Spring/Summer 2023
Volume 55

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.
With Spirit and Strength

AANG ANĜAGIN
AANG ANĜAGINAS

NB3 Foundation Community Empowerment Grant

In 2021, APIA became the recipient of the NB3 Foundation Community Empowerment Grant that included sub awarding a total of $75,000 to 6 community partners to provide grant-funded, financial assistance to implement programming for children and youth ages 0 to 18 with a significant impact on the Alaska Native population in one or more of these core areas:

Elder & Youth participants in a seal & sea lion hunt in March 2022

- Physical activity;
- Deepening cultural connections between Elders and youth;
- Nutrition and traditional foods and/or;
- Opportunities for youth leadership and advocacy.

The six community partners selected that met criteria were: Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Ecosystem Office, Aleut Marine Mammal Commission, Native Village of Atka, King Cove Strong, Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point and Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska.

Amy & Olivia show a partnership plaque

The community partners have tirelessly provided extraordinary activities, some of which include how to hunt, harvest and prepare traditional foods, youth and elder leadership training, nutrition and physical education, crafts and transmission of traditional knowledge.

We were sad to see this grant end in February 2023. The impact made lasting impressions on the communities it was able to support. The NB3 Community Partners will be receiving plaques in the mail as a symbol of our appreciation for their partnership and excellent programming.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Dimitri Philemonof, President/CEO

Our Spring Board meeting took place April 24 – 27. I wanted to share some highlights from my report to the Board.

We welcomed Nick Tutiakoff, the new representative on our Board from the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska. We thank Harriet Berikoff for her many years of service on our Board.

COVID-19 APIA Update

We have fully lifted all COVID protocols –so we are finally back to normal! The Conference rooms are now open for guest groups. Elder potlucks and other gatherings are back on, so look for a notice coming out soon with the date! Thank you for your patience as we worked to keep everyone safe through this prolonged period of COVID. Please come by and see us whenever you are in Anchorage—we would love to see you!

Unalaska Head Start Facility Update

Our Unalaska staff welcomed students into the new Unalaska Head Start facility on Monday February 27th! The Grand Opening / Building Blessing will be scheduled soon for likely late Summer or early Fall. We appreciate the working relationship with the Qawalangin Tribe, the Ounalashka Corporation, the OC Board of Directors and the City of Unalaska, Mayor Vince Tutiakoff and their staff. Our hats off to our architects, LCG, and contractor, Wolverine – for sticking with this project though the many delays due to the prolonged pandemic and the other challenges that arose. Many thanks to Marie Schliebe, Unalaska Head Start Lead Teacher, all our local Head Start staff, Pilita Fernandez, Teacher Aide; Daisy Pereat, Teacher Aide; Pauline Tutiakoff, Cook; and Rachelle Santos, new Cook. We also want to thank the community members that came out to help with the move – including the City Mayor of Unalaska, Vince Tutiakoff. We want to acknowledge the efforts of our key staff at the Headquarter office involved with this project – Beverly Bonnie Mierzejek, former Head Start Division Coordinator; Ken Selby, former long-term Department Director and Project Consultant; Mark Hamm, our CFO; Paula Pinder, former Department of Family & Community Development Director; and MaryEllen Fritz, our current Department of Family & Community Development Director. It was quite the team that made this beautiful facility possible for our children and families in Unalaska. If you are in Unalaska during the grand opening, please feel free to come by for a guided tour from our wonderful Head Start Team!

Nikolski Clinic and Staff Housing

We have been working with the Aleutian Housing Authority (AHA) to develop a plan for the Nikolski clinic and provider house renovation. We expect this project to start this Summer. For the clinic, we are planning an extensive interior remodel, fixture and appliance upgrades, an enlarged exterior door, arctic entry addition, ADA wheelchair ramp with landings and installation of a generator transfer switch. For the provider's house, we are renovating the existing unit extensively on

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

the interior, mechanical maintenance and installation of a generator transfer switch. We are hopeful this project will be completed by the end of this year.

Regional Substance Misuse Summits

Our first event took place in King Cove on January 16th, which was hosted by EAT. The Sand Point summit was hosted by EAT on April 22nd and the Unalaska summit was hosted by APIA on May 13th. We had staff from both APIA and EAT, as well as ANTHC, at the events. Each event covers the: Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program, Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP), Community Reinforcement Approach and Family Training (CRAFT), Narcan Nasal Spray Treatment and Teleservice Halo Lens demonstration. We appreciate the feedback we have received from each Summit. If you or someone you know is in crisis, consider reaching out to our Behavioral Health Team for assistance or referral.

Urban Unangax̂ Culture Camp

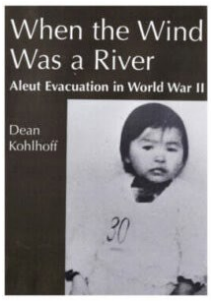
With the COVID protocols finally lifted, we will be hosting camp from June 19th through the 23rd at the Unangam Ulaa, our Anchorage Head Quarters Office. We are looking forward to having camp in Anchorage again this year. Many thanks to Millie and her staff for all their efforts in preparing for camp. We hope to see you here!

Tribal Culture Camp Donations

At last December's Unangax Heritage Association (UHA) Board meeting, a Cultural Donation to be sent to all 13 tribes in the amount of $10,000 was approved. We sent the checks out in mid-March, so hopefully all the Regional Tribes have received them. These funds may be used for a local Culture Camp or any other Cultural or Elder gatherings. If you attend any culture camp or activity in the region, we would very much appreciate it if you would be so kind to share pictures of these events with us. You can email them to apiai@apiai.org or otherwise send them to our office.

Elizabeth 'Liz' Kudrin Passing –Memory Eternal

We are saddened to share that Elizabeth 'Liz' Kudrin, wife of George Kudrin, passed away on February 19th. George worked for us many years ago and is a long-time supporter of our Elders Program. He took very good care of Liz as she had some health concerns. Liz was the birth mother of our Atka VPSO, William Dushkin. She was a big part of the Aleut history as she was born in Attu before World War II and was taken as a Prisoner of War to Japan. She grew up in Atka upon her return. You see her here as a very young girl on the front cover of the When the Wind was a River book by Dean Kohlhoff. She will be greatly missed.



Memory Eternal

NB3 Foundation Community Empowerment Grant cont.

Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Walk in King Cove

"I'll never be able to thank NB3 and APIA enough. Our community needed this empowerment grant. It restored a sense of community that was previously shaken by COVID-19. Through our events we saw youth getting involved, community members volunteering to help elders and our cultural connections strengthening. We hosted community dinners that featured our traditional foods like alodiks and the Russian Easter bread known as kulich. Both of our food events were entirely prepped by volunteers (adult & youth) and served to our community elders. For physical activity, we encouraged families to join us for event walks, community wide scavenger hunts and fitness challenges. We also hosted a paint night and a community baked goods exchange for our elders. It's been an amazing year and it was all made possible with the NB3 grant and our support through APIA. Thank you."

Arlene Wilson, King Cove Strong.

Atka Nigilax build

Headdress making with Shirley Shapsnikoff in Unalaska

Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Grant

A big warm welcome to all our Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Veterans! We have a lot to look forward to this year. By now you probably know that APIA was awarded the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Grant geared specifically at suicide prevention. This project was inspired by the need for this work with our veterans and service members and their families made known by Parker Gordon Fox. He was a sniper instructor in the U.S. military. Parker died by suicide at the age of 25. While he was alive, he stated how people should get (mental/emotional) help.

In honor of Parker's wishes, and in alignment with the SSG Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Project, we here at APIA are partnering with the Alaska VA in order to meet the needs of our Unangax veterans, service members and their families. Our region has the highest number of vets per capita than any region in the State. One upcoming goal is to provide a dozen of our regional vets travel assistance in August for the Alaska Native Cultural Health and Resilience (ANCHR) Gathering occurring in Unalaska, AK!

If you know a veteran in the region or from the region but out of state, please let them know that we want to bring them to the gathering and to reach out to Jenna, Larson, our SSG Fox SPGP Coordinator for more information at jennal@apiai.org.

BASKETRY PROJECT

Last winter, APIA received a grant through the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) American Rescue Plan: Humanities Grants for Native Institutions with funding provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Funds supported the Unangax Basketry Project: Preserving Aleut Culture through exhibition, programming, and object documentation. Cultural Heritage Department (CHD) staff connected with local conservator, Sarah Owens of Interwoven Fibers LLC, and author Ray Hudson to help develop an online exhibition that features 41 baskets from our collection. Public programming included four preservation workshops for tribal members and organizations. Ms. Owens also trained CHD staff in object handling and preventative care for our collections.

Images of the baskets, their history, and interpretive information collected are available for anyone to view on our website: apiai.catalogaccess.com

Visitors to the site can leave feedback for CHD staff. We hope to continue growing the website by adding new information and more of APIA's collections to the online site.

TRIBAL CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM (TCSP)

How Does Tribal Child Support Work?
Child Support refers to payments one parent makes to their child's other parent or legal guardian to help with the costs of raising the child.
Here are the services our tribal child support program provides:
Find the other parent: We can try to find the other parent to establish parentage and a support order.
Establish parentage: We can help parents establish a legal relationship with their child through a quick and easy form or genetic testing.
Establish and enforce a support order: We can establish an order that provides support for your child. When the other parent doesn't pay the full amount or doesn't pay at all, we can use enforcement options like withholding child support from their paycheck.
Review or modify the order: We can review your order and, if appropriate, modify it based on a change in income or circumstances

Our program also has culturally specific elements:
Cultural understanding: Our program knows the community and works to help children financially, emotionally, and holistically. We can make referrals to community and culturally-based programs.

Hands on experience: We're uniquely positioned to walk you through our tribal child support process and family-centered approach.

Non-cash support: We can order non-cash child support payments, such as firewood, subsistence food, home repairs, or other services. *Both parents must agree to non-cash payments.*

Did you know? Our office can help parents who have cases with other tribal and state programs.

Have questions? We're here for you! Contact us to learn more.

Stone Seal Lamp Returns Home

There has been a recent and exciting addition to APIA's collection; a small seal oil lamp! Measuring about 5 inches in diameter and 2.5 inches height, this stone lamp was carved to resemble the shape of a seal's head. The carver, with simple realism, made this lamp look like a seal sticking its head out of the water.

On the underside, around the bowl of the lamp you can still see a ring of debris, indicating that this lamp was traditionally used, possibly for burning seal or whale oil. Small oil lamps such as this were used for both heat and light.

For about 50 years, the lamp was in the possession of Katherine Matera, the daughter of Roy Van Slyck. Roy was stationed on Adak Island during WWII. One day while on the beach, in the surf he spotted what he thought at the time was a plain rock, and picked it up to get a better look. Realizing this item was man made Roy put the lamp in his pocket, and brought it back home to California with him.

Following his return home, Roy went to the San Diego Museum of Us (back then it was the Museum of Man) and loaned them the lamp under the assumption it would be placed on display. Instead, the museum labeled the stone lamp and tucked it away into storage for many years. Not liking this, Roy retrieved the lamp and gave it to his daughter Katherine and son-in-law Walter Matera. In the spring of 2014, Walter brought the lamp to PBS's Antiques Roadshow. The people of Antiques Roadshow appraised it between $4,000-7,000. Following Katherine's death six years ago, Walter held on to the lamp with a fierce closeness and has stated that he is over his grief as he is likely to ever get. Since then, Walter and his children believe the lamp should be returned to the Unangax People.

With pieces like this rare in museum collections, APIA is very fortunate to have such a piece donated to us. Walter made the donation in memory of his wife Katherine. We are excited to display the stone seal oil lamp here at APIA's Headquarters and Cultural Center. We are extremely grateful for the gift from the Matera family!

The Aleut Stone Lamp episode is:
Antiques Roadshow | Appraisal: Aleut Stone Oil Lamp | Season 18 | Episode 15 | PBS

Wellness Updates

Food Security Assessments Complete
The Wellness Program has completed implementing food security assessments in all ten communities throughout the region. Final reports have been completed and have been mailed out to all Tribes, cities, and other stakeholders. We plan to continue and build the regional food systems partnerships started through this project and to address priorities identified from the assessments for addressing food security in the region.

Healthy Store Foods Obesity is a critical concern for people in the Aleutian Pribilof Islands region and with funding from ANTHC, we have been collaborating with community stores to increase the selection of healthy foods and beverages sold in the communities of Atka, Nikolski, and St. George.

HEALTH AWARDS AND TRANSITIONS

Dr. Tara Ford Receives the Alaska Health Achievement Award Congratulations to Dr. Tara Ford for being a recipient of the "Alaska Health Achievement Award" given by the Alaska Public Health Association. This award is a big honor and recognizes an individual whose contributions to the health of Alaska are recent or current.

Dr. Ford has tremendously grown the capacity for community/behavioral health services for beneficiaries in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Region and is setting a standard of high quality and innovative health care services in Alaska. When Dr. Ford first started at APIA in 2014 as the Community Health Services Director, she supervised a staff of 14, including five behavioral health staff. The Behavioral Health Clinic that Dr. Ford walked into was a small clinic with limited staff and paper charts. Under Dr. Ford's leadership, she grew programs and services to include a staff of 55, including 19 staff in the Behavioral Health Program. Expanding behavioral health services created additional revenue for the organization which greatly impacted capacity and augmented further behavioral health and wellness programming in our communities. Dr. Ford is a true visionary, an incredibly hard worker, and a true servant of the people of our region. Through her strong commitment and leadership, she has overseen an incredible growth of services for beneficiaries in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Region.

Dr. Tara Ford Transitions to ANTHC Dr. Ford accepted a new position as the Director of Research at ANTHC. Her leadership and friendship will be greatly missed by many here at APIA. As she transitioned to her new position, there is comfort knowing Dr. Ford remains in state and within the Alaska Tribal Health System continuing to serve the underserved and Alaska Native populations. We look forward to future partnerships with her in her new role. With Tara's leaving, we separated her roles into Behavioral Health and Community Health Services.

Stacy Kelley Announced as Interim Behavioral Health Director Stacy Kelley, MPH has been with APIA for four years as the Integrated Health Department Senior Project Administrator and is now acting Interim Behavioral Health Director. We welcome Stacy's energy, knowledge and expertise during this transition.

New CHS Director Ashley Withrow, is the new CHS Director and has been with APIA for over ten years, previously as the Elder Care Services Administrator. Ashley has shown excellent leadership qualities and has grown the Elder Care Division into a robust program. We are excited for Ashley in her new role.

Delta Bedard receives the AK-PA Distinguished Rural Provider Award Delta's dedication to the Unangan and underserved peoples in the rural and remote community of Unalaska is unparalleled as a rural behavioral health provider. She was formally recognized as the recent award recipient of the AK-PA Distinguished Rural Provider award for 2022. Nominated by her peers and the community, Delta is highly regarded for her service to all community members. Delta has lived in Unalaska for five

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THE JR NBA IN UNALASKA WAS A SLAM DUNK!

APIA exclusively partnered with the Jr. NBA and held its' first ever youth basketball camp in partnership with the City of Unalaska Department of Parks, Culture, & Recreation. The Jr. NBA is the official youth basketball participation program of the NBA. The Jr. NBA encourages and supports youth basketball participation at the grassroots level and improves the overall youth basketball experience for all participants. In April 2023, Jr. NBA staff traveled to the region and held a full day event for youth in hopes of developing a lifelong passion for the game of basketball by teaching them the fundamentals of the sport while instilling core values including teamwork, respect and sportsmanship.

We are grateful for Troy Justice, SVP, Head of International Basketball and a Qawalangin Tribal Member, for bringing his talented team and Charlie Bell, former NBA with the Golden State Warriors! The excitement of the community was spectacular and it was an honor to witness such an engaging and fun event for community of Unalaska. We hope this partnership continues to flourish and we are able to see future Jr. NBA events expand across the Aleutians.

We would like to recognize and congratulate the following players for completing the program:

Mya Tutiakoff
Gabriel Villafuerte
Alexandria Lavoy
Kristoffer Tacata
Tylam Palmer
Thommy Bui
Rochelle Faasavalu
Gavyn Longo
Kleo Faasavalu
Alex Swenton
Jesus Enrique Acosta
Matthew Acosta
Alexis Glan Esnardo
Ruby Cecena
Enoch Whitaker
Pala Tolai
Neta Tolai
Maegan Penaflor
Lincoln Henning
Ramiel Bobadilla
Dean Williams
Brent Pareat
Eligah Nelson
Sofia Nelson
Sam Amora
Deklan Nettleton
Dalyla Nettleton
Rhellie Enele
Deserette V. Quebrar
Beatrice Bagley
Lucy Bagley
Maximus Greaves
Jadon Whitaker
Eli Balalsco-Warden
Khain Calix Rafer
Adyson Scott
Fredie Cecena
Landyn Longo
Kline K. Faasavalu
Adalyn Longo
Kaycee Guiane
Angel Acosta
Tyrell Anthony Sims
Isabella Lopez
Alex Fernandez
Nicholas Kitsyk
Kailani Simbajon
Cory Nelson

ELDER CARE SERVICES ARE ON THE RISE

The Elder Care Services team has increased services for Elders, caregivers, and families of Elders through case management services, chore services and Elder events. The recently hired Elder Case Manager Teresa Komahuk is ready to provide assistance to those in need of case management services or information on other services available. In addition, APIA Elder Health Aides in the region and Anchorage have been hosting Elder gatherings to increase Elder socialization, support brain health, and Alzheimer's and Dementia risk reduction and prevention activities. We stand ready to support you. Please reach out to the Elder Care Services Team to see what services are available.

TOBACCO PREVENTION

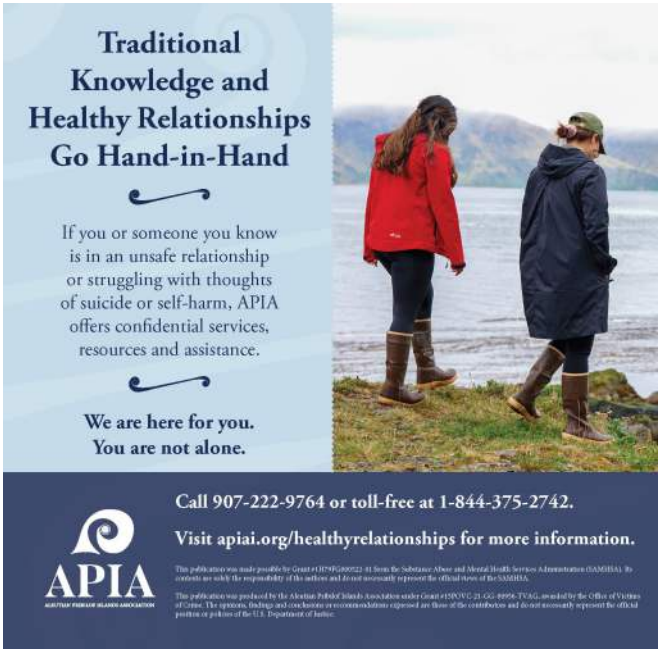
APIA's Tobacco Prevention & Control Program provides community education regarding the health risks of tobacco use and provides a connection to services and resources for quitting tobacco. Resources include counseling and access to nicotine replacement therapies such as patches and gum. APIA has Tobacco Treatment Specialists available for individual and group counseling. These resources are available to help you when you are ready to quit. For more information, please contact Tobacco Prevention Coordinator at (907) 276-2700 or email carolinen@apiai.org or our website at https://www.apiai.org/tobacco-prevention-intervention-program/

Kids participating in a tobacco free walk in Unalaska

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS TEAM (HEART)

Advocacy services are available at APIA. Confidential support for survivors and family members who have experienced domestic violence, teen dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, missing and murdered indigenous persons, and other violent crimes that include safety planning, court accompaniments, referral for legal, financial, and shelter assistance, community outreach and traditional healing practices.

Please contact **HRA@apiai.org** for more information.



HEALTH AWARDS AND TRANSITIONS CONT.

years during which time she has counseled more than a thousand people through individual and group psychotherapy. In rural Alaskan communities, where resources are at a premium, gems truly stand out and Delta is well known for her commitment to counsel any and all in need on the island. Active in her community, Delta is an advocate for others raising the awareness of addressing one's mental health and reducing the stigma related to accessing services. She continues to play a key role in serving all ages from adolescents to elders. Delta's charisma and charm is felt on a daily basis to buoy community spirits. She is also a talented artist who is well known on the island with pieces in the local museum.

In sum, prevention work is consistently one of the hardest to quantify but you know it when you see it. Delta's counseling prevention worth is exceptional and may never be truly known if Delta were not a part of the community.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPY

Expressive Arts Therapy (ExAT) is a form of psychotherapy that draws upon a variety of art materials and artistic activities to help clients access trauma and other emotionally disturbing issues and to express it in a way that does not bring up more pain. When people hear about ExAT they usually think of art activities and creating an end product. They'll say, "I can't draw. I'm not creative. I don't have any talent." ExAT is not about artistic skills or creativity. It's about finding one's inner voice to express feelings and sensations that may not have words. The process of making something is soothing in itself and creates a safe situation where the inner voice can speak.

"I made my bowl dark, because my life has been very dark. I added pearls of wisdom into the bowl, each pearl representing an emotion that has played a large part in teaching me throughout my life."

ExAT is offered at APIA in Individual and Group Therapy. It is also offered in activities that are not clinical therapy. We take non-clinical ExAT to the Region in Health Fairs and other Community Health Services events. Art for Well-Being and *Fun* is a drop-in activity for staff that meets bi-monthly on a Friday over the lunch break from 11:30-1:30 in the AANG Center.

Bowl of Light is one of the activities recently offered in group therapy, facilitated for staff, and on St. George. Individuals listened to this story and made their own Bowl of Light. Briefly, the story goes like this: Every child is born with a perfect bowl of light. The light guides the child so they can see and learn the things they need to go forward in life. Sometimes hurts, betrayals, and bad things happen. They fall into the bowl like stones. There may be so many that the light gets blocked out. The child cannot see. If they empty out the stones one by one they will find that the light is still there. It was never extinguished.

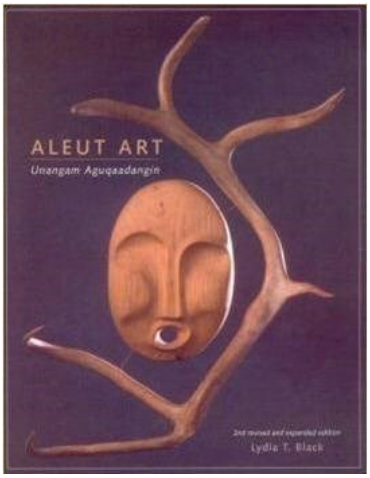
"This is a stronger statement than I realized"

"When my bowl is full with my stones, I know I need to take time and reflect, relax, breathe, and tell myself it is time to care for myself."

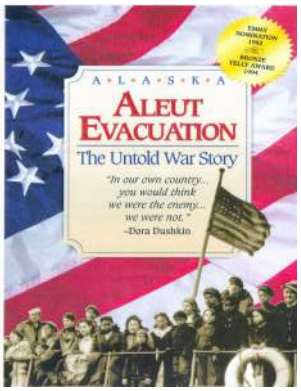
PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

Order Online! Visit our website at **http://www.apiai.org** to order these publications (and **more**!) online! From APIA's homepage, select "Store" from the menu on top, then select a publication and proceed. If you would like to order by phone, please contact us at (907) 276-2700.

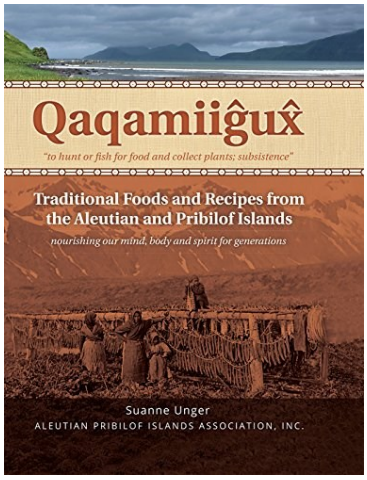
Prices do not include shipping & handling



Aleut Art
by Lydia T. Black
(Hardcover)
~~$49.95~~ **$25.00**

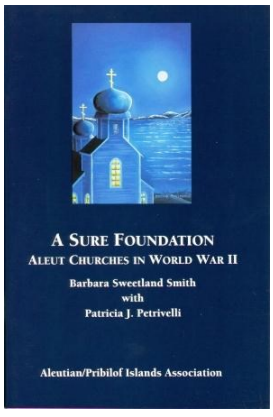


Aleut Evacuation
The Untold War Story **-**
DVD: $19.95
Digital: $15.95



Qaqamiigux: Traditional Foods and Recipies from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands
By Suanne Unger
HARDCOVER: $39.99
SOFTCOVER: $24.99
DIGITAL: $9.99

A Sure Foundation
Aleut Churches in WWII
By Barbara Sweetland Smith with Patricia J. Petrivelli
$15.00



APIA

ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

OUR MISSION

- To promote self-sufficiency and independence of the Unangan/Unanagas[1] by advocacy, training, technical assistance, and economic enhancement;
- To assist in meeting health, safety, and well-being of each Unangax̂[2] community;
- To promote, strengthen, and ensure the unity of the Unangan/Unangas; and
- To strengthen and preserve the Unangax̂ cultural heritage.

[1]Unangan [Eastern dialect], Unangas [Atka Dialect] - Aleuts, plural form; [2]Unangax̂ - Aleut, singular form

ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF ISLANDS ASSOCIATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark Snigaroff, Chair—Atka IRA Council

David Osterback, Vice Chair—Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point

Amos Philemonoff, Sgt. At Arms—Tribal Government of St. Paul Island

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Nick Tutiakoff, Director—Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska

Mark Merculief, Jr., Director—St. George Traditional Council

Amy Foster, Director—Unga Tribal Council