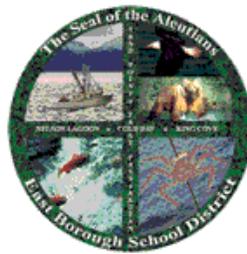
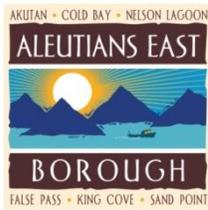


## In the Loop



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

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## State Honorably Discharges Buddy Bendixen from Alaska Territorial Guard During Special Ceremony



Buddy Bendixen was only 16 when he joined the ATG. Photo courtesy: Robin Gould.

Nearly 75 years after bravely defending Alaska's shores against a possible Japanese invasion during World War II, Buddy Bendixen of King Cove was recognized for his service in the Alaska Territorial Guard.

“When Japanese pilots dropped bombs on Dutch Harbor on June 3, 1942, Buddy was only 16 years old,” said Dr. Michael Livingston, APIA Library Services Specialist. “He did not hesitate one moment to step forward to protect his beloved community of King Cove.”



**"This is huge to witness the honorable discharge of the last known living Aleut Alaska Territorial Guard soldier from World War II," said Michael Livingston, APIA Library Services Specialist.**

Bendixen served in the Alaska Territorial Guard (ATG) as an engineer from 1942 to 1945.

"This is huge to witness the honorable discharge of the last known living Aleut Alaska Territorial Guard soldier from World War II," Livingston said.

The ceremony to honor Bendixen took place at APIA in Anchorage on June 12th. Those in attendance included family members, friends, Aleut veterans, a representative from the State Office of Veterans

Affairs, the Alaska State Defense Force (a direct descendant of the ATG), and the Alaska Army National Guard.

"In 1941, the guard of the territory of Alaska had been pulled out and moved to a different location," said Verdie Bowen, Director of the State Office of Veterans Affairs. "There was no defense left."

After the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor, it became very apparent that Alaska was vulnerable. Major Marvin "Muktuk" Marston and Governor Gruening encouraged the military to allow the recruitment of citizens throughout Alaska. Many of the ATG recruits were Native, ranging from as young as 8 years and as old as 80. More than 6,400 eagerly enlisted, with some estimates as high as 20,000. Their mission was to patrol the coastline and report any unusual activities to the nearest military authority.



**Buddy Bendixen was honorably discharged from the Alaska Territorial Guard during a special ceremony at APIA on June 12<sup>th</sup>.**

"They took care of the lend-lease route," Bowen said. "The pilots would sometimes crash, and the Alaska Territorial Guard would go out and rescue them. They had food caches out there to help support them and bring them back. This happened several times."

They also shot down incendiary balloons sent by the Japanese.

“The Japanese would send these balloons across the United States,” said Bowen. “Then they would drop down and start fires because they thought that would keep our forces off the front lines.”

In addition to intercepting these balloons, the ATG also defended the only platinum mine in the nation, which was here in Alaska.

“They did all these things with rifles, ammunition and not a lot of training or equipment, Bowen said.

Bendixen said on one occasion during their patrols, the ATG spotted a contingency of bomber planes that flew in from California. However, the planes failed to flash their recognition signals.

“There were a bunch of destroyers on base (at Fort Randall),” Bendixen explained. “So the ship started shooting at them. We’re seeing all of this, and it scared the holy hell out of everybody.”



Bendixen was presented with his honorable discharge certificate, a distinguished Alaska Territorial medal, a patch and a special Aleut veterans vest.



Bendixen was presented with a distinguished Alaska Territorial Guard medal.

Panic spread, as everyone thought the Japanese were attacking.

“We moved the whole village up into the hills,” Bendixen said.

Later U.S. fighter planes came around the corner, with their emblems clearly displayed on the wings, prompting a wave of relief.

“We were very happy then,” he said.

Bendixen said he enjoyed serving his country.

“We were glad to join – all of us were.”

Following his time with the ATG, Bendixen also served in the Army during WWII from 1944 to 1946.

“Strangely enough, we had an army all over the world at that time,” said Colonel Lee Knowles of the Alaska Army National Guard. “And where did Buddy end up? He ended up right back in the Aleutians. There’s something pretty cool about a local boy, defending what he loved, giving back and contributing.”

He was stationed in Attu, Shemya and Adak throughout his army career, starting out as second mate and was later promoted to captain of the boat.

After the war, Bendixen got married. He and his wife, Rocky, raised nine children. They’ve been married for 72 years and now have 27 grandchildren, 45 great grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren. A lifelong fisherman, Bendixen has owned and run many boats throughout Alaska.



A large crowd gathered to watch as Buddy Bendixen was honorably discharged during a special ceremony at APIA.



Buddy Bendixen thanked everyone for attending his ceremony at APIA on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

At the age of 93, Bendixen still walks down to the harbor every day.

“His happy whistle tunes and his fishing boats are well-known,” said Livingston. “Buddy thinks we are making a huge fuss over nothing.”

However, his accomplishments are worth celebrating.

“We are honored to have Private Herman Carl Bendixen with us today,” Livingston said.

As Bendixen spoke from the podium, he was very humbled by all the attention.

“I’m just shaking like a leaf right here,” he admitted.

“Friends and family, thank you very much for attending this ceremony.”



Col. Lee Knowles of the Alaska Army National Guard thanks Bendixen for his service as the two men salute one another.

Bendixen was presented with a distinguished Alaska Territorial medal, a patch and his honorable discharge certificate. He was also presented with a special Aleut veterans vest and an autographed copy of “Men of the Tundra: Eskimos at War” by Muktuk Marston.

“What magnificent achievements and what a magnificent life he has led,” said Col. Knowles. “Buddy gave back. He took care of his family and contributed to his community. He did great things out there. So Buddy, thank you for doing so much for us.”

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## APIA’s 2018 Urban Unangaċ Culture Camp Hosts Record Number of Participants

Every year, APIA’s *Urban Unangaċ Culture Camp* draws a large group of kids and adults, primarily of Unangaċ (Aleut) descent, from Anchorage and the rest of Alaska. The week-long camp (June 11 – 15, 2018) allowed participants to immerse themselves in traditional Aleut arts, crafts, dance, storytelling, language and traditional foods. It’s an amazing opportunity that allows



Kids work on their art projects during APIA’s Urban Unangaċ Culture Camp June 11 – 15, 2018 in Anchorage.

friends and family to connect with each other and with the traditions of their ancestors from thousands of years ago.

“It’s who we are,” said Millie McKeown, APIA Cultural Heritage Director. “This is how culture is shared.”

McKeown said the reason APIA hosts the urban culture camp is because people say they love to participate in these activities. However, traveling to Aleutian communities, such as Unalaska, for culture camp, isn’t affordable for everyone. McKeown said when people move away from their home communities, there’s a lot of disconnect.

“I think it would happen with any culture, no matter where you’re from,” she said. “Any connection you can make creates a feeling that you’re part of something – you belong.”



“Here, we can be together, share our culture, teach one another and learn from one another,” said Millie McKeown, APIA Cultural Heritage Director.

APIA’s first urban culture camp was launched in 2008. Its popularity grew from there.



Camp participants enjoy their dance class during APIA’s Urban Unangax Culture Camp.

“People want access to their culture,” she said. “They want to feel like they’re part of something. It helps them feel closer to the Aleut community. Here, we can be together, share our culture, teach one another and learn from one another.”

This is the camp’s 11<sup>th</sup> year. Classes included carving, jewelry making, igyax (kayak) building, traditional foods, genealogy, visors, drums, dance, language,

headdress/regalia, and basket weaving.

This year, the urban culture camp hit a record with nearly 200 participants -- more than ever before.

“We actually had to turn over a dozen people away,” she said.

That record number doesn't even count the 12 camp instructors, four apprentices and camp assistants. The large event requires an incredible amount of planning and paperwork.



Twelve year-old Tatiana Stepetin carves a hat during the camp's Aleut bentwood visor class.

"We have to hire our camp instructors every year and keep in communication with them, order supplies and do fundraising," McKeown said.

Seeing the participants in action and enjoying the classes demonstrates that all the work leading up to the camp is worth it.

"I'm carving a hat for myself and making one for one of the boys in my dance group," said 12-year-old Tatiana Stepetin. "I love to come to culture camp because we get to do creative stuff and learn language, carving hats and making drums."

"I'm carving a hat for myself and making one for one of the boys in my dance group," said 12-year-old Tatiana Stepetin. "I love to come to culture camp because we get to do creative stuff and learn language, carving hats and making drums."

It isn't just the participants who find the camp rewarding.

"I love teaching," said O. Patricia Lekanoff-Gregory, instructor of Aleut bentwood visor hat making."

Lekanoff-Gregory learned from the late Andrew Gronholdt of Sand Point, who revived the lost art of visor making in the 80s.

"He basically handed the torch to me, and now I've been doing this for almost 30 years. I love seeing the kids make them."

Traditional foods is another popular class, taught by Tim and Josephine Shangin of Akutan. The participants learn how to prepare traditional foods such as halibut, seal, sea lion, octopus, puffin, seal gut, seal kidney and seal blubber. In the afternoon, older kids practiced with rope while watching Josephine braid seal intestines in preparation for boiling. They also learned how to skin octopus.



O. Patricia Lekanoff-Gregory says teaching the camp participants about Aleut bentwood visor hat making is rewarding.

“Octopus was a bit hit last year, too, so we brought it back again. They (the kids) love it,” Tim Shangin said. “Smoking salmon is another big one. They also like working with the blubber because they can get their hands dirty.”



Instructors Josephine and Tim Shangin of Akutan answer students' questions during the camp's traditional foods class.

Preparing for this class takes several weeks. The Shangins subsistence hunt to gather the food a month ahead of time.

“This year, we brought almost 300 pounds,” Tim Shangin said. “It’s been a good camp. We get the satisfaction of them actually learning and loving a lot of it.”

Drum making is another class participants enjoy. Instructor Lydia Vincler of Akutan learned the art from an elder in her village when she was a child. She’s been teaching drum making since 2012.

“Everybody’s so excited when they see a piece of wood bent,” she said. “They don’t know where else to make a drum. It’s probably the only wood work that they get to do the whole year. I think everybody enjoys it – plus just being around families and friends that they don’t get to see for a long time.”

Instructor Daniel Shellikoff of False Pass teaches carving and mask making. He learned the art while in college.

“They’re lucky to learn this from a young age and develop the skills so they can pass on the tradition,” he said.

Apprentice Chyonne Buterin learned the tradition of headdress and regalia making when she was 11 years old. She’s been teaching the art to kids 10 and under at culture camp for two years.



Josephine Shangin braids seal intestines in preparation for boiling.

“No two headdresses look exactly alike unless it’s intended to do so,” she said. “Only the style is the same.”

The Bering Sea style is what their female ancestors wore for decoration.

“The beads underneath represent a reflection,” she said. “We also have the full headdresses. They are a big, important part of the culture and history.”

Thirteen-year-old Julianna Kuzakin enjoyed making a headdress.



Apprentice Chyonne Buterin teaches students the art of headdress and regalia making.



A camp participant fine tunes his art piece during the mask making class.

“It’s not hard,” she said. “It took about a week and a half. It’s fun. We get to learn what our ancestors wore back then, and now I’m getting to do it. It’s important because it’s part of what makes me who I am.”

Learning the Aleut (Unangam Tunuu) language is another important component for participants. During the morning sessions of camp, the young children learn the language in collaboration with art and dance.

“They sing the song, “Where Are My Fingers” and they go through each finger,” Mckeown said. “Where’s your thumb? There it is. Here’s my thumb. They play a little game.”

## Summer Language Intensive

The participants from APIA’s Summer Language Intensive course (May 20<sup>th</sup> – August 5<sup>th</sup>) help the children in culture camp learn the language.

“They’re teaching the language as they’re learning,” she said.

Between 20 and 25 people (mostly adults and a few youth interns) are taking part in the summer language intensive. They’ve come from throughout the United States, some as far as Massachusetts. Evan Gardner and Susanna Ciotti, the “Where Are Your Keys” consultants, are working with APIA’s language teams to cap off the final year of the three-year grant funded

project. The Atka team, led by Crystal Dushkin and Sally Swetzof, will concentrate on the Niigugim tunuu (Atka dialect) Perfect Path curriculum. Eastern dialect lessons will be taught using the Qawalangim tunuu Freeway Fluency curriculum developed by the St. Paul Island team, led by Aquilina Lestenkof.

“I think there’s fewer than 60 speakers,” said McKeown. “Most of them are over the age of 70, and we’re losing them rapidly. So we’re hoping to build the capacity of our language learners.”

The challenge for participants is that it takes time to immerse themselves in the language.

“What we’ve found over the years is people want to learn the language, but they’re busy raising their kids and making a living. So they don’t have enough time. One of the things we think is going to help save our language is to pay people to learn it. So we thought we’d find funding to pay people, and it’s working really well.”

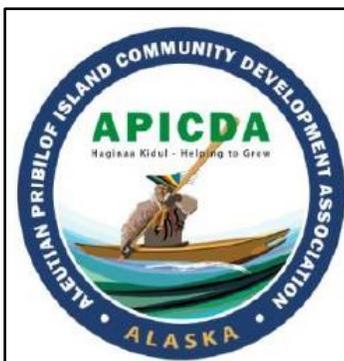
A limited number of paid internships for serious learners was made available for the 11-week program.

“We’ve got several youth apprentices who are also developing leadership skills and taking ownership of learning and teaching the language,” McKeown said. “A part of the project is to teach what they’re learning in their community through the schools. The Unangam Tunuu word for teach and learn is the same. So to teach is to learn, and to learn is to teach. They’re learning so much. The youth component of this is really exciting!”

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## APICDA Board Announces New CEO

*Luke Fanning, APICDA’s Chief Financial Officer named replacement for Larry Cotter, founding CEO of APICDA and APICDA Joint Ventures.*



**Juneau, Alaska** – The board of Aleutian Pribilof Island Community Development Association (APICDA) is pleased to announce that Luke Fanning, APICDA’s CFO will be taking over the Chief Executive Officer leadership role from Larry Cotter. Cotter, who announced his retirement late last year will continue his work through July to help ensure a smooth and successful transition.

Fanning first became acquainted with APICDA in 2007, when he served as APICDA’s banker. Prior to joining APICDA, Luke served as the Vice

President and Regional Manager for First National Bank Alaska, where he managed a region including five bank branches and a portfolio of commercial loans and deposits. He is a lifelong Alaskan whose seafood industry experience began in the 1990's as a crewman on a halibut longliner and salmon seiner. Luke is very passionate about the fishing industry and in his spare time, captains the F/V Triton, a 32' commercial fishing vessel, gillnetting for salmon and longlining for halibut.



The APICDA board announced this month that Luke Fanning is taking the helm as the organization's CEO.

"The board went through a six-month CEO search process and selected Luke from a large field of very qualified applicants. We are supportive of Luke's vision for the future of APICDA and we look forward to working closely with him," said Mark Snigaroff, APICDA board chair. "The impact of Larry's work and unwavering commitment to the Community Development Quota (CDQ) program will be felt for years to come in the region, state and industry. He will be greatly missed by the residents of our communities, the fishing industry and the board and staff at APICDA."

"Larry has been a true visionary for the CDQ program, APICDA and APICDA Joint Ventures, and has worked tirelessly for the past 27 years to help sustain western Alaska villages. It is an honor to be passed the torch to carry on this critical work of supporting human and economic development in our

CDQ member communities by building infrastructure, stimulating commerce, and providing grants, jobs, scholarships and workforce development opportunities," said Fanning. "Larry is a CDQ program pioneer and founding CEO — these are big shoes to fill, and I am humbled to be given the opportunity to serve the people of the Aleutian-Pribilof region."

"It's been my pleasure and distinct privilege to be involved with APICDA and the CDQ program since its inception. I'm confident that Luke will do a great job of serving our communities and fulfilling our mission. He has a proven track record in finance and management along with a steadfast commitment to see our communities thrive," said Cotter. "It's not an easy thing to retire from a company that you love, with a purpose that you love, filled with people that you respect and love. But everything has its time, and it is important that Luke has the freedom to implement his vision for the organization as soon as possible."

# APICDA's Reboot #2 Community Conference Summary

*Submitted by APICDA*

On April 24 - 25, 2018, representatives from APICDA communities attended the APICDA Reboot #2 Community Conference at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage, Alaska. The purpose of the second “reboot” session

was to refine the discussion on the community visions developed from the 2017 session and work to define a very specific action each community could take to begin to address their biggest challenges.

Each community was asked to reflect on their plan developed in 2017 and provide input on changes they would suggest after a year of reflection. In addition, each group was asked to develop an exhausted list of assets of their community; each



Nelson Lagoon community leaders and residents discuss the village's plan during APICDA's Reboot #2 Community Conference in April.

community developed a list of over twenty community assets.

Finally, each group was asked to define the most critical challenge/problem they must address. These issues varied from erosion, to jobs, to schools, but an underlying theme was the loss of population, or stated in the positive, ways to maintain or increase the population. Dennis McMillian, the facilitator from the Foraker Group, presented research on how groups handle such “complex” challenges, and then asked each group to be creative and identify achievable steps that could help them address the challenge.

The remaining discussions were to help each community define a specific goal and to outline a plan on how to implement actions to achieve that goal.

# Rebuilding of Peter Pan Seafoods Port Moller Facility is in Full Swing

*By Gary Johnson, PPSF Port Moller Plant Manager  
(Previously published in Fish News on June 15, 2018)*



Reconstruction at PPSF's Port Moller facility got off to a delayed start as the construction barges hit numerous delays in getting here due to poor weather this spring throughout the Gulf of Alaska. They finally arrived on May 14<sup>th</sup>, and since then, the contractor has made very good progress in getting the dock structure built.

They fully expect to have the dock completed by the end of this month, at which time the powerhouse building can

be built, generators placed and the electrical work can begin. The refrigeration plant will also be in a separate building shoreward of the processing plant.

Processing plant construction should begin in mid-July, with the shell up within four weeks. Then interior concrete, electric and refrigeration installation can commence.

Major construction should be completed by the end of September or the first week in October, with initial installation of the processing equipment at that time. Final installation of processing equipment and tuning up the powerhouse and refrigeration will take place in April and May of 2019, with the plant ready to take fish in June.



This will be a fully modern plant that is being built to significantly increase our daily throughput as well as increasing the production of value added products that Port Moller has become so well known for. We are excited to be involved in this significant investment that will be an asset to Peter Pan, the region, and the North Peninsula fishery for a long time to come.

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## From Heartache to Joy in the Last Frontier, Sand Point Teacher Shares Stories & Advice on Inspiring Blog

Sand Point elementary schoolteacher Candice Robb never imagined years ago that she would move from her southern roots in Arkansas to a rural Aleutian island in Alaska thousands of miles away from home. Nor did she think she and her husband would face a long, agonizing stretch of infertility before being blessed with their two beautiful children. However, those two life-changing experiences, which she describes as their “greatest highs and most heartbreaking lows” prompted her to write about them in her [blog](#), in hopes of sharing advice and inspiring others facing similar experiences.



Candice and Danny Robb with their son, Halsie. Photo courtesy: Megan Marlene Photography of Anchorage, AK.

“So many women struggle with infertility,” Robb said. “So many ask for advice, and they want encouragement. I really felt moved to share my story to encourage other women and families going through the same struggle.”

Robb suffered through an 11-year struggle with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).

“We never could have a baby in Arkansas,” she said. “I had surgeries and went through fertility medications – the whole bit. We had no hope of ever getting pregnant. One in ten women suffer from this. After moving to Ketchikan, we had three foster children we were in the process of trying to adopt. All three adoptions fell through.”

That heart-wrenching experience was just one of the reasons the Robbs were persuaded to look for jobs elsewhere in Alaska.

“We taught for two years in Ketchikan,” Robb said. “It was not the version of Alaska we were looking for, and we wanted a change of pace. We were looking for something more rural. So Sand Point came calling at just the right time. It’s a perfect fit for us, and we love it here.”

Not long after moving to Sand Point and following a jumpstart program on the website, [PCOS Diva](#), Candice and Danny Robb’s lives improved in a big way. Candice transformed her diet, lifestyle and mindset.

“Within four months, I was pregnant with my son,” she said. “Two years later, we got pregnant again with my beautiful daughter. I really think that a change in geography had a lot to do with it. It’s so much cleaner up here – fresher air, fresher water. Our diet changed dramatically. I really credit the amazing superfood, wild-caught salmon, that we eat a lot of out here.”

Robb learned about cleaner living, safer products to use, balancing her hormones and taking more control of her health.

“I was able to conceive naturally both times, and Alaska is a big part of that,” she said.

Robb felt compelled to share her story with others, so she started a blog.

“I’ve kind of done a soft launch and really only told friends and family about it,” she said. “I’m working on two or three more posts.”

In addition to her struggle with PCOS, the blog is also about travel in Alaska. As a mother of two young children, Candice and Danny Robb have had to travel frequently for doctor appointments for their kids.

“We’ve been through so many parts of Alaska, stayed and eaten in many different places,” she said. “I have a big wealth of travel knowledge to share with people, especially traveling with babies and toddlers. It’s a great way to share our story, and how God helped us to come through this



The Robbs suffered through an 11-year struggle with PCOS (infertility) before Candice was able to get pregnant with her son, Halsie, and daughter, Darby. Photo credit: Megan Marlene Photography of Anchorage, AK.

struggle along with healthy living advice and becoming a more informed consumer. We have so many amazing stories to share about how wonderful it is to live out here.”

While her blog is still new, she has already touched the lives of others.

“There’s a young lady from Arkansas, and the blog really speaks to her,” Robb said. “She reached out to me recently. She’s been trying to have a baby for about seven

years, and she was in tears. I prayed with her and encouraged her to read the story of Hannah in the Bible, then directed her to my blog.

Currently, Robb is working on a post that includes numerous resources on programs for women with polycystic ovary syndrome as well as how to source ingredients to include in recipes.

“So hopefully, it will be a great guide for anyone looking to overcome this issue,” she said.

Robb believes her blog has something for everyone.



Robb also blogs about traveling with her children in Alaska.



“I think it’s a very inspiring and hopeful story,” she said. “I feel blessed to be able to share how I’ve been blessed. I feel so welcome in Alaska and consider it to be my home now. I’m proud to live here and to be able to write about it. I enjoy sharing all the beautiful things I’ve learned about this state.”

For more information, visit <https://waysouthofalaska.com/>



Dear Staff Members, Board Members, and Community Partners,

All of us know that Elder services are lacking in our communities, region, and State. The State is asking for feedback from Elders.

If you are 55 years or older, please take a minute to fill out this survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ACoA>

If you know someone that is 55 years or older, please forward this email to them. If you have a newsletter that you create, please consider adding this link to your newsletter.

The survey is due by Friday, July 13th and only takes a few minutes.

This is our chance to tell the State how we need them to step up and help us take care of our Elders. The existing State programs are not enough and their income restrictions make it difficult to provide the limited available services to everybody that needs them.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to advocate for yourself and others.

Jennifer Harrison

CEO / Eastern Aleutian Tribes / Anchorage Office

3380 'C' Street, Suite 100 Anchorage, AK 99503

Office: 907-277-1440, ext. 510 / Toll Free: 1-866-328-4911 / Fax: 907-277-1446

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Start taking photos  
for APICDA's  
2019 Calendar and  
Christmas Card  
Contest!

**\$150 prize  
money per  
photo!**

**Deadline:  
Sept. 29**

**Seeking photos of:**

Community activities  
Winter scenes  
Elders and youth  
Fishing, and more!

Questions? Contact: [media@apicda.com](mailto:media@apicda.com)

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## Got News?

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





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