



# Alaska Fellows Program

## Spring 2026 Newsletter



ALASKA  
FELLOWS  
PROGRAM



# LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Fellows, alums, family, friends, community members, and future Fellows,

In Ernestine Hayes' magnificent work, *The Tao of Raven*, she writes that "...there are moments that keep themselves in our memories: unexpected flashpoints of meaning we don't even recognize until the years, loves, worries have tempered the cloudy chatter of everyday concerns and have left only the brightest flashes." Speaking with Hayes during our closing retreat, we couldn't help but feel captivated by her words, which will surely be felt even as this fellowship ends.

For many of us, our first time in Alaska was stepping off the plane in Fairbanks in September, unsure of what was to come, but ready to move into new homes and unfamiliar communities. Others have lived in Alaska all their lives, grown up here, or have familial ties and histories deeply rooted in the soil. And still others have experienced Alaska as visitors, walked streets and marvelled at landscapes so familiar to us now. Yet, by becoming Fellows, we all agreed to the possibility of new experiences, challenges, and connections.

As the end of May rolls around, some of us will be parting ways with Alaska, inevitably bringing the lessons of this landscape and those who cherish it along with us. Others will be continuing this chapter, having chosen to continue with their host organization, work on a campaign for the 2026 election cycle, or simply stick around long enough to witness the midnight sun.

In these pages you'll find the kinds of stories that define Alaska in the spring (and, admittedly, the prolonged winter). Anchorage tells us of their winter travels and the harsh realities of pet-sitting. Juneau quips of the uncharacteristically snowy winter and reflects on the unique nature of Southeast. Emerging from a collective embrace of darkness, Fairbanks writes of ice sculptures, trips to Castner glacier, and how Alaska changes the meaning of "home." Between Sitka's snowy trials and tribulations, many creative food recipes, and bike repair endeavors, our southernmost friends round out this work quite appropriately.


Whether you're a prospective Alaska Fellow, a current or future host, a curious Alaskan, or a current fellow reflecting on your experience years from now, Hayes emphasized the value of sharing stories out loud with others. So grab a friend or two, find somewhere special, and take a moment to uncover the following stories. From Sitka, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Anchorage, we want to share gratitude for these nine months spent living and growing in Alaska.

We hope you enjoy!

Akanksha Basil & Owen Jakel

## The 2025-2026 AFP Cohort





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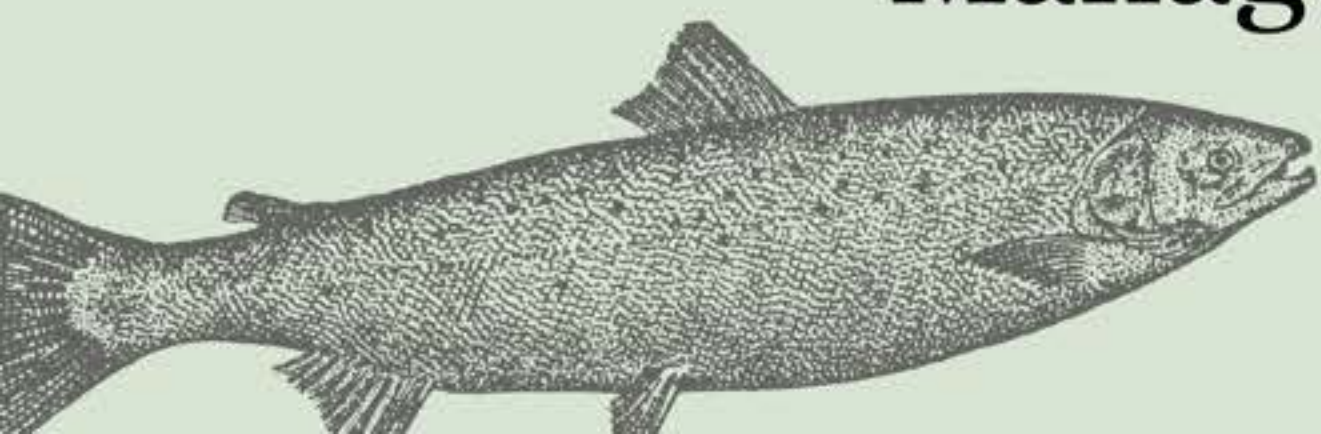
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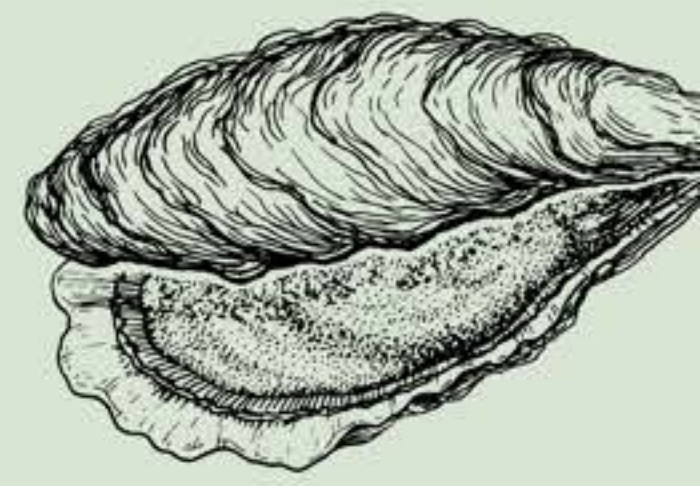


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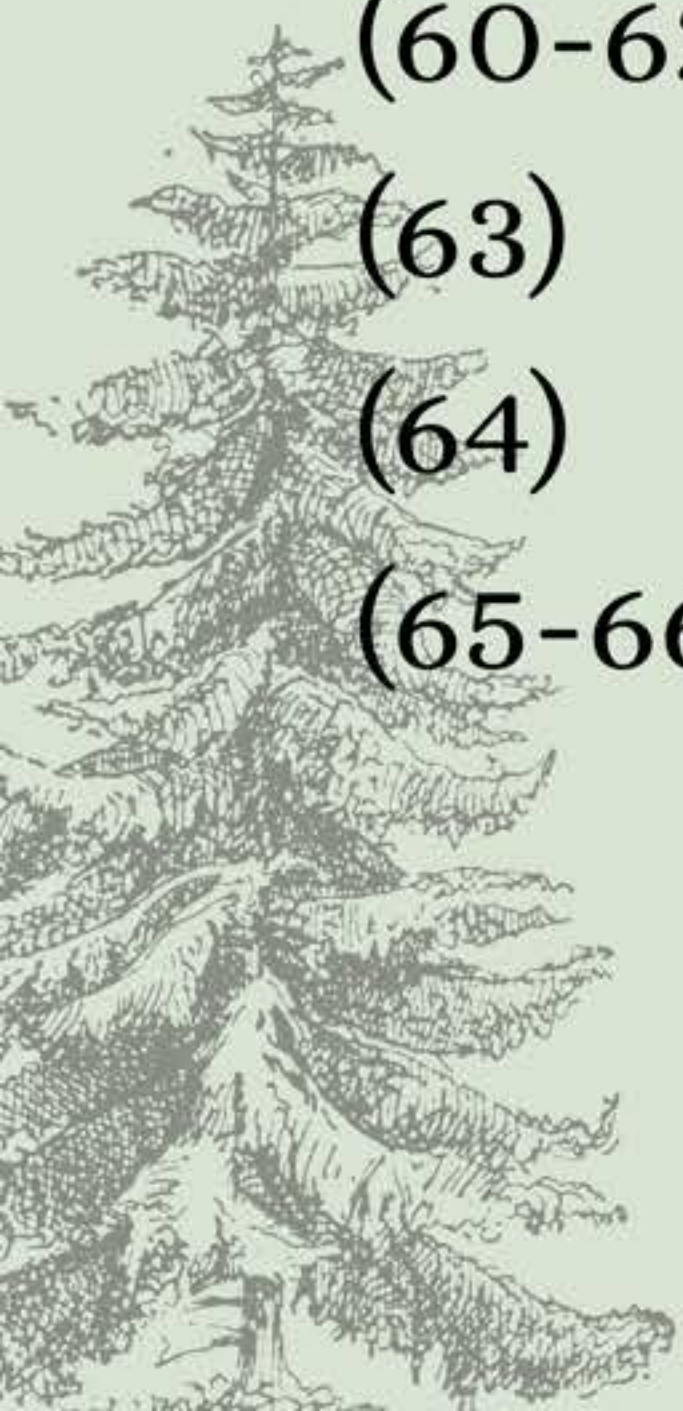


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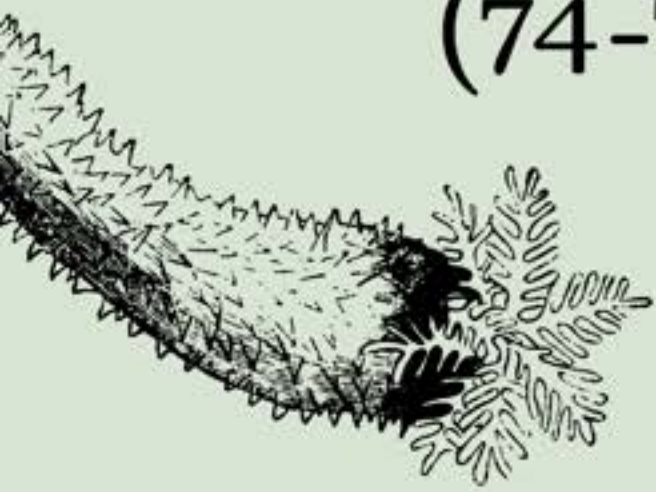
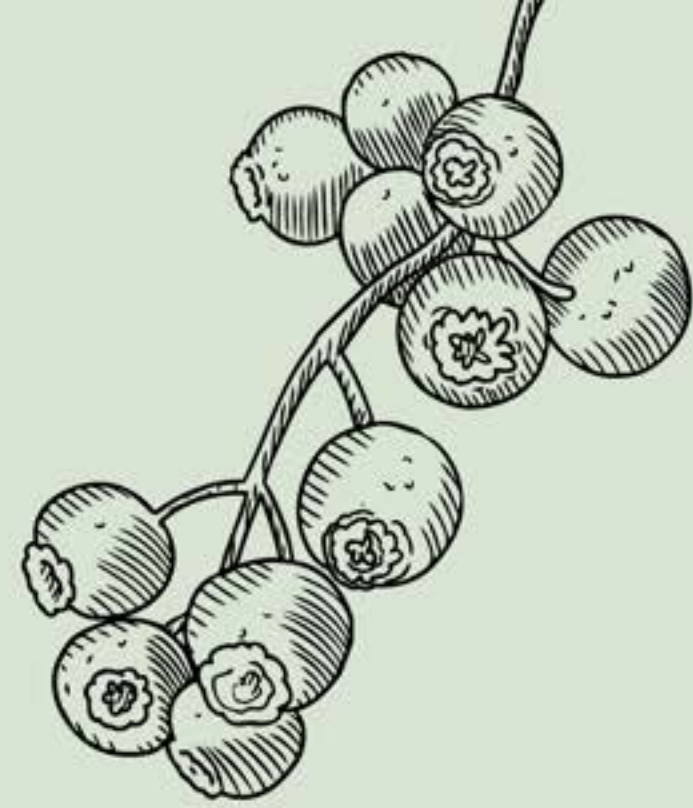
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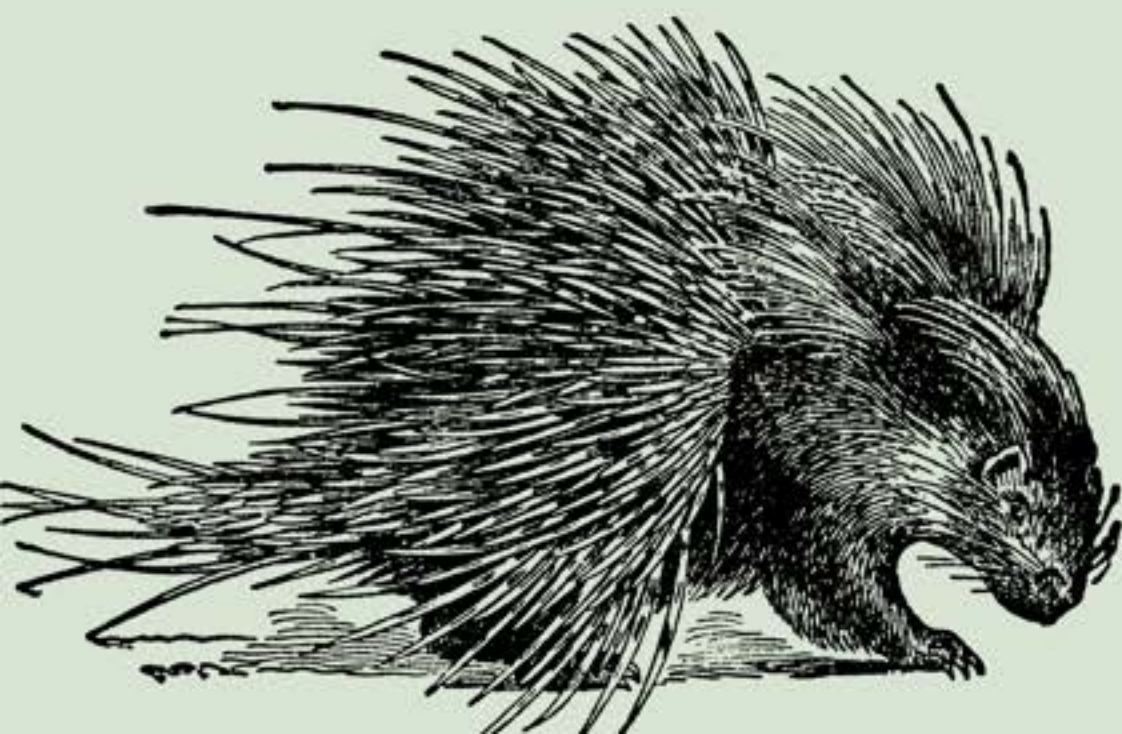
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# Meet Your Editors-in-Chief

## Owen Jakel (he/him)



**A year in review:** There is no place like an Alaskan winter to introduce you to life after graduation, teach you the value of community, and allow you to travel across such an extraordinary and diverse place. Cheers to summer, which is bound to provide much of the same, while fulfilling and challenging us all in new ways.

**Plans after May:** I have begun work as a climate resilience technician at Tanana Chiefs Conference, before my move back to Minneapolis this fall!

**Favorite song this year:** the giver by MAVI

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** An 8-hour drive to the Village of Eagle along the Yukon River.

## Akanksha Basil (she/they)

**A year in review:** This year has been a whirlwind of learning life skills, growing up, and discovering what it means to connect with a community. The Fellowship provided me with the opportunity to slow down and connect with nature, open myself up to new friendships, and understand environmental justice in Alaska.

**Plans after May:** I'll be staying until the end of June, spending time with family this summer, and moving to Denmark in September to start a Master's program!

**Favorite song this year:** Wetsuit by The Vaccines

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Tidepooling and seeing my first whale in Sitka!



# Meet the Rest of the Editorial Team



## Elaine Liu (she/her)

**A year in review:** The AFP program has been life changing - the fellows, the community of Juneau, the close knit collaboration at UAS, where I work, it all cemented my wish to continue living in Alaska.

**Plans after May:** I'm sticking around in Juneau in campaign organizing!

**Favorite song this year:** Petal by Jinzy

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Ferry trip to Haines

## Erin O'Farrell (she/they)

**A year in review:** What a gift it's been to spend nine months in beautiful Sheet'ká. This place has given me so much to carry onward into my next journey - Gunalchéesh!

**Plans after May:** I'll be gearing up for a cross-continental move to Maine with my partner

**Favorite song this year:** Letting Go by Angie McMahon

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Taking advantage of the same-day lift ticket deal at Eaglecrest for some spring skiing in Juneau with the Sitka Fellows



## Anjali Shah (she/her)

**Plans after May:** I'm moving to Woods Hole, Massachusetts to start a PhD program!

**Favorite song this year:** Man I Need by Olivia Dean

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Going to Nome, Alaska! It was super beautiful and the community was very welcoming.



## Amelia LaMotte (she/her)

**A year in review:** I laughed a lot and tried (and failed at) many new things! I embraced failure this year!

**Plans after May:** I am traveling around Alaska for the summer before starting a job at a clean energy company in Chicago.

**Favorite song this year:** Love Takes Miles by Cameron Winter

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Cross country skiing to a public use yurt in Eagle River. It was so cold, but we somehow managed to have so much fun!

## Kamryn You Mak (she/her)

**A year in review:** I've loved learning more about a new place with other eager, silly people!

**Plans after May:** I'm continuing to work with AYE (Alaska Youth for Environmental Action) and am excited to spend time in summer light and sunshine.

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Laughing during karaoke with collaborators/coworkers and Filipino teachers in Brevig Mission



## Christine Whyde (she/her)

**Plans after May:** I am spending the summer in Fairbanks, working for the Fairbanks Daily News Miner and the National Park Service before moving to Cleveland to begin a masters program at Case Western Reserve University.

**Favorite song this winter:** Anything I can stanky leg to!

## Mallory Williams (she/her)

**Plans after May:** Working for the Mary Peltola campaign.

**Favorite song this winter:** Mangetout by Wet Leg

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** The various trips I took to the White Mountain Recreation Area to stay at the public use cabins. Only a couple hours from Fairbanks, you truly feel like you are in the middle of nowhere and get to experience the beauty of Alaska.



## Kate Moe (she/her)

**A year in review:** Discovered hobbies, joy, and community in unexpected ways. Learned that even though things might not feel "right," it will sort itself out, the Alaskan way.

**Plans after May:** Studying for LSAT, starting color-work knitting, and finding myself surrounded by amazing thoughtful people!

**Favorite song this year:** Love to Borrow by Rosie Rush

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Juneau for Folk Fest or the Sitka Wearable Art Show!



## Suraj Singareddy (he/him)

**A year in review:** I made friends! And climbed mountains! And worked! All three were cool.

**Plans after May:** I'll be staying in Sitka and working at Outer Coast full time!

**Favorite song this year:** Sunshine by Cleo Sol

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Iditarod! Besides Trailgate, I also got to go on a very bumpy snow machine ride with my roommates' family.

## Eleanor Greenbaum (she/her)

**A year in review:** This year, I learned about the importance of pushing myself out of my comfort zone and the power of community. Without the friends I made through AFP, I never would have tried cross-country skiing, stayed in a public use cabin, or survived -40!

**Plans after May:** I'll be in Fairbanks continuing to work with my host organization, the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Preparedness.

**Favorite song this year:** Sue me by Audrey Hobert

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Going to Juneau for closing retreat and Folk Fest was a real highlight!



## Tori Lu (she/her)

**A year in review:** Fantastic life affirming community for life fall in love with Alaska sensational supercalifragilisticexpialidocious

**Plans after May:** I am going to Belgium to take carillon lessons at the Royal Carillon School and then going back to Yale for my Master of Environmental Management!

**Favorite song this year:** ITAL (ROSES) by Lupe Fiasco

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Going to Huslia with my homies Owen and Libby and falling in love in Ricko's cabin after butchering a moose





## Caroline Grass (she/her)

**A year in review:** The fellowship has been a totally unique and rewarding first job out of college. I've truly enjoyed working in Anchorage and living in a very different place than the one I grew up in. It's challenged me to put myself out there, try new things, and embrace winter!

**Plans after May:** I'm headed to the Grand Canyon to work with the National Park Service.

**Favorite song this year:** Beautiful Life by Michael Kiwanuka

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** I really enjoyed visiting Seward. Hiking in Kenai Fjords National Park and seeing Exit Glacier was incredible!

## Steven Nohren (any)

**Plans after May:** I will be working at Spring Creek Farm, Alaska Pacific University's farm in Palmer, Alaska, for the season

**Favorite song this year:** Place of My Own by Purity Ring

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Taking the train down to Seward!



## Iz Klemmer (they/them)

**A year in review:** Reconnecting with Fairbanks has been so incredibly special - what a gift to be back in my hometown surrounded by my wonderful intergenerational community, battling through the winter together.

**Plans after May:** Working at Calypso Farm in Fairbanks this summer, then moving to Los Angeles for a Master of Library Science at UCLA!

**Favorite song this year:** Girl from the North Country by Bob Dylan

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Playing with fellow fellows at the AFP Open Mic and watching incredible folk music at Folk Fest in Juneau

## Aakriti KC (she/her)

**Plans after May:** Staying to experience the midnight sun & traveling around Alaska!

**Favorite song this year:** End of Summer by Tame Impala or The Dress by Dijon or I've Seen It by Olivia Dean or Thoroughfare by Ethel Cain (the song that brought me to Alaska)

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Driving to Denali! My friends were visiting, the drive was beautiful, and we saw Denali our entire trip #30%Club



# Meet the Lovely Fellows



## Becca Stern (she/her)

**A year in review:** AFP taught me that intergenerational friendship and community building plus a healthy dose of joy, wonder, whimsy are what make a new place feel like home.

**Plans after May:** I'm sticking around in Anchorage through November working on voter engagement with Alaska Voter Hub and the Mobilization Center, then hopefully moving to Juneau for legislative session in January!

**Favorite song this year:** Right Hand Man by Katie Tupper

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** I loved going to Juneau for the ACLU-AK legislative fly-in and Folk Fest!

## Abigail Bromberger (she/her)

**A year in review:** I am so grateful for the adventure this has been, for the communities I have found, for the new places I now feel at home. For me, Alaska will forever be a place of growth, of warmth (ironically), of beauty, and of joy!

**Plans after May:** I'm staying in Juneau for the summer to continue working for Southeast Conference.

**Favorite song this year:** Seven Wonders by Fleetwood Mac

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Traveling to White Mountain for VLTP was amazing. Whalefest in Sitka was so much fun!!



## Rachel Hartman (they/she)

**Plans after May:** I am staying in Sitka for the summer and continuing to work for Sitka Tribe

**Favorite song this year:** Bathroom Light by Mt Joy

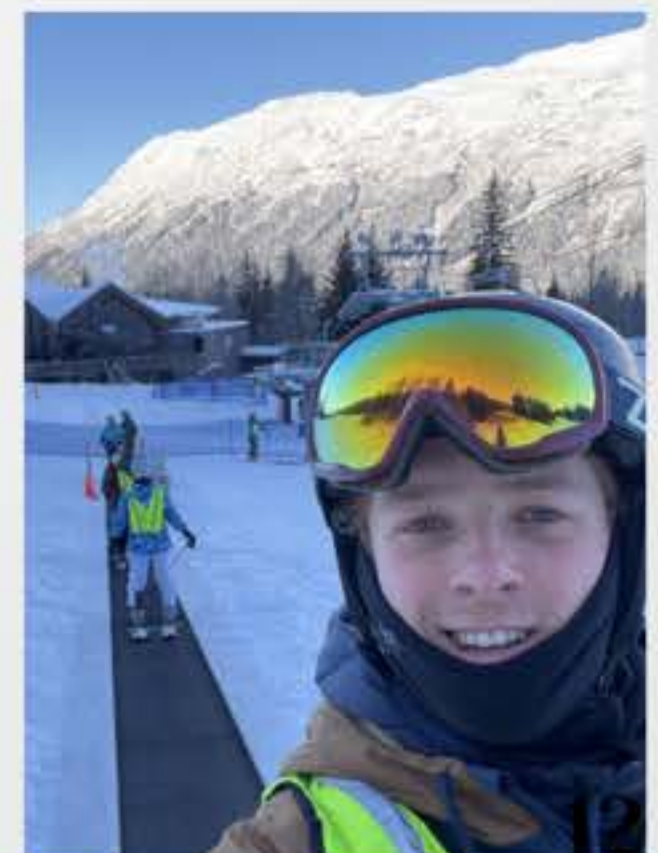
**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Going to Anchorage for the Iditarod Ceremonial Start with my roommates

## Kieran Norton (he/him)

**Plans after May:** I'm moving to Houston to begin a new job!

**Favorite song this year:** The Once and Future Carpenter by The Avett Brothers

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** A trip to Yakutat to surf before closing retreat and folk fest



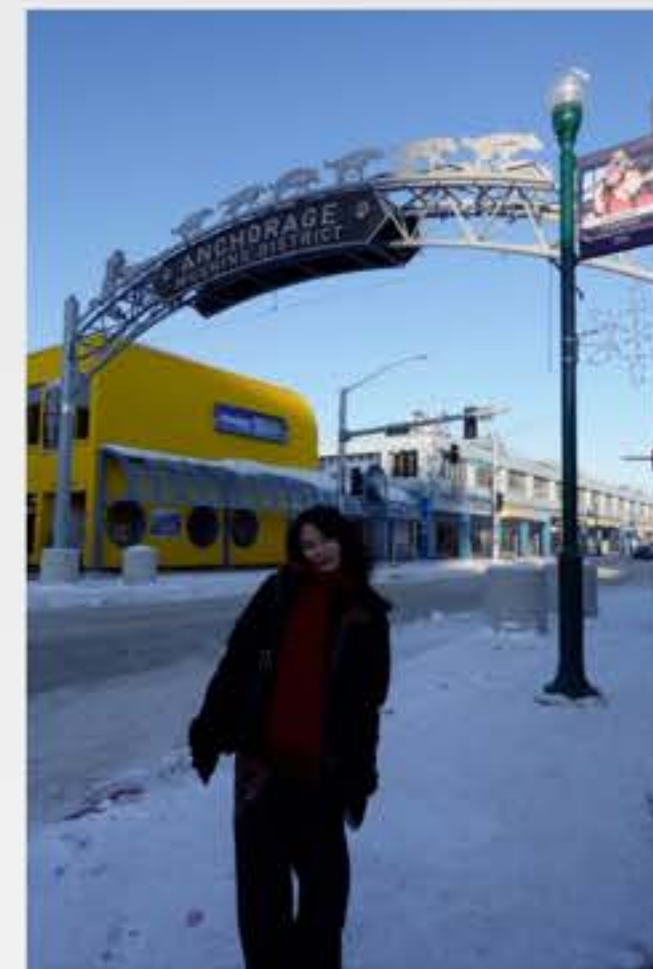
## Lydia Fraser (she/her)

**A year in review:** I basically spent the whole 9 months trying the matcha at every coffee shop only to be severely disappointed every time. I have maybe 2 okay places.

**Plans after May:** To be determined, but will hopefully be around for at least part of June for midnight suns!

**Favorite song this year:** Knuckle Velvet by Ethel Cain

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** The only other place I've been outside of Anchorage is Juneau, so probably that. Mendenhall was great!



## Bella Kirchgessner (she/her)

**A year in review:** I've loved the opportunity to fall in love with Juneau through tide-pooling, snow shoveling, herring processing... I look forward to my path here and am grateful for the friends I've met through the fellowship.

**Plans after May:** I am staying on at Sealaska Heritage Institute and working in the Indigenous Science Building's Makerspace.

**Favorite song this year:** Love Takes Miles by Cameron Winter

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Going to Sitka for Whalefest!



## Libby Musolino (she/her)

**A year in review:** I came to Fairbanks and TCC not knowing exactly where I wanted to go/what work I wanted to do afterwards. Now I feel confident in the work I want to pursue, how to get there, and a strong, new community to support me.

**Plans after May:** Staying in Fairbanks for the summer (and maybe longer) to keep working on the Tribal Resource Stewardship team with TCC

**Favorite song this year:** Professor X by Dave

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Anchorage for the month of February to help Tribal advocates testify at North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and Board of Fish Area...



## Maddy Moore (she/her)

**Plans after May:** I plan to continue living in Sitka and eventually pursue a master's in social work!

**Favorite song this year:** American Teenager by Ethel Cain

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** A tie between skiing in Juneau and Iditarod Trailgate in Anchorage.





## Caleb Grassi (he/him)

**A year in review:** I can't put a price on having a new state to discover with a community of fellows who are in a similar stage of life as me and the training and connections my coworkers at UAF have provided me with. Nobody could have prepared me for the long winter and I am grateful, but wary of getting to experience the midnight sun.

**Plans after May:** I'll be working as a camp counselor at Trailside Discovery Camp out of Anchorage! After that, who knows?

**Favorite song this year:** Graduate by Third Eye Blind

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Our site retreat to Healy for the weekend.

## Suz Oriel (she/they)

**A year in review:** A year filled with rain, laughter, cold plunges, sore legs, and extravagant baking projects. I have learned so much this year and couldn't be more grateful to this community I was lucky to be welcomed into. It did rain a lot though.

**Favorite song this year:** Shrinking Violets- PHOX

**Plans after May:** Staying on at Alaska Marine Safety Education Association (AMSEA) for summer camps and research assistance!

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Going to Sea Pony Farm in Pelican with Sitka Conservation Society. What a magical place. st!



## Maggie Bryan (she/her)

**Plans after May:** Continue working for Alaska Venture Fund and doing some campaign work for the Mobilization Center.

**Favorite song this year:** Little Peace by Lou Hazel

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Visiting Kodiak for Crab Fest!

## Nina Friedman (she/her)

**A year in review:** This year has been full of big changes for me and I am so grateful that moving to Alaska was one of them. AFP confirmed that pursuing new opportunities, that are aligned with my values and hopes, is worth it, despite the uncertainty, and I feel so grateful that this opportunity led me to meet such amazing friends.

**Plans after May:** I recently moved to Brazil to pursue a Fulbright and hope to return to school in the next year!

**Favorite song this year:** Bad Girls (Verdine Version) by Solange

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Our fall retreat to a cabin right outside of Fairbanks





## Zoe Stonorov (she/her)

**A year in review:** 7 people, 1 house. So fun! I also had a cool job!

**Plans after May:** Spending the summer with my sister in Rhode Island!

**Favorite song this year:** Bathroom Light by Mt Joy

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Returning to my high school in Homer!

## Abigail Kany (she/her)

**A year in review:** This year rekindled the relationship I have with my home state; it was a breath of fresh air! I made connections with my roots, and developed a sense of belonging in Southeast AK.

**Plans after May:** I'm working in Juneau this summer: teaching pottery at the local ceramics studio, as well as naturalist guiding (whale watching, glacier hikes) for Gastineau Guiding Company.

**Favorite song this year:** 26 by Caamp

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Traveling to Haines on the ferry along the Chilkat Range to stay in a yurt for our Juneau closing retreat!



## Simran Bhathal (she/her)

**A year in review:** This year really challenged me to grow and adapt to new circumstances, but I'm really grateful for the experience.

**Plans after May:** I've moved back home to NJ to apply to graduate school!

**Favorite song this year:** Fuck Me Eyes by Ethel Cain

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** Trip to Bethel, Alaska, for Typhoon Halong relief

## Audrey Welsh (she/her)

**A year in review:** I've made amazing friends and somehow still really love winter- so I'd say it's a win win!

**Plans after May:** I am moving to Colorado to get my PhD in applied chemistry.

**Favorite song this year:** Right Back to It by Waxahatchee

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** I spent two weeks in Cordova, Alaska, meeting with kelp and oyster farmers, visiting and helping out on their farms, and collecting glacial silt from the river. I loved getting to know the community members and got to see lots of sea otters and sea lions!



## John Putnam (he/him)

**A year in review:** It's been incredibly meaningful. I feel like I've been able to do good work alongside living with a cohort of likeminded, good-hearted people.

**Plans after May:** Working on former AK state Senator Tom Begich's gubernatorial campaign as his body man.

**Favorite song this year:** Winners by Young Gun Silver Fox

**Favorite travel experience:** Seeing my sister in Seattle



## Lee Drukman (they/them)

**A year in review:** This year was unbelievable. I will forever be grateful for my time at 700 Etolin, and all the people, sourdough, shoes (so many shoes), halloween costumes, and bagels that came with it.

**Plans after May:** Working as a snorkel guide over the summer, and then on to whatever's next!

**Favorite song this year:** Basic Being Basic by DJO

**Favorite Alaska travel experience:** I really think I peaked at trailgate, but then I peaked again at Eaglecrest, and then AGAIN during an eleven hour hike of L'úx, the dormant volcano here in Sitka.



# Suraj's Guide to the Iditarod (and Anchorage)

By Suraj Singareddy | Sitka

A few months ago, I had a chance to attend the Iditarod's ceremonial start in Anchorage with the help of AFP funding. The Iditarod was one of the few things I knew about Alaska before moving here, so I was really excited to see it! I thought there wouldn't be much happening aside from seeing the dogs run, but I actually ended up being able to see a decent bit of the city. Here's a guide to some of my favorite spots and events.



**Trailgate.** The big day! With a bar manned largely by former fellows and AFP-affiliates, Trailgate was immensely fun. Dogs. Snow. Friends. Mimosas. Ski couture. What more could you want?



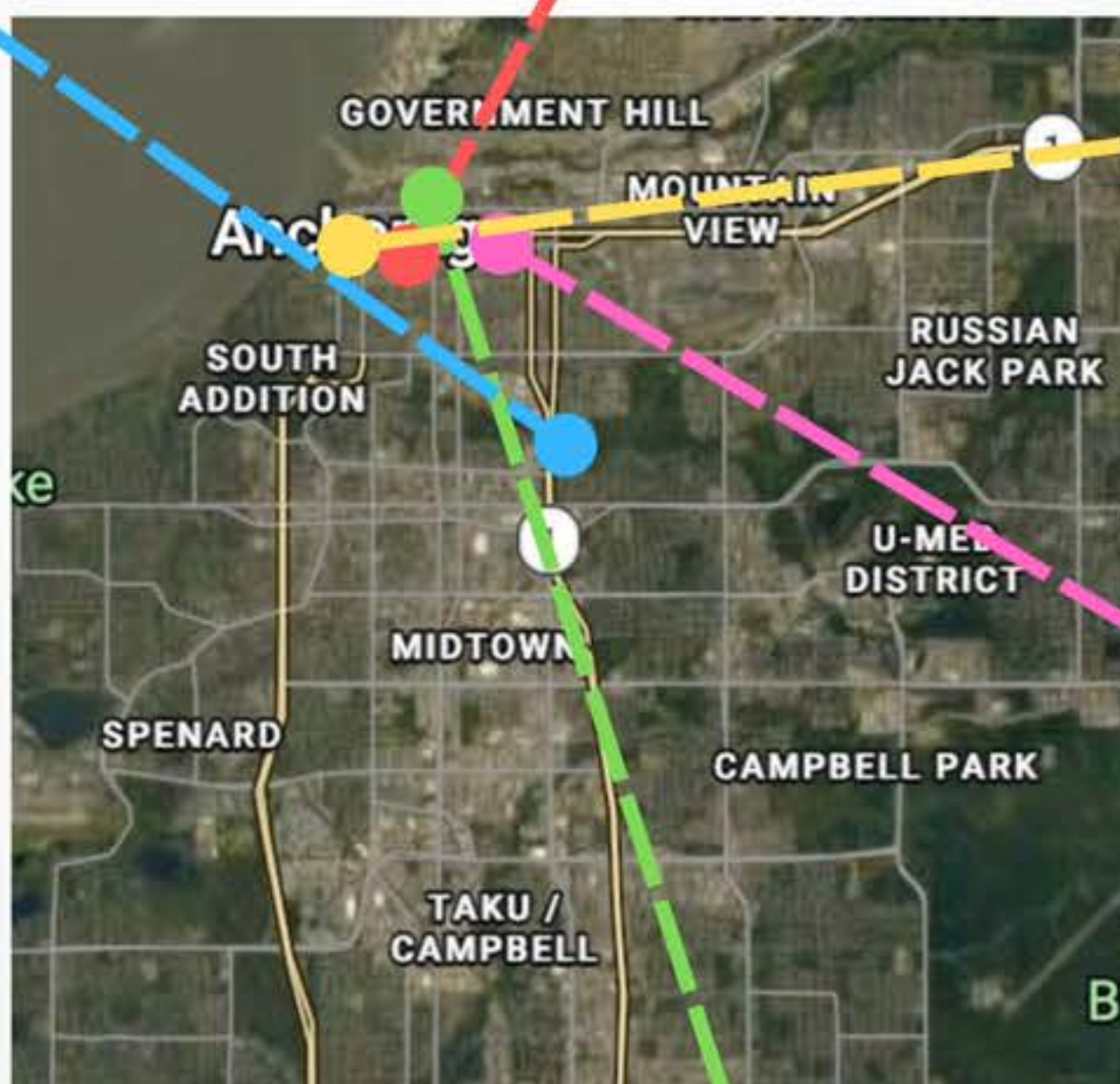
**Snow Sculpture Competition.** Turns out you can carve nearly anything out of snow. A dragon! The Statue of Liberty! An emoji! Christ on a cross! Yes, someone really did carve a crucifixion scene out of snow.



**Running of the Reindeer.** When I first learned about this event, the main question I had was how the organizers stopped the reindeer from running people over. Turns out reindeer aren't actually that tall!



**Fire Island Rustic Bakeshop.** The Sitka fellows spent way too much money here. Our favorite bakery and coffee shop in the big city. Get the breakfast focaccia!



**Whiskey & Ramen.** Do not go to Whiskey & Ramen the Friday before the Iditarod. I repeat. DO NOT GO. If you do go, though, and make it past the three hour wait, the payoff will be incredibly delicious!

*Highs,*

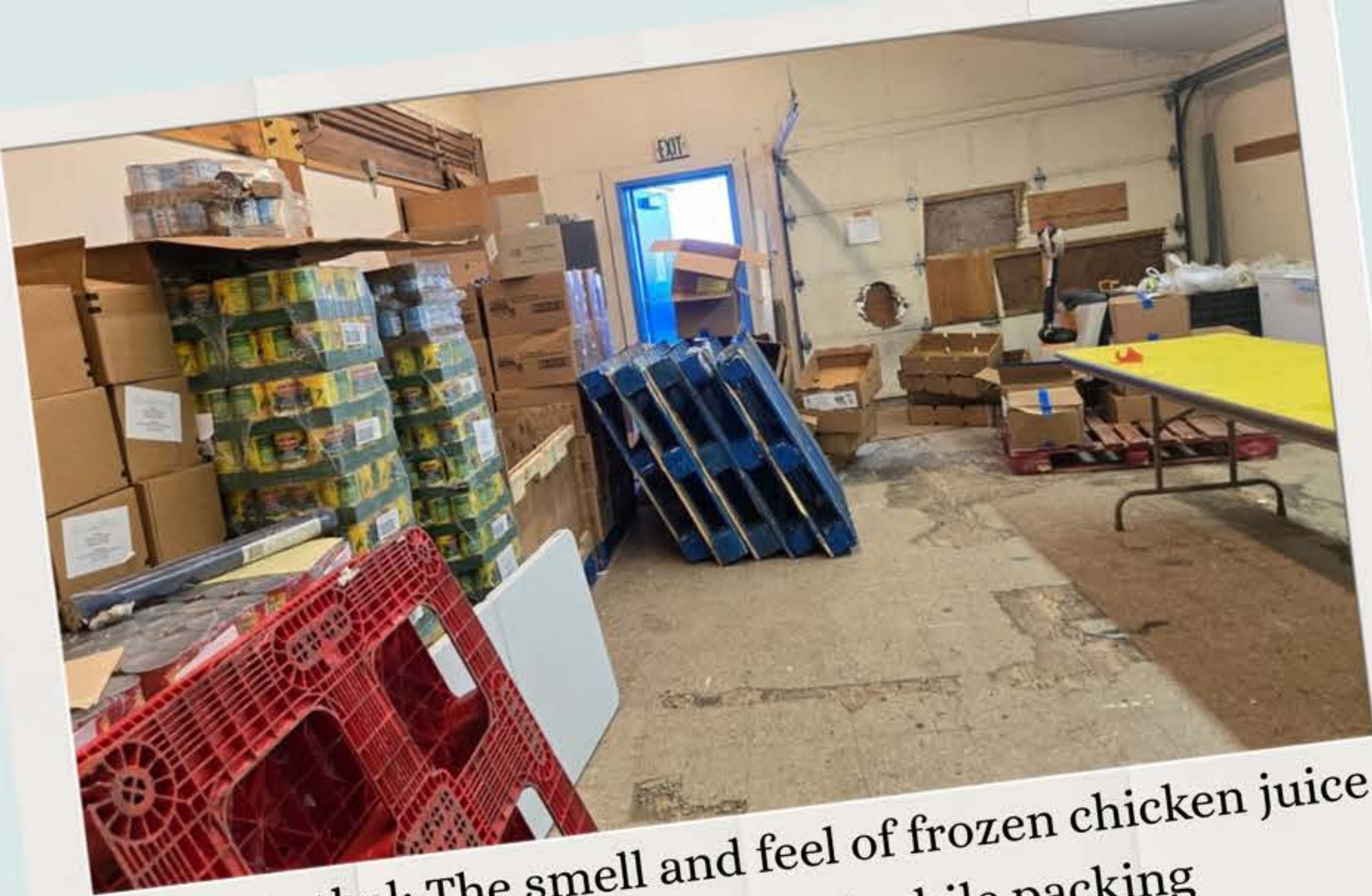
*Lows,*

# and Buffaloes of Kamryn's winter travel

**By Kamryn You Mak | Anchorage**

Over this past winter, I gratefully have been able to travel a bit throughout the state, learning, meeting new people, and seeing different places. Anchorage being on the road system and with the largest airport gives us an advantage in being able to access a lot and travel more than others with home bases elsewhere. My major modes of transportation for these trips included cars, big planes (Alaska Airlines), little planes (4-7 seaters), and 4 wheelers. (Our spring time train ride was awesome and I can't wait to get on the ferry this summer!). I was able to travel as a volunteer for flood disaster relief after Typhoon Halong and to prepare people's taxes; for work to summits, conferences, and trainings; and for fun. Some of these places I visited include Bethel, Brevig Mission, Chefnak, Homer, Juneau, Nome, Scammon Bay, and Seward. Thank you to everyone who welcomed me to their homes, guided me in many ways, and offered insightful and silly company.

What follows is one part of the reflections I've had on this privilege to travel and learn throughout Alaska. It takes the form of "high, low, buffalo" in pictures and captions. This idea comes from a spinoff of "rose, bud, thorn." Like any group of people sharing big meals and getting to know each other, the Anchorage cohort did rose, bud, thorn at Sunday dinners for the first part of our fellowship. Instead of sticking with just the classic, we tried out as many different, reflective sets of questions as possible. One of the early ones that I enjoyed was high, low, buffalo where high is a high point of the week, low is a low point, and buffalo is something random. I hope you enjoy the highs, laugh at the lows, and wonder at the buffalos.



**Low** - Bethel: The smell and feel of frozen chicken juice (or worse, melting chicken juice) while packing distribution bags for the food pantry.



**High** - Homer: Huge snow and ice chunks on the beach! Wow!



**Low** - Scammon Bay: The only fresh air during the busy days of preparing taxes was through peeking out the front door and making sure not too much cold air came in.





**Buffalo** - Bethel: Showing up so hungry to a marionette puppet making workshop with an Anchorage artist who runs the bookmobile and then staying for hours--invested in our little puppets! (Simran's cute puppet)



**High** - Bethel: Meeting up with a friend from the volunteer flood relief trip during subsequent tax preparation trips! Shoutout Tess <3



**Buffalo** - Homer: Trying on the exhibit display XtraTufs to see if they fit and could find a new home...



**High** - Nome: Visiting Nome's forest of old Christmas trees set up on the sea ice with convincing signs and cute animal cut outs.



**Low** - Bethel: Losing a couple of food donation boxes on the road between the food pantry and post office.

**Low** - Chefornak: Not so much sleeping multiple unexpected nights in this windowless classroom, more so the water well issues and thus lack of running water as hundreds of students, a handful of construction workers, and us tax volunteers shared only a few toilets!



**Buffalo** - Brevig Mission: Taxidermy NYO (Native Youth Olympic) game displays. Genius.



**High** - Homer: People indulging my excitement to look at boats and then seeing many otters!




**Low** - Scammon Bay: Pierre decided to drink a whole bottle of water from the local watering hole. He had some tummy troubles the next day...



**High** - Brevig Mission: Balling at 10-11pm womxn's open gym with people of all ages.





**Buffalo** - Bethel: Unexpectedly spending the night in Bethel and sleeping in a church nursery after supper club (community moose stew dinner). Trying to take a group self-timer picture with the available nursery toys.

**Low** - Juneau: shoveling wet, heavy snow for a long time and then our shoveled out parking spot getting taken so we shoveled out two more spots for these big rental vans. Shoutout Juneau fellows for letting us park in your driveway!



**High** - Chefnak: Jackie from CVRF being a welcoming and generous host!





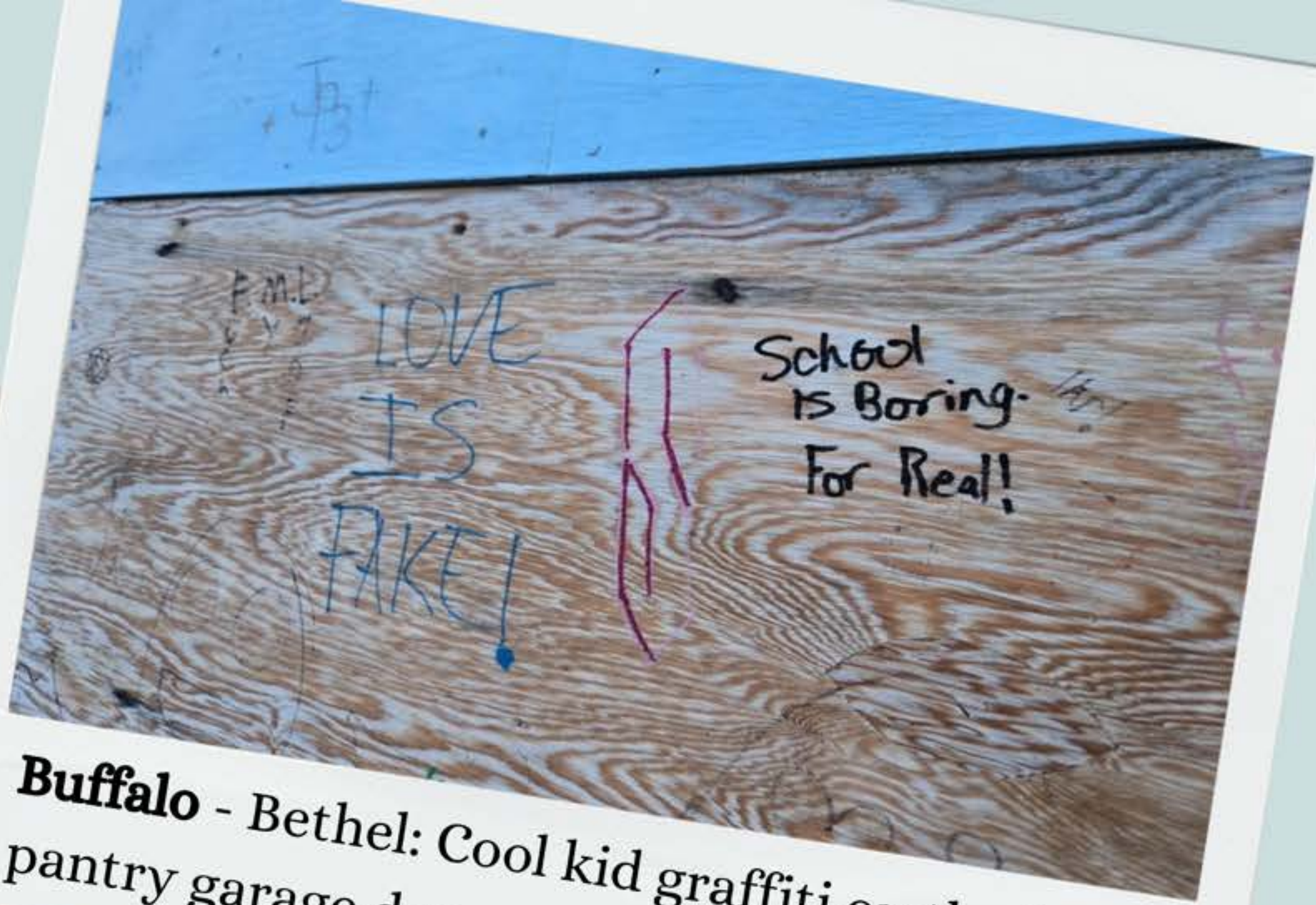
◀ **Buffalo** - Bethel: 11am sunrise over the frozen Kuskokwim river.

**Buffalo** - near Cordova: the milk run flight takes a while!



**High** - Chefornak: Beating Isaac from Nunapitchuk in 1v1 basketball 11-5 💪

lines are obtained  
 point exactly vertically  
 horizontal line.  
 VII. In this case the sun  
 Being the reverse of  
 sun's rays vanish into the picture  
 marked on a vertical line  
 direction point or angle where  
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 (downwards). Note the  
 direction of the object to v.s., and  
 as in last case.  
 II. Example of  
 ground lines of  
 below the  
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**Buffalo** - Bethel: Cool kid graffiti on the food pantry garage door.



**High** - Scammon Bay: Great "team camaraderie," as the tax organization asked for feedback on, especially during our last walk around before getting on the plane.

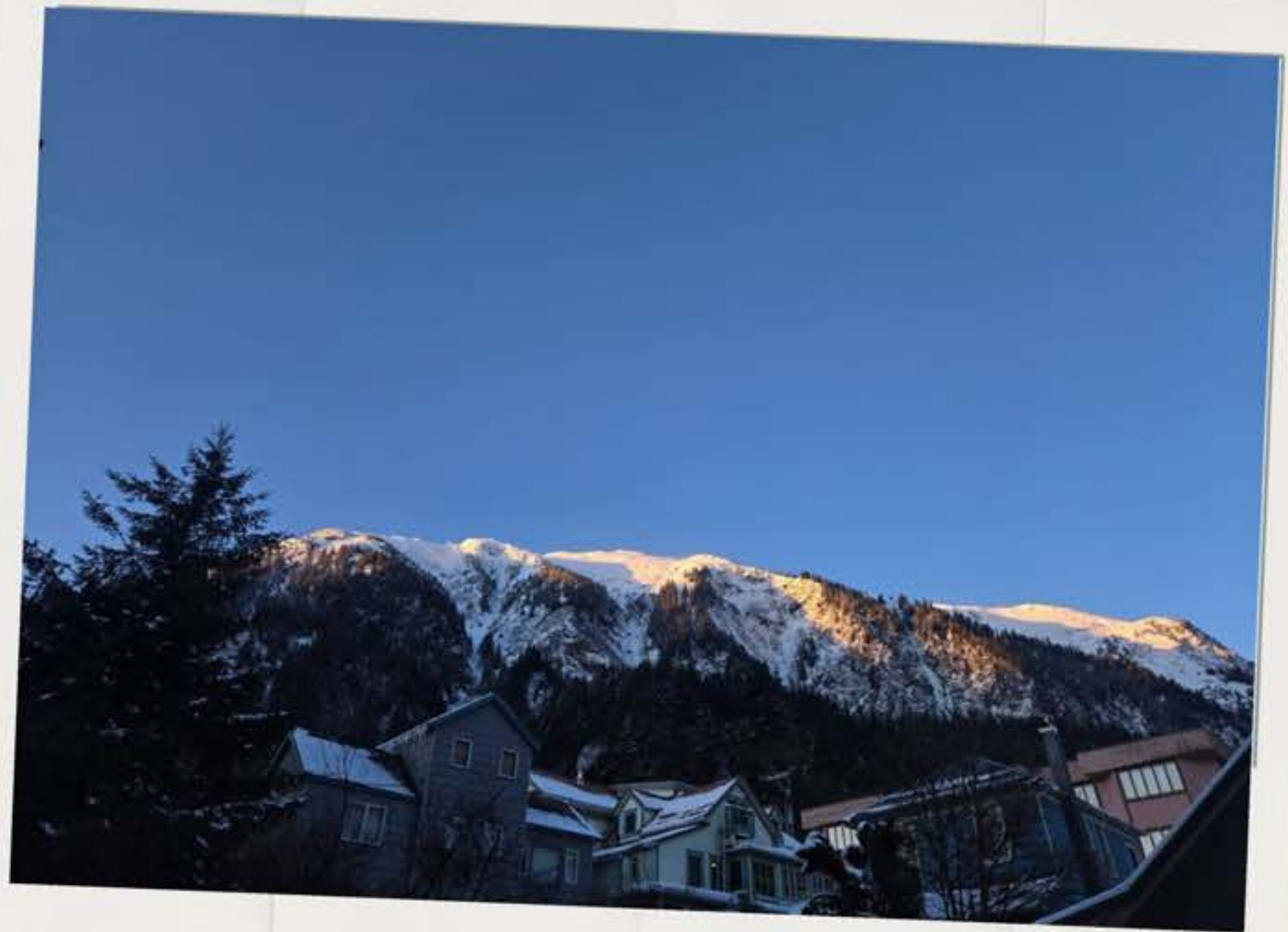


**High** - Juneau: Salty air, moving water, snowy peaks, and marine life <3



**Buffalo** - Chefornek: Many hours watching the weather and students walk back and forth between classes, and also calling the Grant Aviation agent ten times a day for any updates if planes took off.

**Buffalo** - Juneau: Slipping and sliding on downtown Juneau hills with teenagers in their fanciest clothing, ready to talk to their legislators.



**Low** - Seward: Distinctly colder extremities, evidenced in thermal camera.





**High** - Juneau: Skiing on Mendenhall Lake and soaking up the sunshine!



**High** - Bethel: Looking at portraits and reading short blurbs from elders of the region on display in the cultural center.



**Buffalo** - Bethel: Taking silly pictures with frozen salmon after a successful food distribution to Typhoon Halong evacuees.



# Alaska Marine Science Symposium

By Audrey Welsh and Anjali Shah | Fairbanks

Alaska Marine Science Symposium takes place every year in Anchorage to bring together marine scientists from around the world working in Alaska's waters, everywhere from Southeast to the far north Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. The conference has a unique structure, dedicating each day to discussing the various aspects of Alaska's marine ecosystems in different regions. Day one was focused on the Arctic Ocean, day two concentrated on the Gulf of Alaska, and day three centered the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. Alaska and its waters are often grouped as one "Arctic" entity by the Lower 48, but this conference seeks to highlight the diverse marine ecosystems present around the state. From the productive waters in Southeast and Southcentral fed by Alaskan Coastal water to the Bering Sea, seasonally covered by sea ice, to the far north the Chukchi and Beaufort, Alaska's bodies of water all tell different stories and play different roles in coastal communities. Diving into a different region each day, we learned about the impacts of temperature on snow crab development, impacts of sea ice on phytoplankton blooms, and even an environmental DNA sampler funded by the UAF Center for Innovation (an AFP host). Rooted in the idea of the ocean as one unified system, physicists talked with biologists about how ocean currents inform observed patterns in fisheries management, while Indigenous Knowledge holders discussed their sea ice observations in tandem with satellite data. Overall, the conference exemplified the importance of collaboration between disciplines, while also showcasing the diversity of marine life across Alaska.



# Alaska Mariculture Conference

By Audrey Welsh | Fairbanks



The Alaska Mariculture Conference is hosted by Alaska SeaGrant and Southeast Conference. The conference was centered around kelp and oyster farming in Alaska, and included presentations and workshops with industry and community leaders, experts, researchers, and farmers. Four fellows had the opportunity to attend this conference: Abigail B (Juneau), Audrey, (Fairbanks), Kieran (Fairbanks), and Suz (Sitka). We learned about growing bull kelp and seed stabilization, as well as growing the industry as a whole. Conference highlights included a raw oyster bar during the poster session and tradeshow, with about five oyster farmers sharing their oysters with attendees.



# A YEAR ON THE MIGHTY YUKON

By **Tori Lu, Owen Jakel, and Libby Musolino** | Fairbanks



Stretching across Alaska is the mighty Yukon River, Interior Alaska's largest highway and a central part of Alaska Native culture and history. Through Tanana Chiefs Conference we were able to visit this river on numerous occasions to discuss depleted Salmon Runs, river erosion, and flooding (specifically ice-jam flooding), all of which affect communities along the Yukon and its many tributaries.



# Two Adventures to Bethel, Alaska

By Anjali Shah, Eleanor Greenbaum, Iz Klemmer, and Mallory Williams | Fairbanks

Bethel, Alaska, which lies on the Kuskokwim River approximately 70 miles inland from the Bering Sea, is the largest community in Western Alaska. Last October, ex-typhoon Halong devastated the nearby villages of Kipnuk and Kwigillingok, while also causing major damage to Tuntutuliak, Quinhagak, Napakiak, and Nightmute. Since then, Bethel's role as a "hub" community has been key in helping communities recover. Several Fairbanks fellows took two trips, three months apart, to visit Bethel and help the Kuskokwim Intertribal Fish Commission (KRITFC) out with food distribution as a part of this recovery effort.

We worked with KRITFC to pack and distribute frozen and dry donated foods to the villages, as well as run a traditional food distribution event in Bethel. Approximately 65 families, that KRITFC knows of, are displaced from the storm in Bethel, and many of them accepted pantry and subsistence foods. Damages in villages included broken freezers, which may hinder the ability to store subsistence foods. This was the reasoning behind sending these goods to impacted communities.

## Eleanor:

I traveled to Bethel in January with Kevin, a former Fairbanks fellow. The first thing I noticed, stepping off the plane and onto a set of outdoor stairs rather than into the airport, was the warmth of the people despite the freezing cold temperatures and rapid winds. After our coordinator with KRITFC picked us up, she immediately helped a man jump his car and provided us with warm pizza from one of the several Italian-Asian-American fusion restaurants in town.



Our work involved stapling freezer boxes, packing them with a plastic lining, sorting and packing dried goods, and packing fish into the freezer boxes we'd made. We quickly developed a system, listening to local radio and Lizzy McAlpine mixes. Throughout this process, Kevin and I became quick friends with Erald, the Jesuit Volunteer who was leading the project, and were introduced to the rest of the fellows.

With our new friends in tow, Kevin and I got the opportunity to explore Bethel. We drove on the ice road – a decision I may not have made knowing that just a few days later I would see three semi trucks sitting in a foot of standing water right where we drove. We got to see the Russian Orthodox church and learn more about Russian settlers in Alaska. And, of course, we ate at another one of the Italian-Asian-American Fusion restaurants, introducing one of our new friends to udon noodles. Going into the trip, I had packed enough food for myself for three square meals a day. Given the sheer kindness of the people we met in Bethel, Kevin and I did not eat dinner alone for even one night.

The most rewarding part of the trip was being able to distribute the food we'd packed. Because of the weather, planes couldn't fly out to villages, so we couldn't mail most food out while Kevin and I were there. However, we did host a drive for displaced people living in Bethel. Getting a chance to chat with people, see what food people got excited about, and watch our work go to good use was an invaluable experience. I truly hope to return soon to reconnect with all of the kind faces out there.



### **Anjali, Iz, and Mallory:**

Iz, Mallory, and Anjali returned to Bethel from April 20th-25th to continue work on the distribution project. We, similarly, were welcomed by KRTIFC with pizza and a warm bunkhouse despite the windy, rainy weather. Our work involved calling individual people to confirm they wanted another round of distributed food, of which the answer was overwhelmingly yes accompanied with many “Thank you”s and “Quyana” (thank you in Yup’ik). We packed the freezer boxes that Eleanor and Kevin had stapled with salmon, ground beef, and chicken and shipped out pantry boxes filled with dried goods.



With Iz driving a huge truck on the bumpiest roads I'd ever seen, we also got the chance to adventure around Bethel. We saw the famous snowy Yukon flats which extended for miles. We also saw the (now melted) remains of the ice road that Eleanor had once driven on, none of us able to comprehend of how frozen it must have been. We were tricked awake late into the night by the sun almost daily, and saw the first midnight sunset of many due to Bethel's westward location in the Alaska timezone.

We were also graciously welcomed by the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JV) fellows in the area. We attended trivia at a local pizza shop, and watched as the JV's, who have only lived in Bethel since August, waved to everyone in the restaurant and regaled us with stories of the questions they could have gotten right had they only sent up the biggest Heated Rivalry fan for the tie breaker question. They made dinner plans late into the summer, a true testament to the small and tight-knit community.



Our highlight was the Friday evening distribution, where we met many grateful evacuees. KRTIFC ordered reindeer meat, which everyone took first. One couple notably bickered about which meat to take, the husband wanting beef and the wife heading straight for the reindeer. The husband, Andrew, tapped me on the shoulder. "She's always yelling at me..." he rolled his eyes. I giggled and handed him some reindeer meat. Some dynamics, no matter the place or circumstance, never change.

Bethel is one of the most special communities I have ever seen. The locals have undying devotion to the Y-K Delta region, its people, and resources. I only hope I get to go back one day.

# ARCTIC ENCOUNTER SYMPOSIUM



**By Eleanor Greenbaum | Fairbanks**

The Arctic Encounter Symposium brings together a range of stakeholders, from scientists to policymakers and diplomats to business owners, to discuss Arctic policy. Given the attention the region has received in the past few months and years, the conference was buzzing with conversation. Plenary sessions mostly focused on geopolitics, critical minerals, and national security, with keynote speakers such as Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Gov. Mike Dunleavy emphasizing the important role Alaska has to play in the future of a stable Arctic. Breakout sessions, however, ranged in topic from ex-typhoon Halong to workforce development to sports diplomacy.

Hearing from leaders in the Arctic policy space from the mainstage was an incredibly valuable experience. Even more valuable, however, was the opportunity to have meaningful conversations with even the highest-level diplomats in attendance. As a part of the Northern Vision Fellows Program, a fellowship made specifically for this conference for early-career individuals interested in Arctic policy, I was able to be a part of several VIP meetings. Our candid conversations re-instilled my hope for a stable and cooperative Arctic. Beyond these VIP meetings, learning from other fellows whose backgrounds varied substantially from one another was another highlight. While the panel discussions shaped the conference, the “encounters” I had with others were truly the highlight.

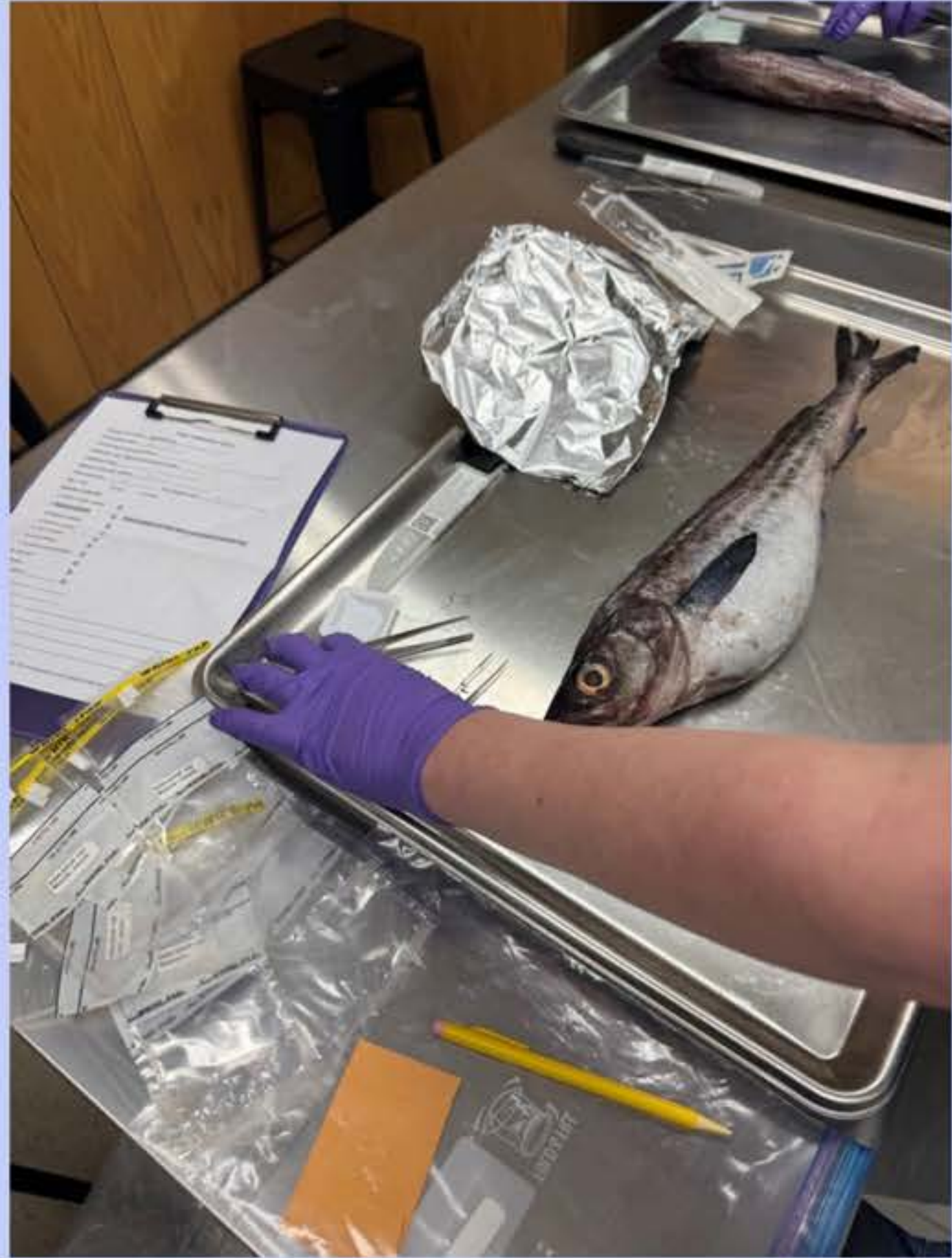
Arctic Encounter also did something I’d never seen at a conference before – it instilled art and culture into its networking activities. The Far North Fashion Show displayed pieces from Indigenous artists in the Anchorage Museum. Vendors sold beautiful art and jewelry, which many attendees wore throughout the conference. The Inuit Circumpolar Council hosted a celebration of Inuit culture, which included traditional song and dance alongside food such as muktuk (whale meat), smoked salmon, and berries.

This conference was unlike any other conference I’d attended in Alaska or elsewhere. It married culture, science, and policy to produce a comprehensive look at the state of the Arctic. While panels varied in their solutions to pressing problems, I walked away ultimately feeling hopeful about the future of the region. And, of course, I was happy to whip out my business professional clothes for my first time since moving to Alaska.

# ACTEM Report

By **Tori Lu** | Fairbanks

In late March, I traveled on behalf of Tanana Chiefs Conference to attend the Alaska Tribal Conference on Environmental Management (ATCEM). This conference convenes tribal leaders, scientists, policymakers, and community practitioners working at the frontlines of environmental change in Alaska. The conference lasted four days and offered sessions that focused on deepening understanding of how knowledge, governance, and sovereignty can shape climate resilience.



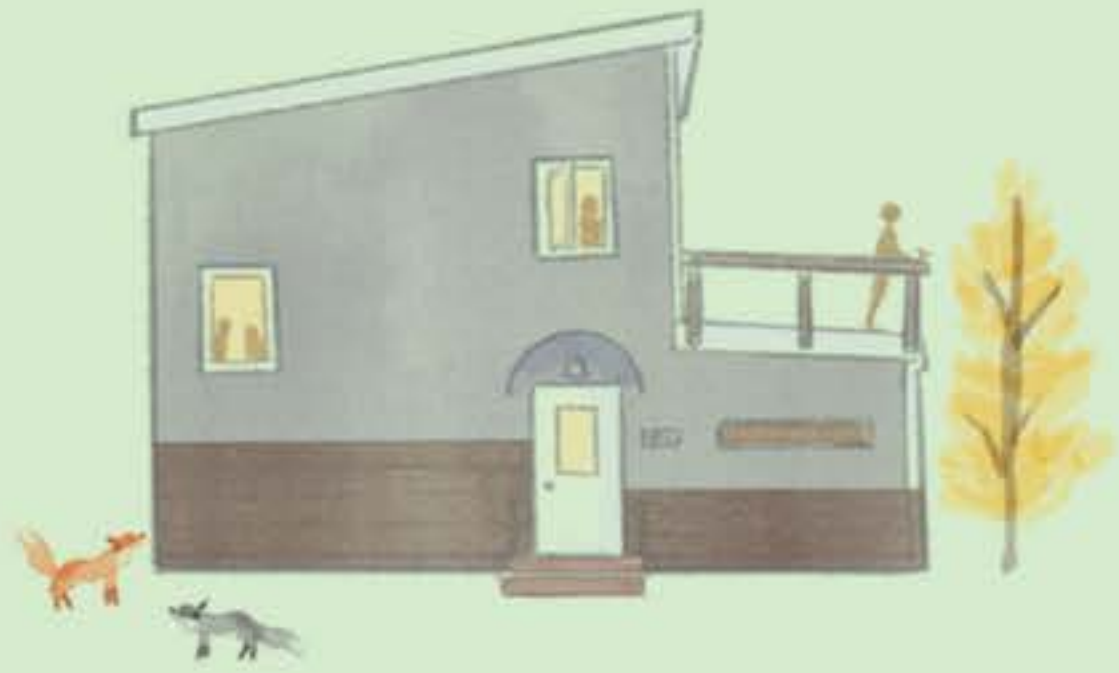
On Monday, I attended a Partner Gathering hosted by Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) as an opportunity for people working under the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge grant to learn about each others' projects and collaborate. We engaged in discussions around what obstacles we anticipated or were facing and how working together to both create and share data together could help our mission.

Some of my favorite sessions were the more practical explanatory trainings. For instance, a Community Permafrost Data talk explained how to monitor homes for effects of permafrost, notably elevation shifts, through the use of tools such as antifreeze leveling tubes and thaw depth monitoring. I also was able to attend a fish necropsy lab that walked through dissecting fish to sample for heavy metals—a process that is important for monitoring food security access in rural Alaska. I also enjoyed talks that exposed practitioners to tools they could use for climate work, such as the NOAA Sea Level Rise Viewer.

As an Alaska Fellow with Tanana Chiefs Conference, this conference was a wonderful experience and extremely useful to better understand the landscape of Alaska Native climate work. I am extremely fortunate to be able to travel and learn so much as part of my fellowship.

# Circling Home

By Nina Friedman | Fairbanks



I didn't understand  
Exactly what it meant  
To know a place enough  
To call it home  
What is in that word  
After all?

Is it witnessing the light shift  
between seasons?

How up north  
Soft hues span the sky  
Like spilled sugar  
Or bread flour

Maybe home is sensed  
In the breeze

When it slips under  
Layers bundles and cuffs  
The texture the same as  
The air I knew in childhood  
Smooth and unyielding  
A cold river running beneath  
Even the warmest days  
Maybe knowing a place  
Is returning



To voices seeping through the walls

And heat spilling from the vents

I think it's more like leaving

And knowing what is left behind

Because even the moon

Appears a different shade

From this far away

Maybe I do know what it means

Because the word I associate with Alaska

Home

For a short while

Still remains



# *The Table is Set: Juneau AK*

By Bella Kirchgessner | Juneau

Block print



# DAYS OF CIVIL TWILIGHT

By Maggie Bryan | Anchorage

February 16, 2026



In December, I wanted to know at what point in the year I could begin running outside again after work with enough light. If I could pinpoint an exact date when this might restart, maybe I could identify a concrete end to my seasonal affective disorder, marking the precise day when there will be enough sunlight, true bright white light, to enter my retinas and penetrate my retinal ganglion cells and be absorbed by melanopsin enough to kickstart my circadian rhythm (huh).



The internet will tell you that that date will fall around February 18th, when the sun will set at 5:53, and I will have enough time to arrive home around 5:15, get changed, maybe eat a snack, and then catch a brief window of true sun before it sets behind the Tordrillo Mountains. By March, my goal could be achieved at its maximum, allowing me to run as long as I please without the need for a headlamp and without needing to turn around worried about impending darkness. But, luckily, sunset is not the only astronomical measure of light, and sunlight is not in fact the only dopamine inducer in exercise.

Enter civil twilight. It's a strange combination of words, and a fairly non-intuitive one. Civil can refer to citizens or civilians or civility and twilight can refer to the time of day, a period of liminality or decline, or the vampire movie and book franchise. If you shuffled the various definitions of these two words and combined them in different ways, you could produce many other meanings (in some ways it feels like our country is in its own civil twilight), but the most common, astrological meaning (more on that later), is defined by the National Weather Service as such:

*“Civil Twilight: Begins in the morning, or ends in the evening, when the geometric center of the sun is 6 degrees below the horizon. Therefore morning civil twilight begins when the geometric center of the sun is 6 degrees below the horizon, and ends at sunrise. Evening civil twilight begins at sunset and ends when the geometric center of the sun is 6 degrees below the horizon. Under these conditions, absent fog or other restrictions, the brightest stars and planets can be seen, the horizon and terrestrial objects can be discerned, and in many cases, artificial lighting is not needed.”*

In Alaska, this strange period lasts especially long, because of the low angle at which the sun crests the horizon, giving us about 15 more minutes of civil twilight than the lower 48. On some summer days, civil twilight is the darkest the sky gets.

Running and walking outside during this chunk of time, during this time of year is a special thing. There are more people outside than when it's 'light' out, because, surprise, other people also work until 5:00 and want to go outside. Some wear goofy light-up vests, which



look like grown-up glowsticks, while others choose to go full dark mode. Some wear headlamps, but there seems to be an unspoken agreement to turn them on at the last second, allowing everyone's pupils to dilate as much as possible before relying on technology. The combination of snow and darkness presents enough of a gear conundrum to satisfy my not-quite-gearhead self: should I wear my spiked, waterproof running shoes, or my more cushioned regular shoes with microspikes, or can I get away with trail runners? Do I need a shell or is a vest enough for today? Headlamp? Reflective buff?

There is a degree of uncertainty as to when it will become totally dark which makes each minute feel that much more valuable.



It's a strange, liminal time, but it's shockingly joyful. Dogs prance through the snow and families ice skate on the lagoon by my house, the silhouette of the Chugach Mountains lingering above them long after the sun has disappeared. Across Turnagain Arm, the Tordrillo Mountains, Mount Susitna, and, on special days, Mount Denali each don a stunning electric glow. In front of the frozen, snow-covered ocean, the colors feel uniquely arctic.



This weekend, I ran outside in full sunlight, on the first sunny day of the week, and even needed sunglasses. It was a welcome change, but I found myself missing the mystery, melancholy, and surprising vibrance of the end of the day. Despite its shortcomings, this in-between light seems honest about where we actually are. It holds a mirror to the uncertainties in my own life, the tragedy and 'civil twilight' in our country, and winter itself as at once bleak and beautiful.



# *Heritage Coffee, Downtown Juneau*

By Akanksha Basil | Juneau

Pen sketch



On Seward Street in Downtown Juneau sits the old Lewis Building, built in 1896. Having housed an array of local Juneau businesses over the years, it is now the site of Heritage Coffee, a coffee shop frequented by everyone – families with kids, busy legislators, college students, travelers new to Juneau. It’s a central point of our small community tucked between the sea and the mountains, a familiar site now emblematic of home.

# L

# imerick

# R

# oasts

By John Putnam | Juneau



## Akanksha

You're so freaking obsessed with moss

With recycling you think you're the boss

You're the slowest on Flume

Probably chasing a loon

But without you, we'd all be lost ❤️



## Bella

You're undoubtedly Juneau's greatest chef

With Bollywood, you're the best dressed

From Michigan you originally hail

But Alaska's now your Holy Grail

I think that beats the Midwest ❤️





## Elaine

You're incredibly involved in the  
community

You take advantage of every opportunity

For an event you're never tardy

And always the life of the party

For the cohort, you're our source of  
unity



## Abigail K



You are our cohort's only true Alaskan

Anyone who doubts that, you're  
outclassin'

You're so fun to be around

Your joy shows no bounds

There's no doubt our friendship is  
everlastin'



## ABIGAIL B

There's no question you love to read  
You spent a year working with seaweed  
You're incredibly sarcastic  
And super scholastic  
We'll all be sad when you leave



## Me (John)

I've roomed with 5 girls this past year  
They've taught me to be openly queer  
I love them to bits  
They give me confidence  
I'll be sad when this month's end is here



# 'Twas the night before Snowpocalypse

By the Juneau Fellows

'Twas the night before snowpocalypse  
And all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring  
Because it got so cold that John slept in his office

The temperatures fell  
Colder than Juneau could bear  
And the fellows divided  
Because Oscar and Felix have very different vibes

The first frost of the year,  
Felix assembled  
Immediately sealing the windows  
With militant attention and urgency

Meanwhile Oscar nearby  
Never once had a thought  
That maybe they should take action  
To make their house even a little bit warmer

Felix was warm  
Warm as could be  
Snuggled safe in their beds  
Except Elaine who was in China

Oscar was freezing  
John fled the scene  
Abigail and Akanksha  
Were hoarding space heaters from everyone they could  
think of

Finally it got bad  
Too bad to handle  
So John came back to fix it  
And absolutely messed up the window sealing and made the  
whole situation worse

His heart was good  
And his intention was pure  
But dear John put plastic  
In a lot of places that it shouldn't have been

Abigail and Akanksha  
Frustrated but kind  
Explained to John  
That tape that feels sticky on both sides is double-sided and  
intended to be used as such

Finally Oscar was sealed  
Five weeks after Felix  
When Elaine returned from China  
And decided to take matters into her own hands and do  
their windows for them

In the nick of time  
The windows were sealed  
Because down from the sky  
Fell the largest snowstorm Juneau has ever seen

Boats were overturned  
Roofs caved in  
As the Juneau fellows  
Returned home from the holidays

Twas the week after Christmas  
And all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring  
Because Juneau received 5 ft of snow

The fellows landed in the powder  
As graceful as feathers  
Though arriving after midnight  
They had to ask half of the airplane to hitch rides  
downtown




As snow fell down  
On the two Juneau homes  
The houses were finally cozy  
Just in time for Oscar's heating to die for the next two months

Please picture this  
It's the middle of the storm  
Juneau fellows have no cars  
But unfortunately they still need to go to IGA to go grocery  
shopping which is a 15 minute walk away through 3 feet of snow  
and multiple steep staircases

Elaine and Abigail  
Head out to shop  
On their way back  
They are offered a ride by a strange man in a car that they've  
never seen before

They politely decline  
They are fine to walk back  
Once they return home  
They share the story dramatically as if they were almost  
kidnapped

Then the two of them leave  
With Bella in tow  
To shovel out drains from the street  
To try to clear out some of the lake-sized puddles that have  
formed because of the frozen drains



They're out there for a while  
Clearing drain after drain  
When soon a car pulls up next to them  
And it's Abigail in the same exact car that almost kidnapped Elaine  
and Abigail from before

Everyone exclaims  
Surprise abounds  
Everyone laughs  
Abigail is safe and is definitely not kidnapped

As they drive away  
They continue to chat  
The nice driver says to Abigail  
"I thought that was a girl and boy when I saw them earlier"

Without a car to call their own  
And the snow growing higher and higher  
The trash cans and the friend's cars in our driveway  
Entombed in a blanket of snow

To celebrate the snow apocalypse cheer  
The fellows and friends all gathered  
Sent out an evite, people came from afar  
To dig out the cars and eat halibut chowder

The Juneauites all agreed  
In that Southeast winter chill  
Twas warm, the love of the fellows  
And cellophane over the windowsills

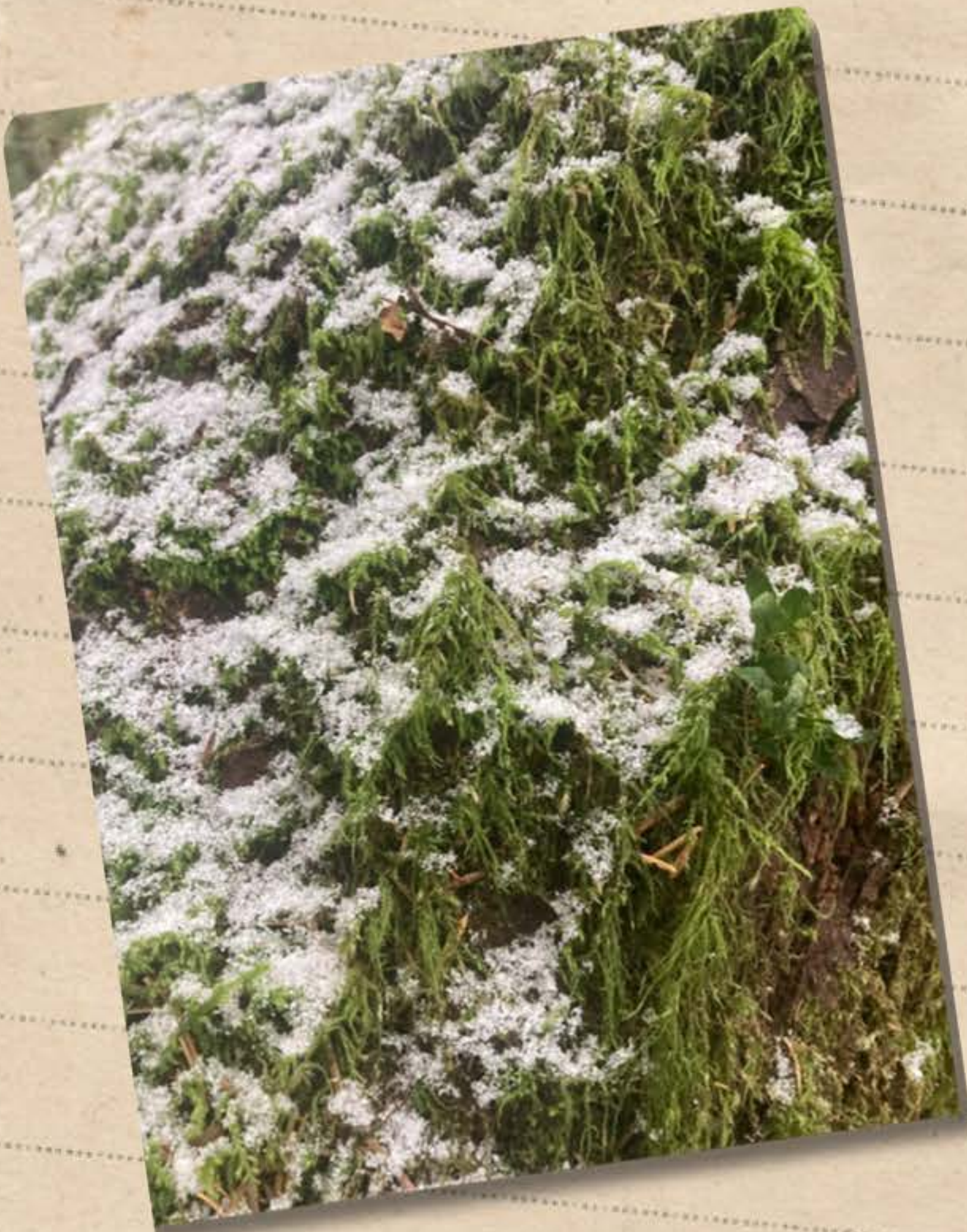


# Snowy Sitka

By the Sitka Fellows

We had a super snowy winter in Sheet'ká this year! Check out some snapshots from the Sitka Stooges' adventures sledding, skiing, swimming, and playing in the snow.







*Music from the Motion Picture Soundtrack*

# Juneau

# Spring

*Starring*

Bella Kirchgessner

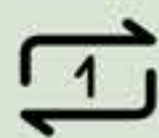
Akanksha Basil

Elaine Liu

JOHN PUTNAM

Abigail Kany

Abigail Bromberger



**The Tongass - Goth Babe**

**Settle Down - The Rain Dogs**

**Notebook - chloe lowe**

**I Don't Miss You at All - FINNEAS**

**Magnolias - ROSALÍA**

**Petal - Jinzy**





"A coming-of-age film like no other!"



"Six strangers move to Alaska together...what could happen when spring emerges?"



**I Got a Name – Jim Croce**

**One Of These Things First – Nick Drake**

**Old Fort Steel Trail – Mon Rovia**

**The Message – Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five**

**CNN Election Night Theme – ?**

**What You Won't Do For Love – Bobby Caldwell**

**Two of Us On the Run – Lucius**

**Carry That Weight – The Beatles**

**Doors – Noah Kahan**

**¿Cuál Es La Razón? – David Byrne**

**Descese – Tori**

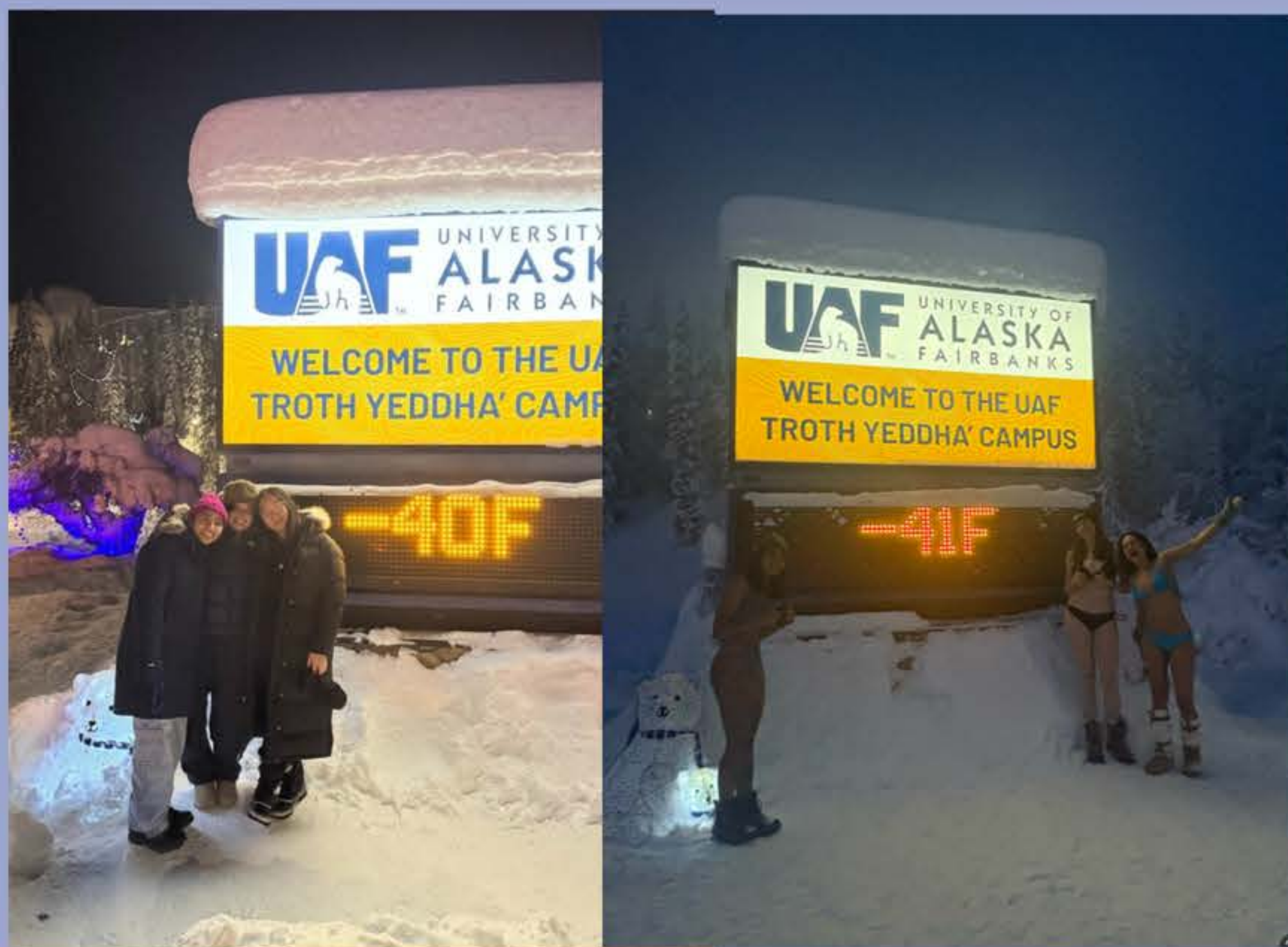
**Feeling – Billie Marten**



# THE FUN THINGS YOU CAN DO WHEN IT'S THIS COLD

By Tori Lu and the Fairbanks Fellows | Fairbanks

Fairbanks is the coldest place I have had the pleasure of living in, and it comes with unique experiences that I would like to share with everyone today!



**Taking pictures in -40 degrees Celsius/Fahrenheit**  
Celsius and Fahrenheit become the same at negative 40, which means people flock to the temperature signs for pictures—often in beach wear. For some reason, I did this three times over the long winter nights. Here are a couple of late-night and early morning pictures!

## Wade through chest-deep snow

The unusually cold winter brought lots of snowfall that didn't melt. In late February, a period of nonstop snowfall meant we had to wade through piles of fluff that were, in some places, "nipple-high," as Kieran would put it.





### **Build an impenetrable fortress**

With so much snow, Owen was called to the humongous mound constructed by the UAF plowers at the edge of the Susville forest. His inner soul needed to build a fort. And so he spearheaded a movement to construct a series of complex snow tunnels not once but twice—because the first fort was not impenetrable enough and, it met its death at the hands of the UAF plowers

### **Sculpt your hair with hot springs steam**

One of the popular wintertime activities in Fairbanks is to visit Chena Hot Springs. In negative temperatures, the steam rises so abundantly that you can scarcely see a foot away from you. It's the perfect environment to sculpt your hair into pointy anglerfish and alien antennae, letting the moisture solidify into ice crystals.



### **Attend the World Ice Art Championships**

It stays so cold that you can sled down ice slides, play ice ping pong and ice connect 5, and admire the beauty of bigger-than-life ice sculptures for weeks!

## Walk into a glacier

Thank you to Iz's mom who took us on an adventure to Castner Glacier! I've never seen such a Pinterest side of Alaska before!



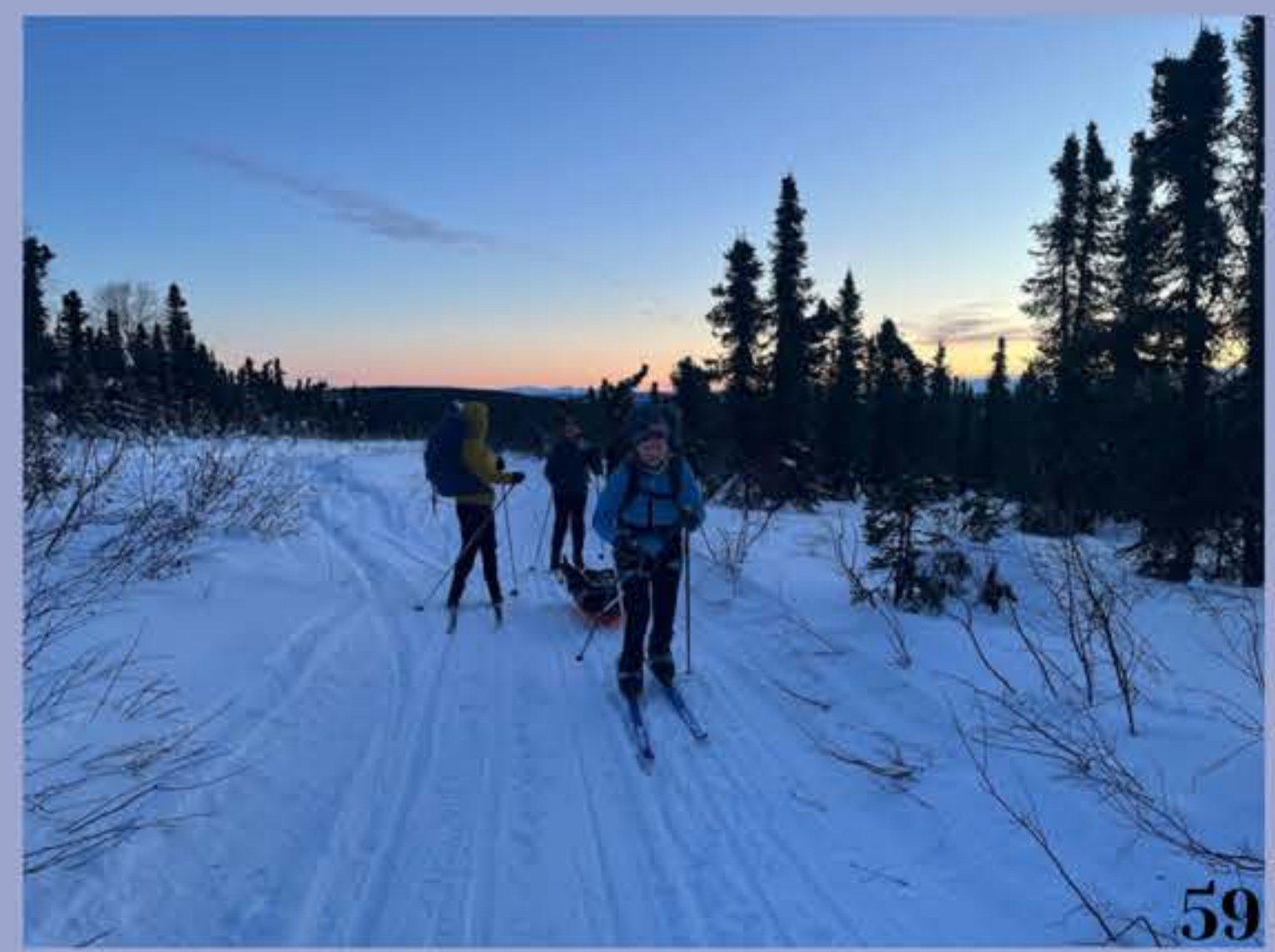
## Run 37 kilometers indoors

If you're feeling restless, you can always run around a 200-meter track approximately 185 times. It's far too cold to run outside for longer than 20 minutes, but you can always try!



## Ski to one of the (many) beautiful public use cabins near Fairbanks!

If you feel like adventuring, you can always ski a variety of distances (7 or 15 miles) to cabins in the White Mountains Rec Area near Fairbanks! But, be sure to bring enough wood, or you might have to ski back at 1am due to impending cold...



# MEET THE SITKA AFP BIKES

By Lee Drukman | Sitka

This semester I've been working alongside three Outer Coast students, who have volunteered their time, to fix up the AFP bikes and get them back on the roads. The four of us had zero knowledge about bikes going in, and have learned a lot from the volunteers at the Salty Spoke, our local bike co-op. We meet every Saturday from 11-2 and spend a few hours chipping away at different repairs. Sitka is the land of rain, which means that maintaining your bike in Sitka is a constant battle against rust, mud, and potholes.

## RED MERCIER FIXED GEAR



The Mercier had a disconnected brake line, but it was definitely in the best shape out of any of the bikes! Remarkably the tubes are intact and the tread on the tires is still looking good. Unfortunately, on its first journey back on the road last week, one of the links in the chain snapped; The Mercier will be making an appearance at the Salty Spoke this weekend.

**Rust rating:** 2/5: It may look fine, but beware unoiled chains...

**Personality:** Speedy!

**Needs:** chain

This bike became the personal project of Outer Coast student, Augustine, who took it upon himself to repair the hydraulic brake system. There were air bubbles trapped in the brake line, but after two weeks of attempts, and a lot of guidance from Salty Spoke volunteers, he was able to drain the line and reset the otherwise intact brake system. This was a super technical repair but, besides some small issues with the tires, which are holding air thus far (knock on wood), this was the only issue that this bike had.

**Rust rating:** 0/5

**Personality:** Sporty, tall

## BLACK SPECIALIZED



## BLUE RALEIGH



This bike, to say the least, has few of its original parts. It is currently waiting to find a viable chain donor...

**Rust rating:** 4/5 Rust removal is solely for morale

**Personality:** Stubborn, but resilient

### Replaced:

tubes

seat

seat post

brake pads

derailleur

hangar

### Needs:

chain

likely a new shifter cable

## SPECIALIZED ROCKHOPPER (WITH BASKET!)



This was the first bike to make its journey home from the basement of the radio station, where the Salty Spoke has kindly allowed us to stash everything while we figure out repairs.

**Rust rating:** 2/5

**Personality:** functional, straightforward

### Replaced:

brake pads

tubes

## LIGHT BLUE RALEIGH



Working on this model has taught us a lot about planned obsolescence. The company manufactures the frames to be impossible to repair without Raleigh proprietary parts, so we are currently waiting for a specialty order of a forty-dollar, 1" x 1" piece in order to get this bike back on the road!

**Rust rating:** 1/5 If it ain't broke don't fix it

**Personality:** Persnickety

**Replaced:**

tubes

**Needs:**

derailleur

hanger

shifting cables

two spokes



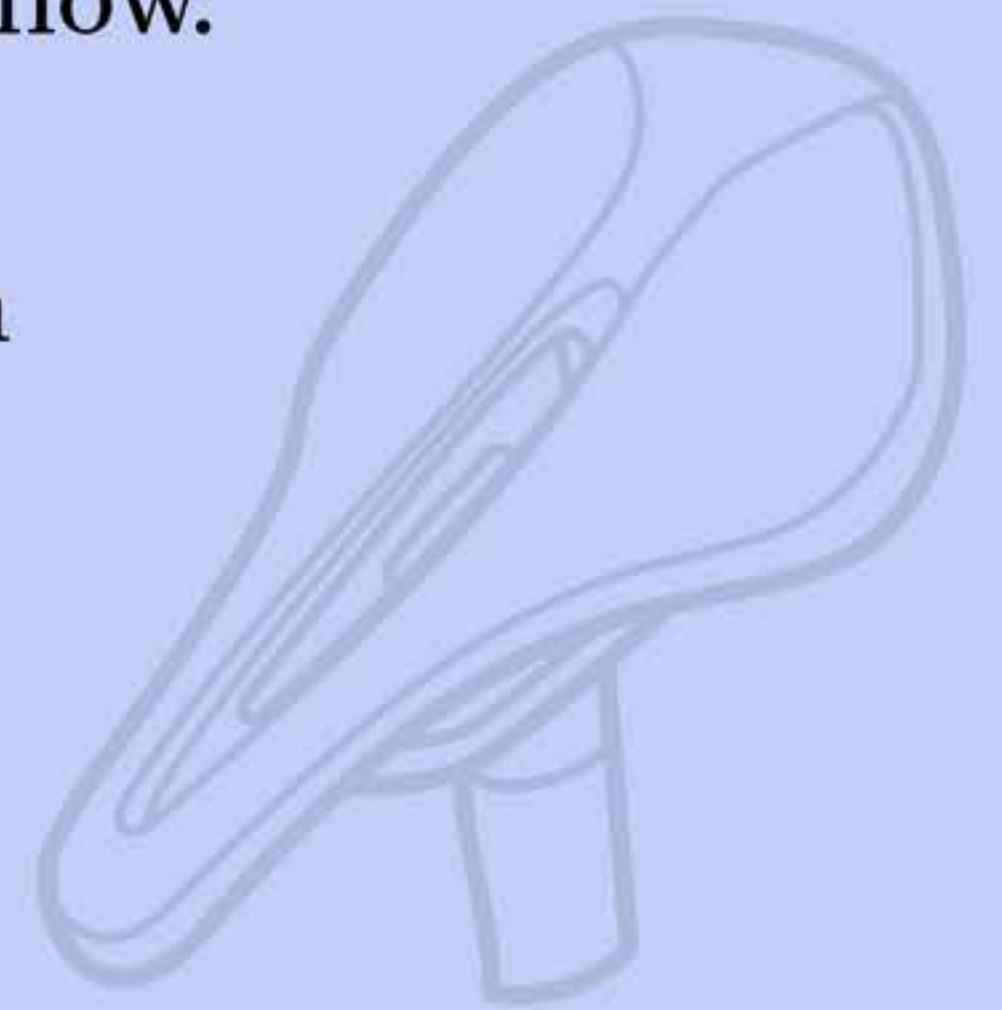
## BOG BIKE (MODEL UNKNOWN)



This bike couldn't make it out of the frozen ground and is instead a decorative sculpture in the yard now.

**Rust rating:** unknown

**Personality:** artistic



## HUFFY CHILDRENS BIKE (RIP)

Not every battle can be won, and this Huffy (not pictured) lost its fight against rust. The rust on all of the other bikes was largely superficial, but on this model the rust had damaged the frame enough that it was not safe to salvage or ride.

**Rust rating:** 5/5 (fatal)

Very specific

# Juneau Bingo

By Akanksha Basil and the Juneau Fellows

Searched for the best deal on XTRATUFs

Developed a fear of making direct eye contact with any of the ravens in town

Became a printmaker, sketch artist, or painter

Seriously underpaid for petsitting an old, crotchety, and/or high-maintenance dog or cat

Sipped a drink in Amalga while watching everyone you know walk past through the windows

Encountered Pat Race at every community event

Drove to Douglas to see the aurora past 10pm on a weekday

Mistook a garbage can for a bear while out on a night run

Serially stalked the Free Little Art Gallery next to the JD City Museum

Dodged cruise ship tourists in September and May

Had an unexpectedly deep, personal conversation with a stranger at Lodestone Library

Made friends at the Rock Dump

**Lived in Juneau (free space)**

Cleared icy storm drains as a form of cohort bonding

Became a frequent flyer at the Salvation Army and SVDP thrift stores

Accumulated a collection of Juneau-specific field guides

Had decision paralysis on a sunny day

Bought a copy of *90 Plus Short Walks Around Juneau* and scribbled all over it

Went tidepooling at the Shrine of St. Therese

Waited in line to get into the Red Dog for a High Costa Livin' performance

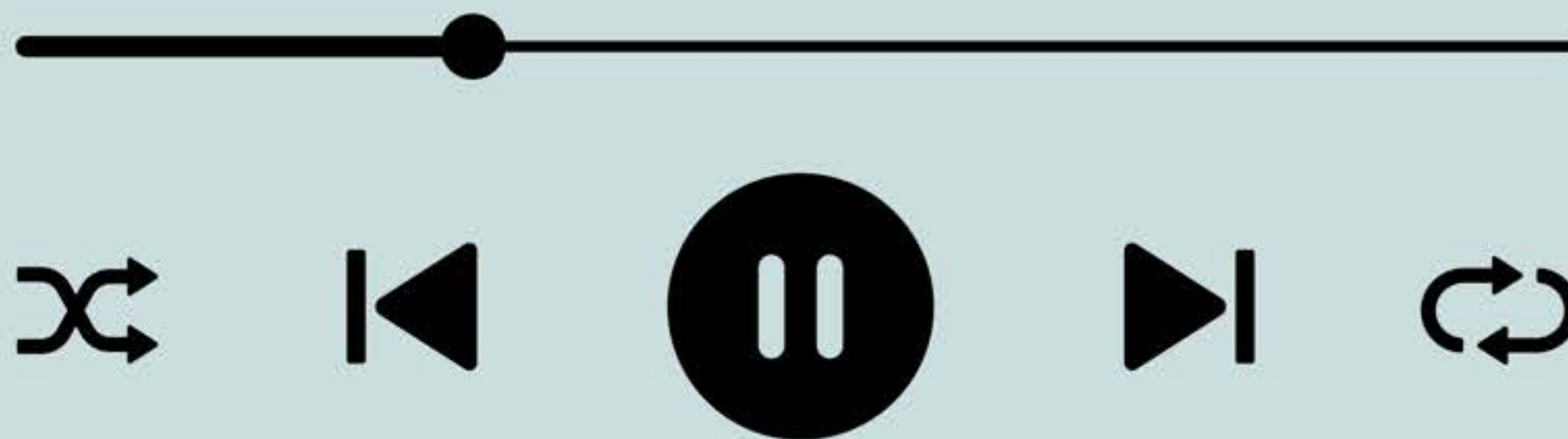
Searched for mining-era pottery shards on Sandy Beach

Starred in the Rocky Horror Picture Show at Goldtown

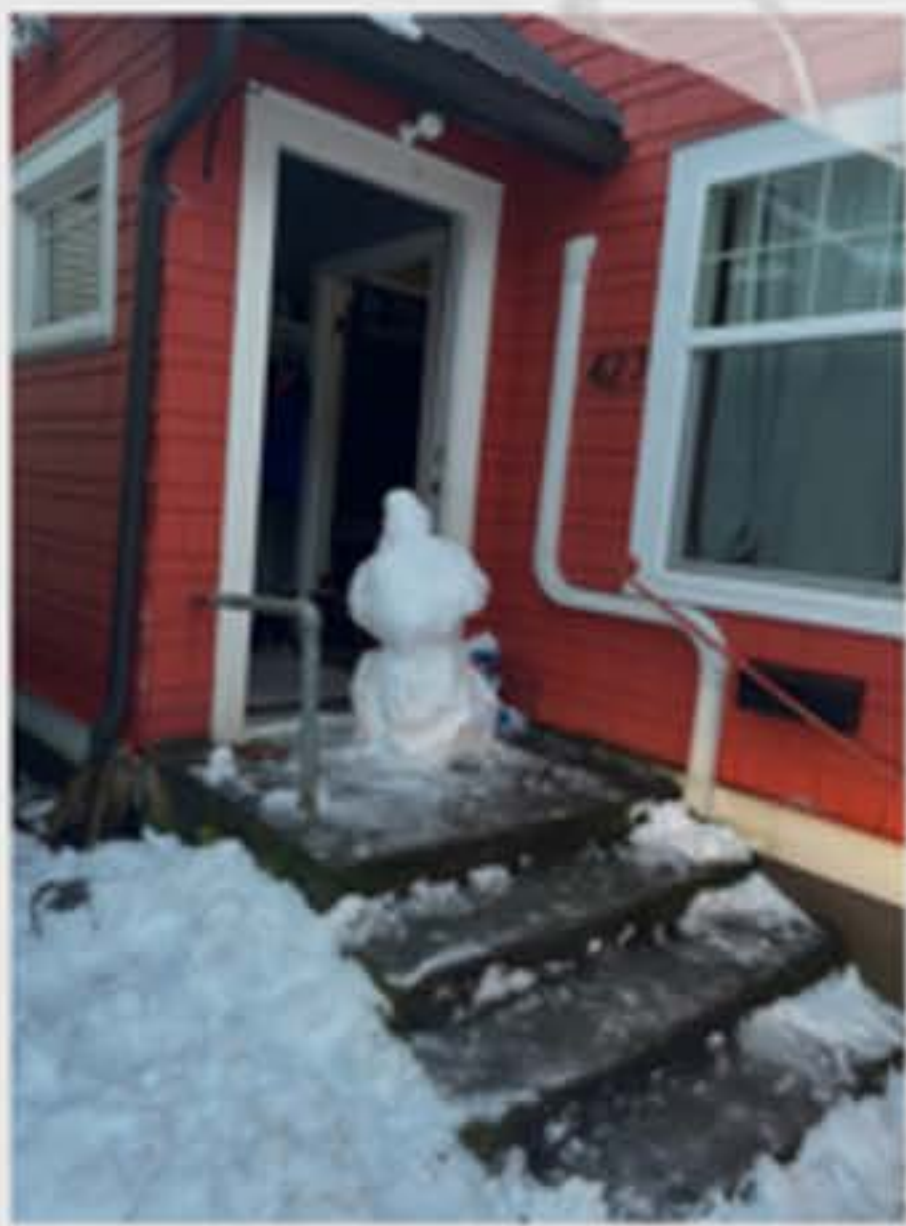
Listened to KTOO with your morning coffee or tea

Been thwarted by a bear (or several) while trying to send mail

Encountered repeat characters on the bus



ITAL (ROSES) by Lupe Fiasco  
Man I Need by Olivia Dean  
Graduate by Third Eye Blind  
Sue Me by Audrey Hobert  
Bad Girls (Verdine Version) by Solange  
Mangetout by Wet Leg  
Right Back to It by Waxahatchee  
Professor X by Dave  
Epilogue v5 by Dominic Fike  
People Talk by The Stripers  
Willa (demo) by Rosie Rush  
All I Ever Asked by Rachel Chinouriri



Surprise visitor from Oscar



ABDC Tax trip to Tunuak and White Mountain



Folk Fest!!!



Closing retreat puppet show



Herring eggs during the spawning



Cross country skiing on the lake!



Evening harbor walks



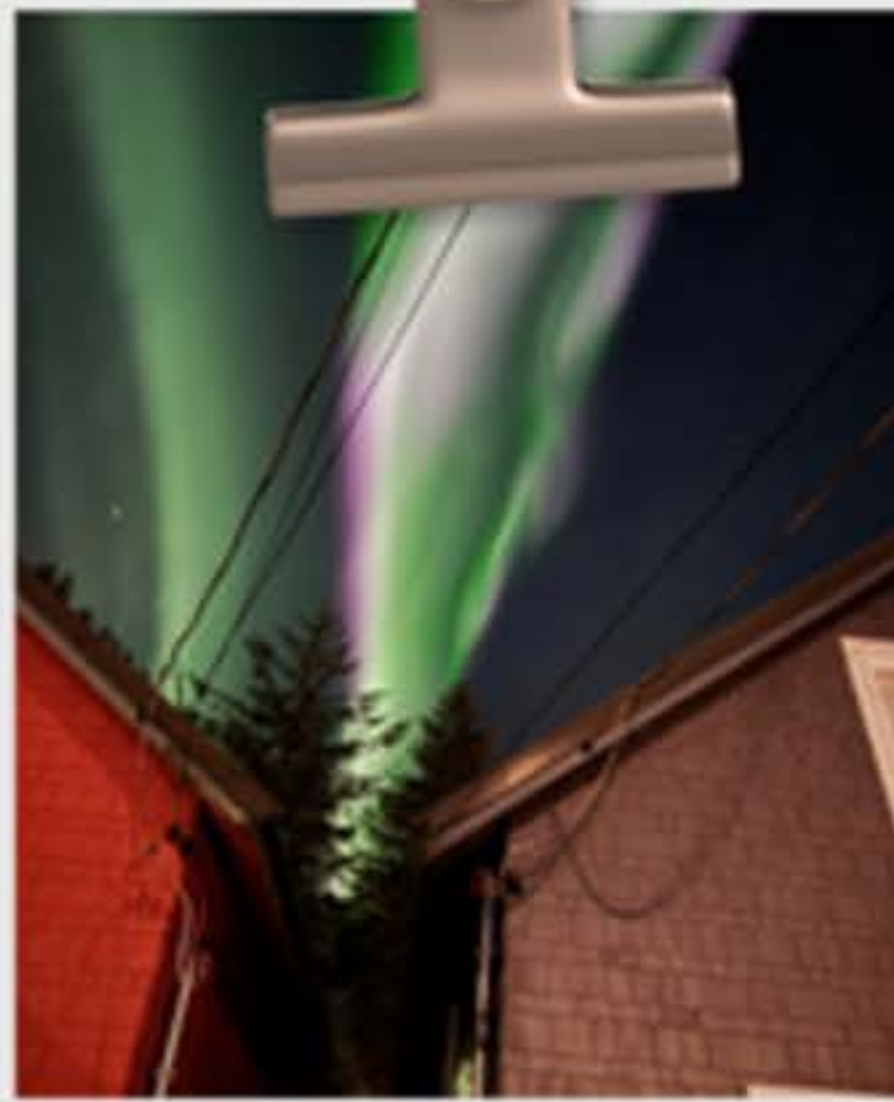
AFP Alumni Reunion boat tour



Thrifting amazing fuzzy hats



Snowpocalypse shoveling party



Best Northern Lights we've seen



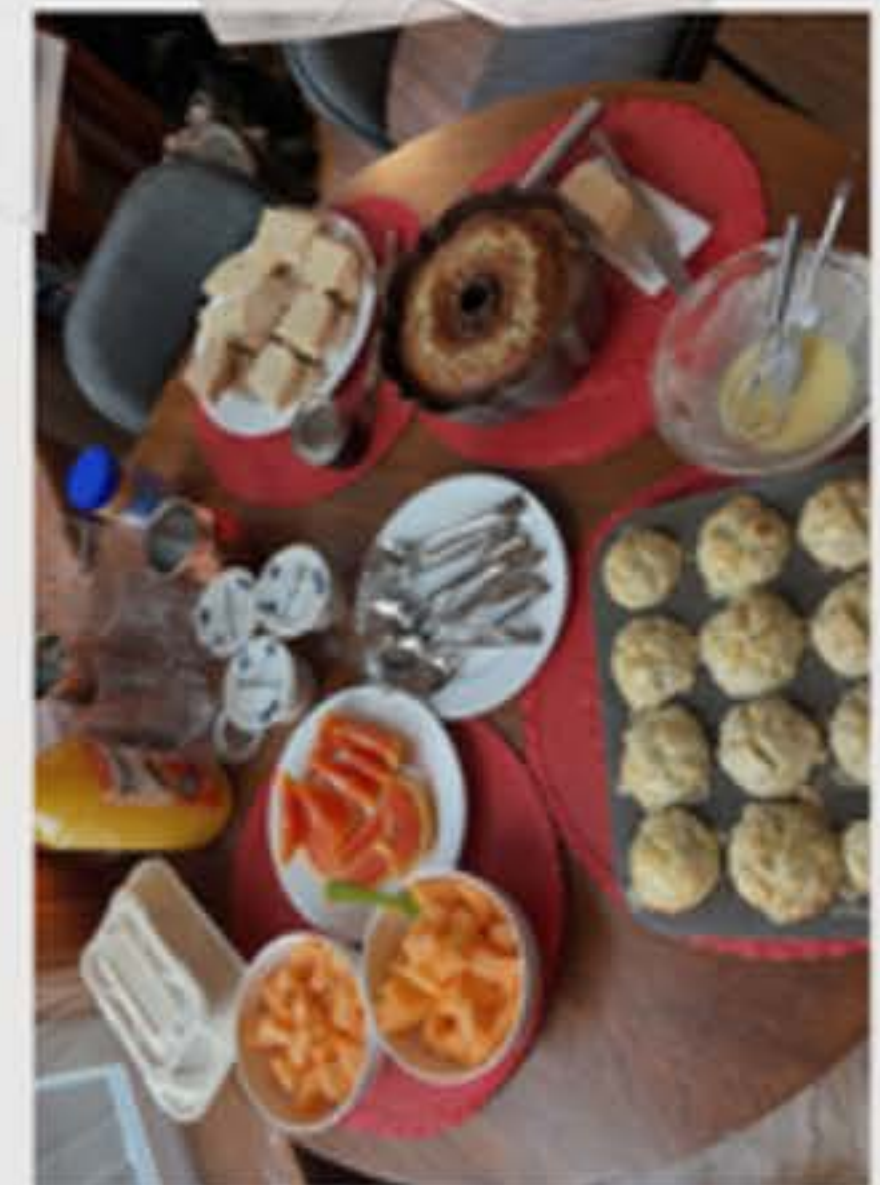
Post skiing sunset golden hour



Bowling!



Superbowl party



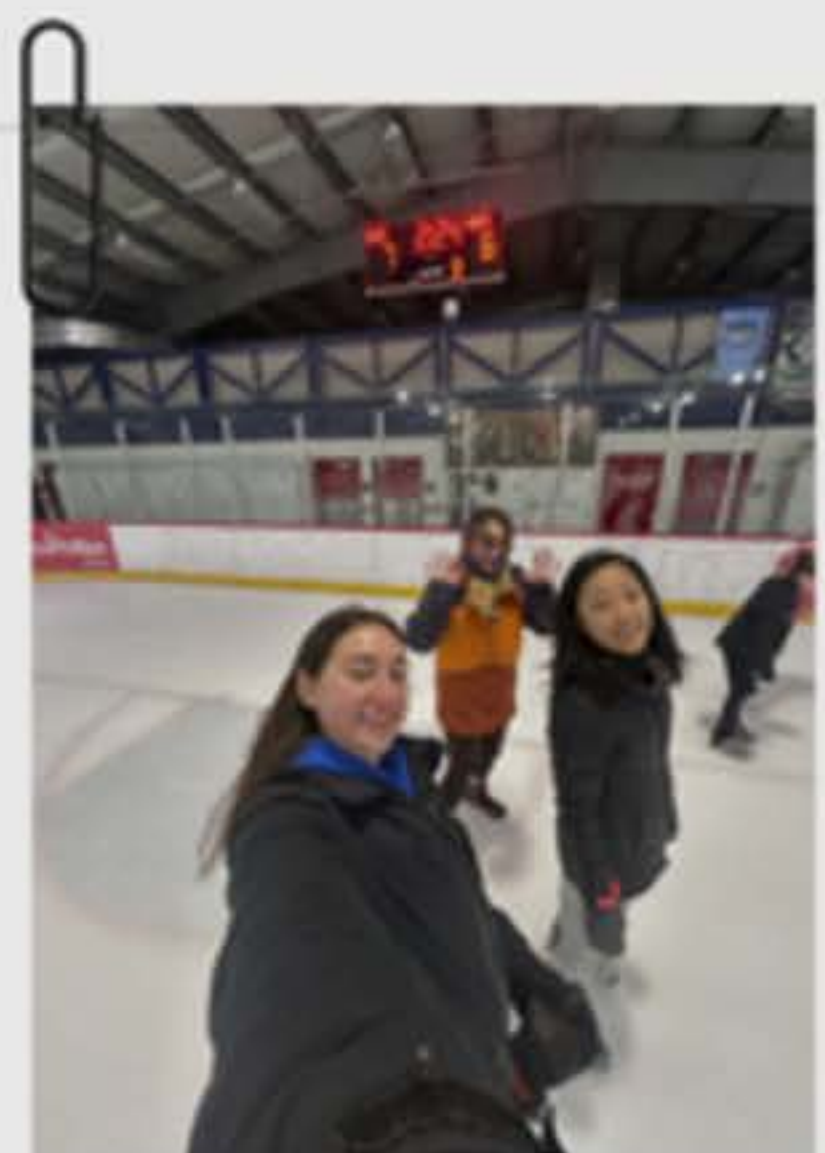
Brunch :)



Ceramics class with Teacher Abigail K



Holi ❤️ at Spice



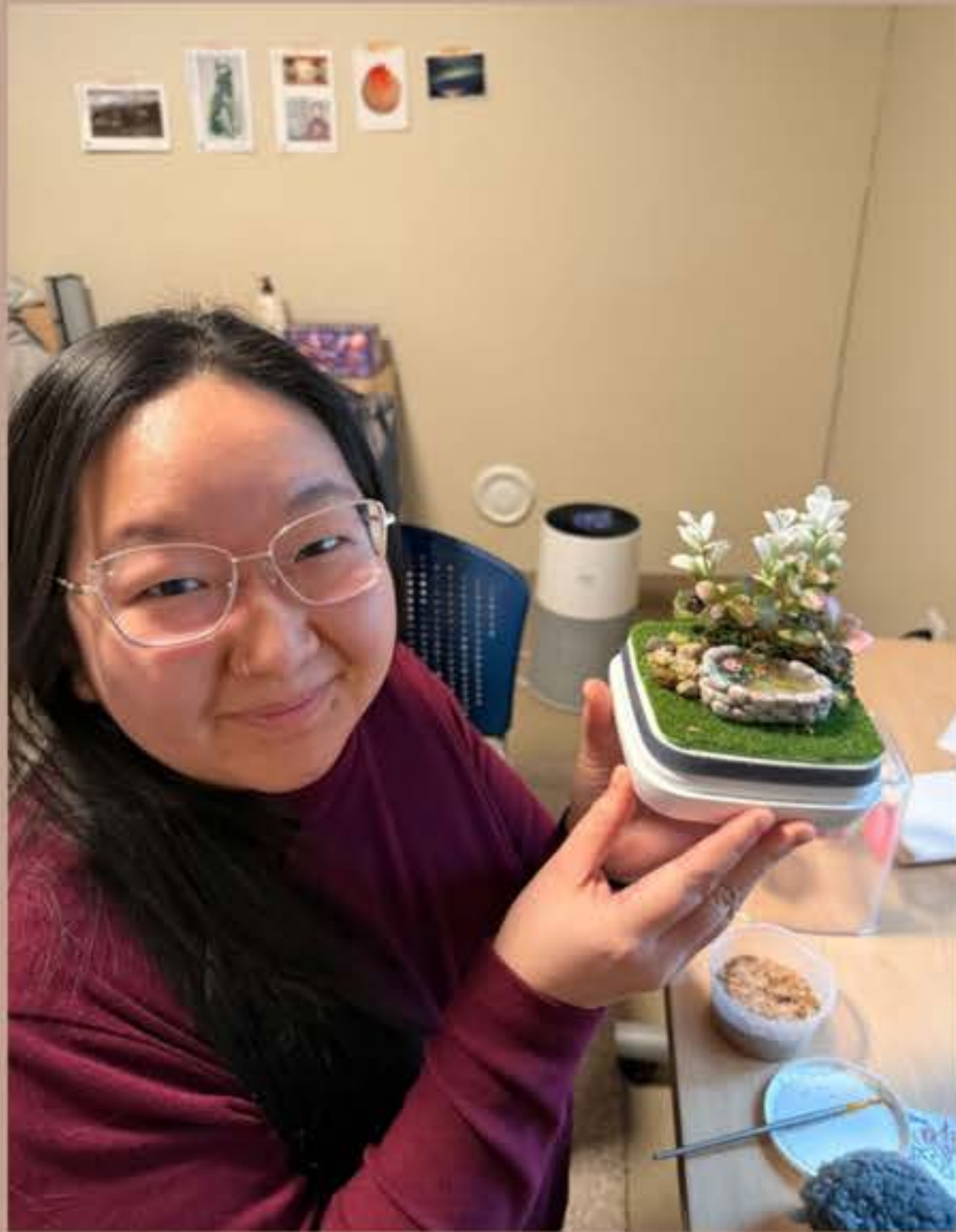
Free ice skating! at Treadwell Arena

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# Melody Update

By Tori Lu | Fairbanks



In the Fall newsletter, I introduced our lovely readers to the delightful animals of Susville. You may remember that one of them was my pet spider, Melody, who I acquired off of Facebook Marketplace. I am sure you all are extremely curious to learn what she has been up to these past few months.

Melody has since molted once again, emerging from her web considerably larger and fluffier. She is a happy little spider who enjoys eating mealworms and climbing around her custom koi pond under the sunshine.

Despite being a jumping spider, I almost never see her jump—when she is hungry she will just climb into her feeding dish, grab a hapless mealworm, and expertly pierce her fangs into its body to feast. She often waves her two front legs at me in surprise when I pick her up.

I hope you enjoyed this update of Melody!



Look at this cutie!!!



Golden hour 🌅

# Juneau Spring Bird Report

By Akanksha Basil | Juneau

After a long, snowy, somewhat troublesome winter, spring is finally here, and so are the birds! Below are some species, both common and not-so-common(!) I've spotted and photographed in the past few weeks. In addition to the birds listed below, I have also seen dippers, pipits, robins, kinglets, harlequin ducks, scoters, mallards, and so many others!



## White-crowned sparrow

Point Bishop trail, Thane

Uncommon in Southeast AK – this fellow was the only one I've seen in Juneau so far, and was rather shy.



## Fox sparrow

Basin Road, near Mt. Juneau

These guys are everywhere right now, and can be seen earnestly hopping around in the moss everywhere you look.



## Dark-eyed junco

Flume trail, near Mt. Juneau

There are two junco subspecies – the slate-colored and the Oregon. Here in Juneau, we have the Oregon subspecies.



## Song sparrow

Rocky tidal beach, downtown Juneau

Song sparrows have a loud, musical, very recognizable song that can be heard near any coastline.



**Townsend's warbler, male**

Road to Perseverance Trailhead

A few weeks ago, these brightly-colored, masked birds began appearing everywhere, darting between the spruces, sometimes in supposed pursuit of one another. Males have a black cap, throat, and cheeks, while females have a lighter cap and cheeks with a yellow throat.



**Wilson's warbler, male**

Cope Park, near downtown Juneau

My first encounter with one of these delightful birds was when one particular gentleman alighted on a shrub not four feet away and spent five whole minutes flitting from branch to branch, head cocked, getting progressively closer to me in evident curiosity.



**Yellow-rumped warbler, Audubon's, female**  
Gold Creek riparian area

I had never seen an Audubon's variant until coming to Alaska, so it was quite the treat to see one the other day! Females are duller in color, but males are a mix of dark charcoal black, grey, and bright yellow.



**Orange-crowned warbler (?), celata**  
Gold Creek riparian area

Orange crowned warblers are pretty inconspicuous birds, but their personalities are vibrant! They look pretty similar to Tennessee warblers (uncommon) and female yellow warblers (common), and can be harder to ID.



### **Hermit thrush**

Flume trail, near Mt. Juneau

It's so hard to tell the difference between the spotted thrushes in SE Alaska, but one main hermit thrush identifier is their rusty, cinnamon colored tail and full, white eye ring. Here in Juneau, we also have Swainson's and grey-cheeked thrushes.



### **Varied thrush, male**

End of Flume trail

I'd seen only flashes of this bird before, to my delight, this guy perched on a nearby branch for at least 30 seconds (!) Varied thrushes are native to the Pacific Northwest and their range extends inland to Idaho and Montana. They're pretty secretive, and don't seem to be as gregarious as the spotted thrushes, at least from what I've observed :)



### **Brown creeper**

End of Flume trail

Is that a bird or is that a bug? Brown creepers are a favorite of mine back home, where they can be spotted shimmying up trees in search of tasty, proportionally-sized morsels. They're supposedly uncommon in SE Alaska!



### **Pine siskin**

Random path across from Evergreen Cemetery

Pine siskins travel in large, very loud flocks and have an extremely unpredictable winter range. More fun than that, though, is their scientific name. *Spinus pinus*. I love birds and bird people.

*...and finally, this guy.*



**Omnipresent. Omnipotent. A force of nature. Would win in a fight (any fight). Could probably win a local election. Will strike back if you do anything to make him and his buddies mad. Be warned.**



# Pour One Out for BeBop

Kate Moe | Anchorage

I remember it like it was yesterday. Receiving a text from BeBop's owner:

"I understand you might be interested in taking care of BeBop...he is a rescue dog who is trying to work through his childhood traumas."

The next two weeks of my life I learned more about this... let's call "being." BeBop hated being touched, loved, looked at in any way shape or form. BeBop called the shots. It would seem as though he was fairly low maintenance, because he hates everyone. Well that is not the case.

Every morning, I would wake up to him panting and running around the living room. I was instructed that I could not put a leash on BeBop or else he would try and bite me. "Let him outside, and call him back in by yelling  
"AY BEBOP, AROO BOP"

I was stunned, but I did not want to get bit. My first morning with BeBop I opened the door and turned to put on my shoes. As I put them on, he ran outside. I turned back and BeBop was gone. I tried not to panic. However, this is BeBop we are talking about. I was yelling BeBop Aroo Bop, as per the request. I go everywhere. The front yard, the back yard, the lukewarm hot tub. Thankfully, I found him 20 minutes later near the lake. He started to run away but I brought out the one thing he didn't hate in this world,  
pepperoni.

Have you ever heard of a soulmate? BeBop didn't have one. He did, however, have a soul that was filled with pepperoni. I bought more pepperoni this week than I cared to admit. However, it was the only thing I knew that would make this dog not kill me in the middle of the night. I kept pepperoni on me at all times.

Eventually, he even started laying on me in the middle of the night.

I wouldn't say he loved me though, he just loved pepperoni.

As I am sure you may have noticed by now, I have been using the past tense when referring to BeBop. That is because he is no longer with us. Back in January, I texted BeBop's owners.

“Hello! Wanted to check to see if you need any BeBop coverage over the next few months?”

It was dark in Anchorage at this point and I wanted to get a bit of money and car access as well. What came next was something I could have predicted...

“A coyote got BeBop”

Too stunned to speak, I never responded, still haven't to this day.

Unfortunately, my first thought was, “thank god I didn't witness his death”. Given his avoidance towards coming indoors, the only thing that saved me from BeBop's demise was the pepperoni.

BeBop lived a strange life. It seems I was just a small part of it. His owner's granddaughter, who moved from Norway just weeks prior to my time with him, adored him. She was the only one who could engage. My heart goes out to her.

I'm sure BeBop will still find his way into my life without my permission. He will be reincarnated as another dog, being, or source of drama. Just in case, I know to carry pepperoni with me wherever I go.



# A Guide to Intertidal Life in Sitka (and Southeast AK)

By Akanksha Basil | Juneau

In late March, I was fortunate to travel to Sitka, using AFP funding, to observe the spring herring spawn. While I didn't see very many herring, I was able to see quite a few critters, including many intertidal invertebrates existing happily in Sitka's abundant tide pools and rocky coastline. Below is an informal photo guide to some of the marine creatures you might encounter in SE Alaska.

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## Leather Star *Dermasterias imbricata*



Leather stars are a common sea star species found along the Pacific coast, from Prince William Sound, Alaska to San Diego, California. Their bodies are smooth and slimy to the touch due to the thick protective mucus they secrete.

They can be found on rocky shores and on harbor sea walls. This one, along with many others, was found on the rocks in Crescent Harbor.

Leather stars have a wide central disc, with five thick, short arms, and are identifiable due to their unique texture and garlicky smell when lifted out of the water (yup, really!).

# Ochre Star

*Pisaster ochraceus*



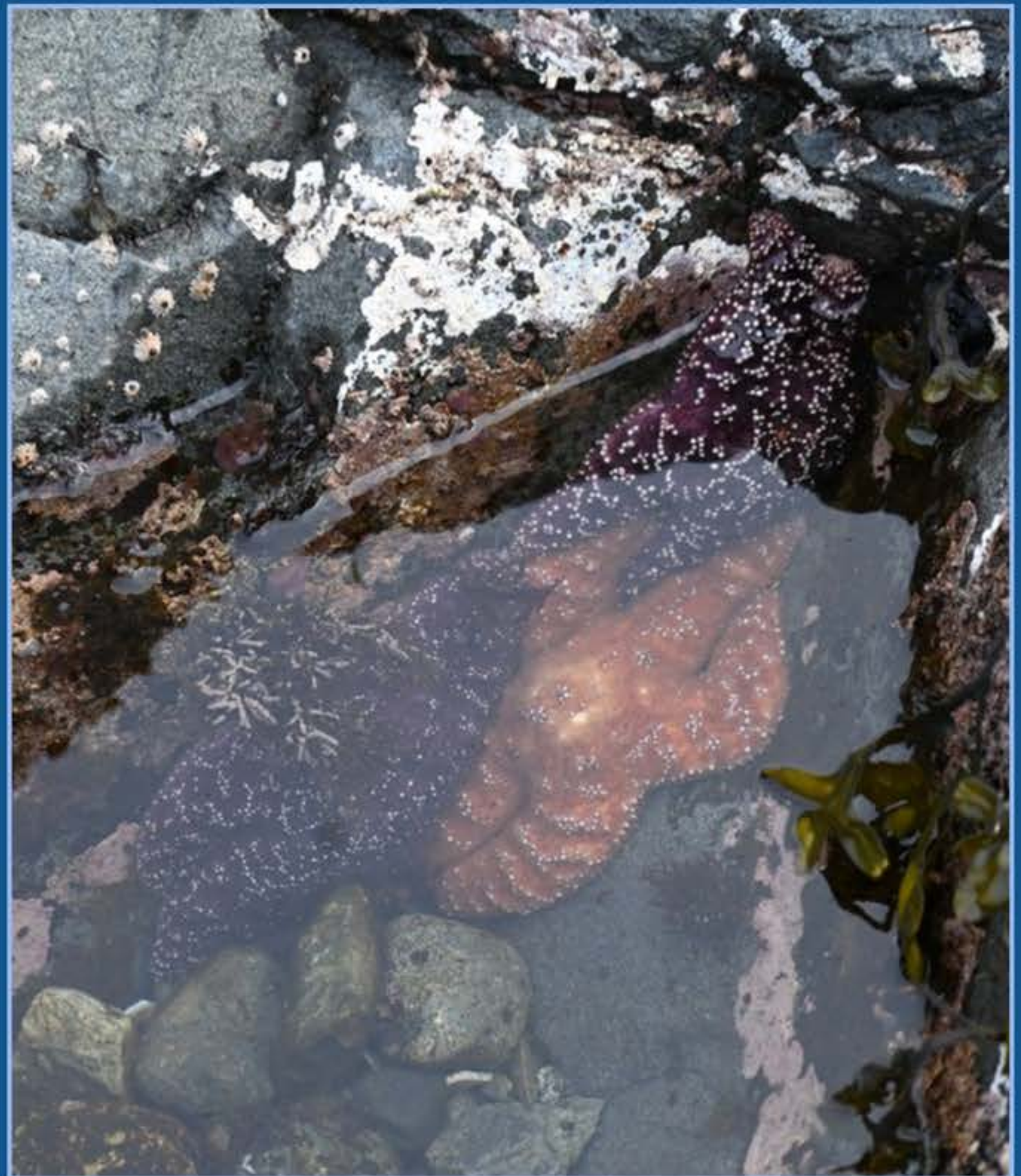
The white spines, called ossicles, form a pentagonal shape in the center of the star.

Ochre stars and mottled stars are often confused for one another. Ochre star arms are widest at the base, where they connect to the center disc, while mottled star arms are tapered slightly at the base and are thickest slightly off from the center disc. Mottled stars also typically have longer arms and non-patterned ossicle arrangements.

Sadly, ochre stars are very susceptible to Sea Star Wasting Disease, which has devastated some populations.

A very common Pacific sea star species, ochre stars occur in a variety of color forms – orange, yellow, brown, red(dish), and purple – and are typically 10-18 inches in diameter.

They can be found on exposed, rocky shores and are, according to some sources, extremely tolerant of air exposure and resistant to desiccation.



In a Sika tide pool. Seems like ochre stars are rather cuddly as well.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4760142/>

<https://www.haystackrockawareness.com/mottled-sea-star>

[https://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Pisaster\\_ochraceus/](https://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Pisaster_ochraceus/)

# Giant California Sea Cucumber

*Apostichopus californicus*



Found peeking out from some mucky-looking boulders in Crescent Harbor.

In Alaska, they can most commonly be observed on boulders, cobble, sand, and other substrates, and tend to seek out nutrient-rich organic sediment.

These sea cucumbers are an economically important species, driving a very profitable commercial fishery. They're usually yellow, red, or brown, with a soft outer body, pointy-looking projections (papillae) covering their backs, and tube feet. They can be found across the entire length of the North American Pacific coast, from the Aleutian Islands, AK to Baja, CA.



A sketch showing general body shape and papillae.

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## Orange Sea Cucumber *Cucumaria miniata*



A sketch showing body shape and tube feet.

Orange sea cucumbers have ten finely branched tentacles that function to catch prey and organic detritus. Their bodies are long, with several rows of brown tube feet.

The bright orange color and wispy appearance of this sea cucumber makes it distinctive and easy to ID. They can be observed in between rock crevices in bays, on rocky shores, and in kelp forests.



In Crescent Harbor!

# Moonglow Anemone

*Anthopleura artemisia*

Moonglow anemones, also known as burrowing anemones, live with their main body column buried in the sand. They can be green, brown, pink, or orange, and have white-banded tentacles. They can be found from Alaska to California, like many of the species listed here.



A green moonglow anemone in a very productive tide pool.



A close-up of a moonglow anemone's tentacles, with banding visible.

These anemones can be found in the intertidal zone and prefer to live away from other anemones (they like their space...who doesn't?). Interestingly, moonglow anemones will sometimes take over holes left by clams and live in them.

# Giant Green Anemone

*Anthopleura artemisia*

This bright green anemone gets its color from a green skin pigment in combination with symbiotic algae living in its tissues. They can grow to almost a foot in diameter and can be found in the subtidal and intertidal zones from Alaska to Baja, CA. In addition to small crabs, bivalves, and fish, giant green anemones have been observed eating small/baby seabirds.



One of the biggest ones I saw in Sitka.



A Dungeness crab found on the eelgrass beds near the Sitka Sound Science Center.

# Dungeness Crab

*Cancer magister*

Dungeness crabs, which are highly prized as seafood, can be found from the Aleutian Islands to Magdalena Bay, Mexico. They live in estuaries, bays, and close-to-shore areas, and prefer muddy substrates and eelgrass beds. They scavenge for worms, bivalves, small fish, shrimp, and other crabs.

Dungeness crabs typically sport a reddish-purple shell and white-tipped claws, unlike red rock crabs, which have black-tipped claws.

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# Purple Shore Crab

*Hemigrapsus nudus*

Purple shore crabs are small, variably-colored invertebrates that can be found from southern Alaska to Mexico. They prefer rocky beaches and estuaries, and often live under cobble in large numbers.



I found so many of these guys crawling under rocks in Sitka.



A sketch of the same crab.

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=dungenesscrab.main>

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/basics/crab>

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=dungenesscrab.main>

These crabs feed on green algae and microorganisms, as well as young bivalves, snail eggs, and other small organisms.

# Entomatadas

BY MADDY MOORE

## Ingredients

- 5-6 Medium Tomatoes
- 2 Serrano Chiles
- Vegetable Oil
- 3 Large Garlic Cloves
- 1 White Onion
- 1 ½ tsp Salt
- Knorr Chicken Bouillon (cubes or powder)
- 3 Bay Leaves
- 24+ Corn Tortillas
- Mexican Crema
- Queso Fresco

## Directions

[Juaja's Mexican Cocina - Video](#)

1. Watch linked video above ^
2. Roughly chop ½ onion and peel garlic
3. Roast the tomatoes and chiles on a foil lined stainless steel pan. Once charred, set aside, remove foil, and pour about 1-2tbs vegetable oil into pan. Cook onion and garlic on pan for 5ish minutes.
4. Blend tomatoes, chiles, onion, and garlic.
5. ¼ cup of oil (maybe less) in pan. Wait till it's hot. Pour mixture back in pan. Stir while pouring. Put 1 chicken bouillon cube into mixture. Stir, stir, stir. Salt to taste.
6. Crumble queso fresco, dice up onion, get crema out!
7. Fry up tortillas <15 minutes. Place on paper towels. I like to place paper towels down, then 6 tortillas, repeat so the oil get's absorbed.
8. Then, assemble! Dip both sides of tortilla in entomatada sauce, fill w/ queso fresco, diced onion, roll up. Top with more sauce and queso fresco! SO good and simple.

## Notes

Some good additions are shredded chicken, cilantro, diced onion, avocado



# La Noche de Entomatadas



# BULLWHIPONNAISE

## CHECKEN

By Zoe Storonov and Suraj Singareddy | Sitka

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Earlier this year, Barnacle Foods was kind enough to send the Sitka Fellows some free hot sauce (thank you, Max!!). We wanted to show you one of the ways we use hot sauce in our daily cooking. Perfect for Sunday house dinners!



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## INGREDIENTS

- 1-1.5 lb Chicken Thigh
- ½ cup Bullwhip
- 3 Tbs Olive Oil
- Crushed Garlic
- ½ cup Mayonnaise
- Crushed Black Pepper (to taste)
- Pickle juice (to taste)
- Onion Powder (to taste)
- Salt (to taste)
- 1 Tbs flour

## INSTRUCTIONS

Salt and pepper chicken thighs. Combine all of the ingredients in a bowl, add the chicken and let it marinate for 60-90 minutes (the longer the better.) Heat up a cast iron pan, wait until fully hot and then cook the chicken. Flip after one side is browned –there should be a crispy crust. Cook chicken until the internal temperature is 165 degrees Fahrenheit and enjoy!



**Cheers to those who made this year possible and all that AFP has in store for the future. We're lucky to be a small part of it!**

