



TIDE POOL TIMES

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association's Monthly Regional Newsletter

May Wellness



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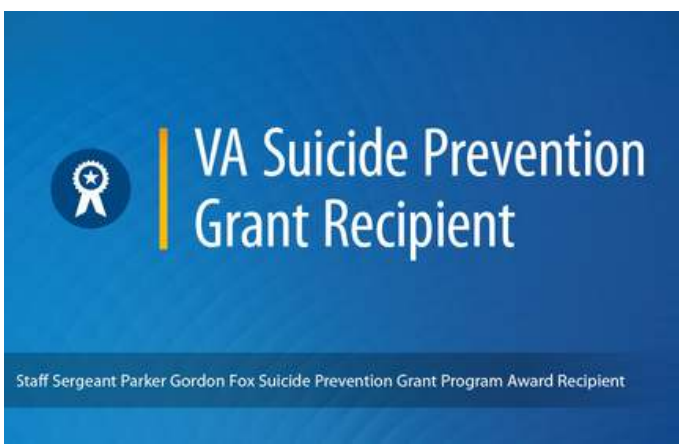
Program Update Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Project

April was true to form with the Alaskan unpredictable weather, and the back and forth of deciding whether to change over winter tires, but we got through it. More changes are happening at the Vet Center, and although many of our therapists there are leaving, the weekly Yoga and Listening Circles remain a steady part of our joint partnership. We continue with our mission here at APIA to support our Veterans with culture and connection.

Our team has been working diligently to bring all of our women Veterans and active service members, as well as the wives of our enrollees to the Women's Wellness Gathering here in Anchorage next month. Our Staff Sergeant Fox team here at APIA can't wait to facilitate Mind Body Medicine at the Gathering as well.

Destiny will be offering Peer Support Services, and Amy and Jenna will be there with Healing Touch and Yoga. If you have yet to sign up for the Women's Wellness Gathering June 5-8, [here](#) is the link to the registration. Save the date for the ANCHR Gathering! July 10-13 out in Unalaska. We look forward to another fantastic time of healing, culture and connection.

With so many new participants joining the project, our CHS Program Assistant, Georgia Kashevarof, is jumping in to help with monthly case management calls. We're really thankful for her support, and we're sure our enrollees are enjoying her visits and friendly vibe. Please contact destinyk@apiai.org.



Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program Award Recipient



Photo Courtesy: David Fox



Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

CRC Walks with Nolon the Colon

By Vivian Nguyen

From March 5-12, 2025, we had the opportunity to travel to Unalaska to engage with the local community in raising awareness about colorectal cancer (CRC) and improving screening rates for individuals who are due for screening. During our visit, we successfully distributed 4 FIT kits to community members and organized an outreach event on March 8, 2025, aimed at further promoting colorectal cancer awareness.

The outreach event took the form of a walk, held indoors at the community center track due to inclement weather. Despite the weather challenges, the event was highly successful, with approximately 20 participants in attendance. The response from participants was enthusiastic, and many walked for varying durations, typically between 30 minutes and one hour if not more. We had the track open for about 3 hours since not everyone showed up at the same time and participants were encouraged to walk at their own pace, with the flexibility to stop whenever needed.

This event not only helped to raise awareness about the importance of colorectal cancer screening but also fostered community involvement and support for early detection efforts.

In addition to distributing FIT kits and organizing the outreach event, we also called those who were due for screening, and some opted to go into Anchorage. As a result of these efforts, we scheduled 4 additional people for colonoscopies and entered 3 referrals for a colonoscopy in Anchorage. On March 24th, we had another Colorectal Cancer Awareness Walk/run in Anchorage Alaska. There was a good turnout of 18 participants who came to support the cause and we walked on the Campbell Creek Trail starting at APIA. We had two people dressed as polyps to promote awareness and all participants received a commemorative shirt. There were also educational resources that participants could take if they chose to. The event was a great success!



VPSS REPORT

I've recently made real progress helping Veterans secure higher disability ratings and access long-overdue benefits. After talking with the VA, I learned that Veterans over 75 now get priority in the claims process—huge news for older Vets who've been waiting too long. I also found two great one-time grants through the Disabled Veterans of America Foundation:

- Food assistance up to \$500, including support for special diets
- Utility assistance up to \$1,000
- No case manager letter is required, but I'm happy to provide one to help. I used the food grant myself—groceries were delivered within 2 days.

And just a reminder: asking for help is hard, but you're not alone. I live with PTSD and depression too, and I know how isolating it can feel. Even a simple text can be a lifeline. If you ever need to talk or need support, I'm here. Text me anytime at (907)615-7556—whenever you're ready.

Destiny Key is our Veteran Peer Support Specialist (VPSS) here at APIA. She served in the U.S. Navy from January 2020-January 2024. Reach out to her for help with the VA.





Photo Courtesy: Jami Creasey

Monthly Spotlight

I'm JD, a third-generation Alaskan from Eagle River, with deep roots in this state. My grandparents came to Alaska in the 1950s with the Army, settled in Muldoon, and raised five kids, laying the foundation for a family proud to call Alaska home. No matter where I go, Alaska always draws me back. I love the fishing, the endless outdoor adventures, the rich history, and the independence that defines this place.

Professionally, I've worked in oil and gas logistics, sales, security design, and non-profit housing. Today, I serve as Facilities Coordinator for APIA, supporting the people and programs serving the Aleutian region and UnangaĀ (Aleut) communities. I take pride in keeping our facilities running smoothly—not just for today, but with a long-term, sustainable mindset. I'm currently pursuing my Certified Facilities Manager (CFM) certification through IFMA to grow in the role and bring even more value.

Outside of work, I try to spend as much time as I can outdoors—often going solo with just my dog, Bacon, as my adventure buddy. Whether it's camping, hunting, fishing, or just exploring, we're always up for a good outing. That said, I've learned the hard way that solo dip netting can get interesting fast. It's definitely a lot easier when you've got someone around to mind the cooler and help bonk fish when the tides are rolling in and out—Bacon's moral support only goes so far!

Over the past year, I've made a point to focus more on strength training and personal fitness. It's become a steady part of my routine and a great outlet to stay grounded, clear my head, and challenge myself in a healthy way. When I'm not lifting or out in the woods, I'm usually in the garage woodworking, or outside grilling. BBQing for my people is one of my favorite pastimes. I usually take the lead on cooking for the holidays and family gatherings. I love cooking for family and friends—it's my favorite way to bring people together and share good food and company.



TIP OF THE MONTH



I'll never forget where I was the first time I heard the song, "Sound of Sunshine" by Michael Franti. It was the summer of 2010, drivin' down the road; my kids were in their booster seats boppin' along, and by the end of the song we were singing the chorus together.

Music just has a way of taking us back or makes us think about a special person in our lives. But did you know that music can deeply impact your emotions? Whether you want to relax, or need a pick-me-up, or want to crush that workout, there's music for that.

Recent studies show that the right kind of music can help alleviate pain, energize the body, and even help manage symptoms of certain diseases. College students who listened to certain playlist while studying a subject retained the information much better, and when they listened to it while taking the test on the subject, it improved their test scores.

If you want to up your mental health game, listen to your favorite tunes. Music activates almost all of the brain's different regions and networks, as well as upping the production of serotonin and dopamine (those feel-good neurotransmitters) in your brain. What's on your summer playlist? In Good Health ~ Jenna

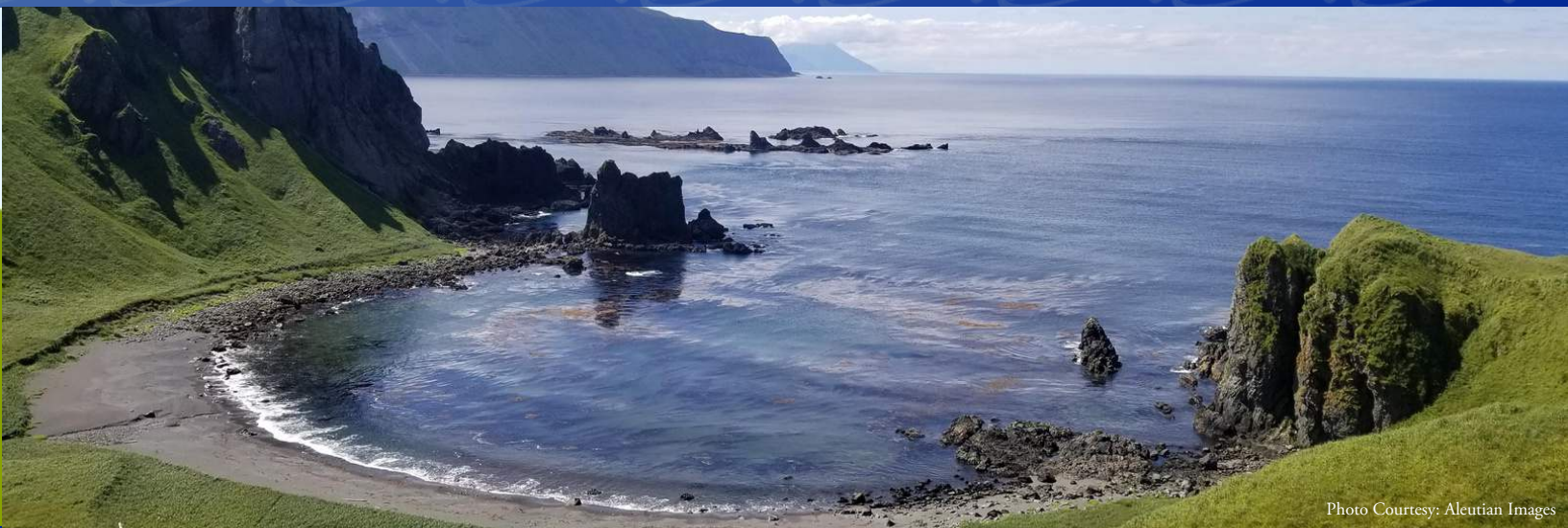


Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

Community Board



3rd Annual Substance Misuse Symposium Grand Aleutian Hotel, Makushin Room

**Thursday, May 8-First Responders
Mental Health First Aid**

Breakfast served 8:00am and Lunch 12:00
Event 8:00 am-5:00pm

**Friday, May 9-General Audience
Behavioral Health, Illicit Fentanyl Awareness**

Dinner served 5:00pm
Event 5:15 – 9:00 pm

**Saturday, May 10-Youth
TEEN Mental Health First Aid
(9th to 12th Grades-Registration Required)
Breakfast served 9:00am and Lunch 11:00am
Event 9:15 – 4:00pm**



Register Here
with QR code!

Join representatives from Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA) for a symposium to bring more awareness to opioid and substance misuse in our region. Giveaways offered at event!



Alaska

ADRC

Aging & Disability Resource Center

April-May-June 2025



ADRC Brown Bag Education Series

You are invited to attend the FREE monthly Brown Bag Education Series presentations, hosted by the ADRC. The series is held once a month, on Tuesdays from 12:00pm-1:00pm on Teams. Contact Karla Wright at karla.wright@anchorageak.gov or call 907-343-7778 to receive an invite.

April 8 Susie Smith, Executive Director
Hospice of Anchorage

May 13 Donna Koecher, RN CNOR, Joint and Spine Navigator
Orthopedic and Spine Department, Alaska Regional Hospital

June 10 to be announced



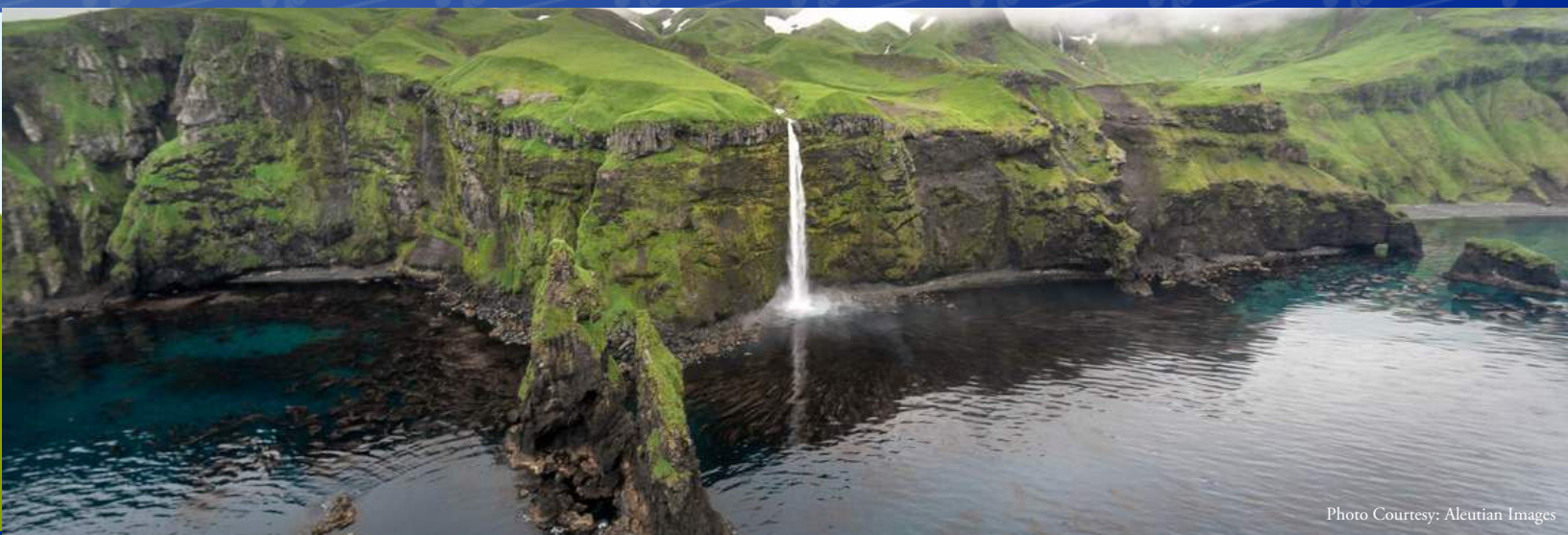


Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

Community Board



Weekly Virtual Elder
Exercises with Lorraine

Weekly on Tuesdays

3:15pm - 3:30pm

Facebook Live - APIA's Facebook

Please join Lorraine Thomas, Lead Elder Health Aide and team as they demonstrate simple chair exercises each week through Facebook Live on the APIA facebook page. (www.facebook.com/APIAI)

For more information, contact Lorraine Thomas at (907)276-2700 or via email LorraineT@apiai.org



MIND BODY MEDICINE GROUPS FOR VETERANS

8 Weekly 2 hour Virtual Group Sessions

Fridays starting AUGUST 2025

Research based mind-body medicine strategies with remarkable benefits for physical, cognitive and emotional wellness.

Curriculum

- Week 1: Setting the Container, Breathwork, Drawings
- Week 2: Biological Underpinnings, Autogenics, Biofeedback
- Week 3: Meditation and Movement-Shaking/Dancing
- Week 4: Guided Imagery
- Week 5: Emotions
- Week 6: Eating, Nutrition, and Relationship to Food
- Week 7: Spirituality and Meditation
- Week 8: Reflection, Closing Drawings, Ceremony

Scan QR to Register:



Contact a Member of the SSG
Fox SPGP Team:
Phone: (907) 276-2700
Toll Free: (800) 478-2742
Fax: (907) 222-4279



This project is funded under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program, grant number AK-SSG-1461-22. The views, policies, and opinions expressed are those of the grantee and contractor herein. They do not necessarily reflect those of SSG Fox SPGP.

Community Board (cont.)



May Friday Elder Gatherings will be held from 10am to 12 noon on the 9th, 23rd and 30th.
1131 E. International Airport Rd,
Anchorage

UPCOMING EVENTS

May is the month of...

Mental Health Awareness Month

Memorial Day

Mother's Day

May 5th

Cinco de Mayo

May 7th

Teacher Appreciation Day

May 11th

Mother's Day

May 21st

World Meditation Day

May 27th

Memorial Day

June is the month of...

Father's Day

Environmental Awareness

Juneteenth

July is the month of...

Independence



TOBACCO USE & PREGNANCY

Did You Know Tobacco Use During Pregnancy is Harmful for You & Your Unborn Child?



Here are some of the reason's why:

- Tobacco exposes adverse effects on fetal & child development
- Reduces fertility
- Premature birth
- Low birth weight
- Stillborn
- Sudden infant death

Study's show that 36.6% of Alaska Native Mothers used tobacco during pregnancy between 2015-2019. That is alarming. Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of illness & death for infants and mothers.

For more information, contact Caroline Nevak at (907) 222-4237 or email at: carolinen@apia.org

DATA SOURCE: ALASKA DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH, ALASKA HEALTH ANALYTICS AND VITAL RECORDS SECTION



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

Flowers are great, but prevention is priceless. Don't forget early detection of colorectal cancer saves lives!

APIA's Clinics:

Unalaska: (907) 581-2742

St. George: (907) 859-2254

Nikolski: (907) 576-2204

Atka: (907) 839-2232

For more information, contact Vivian Nguyen at viviann@apia.org

