slightly off Broadway Show! 8p-9:30p
The Brown Bear Saloon – Juicy Harps 10 Year Anniversary Show 8p-11p
The Carousel Lounge – Linda’s Birthday Party ft. Danger Money Live 10p-2a
Don Jose’s Mexican Restaurant – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-12a
The Gaslight Bar – The Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 8p-11p
Humpy’s – Cold Fusion 9:30p-1:30a
Hunger Hut (Nikisko) – Hot Mess 9p-3a
Koot’s – Comedian Robby Slowik 7p-9p & 9:30p-11p
Koot’s – White Party ‘22 10p-2:45a
Mad Myrna’s – The Rocky Horror Show 6p-9p
Mad Myrna’s – Mad Myrna’s Diva Variety Show 9p-11:30p
The Mug-Shot Saloon (Wasilla) - The Glacier Blues Band 10p-3a
The Nave – Fall Dance Series: Jess Winn with Fat Weasel 6:30p-9p
Palmer Train Depot (Palmer) – Family Silent Disco 3p-8p
The Raven Bar – Underwear / Pajama Party 9p-2:30a
Serrano’s Mexican Grill – Nothin’ But Karma 8p-11p
Sitka Fine Arts Camp (Sitka) – A Tale From The North-Woods 7p-9p
Studio C – Studio Sessions: The Ed Washington Experience 8p-10p

Studio Pulse Center for Dance – Heels 2 Heal 8:30p-9:30p
Van’s Dive Bar – Hwy9 w/The Hall Monitors ...Live 9p-12a
Williwaw Social – SVDDEN DEATH 9p-2a
Writer’s Block Bookstore & Café – ROGUES & WENCHES in concert 6p-8p



Sunday, November 20th

The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke Sunday 8p-2a
Humpys - Open Mic Jam 8p-11p
Koot’s – Comedy Open Mic 8:30p-10p
Mad Myrna’s – Karaoke 9p-12a
Pioneer Bar – Industry Night w/ Joe Brady 10p-2a
Van’s Dive Bar – Open Mic! Overlorded by Wash Your Hands 8p-12a

Monday, November 21st

Koot’s – The Monday Mic at Koots 9p-12a
Van’s Dive Bar – Mellow Mondays w/ Nikki Now 9:30p-12a

Tuesday, November 22nd

American Legion Spenard Post 28 – Open Band Jam Night! 6:30p-9:30p
The Carousel Lounge – AK Rockstar Karaoke 8p-2a
Klondike Mike’s & the Main Street Grill (Palmer) – The Open Stage 7p-10p
Koot’s – The Eternal Cowboys 10p-12a
Organic Oasis – Williwaw Blue 5:30p-7:30p
Trophy Lounge – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 9p-1a
Van’s Dive Bar – OPEN JAM w/ Daylight Mike 9p-12a

Wednesday, November 23rd

907 Alehouse – Tyrone Palmer & Friends 7p-10p
Eddie’s Sports Bar – Jukebox Karaoke Roadshow 9p-12a
Humpys – Shaun Pacarro of H3 7:30p-11:30p
Koot’s – Country Night with DJ Lefty 8p-12a
Koot’s – Comedy Open Mic 8:30p-10p
Koot’s – A Karaoke Friendsgiving 10p-2a
Mad Myrna’s – Karaoke 9p-12a
Palmer Alehouse (Palmer) – David Reiman live 6p-9p
Pioneer Bar – The Eternal Cowboys 10p-12a
PubHouse – Witty Youngman 7p-10p
Schwabenhof (Wasilla) - Open Mic 7p-12a
Van’s Dive Bar – Turkey’s Last Stand w/ HOT DISH 9p-2a



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Thu 11/17

Featured



Thursday Night Fights: Boxing
@ 7:30pm / \$12.50-\$60
William a Egan Civic and Convention Center, 555 W 5th Avenue, Anchorage



Fri 11/18

IM Not So Great Alaska Shootout
@ 4am
Seawolf Sports Complex, 2801 Spirit Way, Anchorage. 907-786-1231

Stars of the Alaskan Sky
@ 6:30pm / \$10
The UAA Planetarium & Visualization Theater will be presenting Stars of the Alaskan sky Friday, November 18 at 6:30-7:30 PM in the UAA - ConocoPhilips Integrated Science Building - Room 220! UAA Planetarium and Visualization Theater, 3101 Science Circle, Anchorage. 907-786-6358

Featured



UAA Jazz Concert
@ 7:30pm / \$10
The UAA Music Department Jazz Ensemble presents Voices of Jazz! This performance will be held Friday & Saturday, November 18 & 19 at 7:30 PM at the UAA Recital Hall. Fine Arts Building, 3700 Alumni Drive, Anchorage. 907-786-6358



Featured



Sweet Cheeks Cabaret: Amateur Night
@ 8pm / \$18
We're back with another amateur night to remember! The Broken Blender, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com



Black Holes
@ 8pm / \$10
The UAA Planetarium & Visualization Theater will be presenting Black Holes on Friday, November 18 at 8:00-9:00 PM at the UAA - ConocoPhilips Integrated Science Building - Room 220! UAA Planetarium and Visualization Theater, 3101 Science Circle, Anchorage. 907-786-6358

Sat 11/19

Turdinken Pickleball Tournament
@ 3am
Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 W 48th Avenue, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

IM&B Glow N Dark Flag Football
@ 3am
UAA Recreational Sports - Online, 2801 Spirit Way, Anchorage. 907-786-1231

Barbara Lavallee Calendar Signing!
@ 1pm
Barbara Lavallee will be in the gallery to sign and personalize Calendars & Prints for you! 2 Friends Gallery, 341 East Benson Boulevard, Anchorage. 2friendsgallery@gmail.com, 907-277-0404

Featured



Comedian Robby Slowik
@ 7pm / \$20-\$25
Aside from clubs and venues nationwide, Robby has done stand-up on Conan (TV!) and his album Live Near Carnegie Hall (Available to stream wherever you do your streaming) plays frequently on SiriusXM. Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage



Archery
@ 7:30pm
Kincaid Wax Bunker, 9301 W Raspberry Rd, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

Sweet Cheeks Cabaret: Sassy Saturdays
@ 8pm / \$20
It's the best show in town! Our weekly cabaret and burlesque variety show features different performances each week, complete with live singing, burlesque, dance, aerial, and more! The Broken Blender, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com

Comedian Robby Slowik
@ 9pm / \$20-\$25
Koot's, 2435 Spenard Rd, Anchorage

Sun 11/20

Holiday Vendor Marketplace & Craft Show
@ 12pm
Find one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted gifts for everyone on your shopping list! Jewelry, clothing, art, soaps, candles, baked goods and so much more. 600 E Northern Lights Blvd, 600 East Northern Lights Boulevard, Anchorage. amberdmusso@gmail.com, 907-602-6225

Tue 11/22

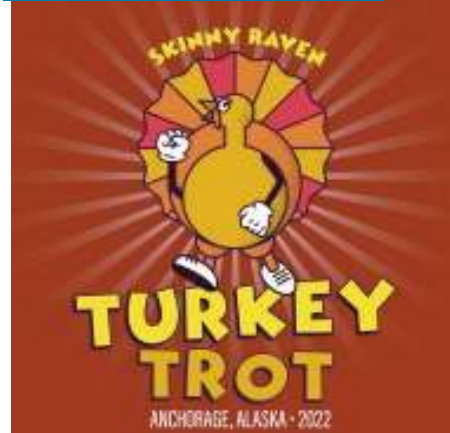
IM 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament
@ 4am
Seawolf Sports Complex, 2801 Spirit Way, Anchorage. 907-786-1231

Wed 11/23

IM 4 on 4 Volleyball Tournament
@ 4am
Seawolf Sports Complex, 2801 Spirit Way, Anchorage. 907-786-1231

Thu 11/24

Featured



Skinny Raven Turkey Trot
@ 12am / \$30-\$30
Skinny Raven Sports, 800 H St, Anchorage



Sat 11/26

Featured



Holiday Vendor Marketplace & Craft Show
@ 10am
Find one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted gifts for everyone on your shopping list! Jewelry, clothing, art, soaps, candles, baked goods and so much more. 600 E Northern Lights Blvd, 600 East Northern Lights Boulevard, Anchorage. amberdmusso@gmail.com, 907-602-6225



Holiday Makers Market
@ 12pm
Shop small and local! Arts and Crafts! Turnagain Arts Building, 4105 East Turnagain Boulevard, Suite A3 front of building facing the street, Anchorage. sparkletribe1@gmail.com

The Nutcracker
@ 2pm
Atwood Concert Hall, 621 W. 6th Ave., Anchorage

Archery
@ 7:30pm
Kincaid Wax Bunker, 9301 W Raspberry Rd, Anchorage. 907-343-4355

The Nutcracker
@ 7:30pm
Atwood Concert Hall, 621 W. 6th Ave., Anchorage

Sweet Cheeks Cabaret: Burlesque Bingo Fundraiser for Planned Parenthood
@ 8pm / \$20
Join us for a Sassy Saturday benefit for Planned Parenthood! The Broken Blender, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com

Sun 11/27

Sweet Cheeks Cabaret: Pies & Thighs: A Gratuitous Burlesque Brunch
@ 11:30am / \$20
Feast your eyes on our zero calorie Thanksgiving brunch spread! The Broken Blender, 535 West 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. sweetcheekscabaret@gmail.com

Holiday Vendor Marketplace & Craft Show
@ 12pm
Find one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted gifts for everyone on your shopping list! Jewelry, clothing, art, soaps, candles, baked goods and so much more. 600 E Northern Lights Blvd, 600 East Northern Lights Boulevard, Anchorage. amberdmusso@gmail.com, 907-602-6225

The Nutcracker
@ 1pm
Atwood Concert Hall, 621 W. 6th Ave., Anchorage

Featured



ALC Concert Series: Two Rivers-Music for Advent
@ 4:30pm
TWO RIVERS, a collaboration between violinist Elena Lukina and instrumentalist Yngvil Vatn Gutu, presents music for Advent Anchorage Lutheran Church, 1420 N Street, Anchorage. tamarialice@gmail.com, 907-982-9777



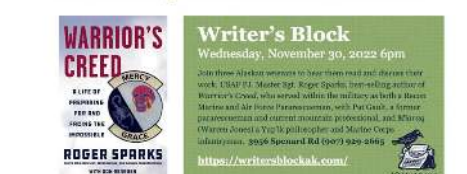
The Nutcracker
@ 5:30pm
Atwood Concert Hall, 621 W. 6th Ave., Anchorage

Wed 11/30

Featured



The Things We've Carried: An Evening with Alaskan Veterans



The Things We Carried: An Evening With Alaskan Veterans
@ 6pm
Join three Alaskan veterans to hear them read and discuss their work. Including, USAF P.J. Master Sgt. Roger Sparks, best-selling author of Warrior's Creed. The Writer's Block Bookstore & Cafe, 3956 Spenard Road, Anchorage

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The most important meal of the day

Waffles and Whatnot creativity shines in their take on breakfast

RESTAURANT REVIEW
BY JIN CHONG

In a food world characterized by maximalist TikTok trends and chaos cooking, it may feel as though certain beloved dishes are at risk of being pushed too far and losing their essence—in other words, what made us fall in love with them in the first place. Oftentimes, dining can simply be a matter of wanting to reexplore the familiar and seek that which provides a sense of comfort. It’s in these instances where even the most basic food preparations can have the most to offer.

Breakfast foods seem to be somewhat immune to the increasing overcomplication of food, if only because most dishes consist of a few elements to begin with. I mean, there’s only a handful of ways one could put a spin on scrambled eggs before it starts to resemble something else entirely.

There’s an implicit sanctity to this lineup of carby, stick-to-your-ribs fare which people are more or less hardwired to crave in order to kickstart the day. In that regard, Waffles and Whatnot smartly appeals to its wide client base by honoring one of the most fundamental, yet surprisingly versatile breakfast dishes. While their breakfast renditions mostly color within the lines, it’s the brand’s unique identity and focus on community that distinguishes them from the crowd.

For instance, take signs of Waffles and Whatnot’s character strewn throughout the restaurant. You’ll notice bright red picnic tables atop a vast swath of green-colored flooring as a couple of details clamor for attention. This abstract take on an outdoor dining setup, made complete with the façade of a food truck painted over their back wall as an homage to their roots, is a little zany, yet comes across as refreshingly authentic and true to the spirit of this venture. Imaginative chalk art and words of inspiration by the CEO and founder create a family-friendly vibe along with the scribbles of happy customers scrawled on the walls.

It took some time to wrap my head around the menu on my first visit. There’s a lot to take in, from the puzzling inclusion of eye-rolling emojis featured at the end of certain options to the names of their dishes themselves and their descriptions. One even appears to be named after a regular by the name of Brian Sison—with a vague explanation and not a single mention of ingredients, I was left mystified as to what exactly this was.

But I settled for something a little more conventional by ordering the Naughty BAYB Mama. How could I ignore the seductive promise of a “50 shades of delicious waffle?” In reality, I was faced with a signature chicken and waffle combo drizzled with honey while I was informed that the naughty element suggests the waffle selection is appointed by the chef. On top of me not knowing how my waffle would turn out, I sheepishly replied “yes” when asked if I wanted some whipped cream. I was flying blind, but it was exciting at the same time.

Fortunately, I only had to wait around 10 minutes to discover that the waffle was tamer than the fiendish gut-buster I was expecting. The beautifully golden brick of a waffle was sturdy and able to support a fresh array of berries, two types of syrup, and a dense scoop of whipped cream. On the other side of the plate were four giant chicken strips with flaky breading fried to a crisp texture along with some hot sauce for dipping.

Between the dish’s two halves, the waffle was arguably the more successful. Besides its robust exterior, the batter was delicately sweetened with a fluffy consistency. The chef seemed to have opted for a sauce duo of maple caramel and a white syrup that might have either been sweetened condensed milk or white chocolate—hard to say. Theoretically, these elements could have led to nothing but a sugar overload, but the subtle differences in sweetness and texture contrasted in ways to make for a balanced, not at all cloying treat.

The fried chicken strips were obviously meant to be the yin to the waffle’s yang, but the strips weren’t nearly as boldly seasoned as I had hoped. Although the coating was consistently crisp and zhuzhed up with a light drizzle of honey, the meat was ultimately dry and a little tough, especially with the skinnier portions. Another downside is that these tenderloins didn’t appear to have been brined for very long, if at all. They tasted as though they were lacking in soul, which made me all the more appreciative of the inclusion of the bright hot sauce which was almost essential to perk up the bland chicken.

At least my wife enjoyed her low-carb waffles. She offered a sample of this alternative spin with its batter made with almond, coconut, and arrowroot flour which was well-browned and simply adorned with another fatty scoop of whipped cream and a side of syrup. Not exactly beauty queen material, but rather more of a homely appearance. What really gave this waffle legs were the earthy, nutty flavors along with a heartier texture.

There was no sacrifice in flavor to be found here—if anything, this could be seen as somewhat of an upgrade to the standard variety.

With so much mystery that lingered regarding The Brian Sison, I had no choice but to return to Waffles and Whatnot the next day to uncover what



uber-creative monstrosity lay in wait. Would it be sweet or savory? Either way, I was game as I simply wanted another taste of warm waffles in addition to trying the garlic mac and cheese I previously noticed.

Turns out, The Brian Sison was a waffle chicken sandwich of the highest order in that it was stacked with bacon, a griddled slice of cheese, and spinach. The finishing touch? A side of sausage gravy and hot sauce ostensibly meant for pairing with the buttery sandwich. This time, the bacon and cheese went a long way toward boosting the overall seasoning levels and I didn’t find any issues with the chicken this time. Another detail I noticed is that the waffles were flecked with a green herb of some sort, pushing this even further into savory territory even with a faint hint of syrup.

As for the mac and cheese? It was smooth, creamy, and moderately tangy—whiter in color and more reminiscent of an alfredo pasta, but it was rich and it went down easy regardless.

Waffles and Whatnot’s success rides on the belief that breakfast foods are the most time-honored and widely beloved of all meals. Their creativity shines through their excellent waffles which function as a blank canvas for an endless amalgamation of toppings. Their brand philosophy helps compensate for any minor deficiencies by serving up a heaping dose of fun with each experience. And what are waffles if not highly adaptable vehicles for fun?

Waffles and Whatnot is located at 500 Muldoon Rd, Unit 5 and is open from 8am — 3pm Wednesday — Sunday.



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PLAYING THIS WEEKEND

Ed Washington debuts sophomore album “Hedonism”

BY ALEJANDRO BOUZAS

A year ago, Ed Washington released his debut album, “Stoicism.” Loosely based on a school of Hellenistic philosophy founded by Zeno of Citium of the same name, “Stoicism” examined the importance of personal virtue ethics and the singer’s relationship to the world around him.

“[The album] was a way of documenting my trial and error, and just trying to understand myself and understand the world. There was a moment in my life when I really felt I needed to be stoic and adhere to those ideologies. Later, I was definitely hedonistic for a part of my life as well. And the final project is going to be about a theory on the good life, based on the Greek concept of Eudaimonia. And that’s going to be the hardest one to write because I think it needs to be the most thought out,” explained Washington.

His sophomore album, “Hedonism,” was released on October 28 of this year and veers slightly away from the idealistic nature of Washington’s debut.

“I think ‘Hedonism’ focuses on where I went after my heartbreak. I went down a dark path of just trying to fill a void with empty pleasures, and realizing that true happiness is more about the things that take work and are more substantial, and not just empty,” said Washington.

Never one to avoid tackling some of the most difficult topics – addiction, sex, and mental health – Washington’s album is infused with the same insightful, sometimes playful lyricism that has garnered the artist local acclaim.

“This new album has a theme of running from pain and hiding from pain, trying to find pleasure in relationships, drugs, sex, and things like that. It’s a journey people go through as young adults, mostly. There were a lot of good times, but there’s still a lot of unhealed trauma that I needed to cope with,” said Washington.

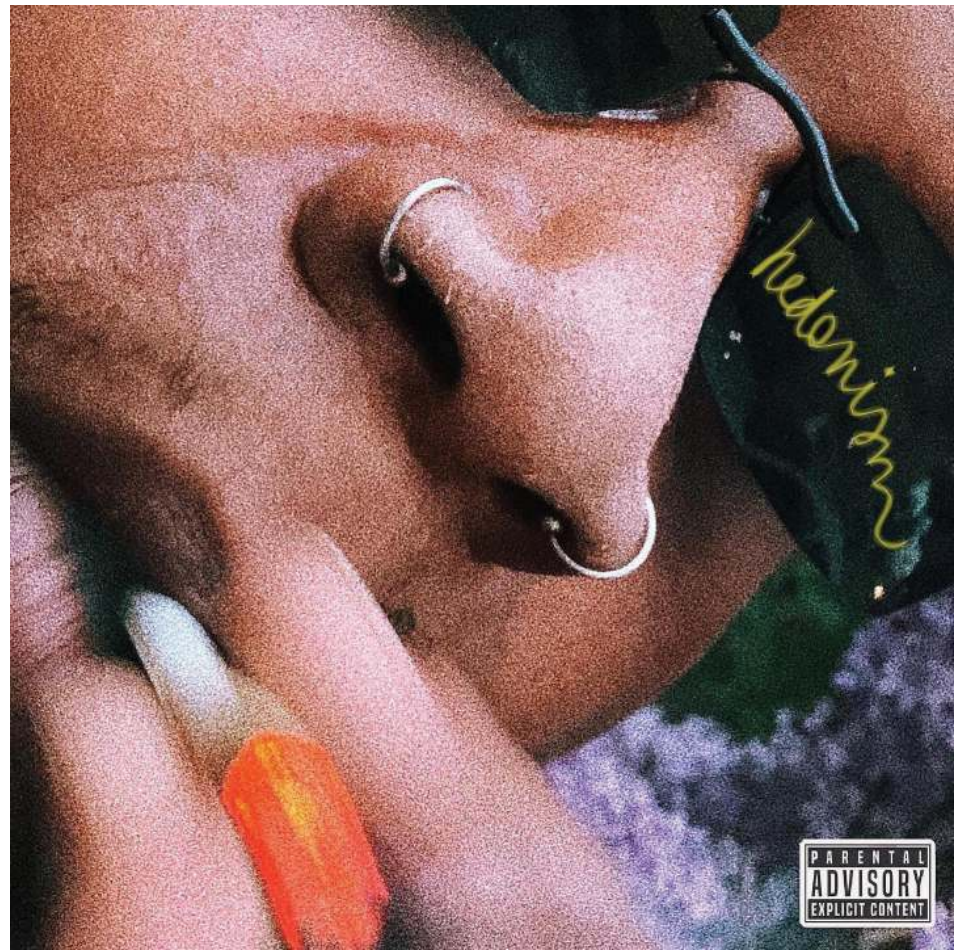
Thematically, Washington’s music has aligned with other heart-driven singer-songwriters like Nick Carpenter and Quinn Christopherson, with whom he frequently collaborates. Naturally, Washington’s delightfully cathartic music is inspired by the unique upbringing Alaskans experience. To fully understand Washington’s point of view, look no further than the track “Everything’s Okay.”

“‘Everything’s Okay’ represents my realization that everything isn’t okay. I still have a lot of issues to deal with from my childhood, from relationships that went wrong. Whether it be friendships or romance, I just held on to everything for a really long time. And so this album has been a chance for me to release all of that pain,” said Washington.

Recently nominated for Best Male Vocalist, Best Singer, Best Songwriter, Best Hip Hop Artist, Best R&B Artist, and Best Band for the 2022 Press Picks, it appears that Washington’s message is felt deeply by the Anchorage community.

“Those nominations mean a lot. I was born and raised here. I went to college here, where I studied music. I played in supportive roles in bands like Medium Build, where

I was a bass and keyboard player. I’ve always been nurtured by this community, that’s how I learned to do what I do. Recognition always feels really nice, and it feels good to be seen. And I think that’s what a lot of artists want. I’m very grateful,” said Washington.



Catch Washington live as he performs his new album on November 17 at the Nave, November 19 at Studio C, and November 26 at Cafecito Bonito for Lights Down Low. Check out Washington on IG (@ed_washingtonii) for up-to-date concert information.



Blackwater Railroad Company and Wiley Post play Williwaw Friday

BY ALEJANDRO BOUZAS

Approaching their 10th year of combining bluegrass, country, rock, and Americana music, the Blackwater Railroad Company has earned its spot at the top echelon of Alaskan bands. Working in chaotic unison to create beautiful harmonies, this five-piece string band has developed an unparalleled sound.

“This year has been wild. It’s been really great. As things are opening up again, people are going out. We played some shows last summer, but it didn’t quite feel normal, whereas this summer was really great,” said one of the band’s guitar players, Leo Storm Ash. “I think people were really thirsty to go out and have a good time and listen to live music. Everywhere we played all over the state was the same, the crowds were just electric. People were cooped up and really looking to have a good time and enjoy that Alaskan sunshine and come hang out with us. It’s been super fun.”

On Friday, the band will join forces with Wiley Post for the band’s last full band show, before embarking on their upcoming two-week Hawaiian Tour in December.

But these season professionals aren’t on “Island Time,” yet. They are determined to throw one hell of a going-away bash.



“We’ve always got the crowd pleasers, some of the classics that I feel like people would be upset if we didn’t play. We’ve also got some new tunes that we’ve yet to release, and I’m going to record what we’ll be playing this Friday. You never know what you’re gonna get when you come to a Blackwater show as far as what songs but we always bring amazing energy for sure,” said Ash.

Among some of the band’s expected repertoire is music from their albums *Onsara Vol. One* and *Onsara Vol. Three*. For those anxiously awaiting the release of *Onsara Vol. 2*, there may be a delay.

“We got inspired by the Wu-Tang Clan. They recorded an album and only released one copy. And it’s a very long story of what happened with that one album. So there’s only one copy of *Onsara Volume Two*, and we auctioned it off. But the truth may or may not be that we may also have mistakenly called it three when we submitted it. It’s possible that our old manager may have put volume three rather than two. And that’s why there’s no two, but I much prefer the Wu-Tang story,” said Ash with a laugh.

Blackwater Railroad Co. and Wiley Post will perform Friday, November 18th at Williwaw Social (609 F St.), starting at 7pm. Tickets purchased in advance through williwawsocial.com are \$15, while tickets purchased at the door will be \$20.



(Photo by Tom Williams-Pool/Getty Images)

Alaska’s two U.S. senators vote to advance federal same-sex marriage protections

Sen. Dan Sullivan says he was swayed by the addition of sections protecting religious organizations

BY JAMES BROOKS
ALASKA BEACON

Alaska’s two U.S. senators voted on Wednesday in favor of ending the debate on a bill intended to protect same-sex and interracial marriage rights, advancing the bill toward final passage in the U.S. Senate.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Sen. Dan Sullivan, both Republicans, joined ten other Republicans and all 50 Democratic Senators on a “cloture” vote needed to end the debate. The final vote was 62-37, making final passage — which requires just 51 votes — certain.

After the vote, President Joe Biden urged members of Congress to finish work and send it to his desk.

If signed into law, the bill would not have a significant immediate effect; the U.S. Supreme Court guaranteed same-sex marriage rights in a 2015 decision.

Earlier this year, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas wrote that the Court should re-examine that decision. His remarks sparked congressional action.

If the bill becomes law and the Supreme Court reverses its 2015 decision, states would be allowed to choose whether to ban same-sex marriage but would be required to recognize same-sex marriages from other states and those performed in their states when the practice was legal.

In Alaska, the state constitution still contains an amendment prohibiting same-sex marriage; that amendment has been legally suspended since 2014 but could be reactivated if the Supreme Court reverses itself.

The bill also requires the federal government to recognize same-sex marriages. It reverses Clinton-era legislation that defined marriage as between a man and a woman.

Wednesday’s vote came after a slightly different version of the bill passed the U.S.

House in July. The Senate postponed consideration until after the midterm elections.

Part of the reason for the delay was the need to gain more support from Senate Republicans. While Murkowski was among a handful of Republicans who indicated that they would vote for the House’s bill, others, including Sullivan, said they were likely to oppose it.

That presented a problem for supporters, who needed at least 10 Republican votes to advance the bill.

To garner those votes, supporters amended the bill and added provisions stating that religious organizations are not required to host, accommodate or participate in same-sex wedding ceremonies.

The bill adds a legal shield preventing lawsuits against those organizations if they refuse to host same-sex weddings.

Ben Dietderich, a spokesperson for Sullivan, said that component was the result of research by Sullivan’s staff and others, and its inclusion was key.

“By doing that, it secured the senator’s vote, and I think it also helped get other Republicans on board as well,” Dietderich said.

In a prepared written statement, Sullivan said that he continues to believe the bill is unnecessary because of the Supreme Court’s 2015 decision but believes the religion-related provisions are worth supporting.

“While I’ve long held that marriage should be an issue left up to the states, the Supreme Court nationalized the issue in Obergefell. I said then that I would respect the Court’s decision but would also continue to fight for and respect and defend the religious liberty of all Americans. This bill makes important advances in doing that,” Sullivan said. “Finally, in the very unlikely event that Obergefell is overturned in the future, this bill would still respect state laws, like Alaska’s constitutional provision on traditional marriage, and it would only require states to provide full faith and credit recognition to all lawful marriages from other states.”



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I EY MI!



One of the fastest rising groups in the American reggae scene, the Elovaters brought warm vibes and hot beats to Williwaw on November 5. They were joined by Alaska's own Hawaiian reggae heavyweights, H3.
Photos by @TrueNorthPhotoAk



November 17-November 23, 2022

PRESSIFTEDS

A STUDY IN SCARLETT

Canna Get Hashy LLC is applying under 3 AAC 306.500(a)(1) for a new Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility license, license #34641, doing business as Canna Get Hashy, located at 810 E 6th Ave Unit B, Anchorage, AK, 99501, UNITED STATES.

Denali Fire Black LLC, doing business as Denali Fire located at 6209 Mike St, Suite 2C, Anchorage, AK 99518 is applying under 3 AAC 306.045 for transfer of controlling interest in a Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility (3 AAC 306.400 (a)(1)), license #14073. The transfer involves a change in ownership within Denali Fire LLC from Maverick Ventures, LLC 30%, Silver Fox Solutions, LLC 30%, and One Denali, LLC 40% to Maverick Ventures, LLC 70%, and Silver Fox Solutions, LLC 30%.

ACROSS

- 1 Acquire a wintry glaze
6 Ending for Rock
10 Dollars and cents
14 Woodard with four Emmys
19 Many a Jamaican believer, informally
20 Canine pain
22 "Yes, —!" ("Definitely!")
23 1936 film sequel with William Powell and Myrna Loy
25 Utter words
26 — Boys (hit rap trio)
27 "Lenore" poet
28 Suffered
29 Abbr. on a naval vessel
30 A wide physical variety
37 Stretch (out)
38 Oscar winner Jared
39 Seattle baseball team
40 Possible reply to "Who's there?"

- 43 Debater's platform
44 Model Klum
46 While lead-in
47 1997 James Bond film
51 — trial basis
52 Mess up morally
53 Locale of Ali's "Rumble in the Jungle"
54 Immune response trigger
59 Mess up
61 Canine coat
63 Scarf site
65 "Yay, me!"
66 Question about a weak effort
72 Woman on the throne
73 Designer Cassini
74 Father
75 LA-to-LN dir.
76 Apply via an aerosol
79 Rockabilly singer Chris
82 "Send help!"
84 Epoch
86 Influential Brian Eno album of 1975
90 Peter of "Columbo"
94 Dark beer

- 95 Rock guitarist
Lofgren
96 No-brainer
class
97 Cut across
99 "Le Roi d'Ys"
composer
Édouard —
100 Sun. church
oration
101 Fifteen
minutes of
fame
105 Triceps' place
108 Quick snacks
109 Intense anger
110 Electrical
resistance
measures
112 Shrink back
113 Novel and
film whose
last line is
formed by six
key words in
this puzzle
118 "— Is Born"
119 Came to an
end
120 Finnish
architect
Alvar —
121 Comes to an
end
122 Je ne — quoi
123 Bullets, e.g.
124 Hair lock

DOWN

- 1** Ex-Yankee
Hideki —
- 2** Snug eateries

- 3 “Cómo —?”
4 Rugged
trucks, briefly
5 Ones sharing
in meals, e.g.
6 Jazz singer
Waters
7 “Little piggy”
8 Young child
9 Verb suffix in
the Bible
10 Olympic craft
11 Top points
12 “— Na Na”
13 She cackles
14 Home of St.
Francis
15 Contour of
one’s kisser
16 Coldest
refrigerator
part
17 Bookworms
18 “Oh no,
mice!”
21 River giant,
informally
24 Floor square
28 Actor Brody
31 Deli side
dish
32 Ketchup
brand
33 Befuddled
34 Surrounded
by
35 Gymnast
Comaneci
36 JFK jet, once
37 Angsty music
genre
40 Skater Midori

- 41 Gets rid of
some flab
42 More brainy
43 Dunkable
treat
44 "— mud in
your eye!"
45 Put up
48 Rock fissure
49 Pickling liquid
50 Clic — (Bic
brand)
55 Persia, now
56 Artillery unit
members
57 Aged
58 Prefix with
classical
60 Actress
Perlman
62 Pi follower
64 Early English
dramatist
Thomas
66 Mental figs.
67 Novelist
Seton
68 Peace
Nobelists Root
69 Surrounded
(by)
70 Springs in
deserts
71 Japanese
wheat noodle
77 Beginnings
78 Tally mark
80 Strain at —
(fuss over
trivialities)
81 Shrimplike
crustacean

- 83** Sugary delicacy, old-style
85 Org. for periodontists
87 Carry along
88 Race in "The Time Machine"
89 Rowing tool
90 Bouquet-bringing co.
91 Middle East studier
92 Let have it
93 Ski mask, e.g.
98 Villains' looks
99 Lerner's partner in musicals
100 "Quiet down"
102 Moses' mount
103 Hunts quarry
104 Reached
105 Moving spryly
106 Fees for flats
107 Old PC platform
111 Wage — of words
112 Used to exist
113 Motorist's navig. aid
114 Ending for Rock
115 Boise is its cap.
116 Actor Hanks
117 Fan sound

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LEGAL

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 to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq. At 901 Photo Ave. Second Floor, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 or jana@jdwcounsel.com
 Anchorage Press
 Publish Dates 11/17/22, 11/24/22, 12/01/22

“Highwater LLC doing business as McGinleys Alaskan Pub located at 645 G Street Anchorage is applying for a transfer of a beverage dispensary AS 04.11.090 liquor license to Highwater LLC doing business as Blarney Stone Pub. The change in ownership involves the ownership interest transfer from Daniel Sullivan 10%, John Peterson 12%, Paul Nelson 12%, Don Kessler 12%, Matthew Fink 12%, Richard & Andrea Hobbs 12% and Gator Bros LLC 12% to Matthew Fink 44%, Richard Hobbs 44% and Gator Bros LLC 12%. 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 11/10/22, 11/17/22, 11/24/22

Denali Fire Brown LLC, doing business as Denali Fire Extracts located at 6209 Mike St, Suite 2B, Anchorage, AK 99518 is applying under 3 AAC 306.045 for transfer of controlling interest in a Marijuana Product Manufacturing Facility (3 AAC 306.500 (a)(1)), license #14619. The transfer involves a change in ownership within Denali Fire LLC from Maverick Ventures, LLC 30%, Silver Fox Solutions, LLC 30%, and One Denali, LLC 40% to Maverick Ventures, LLC 70%, and Silver Fox Solutions, LLC 30%. 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 to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq. At 901 Photo Ave. Second Floor, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 or jana@jdwcounsel.com
 Anchorage Press
 Publish Dates 11/17/22, 11/24/22, 12/01/22

Denali Fire Green LLC, doing business as Alaska Weeds located at 6209 Mike St. Suite 2A, Anchorage, AK 99518 is applying under 3 AAC 306.045 for transfer of controlling interest in a Retail Marijuana Store (3 AAC 306.300), license #14083. The transfer involves a change in ownership within Denali Fire LLC from Maverick Ventures, LLC 30%, Silver Fox Solutions, LLC 30%, and One Denali, LLC 40% to Maverick Ventures, LLC 70%, and Silver Fox Solutions, LLC 30%. 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 to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq. At 901 Photo Ave. Second Floor, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 or at jana@jdwcounsel.com
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Super Crossword

Answers

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



Tutti Pazzi, Inc, dba Chair 5 Restaurant located at 171 Linblad Avenue, Girdwood, Alaska is applying for transfer of a Beverage Dispensary AS 04.11.090 liquor license to Ski Bum Ventures, Inc. dba Chair 5 Restaurant. Under the terms of AS 04.11.360(4)(B), AS 04.11.670, and 3AAC 304.106, the transferor/lessor retains a security interest in the liquor license that is the subject of this conveyance, and may, as a result, be able to obtain a retransfer of the license without satisfaction of other creditors. 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 11/10/22, 11/17/22, 11/24/22

A five-hour tour of the Big Apple

BY NED ROZELL

NEW YORK — A few days ago, along with 50,000 others, I covered 26.2 miles of this city on the worn soles of my running shoes.

Last March, New York City Marathon officials notified me that they had selected me in the random lottery; I should not be alarmed when my credit card was dinged for \$295.

That was the steepest marathon fee I have ever paid, especially compared to the lifetime Equinox Marathon bib I purchased in the 1990s for \$125 (which is the best investment I'll ever make).

But, ya know, as I sit here at my sister's house in Brooklyn with sore legs and a fuzzy head, the New York City Marathon seems worth more than money. When I search for one word, I keep coming back to joyous.

It started at 5 a.m. on Nov. 6, 2022, when my sister Mary volunteered to drive me from Brooklyn to the dock of the Staten Island Ferry in Manhattan. As we left her brownstone in the black of morning, I looked up and saw the Alaska flag in the sky: The Big Dipper pointing to the North Star. Good omen.

I packed onto the boat with hundreds of other people clad in running shoes and frumpy clothes they later would throw in donation boxes on Staten Island (worn to keep warm while waiting hours for their race to start). With no seats left, I stood and looked out the ferry window at the dark sea of New York Bay.

There, lit up and glowing green on her own island, was the Statue of Liberty. I choked up a bit, thinking of my grandmother Mary Liston, who was a friend of mine (we toured Ireland together when I was 22 and she 85). "Nanny" had sailed past Lady Liberty to Ellis Island in her 20s as an immigrant from Ireland. My grandfather Ned, who died a few years before I was named for him, shared that experience.

Maybe Nanny's story and the recency of that side of my family becoming Americans has made me feel a pull to the big city, which is strange considering my life choices. Maybe that attraction is also due to newborn me belting out my first scream in Manhattan, where I was born before my parents moved to upstate New York.

From there I hightailed it 36 years ago to Alaska, where I have lived ever since. In that time, Nanny and both my parents have died, and my two brothers and two sisters have given me nieces and nephews. Most of those kids have grown up and fledged. It happened so fast.

Enabled by reasonable air travel prices for as long as I have lived in Alaska, I have tried to make it back once or twice a year. On one of those trips, in 2009, my wife Kristen ran the New York City Marathon.

Back then, squinting at the subway maps, our daughter Anna and I popped up in Brooklyn but never caught a glimpse of Kristen until after she finished in Manhattan and was wrapped in a shawl of foil.

In Brooklyn, Anna and I saw crowds yelling as if the Beatles were back in town. Since then, I have tried to enter the race by random lottery, which offers you a 2 percent chance of getting a bib. In 2022, my number got called.

Which is why on a warm November morning I was standing on the upper deck of Verrazano Narrows Bridge with thousands of other people. That suspension bridge at the pinch point between upper and lower New York bays carries 13 lanes of car and truck traffic on two levels between Staten Island and Brooklyn when the race is not happening.



Ned Rozell pauses with his sister Mary in Brooklyn as he runs the New York City Marathon on Nov. 6, 2022. Photo by Mary Rozell.

At 10:20 a.m., Frank Sinatra sang "New York, New York." A cannon stopped everyone's heart for a second. We shuffled northward.

I imagined I could feel the deck bouncing as we left behind Staten Island, the smallest New York borough by population (about a half million). All those people live in the same space as Alaska's Douglas Island near Juneau (home to about 5,000 people).

Five thousand is perhaps how many people were moving on the top tier of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge when my feet were on its asphalt Sunday. Not many of us looked alike. People chatted in some languages I could place, some not.

I turned and talked with Anna from Aruba, originally from Venezuela. Anna had braces on her teeth. Her teenage son spoke four languages.

"I am happy it is warm," she said. "My training runs in Aruba are all at 27 degrees (Celsius, or 80 degrees Fahrenheit), so this feels good."

"This is like the hottest day of Alaska's summer," I told Anna.

A temperature of 75F was recorded in Central Park on race day, a record for Nov. 6.

Heat is not a friend to most runners. When we overheat, mammals like us get tackled by lions — our cells don't function well, our muscles cramp and we slow way down. I could feel my face getting red on the bridge, not yet into the second borough of the race and less than two miles into the day.

Approaching Brooklyn, we could hear it before we saw them: A soft, constant roar, like waves crashing the shore on the Lost Coast south of Yakutat.

We jogged off the bridge ramp and into Brooklyn. The din was people, lining the streets four deep behind a strip of blue plastic tape that resembled a thick finish line. They were cheering. Not for the two Kenyans who had passed a few hours earlier on their ways to winning the men's and women's races. But us, a multicolored mass oozing in slow motion compared to the elites.

Friends who had run the race told me to wear my name on my shirt, so people in the crowd can call it out. I instead chose a University of Alaska Fairbanks t-shirt where the ALASKA stood out in blue and gold.

And there, as I decelerated for the next few hours, I heard that word, which hit like a shot of electricity each time.

"Go Alaska!"
"You got this, Alaska!"
"I'm lookin' at you, Alaska!"



A woman welcomes runners to Brooklyn during the New York City Marathon on Nov. 6, 2022. Photo by Ned Rozell

I ran on the far right of 4th Avenue in Brooklyn (the shady side), slapping my sweaty hand into the palms of kids and adults of all sizes and races. Each thwack gave me a few free steps, floating on air. One guy almost popped my rotator cuff.

At one point, I turned to a woman next to me whose face was cherry red like mine. She was smiling at the din of cheers, and signs held up, each with a New York flair: I LOVE YOU, RANDOM STRANGER.

"I may pass out from heat stroke, but I'll die happy," I said to my new friend.

My aunt Fran — Nanny's daughter — once pointed out to me that for all the billions of people in the world, no two faces are exactly alike. I saw hundreds of faces that day, making eye contact with kids whose hands I smacked and people who shouted Alaska. But my brain's facial recognition software pinged with a positive match only once.

There was my sister Mary, standing on the steps of an ornate Baptist church one block from her house in Brooklyn. I stopped and picked her up for a hug. Joy.

On I went, bopping past rock bands playing at gas stations, recorded music blaring at eardrum-damaging volume on every corner, and pods of uniformed police who stood in the middle of cross streets.

I could tell from the increasing weight of my cotton Alaska shirt that the relative humidity was high. Every few kilometers, volunteers held out cups of sports drink and water. The streets around those stations were coated with crushed paper cups, trod to a watery pulp.

The course featured 400 port-a-potties for each mile, none of which was there the day before, nor the day after.

I sucked down both sports drink and water at every stop, happy for the chance to walk, which helped cool the engine.

Nearing the end of the 11 miles of Brooklyn, we runners moved through Williamsburg, one of the few silent places on the course besides the five bridges. Williamsburg is home to a large population of Hasidic Jews who seemed disinterested in the show. No one stood behind the blue tape.

Losing the cheers and the hand slaps there flipped me back to Alaska running, where most of the trail is covered alone and it helps to groove on the meditative repetition of one foot after another.

That Zen was harder to find in New York, but soon it was back to the cheering crowds and high rises of Queens, then over a bridge to Manhattan, then over another and a one-mile tour of the Bronx before re-entering Manhattan island from the north. Each borough felt a little differ-

ent — Brooklyn was homey, the Bronx industrial and Manhattan had everything.

The race had its own smells: the musk of the subways beneath wafting from metal grates, clouds of skunky marijuana smoke, Vaseline, and salty sweat, buckets of it.

The last bridge crossing from the Bronx to Manhattan was 21 miles into the race. A good number of people were walking. The scene resembled a parade. The heat index was collecting its toll.

It was around there the male leader of the race, Daniel Do Nascimento of Brazil, had hours before collapsed and left the course after having sped to a two-minute lead for half the race. I jogged past people stopped on the pavement with grimaces on their faces, stretching their cramped legs. A woman I met a day later said she had vomited 12 times. Her finish time was an hour faster than mine.

The Manhattan crowds lined the route all the way to its finish in Central Park. The yelling was somehow louder than ever; my ears rang (and are still ringing).

Many people trotted past me in the last few miles. In Fairbanks' Equinox, I would feel a burst of adrenaline when that happened. In New York I didn't care. It was all about that lighthearted post-pandemic-humans-pressing-against-each-other atmosphere, which had enough emotional punch to mist my eyes in the last two miles.

There, I thought of 2020, when my brothers and sisters let me enter their homes when they didn't know if my breath would kill them. And how this year, 2022, was the first year international runners were allowed back to compete in the New York Marathon since 2019, swelling the ranks from 30,000 to more than 50,000.

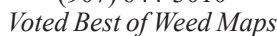
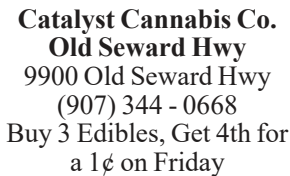
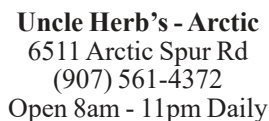
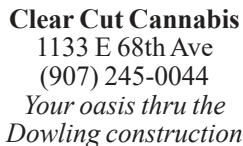
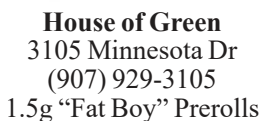
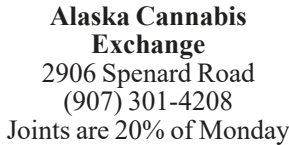
All those humans restored what I have always believed, but has wavered at times: Most people are good, and there is something in every human that every other human can relate to.

That day, thousands of our species were out there, standing and smiling and breathing each other in for a few hours.

As the crowd roared like I was Aston Kutcher or one of the other celebrities, I smacked a last few hands before a slight uphill when the finish line appeared. I crossed the mat near Tavern on the Green at the same time as three others. We tied for 26,033th place. Joyous.

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 ned.rozell@alaska.edu is a science writer for the Geophysical Institute.

YOUR MAP TO ANCHORAGE'S DANK SIDE



BY LEAFLY

- Canola
- Vegetable
- Coconut
- Olive
- Avocado
- Sesame
- Peanut

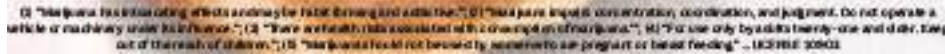
- The weight of your concentrate (in grams)
- The potency of the concentrate (THC% or CBD%)
- The number of servings the cooked dish will yield (e.g., “makes a dozen cookies”)

- (weight of concentrate x THC% x 1,000) / number of servings
- Multiply the weight of your concentrate (in grams) by the percentage of THC (as a decimal)
- Multiply that number by 1,000 to convert grams to milligrams.
- Divide that number by the number of servings your recipe yields to determine milligrams of THC per portion.

- Cannabis concentrates
- Baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Oven

1. Preheat oven to 200°F (93°C)
2. Line baking sheet with parchment paper, and place concentrates on it
3. Bake for 20-25 minutes, watching the concentrates to make sure they don't overcook; once they have melted down and start to bubble, they are ready; if decarbing kief or a powdery concentrate, stir it around every few minutes
4. Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly
5. Cooking, baking, and infusing with concentrates

Let the infusion cool, and add it to any recipe. Use oil to make a salad dressing or to oil a pan before cooking, or use infused butter in place of regular butter for baking.



Giving thanks

ASK OSKAR
BY OSKAR SAVILLE

Dear Oskar,

Thanksgiving is on its way. After two long years of being unable to be with family on the holiday, I am excited to be with mine. Truthfully, I used to dread it, but this time away has given me pause to think differently. It has also brought up for me that I really have not been very grateful in my life, and I would like to turn that around for myself and teach my children how to be grateful as well. Can you offer advice?

- Giving Thanks



Dear Giving Thanks,

Thank you for such a timely question as the holidays approach. Gratitude is a natural part of who we truly are. We come into the world with gratitude. This is evident as you watch a baby explore its surroundings. They have so much joy and happiness in every moment they are allowed to explore. So why don't we keep that natural part of ourselves? Because somewhere along the way, people began teaching their children that they were not enough, and when we see ourselves as not enough, it follows that we see the world in that way.

So what can we do? Get back to the TRUTH: You are ENOUGH! Let's forgive those who came before us who had forgotten, and get back to the joy, which is our birthright.

If you're looking for where to begin being grateful, start with yourself—all of it. Start every day by facing yourself in the mirror—looking at or thinking about your hair (even if you're bald), body, face, height, intelligence, home, bank account, and such—and telling yourself how beautiful or handsome you are. While you're in the shower or bath, give praise for your beautiful, healthy body. Hold your hand and give thanks for

the work your whole body does. Thank your toes for helping you keep your balance. Thank your back for giving you support. Thank your eyelashes and eyebrows for protecting your eyes. Thank your heart for beating and your blood for cleaning and flowing. Thank your home for keeping you dry and safe. Thank your talents and gifts for giving you so much pleasure. I could go on for hours, but you catch my drift.

As you continue to get in the flow and regain your joy and gratitude for the beauty that is you and your world, it will naturally give way for the gratitude of the bigger world and people around you. You might even find yourself giving thanks for the people who change the bulbs in the traffic lights, the people who rebuild and pave the roads, the person who invented the car, or the person who came up with the idea for public transportation. Thank your job for a place to work and for the money that flows into your life. Give thanks for your parents, children, siblings and others (you don't have to like them to give thanks for them). And as you begin to see the joy and gratitude in all things (even the ones you don't like) you are becoming the energy of gratitude and will exude it all you do. As you praise and glorify your children, they will come to know gratitude and embrace it as well.

As your gratitude grows, so will your life. Gratitude is not saying you don't want more—that's a common misunderstanding of the concept— it's just the joyful acknowledgment of what is. When you embrace gratitude (and diminish your "not enough" mindset) you'll find your life feels more abundant than ever. You might find that instead of wanting five cookies, eating one is incredibly fulfilling, or maybe even just watching someone eat one is just as fulfilling. The mindset will change from the happiness coming from how much, to the gratitude of the joy of life.

When the sun goes down and it's time for bed after a fulfilling day, you can end as you started, giving thanks for your comfy bed, family, and the events of the day. In the past, you might have gone through a list of things you didn't get done or things you're worried about, but your goal now is to use that mental list to keep track of all the beautiful things that happened that day: maybe someone opened a door for you; you saw a shooting star; a friend called to say hello; you child gave you hug; and so on.

Remember you are enough!

I will end this column today with the gratitude I have for all of you who read this, for my ability to write a weekly column, to my daughter who reads it over for me, my children for their undying support, my editor Joey, who looks it over for me and helps me say the things I want but with better form and grammar, and my editor O'Hara who reads, prints it and takes great care of this paper. Happy Thanksgiving!

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