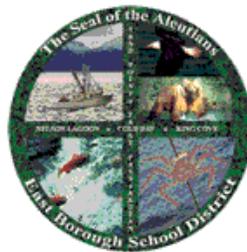
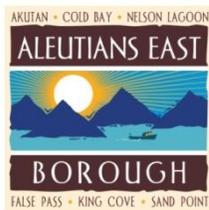


In the Loop



Eastern Aleutian Tribes

Bringing the Aleutians East Borough, the AEB School District and Eastern Aleutian Tribes together by sharing common goals.

Cold Bay Residents Pull Together as they Respond to an Emergency Landing by Delta Airlines



Delta Airlines flight 68, originating from the Norita International Airport in Japan, was heading to Portland Oregon when engine trouble forced an emergency landing. Photo by Rachel D. Kremer.

Just three months after responding to an emergency landing by American Airlines, the community of Cold Bay put on a repeat performance, but this time it was for Delta Airlines on Jan. 14th.

“Once again, the DOT (Alaska Department of Transportation) staff here in Cold Bay, and the community, stood up to the challenge,” said Harold (“Happy”) Kremer III, Cold Bay Airport Manager. “I think it went as smoothly as it could go.”

Delta Airlines Flight 68, originating from the Narita International Airport, (about 50 miles west of Tokyo, Japan) was heading to Portland, Oregon when the crew learned there was a problem.

“There was an indication in the flight deck of a potential issue with one of the aircraft engines,” said Michael Thomas, Delta Airlines spokesperson. “As a precautionary measure, our flight crew elected to divert to the nearest suitable airport, which was Cold Bay, Alaska.”

Meanwhile, crews on the ground knew exactly what to do to prepare.

“We have an emergency control plan that helps us prepare for situations like this,” Kremer said. “When some of the key members of our emergency control plan are out of town, we have to improvise, so that’s what we did.”

Kremer said he moved his employees into place where they were needed. Emergency vehicles were staged nearby as a precaution. Fortunately, the 767 made a smooth landing with about 221 passengers and crew members at 6:05 a.m. Chairs had been set up to host the passengers during their stay in Cold Bay.

“My crew and some of the PenAir guys went to the school and grabbed some chairs, whatever we could find there,” Kremer said.



The Izembek Refuge office brought two buses and one passenger van to transport the Delta Airlines passengers to the Community Center and the Borough Terminal Building after the plane made an emergency landing. PenAir also donated a driver and a passenger van to help out. Photo by Rachel D. Kremer.

Some chairs were taken to the Borough Terminal Building and the rest were transported to the Community Center.

“We split up the passengers,” said Kremer. “The Izembek Refuge office brought two buses and one passenger van. Peninsula Airways donated the use of their passenger van and a driver, Steven Rothy. So we used four vehicles to transport the passengers and crew from the aircraft to two staging areas. Some of the passengers stayed on the plane as an option because they had beds in first class.”

The Cold Bay community jumped into action to prepare for those who were getting off of the plane. One of DOT’s newest employees in Cold Bay, Russell Ruta, escorted one of the Delta pilots to the Bearfoot Inn store and purchased soda, bottles of water, coffee and food. They then distributed the beverages and food to the two locations. The Bearfoot Inn donated coffee pots so DOT employees could make coffee at the terminal building.



Passengers relaxed at two different buildings in Cold Bay, the Community Center and the Borough Terminal Building. Photo by Rachel D. Kremer.

In a situation like this, it's all hands on deck for the small community of Cold Bay.

"The FAA had a couple of their maintenance guys conducting scheduled maintenance," said Kremer. "We put them to work providing security as part of our emergency control plan. Art manned the gates for us. Another employee provided security in the terminal building to make sure passengers didn't make their way upstairs where Flight Service and the Weather Service offices are located. The FAA guys also brought up a microwave so passengers could heat up food in the terminal building."

Cold Bay Vice-Mayor Daily Schaack was stationed at the Community Center to lend a hand.

"I was there helping out to make sure everyone was comfortable," she said. "I made coffee, pots and pots of coffee. I let several passengers use my cell phone to call home because their (mobile) phones wouldn't work here."

One of the passengers had three little girls in tow.

"One was about a year old," Schaack said. "We just happened to have a playpen, so we set it up for her."

Daily said the passengers were relieved to be on the ground, safe and sound.

“For the most part, they were all in a pretty good mood,” she said. “Some of them couldn’t speak English very well, but we tried to talk to each other as best we could. A lot of them didn’t know where they were at first. They said, “Where are we? Where??!” she laughed. “I was asked a million questions; such as how many people live here? Why do we live here? I had a good time talking with them. It was fun.”

Cold Bay resident Rachel Kremer volunteered to take photos and document the emergency landing for DOT after the plane touched down.

“I was sent to the Community Center and to the Borough Terminal Building,” she said. “Everybody (in Cold Bay) pitched in to make the passengers and crew comfortable. Delta Airlines provided pillows and blankets to make sure everyone stayed warm.”



Delta Airlines sent a second plane at about 2 p.m. on Jan. 14th to transport the passengers to Portland, Oregon. Photo by Rachel D. Kremer.

Rachel said the passengers weren’t expecting to land in Alaska.



“It’s wonderful to see members of the community coming together to support an incident like this,” said Cold Bay Airport Manager Harold “Happy” Kremer. Photo by Rachel D. Kremer.

“They expressed a lot of enthusiasm,” she said. “One lady said, “Oh, my friends are never going to believe me. Can I get a picture of you guys and a video so they know that we were in Alaska?” She was fun. Another lady I talked to said, “When we got here, it was cold and dark outside, and it didn’t look like Oregon!” They were a little shocked that they were here in Cold Bay.”

Later, the passengers were allowed to go outside and take pictures.

“They expected it to be light outside,” she said. “Of course, it stays dark until 10 a.m. this time of year. Then the sun started rising. They weren’t used to that. They were just looking around at the snow. It was all brand new. Some of the passengers were wearing shorts because they came from Thailand. So blankets had to be brought to them. They made the most of their time here. They all had good attitudes. They laughed, joked around and made an adventure of it.”

Some of the passengers walked across the street to the City Office and the library to access the Internet so they could contact family members or employers to let them know what happened and that they would arrive in Portland late.



A truck de-ices the stranded Delta Airlines plane after swapping out the engine. Photo by Harold “Happy” Kremer.

A second Delta Airlines plane was sent to Cold Bay and arrived at about 2 p.m. to transport the passengers to their final destination in Portland, Oregon.

“I went to the runway and took pictures of the plane and as the passengers were loading onto the jet,” Rachel Kremer said. “I think everything went very smoothly. Everybody worked together

very well, including the crew from Delta. Even though they were ready to leave, they still had smiling faces.”



One week and five hours after the plane arrived in Cold Bay, Delta Airlines flight 9933 (originally flight 68) departed from the community at 11:05 a.m. on Saturday, January 21st. Photo by Harold “Happy” Kremer.

This wasn’t the first time that Delta Airlines diverted to Cold Bay. The last time the airline made an emergency landing was on Oct. 30, 2013 with 167

passengers and 11 crew members. That flight had originated in Tokyo and was heading to San Francisco when the jet experienced engine trouble.

“I was impressed the last time,” Delta Airlines spokesman Michael Thomas said. “I think it’s pretty

obvious that the small but mighty community of Cold Bay always responds with the full support of everyone there.”

“It’s wonderful to see the members of this community coming together to support an incident like this,” said Happy Kremer. “They do it, not expecting anything, other than to just help. It’s truly amazing.”

One week and five hours after the plane arrived in Cold Bay, Delta Airlines flight 9933 (originally flight 68) departed from the community at 11:05 a.m. on Saturday, January 21st after maintenance crews swapped out the engine and de-iced the plane. The plane landed safely in Portland at 4 p.m. Alaska time.

Motivational Storyteller, Leadership & Personal Development Expert Inspires Students, Teachers in Sand Point



Motivational storyteller and leadership development expert D.J. Vanas inspires students in Sand Point during a recent presentation.

Growing up in poverty never stopped D.J. Vanas from succeeding in life beyond his wildest dreams. As a child, he had few prospects. However, Vanas, a tribally-enrolled member of the Odawa Nation, took advantage of his education to follow his passions. The internationally-acclaimed motivational storyteller and leadership and personal development expert came to Sand Point earlier this month to share that message with students and teachers. Vanas, a former military officer, shows organizations how to apply the power of the warrior spirit to perform at their best, stay resilient and thrive in tough, changing environments. Vanas is now the president of his own company, Native Discovery Inc. He has delivered his dynamic programs in 40 states and overseas to more than 7,000 audiences, including Walt Disney, NASA, Intel and hundreds of tribal governments, communities and schools. His advice to students is they have a choice to create the life they want to live.

“The focus is trying to get youth excited about their future,” he said. “I talked to them about the power of choice, the power to explore the world around them. If somebody had told me that I would be able to travel the world, meet famous people, be part of the launch team in the Air Force that put two satellites into space, learn how to fly airplanes and jump out of them, have my own company and publish two books, I would have thought those people were nuts! I try to get students to understand that education is an investment that you make in yourself and that it will pay off in ways you can’t possibly imagine right now.”

Vanas impressed upon the kids that no matter how life starts out, you can overcome the odds.

“My parents were teenagers living in poverty when they had me,” he said, “and I was the first person in my family to go to college, to get a bachelor’s and master’s degree, the first to publish a book and own my own company. It was all through the power of getting my education and having the support structure in place, namely my parents and my teachers.”

This was Vanas’ second visit to the region. He came to the area the first time last September with APIA and conducted a series of community events and staff development. The feedback was very positive, so APIA brought him out again for several events in Sand Point on January 10th and 11th. The theme of his workshop was “Empowering Our Children”. Vanas held a community event at the QTT Community Center during the evening. The following day, he conducted a series of presentations for the junior and senior high students, the elementary school, kindergarteners, teachers and administration staff.

“I wanted to remind teachers of the power and impact they have on the lives of young people,” he said. “Sometimes it’s not readily apparent, but that doesn’t mean what they’re doing isn’t working. It can get tough and sometimes teachers can feel burned out by the end of the school year,” he said.

Vanas reminded them that despite challenging times, teachers *are* making a positive impact. He reminded the students to find their passion and connect to the opportunities around them.

“I encouraged them to be detectives in their own lives,” Vanas said. “I told them that for the rest of their lives, they’ll see examples of “the haves” and the “have nots” when it comes to education. The lines are pretty clear on what your opportunities are on either side of that fence, so make sure you get as much education as you can. I also talked to them about the power of environment – who they surround themselves with – their friends, their teachers, who they should seek out in times of trouble. I also shared with them that it’s critically important to start surrounding themselves with good, high-quality people who are competitive in a healthy way.

Vanas read from one of his books, “The Tiny Warrior” and told stories about sharing the journey of life with the right friends.

“We talked about the power of education and how it can turn life into an adventure,” he said. “That was a very powerful theme that I shared with all of the youth groups.”

Vanas said he wished people would have done that for him when he was growing up.

“I let them know that when I was in middle school in Biloxi, Mississippi, I took a snapshot assessment of my life and where it was headed. I looked around at the environment I was in, and it was a rough one.”

Vanas said his school was located across the street from one of the largest project developments in southern Mississippi.



Vanas said at the age of 13, he took a snapshot assessment of his life and decided he wanted something better. He took his curiosity about life and applied it to school.

“We had crime. We had violence,” he said. “We had high school dropouts and teenage pregnancies. I saw people drinking malt liquor in deserted cars on my way to school on the bus in the morning. I saw drugs. I just thought, there has to be another way. I don’t want to live like this.”

Vanas said that’s when he really started to take his curiosity about life and applied it to school.

“It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to look at the world we live in today and realize that education is a powerful ladder that allows you to climb higher in the world,” he said. “That’s the basic assessment that I made at 13 years of age. I started to apply that to myself and I got better results.”

Vanas said when he talks to kids and hears them say that they aren’t good students, he challenges them.

“I ask them, who told you that garbage?” he said. “If you’re willing to do the work and willing to get help when you get stuck, anybody can become a good student.”

Vanas said it never fails to surprise him that many students will raise their hand when he asks who is a school athlete, but not as much when he asks who is a good student. He often hears students comment about how they spend hours playing sports to improve.

“I ask them how much time are you putting into your schoolwork? And they say, I don’t know, like 15 minutes. I ask, per day? They say, no dude, per week. Well, there’s your problem!” he said,

chuckling. “I’m trying to instill in them that being smart is cool and something you should want to pursue because of the feeling it instills. I felt it, and you can take that anywhere you go!”

Vanas said he also cautions students about teasing other kids.

“I tell them be careful who you call a nerd because you’ll probably be working for him or her someday. That always gets eyebrows raised, but it’s the way of the world.”

Vanas said he was buzzing with excitement following the community and school presentations. He said the kids were very open about expressing their goals. Afterwards, the students asked for a breakout session.

“We had an intensive session on college preparation and success. Several students thanked me for being here and said they really enjoyed it. Others said I gave them a lot to think about and that it was a great way to start the new year. What I look for is the connection, and we had it in spades that day, so I was really happy with that.”

He reminded the students to come to school every day and to do their best, even when times get tough.

“That’s what got me through the Air Force,” he said. “I wanted to quit a million times, but I kept telling myself, one more day. Give it one more day. I realized when things get hard, take it a day at a time. When they get really hard, take it an hour at a time. When things get really, really hard, take it a minute at a time. If you struggle, you’ve got tomorrow. Come back and re-commit, and you can get through darn well anything.”

For more information about D.J. Vanas, visit: www.nativediscovery.com

SWAMC Economic Summit: A Networking Adventure

Submitted by SWAMC Staff

With the holidays in the rear view mirror, it is time to plan for the new year ahead! We hope that your plans include registration and attendance at the 2017 Economic Summit and Membership Meeting scheduled for March 2nd and 3rd, 2017. Our focus this year is on Turning Challenge into Opportunity.

With packed schedules and tight budgets among our members and attendees, we have squeezed our three-day conference into two jam-packed days of information and networking. On Day One, we will hear from several Walker Administration commissioners on how smaller state budgets will affect vital services in southwest Alaska. Public Safety Commissioner Walt Monegan will address the recently-enacted criminal justice reform bill, and in the afternoon, we look forward to learning about the new strategies that will be necessary to sustain rural communities and start new business ventures.



Alaska Gov. Bill Walker addresses attendees at SWAMC's 2016 Economic Summit and Membership Meeting.

Day Two will focus on one of our favorite topics: Fish! The Governor is invited to kick off the day, followed by area legislators who can break away from Juneau. The lunch discussion will include updates from a few CDQs. We will wrap up the Conference looking at value-added strategies and hear from a world-renowned expert on global fisheries.

March will be here before we know it, so make your plans and join us at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage.

[Info and Registration for SWAMC Economic Summit](#)

New Employee Joins DOT Team in Cold Bay

Russell Ruta recently joined the DOT team in Cold Bay, and since his first day, the equipment operator hit the ground running. The former Wasilla resident was eager to apply for the position after family members (Ray and Glennora Koso of Cold Bay and King Cove, his father and mother in-law) informed him that there was an opening in Cold Bay.

“I had visited Cold Bay before,” he said. “I love the outdoors, which is a big part of why I wanted to come here. Also, Cold Bay Airport Manager Harold (“Happy”) Kremer is a great guy to work for.”

Ruta began his job on December 29th, and so far he's finding the work to be very enjoyable.



Russell Ruta joined Cold Bay's DOT team on December 29th, and is finding the work to be very enjoyable. Photo by Harold "Happy" Kremer.

"The job is pretty cool," he said. "I'm enjoying running all of the equipment. The guys here are great to work with. So far, we've had a couple of big planes land here."

One of them was the four-engine Russian-built Anotonov 124, the largest heavy military transport aircraft in the world. Last week, the cargo aircraft transported two de-icing trucks, a tanker of de-icing fluid and parts, which included an engine for the stranded

Delta Airlines plane.

Ruta also helped out during the Delta Airlines emergency landing on January 14th. Part of his role was to purchase beverages and food from the store at the Bearfoot Inn to distribute to the Borough Terminal Building and the Community Center where passengers were staged.

"It was quite the experience," he said. "I got a lot of trivia questions from the passengers. I've lived here for less than a month, and everybody and their sister (from the Delta Airlines airplane) was asking me, 'What's it like here?'"

Prior to this position, Ruta spent three years working as an apprentice electrician. He, his wife, Ricky, and two young kids are enjoying living in Cold Bay.

"I'm glad I'm able to work here," he said. "It's a great opportunity, and I'm excited to see where my career goes."

Got News?

If you have news you'd like to share or if you'd like to subscribe, please email ltanis@aeboro.org or call Laura Tanis at (907) 274-7579.





*Thank you for reading **In the Loop**. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe, please send an email to ltanis@aeboro.org. For more information about our communities, our people, and our fisheries, please visit us at www.aleutianseast.org and www.aebfish.org. For the latest news, find us on Facebook:*

[*Link to AEB's Facebook page*](#)

[*Link to King Cove's Facebook page*](#)

