



TIDE POOL TIMES

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association's Monthly Regional Newsletter

September Wellness



Photo Courtesy: Google Images

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Program Update

Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Project

September is Suicide Prevention Month. The whole purpose of our program is to prevent Veteran suicide. We do this by offering alternative means of prevention that were naturally a part of our indigenous cultures here in Alaska for time immemorial. Our Ancestors knew that connection and culture were just a given part of daily life. Everyone did what they loved and were good at for the sake of the tribe. We honor our active service members and Veterans through the many offerings funded through the VA and the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program.

The very weekend this newsletter is published we will be out in Unalaska facilitating one of the yearly offerings of the program, the 4th annual Alaska Native Cultural Health and Resilience (ANCHR) Gathering. It's a healing gathering based on the SAMHSA sanctioned, practice-based Gathering of Alaska Natives (GOAN) that has been transposed to fit our UnangaĀ region.

Huge gratitude to our sponsors: the Qawalangin Tribe, PCR, OptimERA, Trident Seafoods, KUCB, and Grant Aviation. We could not do what we do without our supportive community partners. When we come together to support each other in our wellness, amazing things happen. Healing happens.

If you are a Veteran or active service member and you are interested in joining our program, please contact destinyk@apiai.org.



VA Suicide Prevention Grant Recipient

Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program Award Recipient



Photo Courtesy: David Fox



Photo Courtesy: Katie Kutschbach

Program Update (cont.)

In the Veteran community, where hope can often feel distant, the SSG Fox Suicide Prevention Program has emerged as a vital source of support, vividly demonstrated through the experiences of individuals like Daniel Gould and John Mercurief. These stories highlight the profound impact of dedicated outreach and advocacy in transforming lives.

Daniel Gould, a Vietnam War Veteran, had long struggled with neglect and deteriorating health, feeling abandoned by the system designed to help him. His situation seemed dire until recent outreach efforts in King Cove rekindled a glimmer of hope. This renewed sense of optimism has provided Daniel with a tangible prospect of receiving the benefits and recognition that have eluded him for years.

Similarly, John Mercurief's story exemplifies perseverance in the face of systemic failure. After enduring decades of neglect and injustice following his service in Vietnam, John's situation has begun to improve with the recent receipt of his file's intent. This milestone, though just the start of a longer journey, represents a significant step toward acknowledging and addressing his struggles.

These personal narratives, supported by the relentless efforts of the SSG Fox Suicide Prevention Program underscore a broader shift from despair to hope, offering a beacon of justice and healing for many veterans.

~Destiny Key, Veteran Peer Support Specialist

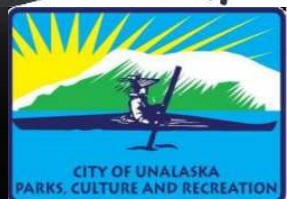
THANKS TO OUR ANCHR SPONSORS



Grant Aviation
Regional airline in Alaska



OptimERA xG



We couldn't do this without the help and support of our community partners. Thank you for supporting our suicide prevention efforts.

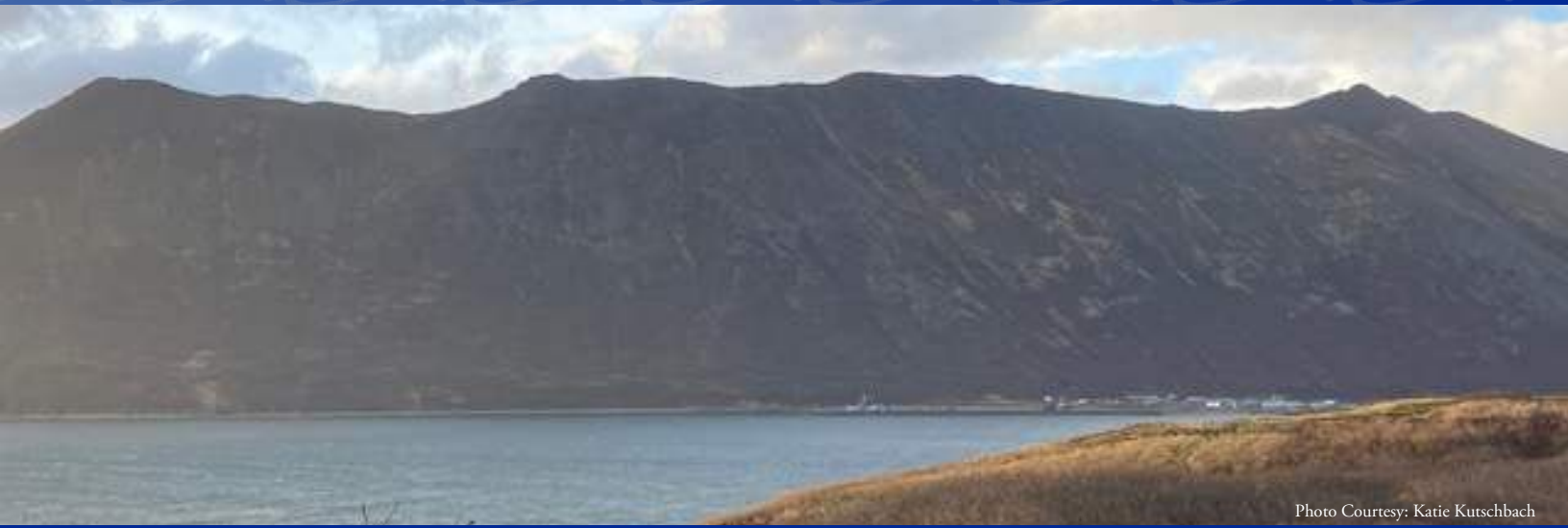


Photo Courtesy: Katie Kutschbach

Good Health & Wellness in Indian Country

Obesity is a prevalent concern nationwide, including for the people of the Aleutian and Pribilof Region. To increase the number of places for safe and accessible physical activity, APIA partnered with Tribes to develop "Walking Maps" in three communities. One way to address the high rate of obesity is by establishing clearly marked routes, complete with distance markers, estimated walking times, and locations.

According to the CDC, American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) adults are 50% more likely to be obese than non-Hispanic whites, and adolescents are 30% more likely. This obesity epidemic disproportionately affects certain groups within the community. More than half of AI/AN women are overweight, and 40–50% of AI/AN children under 10 in many tribal communities are overweight or obese.

To address this community concern, APIA's Wellness Team partnered with Tribes to develop "Walking Maps" for the communities of Unalaska, St. George and Nikolski. Permanent maps were created for St. George and Nikolski that are now posted in locations that are highly visible and frequently visited. For Unalaska two separate tri-fold brochures (Unalaska and Dutch Harbor) were designed with education on how walking improves one's health. The Walking Maps have been posted and distributed in the three communities. The Unalaska maps were presented at the annual community health fair.

-Candace Nielsen & Courtney Edwards,
Wellness Project Coordinators

STRAWBERRY RHUBARB CRISP

Ingredients

- 4 C. Fresh Strawberries
- 2 C. Fresh Rhubarb (1/2 in.)
- 2 T. Cornstarch
- 1/2 C. Granulated Sugar
- 1 1/2 t. Fresh Orange Zest

Topping

- 1 C. All Purpose Flour
- 1 C. Quick Oats
- 2/3 C. light Brown Sugar (packed)
- 2 t. Cinnamon
- 3/4 t. Kosher Salt
- 12 T. Unsalted Butter (cold/cubed)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Use a 10" Cast Iron Skillet. Mix first 5 ingredients and add to baking dish. Mix together next 5 ingredients and then smoosh the butter in until mixture holds when you squeeze it in a fist. Crumble on top of the fruit mixture in an even layer. Place in oven for 35-40 minutes (or until top is golden brown and edges are bubbling). Let the crisp cool for 30 minutes. Top with ice cream - or not. Enjoy!



Photo Courtesy: Katie Kutschbach

Autumn in Alaska

Fall Time is Back to School Time

It is fall time in Alaska and school is back in session. For some families, school is a welcome opportunity for a routine schedule. For others it becomes a seemingly endless time coordinating busy family activities. Helping your kids eat healthy can be particularly challenging when running from school to cross country or piano practice. With a little preparation and planning, your family can still have healthy foods and spend quality time together.



- **Package up snack-size amounts of healthy foods.** This can be a fun activity to do with your kids at the beginning of the week or the evening before a busy day. Just portion out snack size amounts of fruits, veggies, whole grain cereals, and/or unsalted nuts to grab quickly on your way out the door. Plus, your kids may be less likely to complain about the food choice if they helped package it!
- **Plan meals for the week.** This may sound like a lot of extra work but can save time and stress. Knowing what you are making for dinner will allow you to make healthier choices, rather than just grabbing whatever is quickest that might have high amounts of salt and sugar. Meal planning can allow you to prepare a portion for future meals to save time.
- **Here are some ideas:**
 - ✓ If you are having chicken or fish, cook extra to use for a different meal the next night.
 - ✓ If you are making soup, make a double batch and freeze half to use later.
 - ✓ If you are grilling steaks, make a couple extra to cut up for a chef salad tomorrow.
- **Healthy eating does not need to be expensive.** There are many ways you can save money on healthy food choices.
 - **Creating a list** and limiting the amount of times you go to the store will help cut down on the cost of unplanned, unhealthy foods (those potato chips you grab quick as you are going through the grocery line 😊).
 - **Choose canned or frozen fruits and veggies.** These options can be just as healthy and will stay fresh until you are ready to use them. This reduces food waste. Rinsing off the canning liquid will reduce much of the extra salt and sugar that may be found in canned foods.
 - **Buy in bulk** the ingredients you already use and freeze what you do not need right away. Not everything in bulk is the best value for your money so focus on the foods you already use a lot.
 - **Do not go to the store hungry.** We are much more likely to buy foods we do not need, just because everything looks good when we are hungry.
 - **Harvest your own foods.** Alaska has a bounty of berries, greens, fish and other healthy meats! If you are not able to get out yourself, consider a trade with someone (fresh baked bread in exchange for fish).
- **Don't forget to stay active!** Finding time for fun activities with your family will help everyone stay at a healthy weight and teach your kids good habits as they grow.

A NOTE ON WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Have you ever gotten frustrated about your weight and felt a little more depressed after looking in the mirror? Here are a few simple things we can do to manage hormones and mitigate weight gain when you make them a daily practice.

Eat mostly lean protein and vegetables. By taking sugar and most starches out of the diet, it reduces the strain on your pancreas producing less insulin (fat producing hormone), which means less stored fat.

Drink only water, tea and black coffee. Alcohol and soda spike our insulin levels and throw our hormones way off balance. Even diet sodas trick our brains due to the sweetness. The chemicals are neurotoxins and hormone deregulators, despite being sugar-free.

Sweat for a little bit each day, even if it's just a 7-minute HIIT workout, it can create several good chemical reactions in our bodies as well as create an uptake in neurotransmitters in our brains.

Focus on your breathing for at least 5 minutes a day. Meditation is a proven way to help with weight regulation. It reduces the stress hormone cortisol that makes us gain weight.



Photo Courtesy: Katie Kutschbach

Monthly Spotlight

Aang! My name is Marisa McKasson and I am the new Tribes Extension agent serving the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands. I will be working closely with colleagues at the Cooperative Extension Service and APIA's Community Health Services team to help our communities grow, cook, safely preserve, and eat more food at home. In addition to offering technical assistance and advice on these topics, I can also work with your community to put on virtual and in-person workshops on topics such as growing your own food, greenhouses, community gardens, healthy cooking, food preservation, and more if you are interested in working together!



I grew up on Kumeyaay land in San Diego, CA but am very glad to currently live, work, and play on Dena'ina land in Anchorage, AK. Since arriving in Alaska, I have been working on Alaska Native food sovereignty and food security at ANTHC. I look forward to continuing to learn and grow while serving and working with the Tribes of the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands in this new role. In my free time, I love to spend time running, biking, skiing, and/or hiking around Alaska, doing yoga, and cooking new recipes with local foods – all with family and friends of course.

To sign up for the Tribes Extension newsletter to learn about funding and learning opportunities or learn more about the University of Alaska Fairbank's Tribes Extension program, please visit our website:

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/tribes/>.

Request a workshop, here: <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/tribes/request-a-workshop.php>

You can contact me directly at mnmckasson@alaska.edu or (907) 222-4203 if you have any questions on the above topics or want to say hello!

My office is located on the third floor of the APIA office at 1131 E International Airport Rd, Anchorage, AK 99518. I look forward to working with you!

TIP OF THE MONTH



The July volume of the Tide Pool Times provided great tips on picking berries. Now that it is officially berry picking season, this month we want to discuss all the great ways to preserve our berries! As we know, berries are not only an important traditional food but also happen to be very healthy to eat (for more information, see [Traditional Unanga Foods](#) [Nutritional Facts About Berries](#)). When preserving berries, we want to make sure we preserve all the amazing nutrition they provide!

The University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service has great publications to help us with ways of preserving berries and other foods in a safe manner. Many Alaskans freeze their berries or make jams and jellies. But if your freezer is already full of salmon or you want a lower sugar option than jam, using a water bath canner to can berries in a light syrup is another great option. Reach out to Marisa at mnmckasson@alaska.edu or at (907) 222 - 4203 for a written recipe for canning berries.

To see more recipes, food preservation information, or to learn more about growing your own food, you can review all Extension publications [here](#). In Good Health ~Marisa



Photo Courtesy: Katie Kutschbach

Community Board



A1C Testing

A1C test - simple blood test that measures your average blood sugar levels over the past 3 months.

Your A1C Result:

Normal = Below 5.7%

Prediabetes = 5.7% to 6.4%

Diabetes = 6.5% or above

Get a baseline A1C Test if:

Over the age of 45

or if you're under 45, are

overweight, and have one or

more risk factors for

prediabetes/type 2 diabetes.

Scan QR Code for more info.



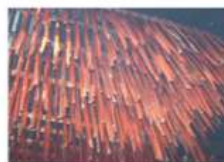
Alaska Tribes Extension Program

To see all that Alaska Tribes Extension Program has to offer, visit www.uafr.edu/ces/tribes

The goal of the Alaska Tribes Extension Program is to promote food sovereign and secure Tribes in Alaska.

Let us know how we can work together.

Contact us at: UA-TribesExtension@alaska.edu



Request a Workshop

Free workshops for your community

We support Tribal communities in efforts to promote food security, resiliency, and economic diversity, while upholding traditional knowledge and traditional ways of securing food. We offer technical assistance and a variety of workshops in partnership with Tribes and Traditional Knowledge Holders.



- 10 steps to growing your own food
- Starting a Tribal, community, or school greenhouse, garden, or farm
- Seed starting
- Gardening
- Pest management in your garden
- Healthy cooking
- Greenhouse management
- Growing berries in your backyard: strawberries, raspberries & more!
- Pickling vegetables
- Canning red meat or fish
- Food preservation 101
- & more!

Stay Connected

Monthly newsletter & webinar series

- Stay up to date on webinars, funding, resources and news relevant to growing food in rural Alaska communities. Sign up with this link!



Tribal Chiefs Conference

Our Partners



Rural Cooperative of Alaska



Find out more about USDA grants and programs here: <https://www.farmers.gov/>

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Our Funders

Community Board (cont.)



**In September We
Celebrate
Labor Day & Suicide
Prevention**

UPCOMING EVENTS

September is the month of...

Labor Day

Suicide Prevention

Recovery

September 2nd

Labor Day

September 5th

International Day of Charity

September 10th

Suicide Prevention Day

September 12th

National Day of Encouragement

October is the month of...

Mental Health

Breast Cancer Awareness

Halloween

November is the month of...

Daylight Savings Ends

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving



Prediabetes

Prediabetes is a serious health condition where blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes.

1 in 3 adults have prediabetes.

Prediabetes puts you at increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

Lifestyle changes can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Scan QR Code below to take the Prediabetes Risk Test



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