

THE QAWALANGIN TRIBE OF UNALASKA | WINTER ISSUE 2021

# Unangan Tide



Photo credit to Kaye Gumera. Photo taken at Captains Bay, Unalaska, Alaska.

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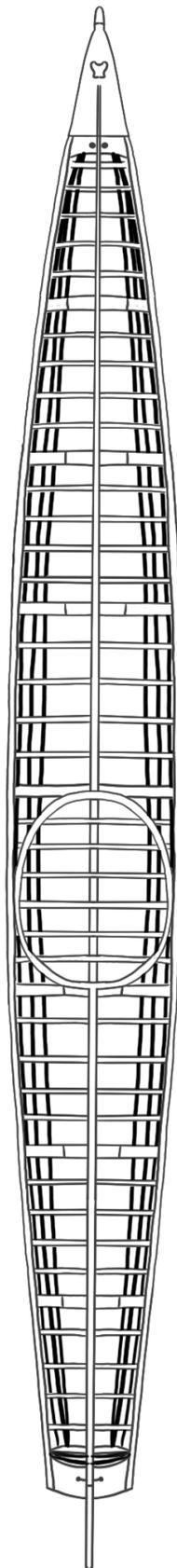
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## RECYCLING & BACKHAUL

I know that many community members are wondering about the status of our recycling program. We are currently not able to accept materials for recycling, but we are working behind the scenes to figure out how we can get this program up and running again!

This summer, we will be working with the Backhaul Alaska program to coordinate a community-wide collection event and backhaul off the island of electronic wastes such as old computers, phones, printers, radios, or other things with a battery or a cord. We will let everyone know as details are available.



## UPDATES FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL & FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

BY: CHANDRA POE

### PARALYTIC SHELLFISH POISONING

Our intrepid staff are continuing to collect mussel samples throughout the winter. As they are available, we are posting lab results on our website at [Qawalangin.com/psp](http://Qawalangin.com/psp). As always, please be aware that toxin levels can change very quickly – just check out the numbers from summer 2020 to see how much difference a week can make in the toxin load of blue mussels. As the ocean temperatures rise, the phytoplankton that produce these toxins will increase. Please continue to be cautious! Remember: If you can't get them tested, the only way to know shellfish are safe to eat is to buy them from a commercial source.

We are continuing to look for monitoring methods and options that will address this important food safety concern.





## **NEW FISHERIES & OUTREACH POSITION IN THE WORKS**

We are hiring! By the next newsletter we should be introducing a new Fisheries Biologist and Outreach Coordinator. We will be continuing to accept applications until the end of January and starting the interview process shortly after. We are excited to be coordinating with Sea Grant to support this new position and anticipate some amazing things in the months and years ahead, including continued work at the McLees Lake weir monitoring this important sockeye run.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **COASTAL OBSERVATION AND SEABIRD SURVEY TEAM (COASST)**

On February 20 from 10:30 am – 1:30 pm, COASST will deliver a virtual training session for Alaska residents. COASST participants help make a difference for the environment by collecting data on beach-cast carcasses of marine birds on a monthly basis to establish the baseline pattern of beached bird mortality on North Pacific beaches. This training is free, but you need to register ahead of time. Learn more by calling COASST at 206-221-6893, emailing [coasst@uw.edu](mailto:coasst@uw.edu), or visiting their website at [coasst.org](http://coasst.org).

### **DRONE PILOT SCHOOL**

Our friends at Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council are hosting a virtual Drone Pilot School in partnership with Delta Backhaul on March 2-4. This class will prepare you to take the FAA Part 107 exam to become a certified drone pilot. The cost is \$99. For more information, contact Maryann Fidel at [mfidel@yritwc.org](mailto:mfidel@yritwc.org).

### **LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVER (LEO) NETWORK MONTHLY WEBINARS**

Every month (usually on the 3rd or 4th Tuesday afternoon of the month), the LEO network hosts a webinar and teleconference to review recent observations and also hear from guest experts on a wide range of environmental topics. You can learn more and access archived webinars online at <https://www.leonetnetwork.org/en/docs/about/leo-webinars>.

# SHAYLA TAKES ON A NEW ROLE: CLIMATE RESILIENCE COORDINATOR

BY: SHAYLA SHAISHNIKOFF

In conjunction with an accredited college internship, Shayla has taken on a new role as the Climate Resiliency Coordinator at the Tribe.

The climate is changing and causing a host of serious consequences for people around the world. In the United States, Indigenous peoples will likely be disproportionately impacted compared to their non-Native counterparts. Alaskan Native villages, for example, are already experiencing acute and rapid changes, such as warmer ocean temperatures and rising levels of PSP toxins, changing precipitation patterns, changes to local ecosystems and culturally important plant and animal species, and more frequent and severe extreme weather events.

To maximize climate resilience, we will be developing an updated climate and adaptation plan addressing topics of concern for our community and region. In doing so, we will recruit a committee of Elders, leaders, and youth to help us prioritize what is included in our plan for adaptation. The Unangaꝥ people have cared for these lands for time immemorial, and I am dedicated to carrying on that legacy of stewardship.



**TUMAN TANAX̄ AGLIISAAX̄TAN.**  
TAKE CARE OF OUR LAND.

**TUMAN ALAGUX̄ AGLIISAAX̄TAN.**  
TAKE CARE OF OUR OCEAN.

**SHAYLA  
SHAISHNIKOFF**

Shayla Shaishnikoff showing the camera one of her plate samples pulled from the Spit Dock.

# ISLAND ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP: THE BROWNFIELDS TRIBAL RESPONSE PROGRAM

**BY: ELISE CONTRERAS**

You can find roughly 600 Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) all across the state of Alaska, 30 of which are located on Unalaska. You've almost certainly come across abandoned building debris or concrete, seen rommel spikes or heard about the residual contamination associated with these abandoned military installations. Unalaska has many sites that have been documented and prioritized for cleanup by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and in the Tribe's strategic project implementation plan (SPIP). However, it is not uncommon for new sites to be discovered or contamination issues brought to the attention of the Tribe.

At times, tackling these environmental issues can feel like an insurmountable challenge but the Tribe is constantly making strides forward to address issues of debris and contamination concern through different funding mechanisms. Two active programs for the Tribe are the Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation

Program (NALEMP) and the Tribal Response Program (TRP). Our NALEMP cooperative agreement, through the Department of Defense, provides cleanup funding to address former military contamination and debris removal on the island.

Our TRP cooperative agreement, through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides a means of building tribal capacity and assessing and remediating Brownfield sites. Brownfields are lands where the development or reuse of land is complicated by the presence, or perceived presence of contamination. The TRP allows us to address sites that are "orphaned," meaning they lack a responsible party for the contamination concerns.



# ISLAND ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP: THE BROWNFIELDS TRIBAL RESPONSE PROGRAM (CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

**B**rownfield sites can be reused or developed to include anything from restoring subsistence use areas to building housing and other building infrastructure. The possibilities are endless! The remediation and reuse of contaminated lands is crucial for the continuation of subsistence, safe recreation and economic prosperity on the island.

The long-term goals of our TRP program are to build tribal capacity, identify sites of concern for building our inventory and public record, create opportunities for remediation and land reuse in a way that best suits the community's needs, and to be a resource for public comments and information. We aim to continue building tribal and community environmental knowledge through outreach and community education. We are planning to get several staff members certified in environmental sampling procedures in order to tackle site specific assessment work and create more mechanisms to respond to contamination concerns on the island.

In September of 2020, the Tribe completed its third year in the program and is excited to continue to refine and leverage the

support that the TRP provides. As part of the program funding, TRP provides tribe support for commenting on technical documents that impact environmental issues on the island to help ensure a thorough and complete cleanup. We want to ensure that response action is protective of both human and environmental health. We work with the Alaska Department of Conservation (ADEC) to make sure that potential clean-up plans meet requirements and sites are appropriately cleaned up.

The Tribe maintains and regularly updates a contaminated site inventory, and a public record that can be found on the Tribe's website. We plan to expand on the site inventory over the next year to include potential health impacts, possible uses of redeveloped sites, cost estimates of completing cleanup, and any other applicable information as we are able.

If you have any feedback or comments please fill out the community survey on the Tribe's website at <https://www.qawalangin.com/brownfields>, call the Tribe office at 907-581-2920, or reach out to the TRP coordinator at [elise@qawalangin.com](mailto:elise@qawalangin.com) with any information you might have.





## VACCINE UPDATE

**BY: ALYSHA RICHARDSON**

The Oonalaska Wellness Center has received generous allotments of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine from the Indian Health Service. With those allotments, APIA deployed vaccines quickly to front-line healthcare workers, Elders living at the Senior Center, and Tribal members and residents over the age of 65. After offering and administering vaccines to those groups the Qawalangin Tribe prioritized all QT Tribe members, Indian Health Service beneficiaries, and non-beneficiary household members. To support APIA in this effort, Tribe staff conducted outreach to as many qualified people as possible and coordinated meetings with other community stakeholders to expedite a strategic rollout. In addition, the Tribe authorized prioritization to all staff at the Unalaska City School District, and 48

vaccines were administered. Qawalangin Tribe staff continue to work diligently to assist APIA and other agencies to successfully rollout vaccines in our community and we are hopeful that efficient distribution will yield continued access to sizeable allotments.

Also recently, the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska has partnered with the City of Unalaska, the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA), and Iliuliuk Family & Health Services (IFHS) to write a letter of request to Governor Mike Dunleavy for vaccine support to the community of Unalaska and the International Port of Dutch Harbor. The joint request includes an immediate distribution of 2,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to be sent to our community.

# THINKING FROM THE HEART FOR YOUR HEART

BY: LISA TRAN

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States for both men and women. Thinking about heart disease may make you feel overwhelmed or worried. However, being aware of ways you can work with your provider, monitor your heart, and take better care of yourself, can put you on a path for success. And, since February is Heart Health Awareness month, it's a perfect time to learn about the steps you can take now to help your heart.

There are many risk factors associated with heart disease that we cannot control such as gender, genetics, and increasing age, but there are factors that we can take control of such as diet, physical activity, and blood pressure.

Nearly half of American adults have high blood pressure, also known as hypertension. High blood pressure is mostly a symptomless condition; however, it can lead to an increase in risk for heart attack, stroke, and heart failure. High blood pressure can be controlled through lifestyle change and medication. Our way to take care of your heart is to know your blood pressure.

The Qawalangin Tribe is working to bring awareness to heart health and reduce the prevalence of high blood pressure in our community. In November, we teamed up with APIA medical director, Lori Jackson, to administer flu shots and offer blood pressure checks to Tribal members during the Tribal election. The event offered screenings designed to help engage individuals with or at high risk of high blood pressure with locally available health resources.

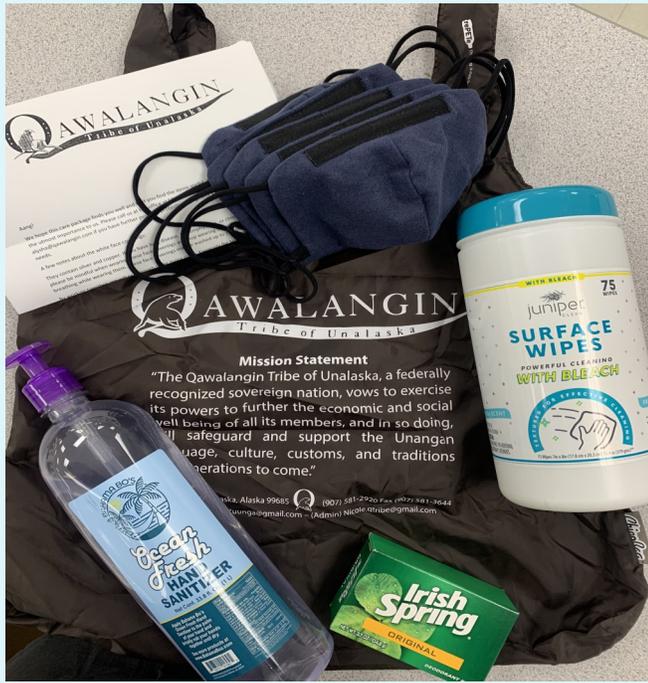
In February, the Wellness Team will be trained to implement the American Heart Association's Check Change Control self-blood pressure monitoring program. The program fosters general blood pressure awareness and focuses



Photo credit to the American Heart Association's CCC 2021 Implementation Guide.

on improving healthy habits to support prevention and management of high blood pressure. Anyone age 18-85 is eligible to participate in the self-monitoring program. The Tribe can issue you a blood pressure monitor, a log, program materials, and we can offer support through mentoring. We have a limited amount of blood pressure monitors and they will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis. We encourage participants to share their monitor with family members who are also enrolled in the program or just want to measure their blood pressure. If you would like to participate, please call the Tribe's office at (907) 581-2920.

**“The thing that is essential about hypertension is that it can be treated.”**  
– Ira M. Grais, MD



## ELDER BAGS OF HEALTH & SAFETY

In December we distributed 47 individual bags of health and safety supplies to Elders. The bags contained hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, bar soap, face masks with silver and copper embedded, and flannel masks. The health and safety of our Elders is of the utmost importance to us. Kaanguda (be healthy)!



# AN UPDATE ON THE FOOD BANK & ELDER CARE BAGS

BY: ALYSHA RICHARDSON

## FOOD BANK UPDATES

This month we were able to overcome a significant hurdle to allow this project to come to fruition - negotiating a lease agreement with the Ounalashka Corporation for space for the food pantry. We just received keys and will be working on next steps which include applying for a food establishment permit, procuring operating supplies and equipment, and readying the space for operations, among other things. In addition to actualizing the physical space for this project we recently received several of our large food pantry appliances. We have been advancing this project with the help of our partners at The Aleutian Housing Authority, Ounalashka Corporation, Food Bank of Alaska, and Safeway to name a few. We are so grateful for their support!

FOOD BANK  
of ALASKA



# LETTER FROM ALLY SIEGEL

## CALLING ALL SUBSISTENCE HUNTERS & GATHERERS!

Hello Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska,

My name is Ally Siegel and I have worked at BBC Studios for National Geographic Channel for nine years.

We are interested in meeting with people who live a subsistence lifestyle, hunting, fishing, trapping and living from the land as much as possible. If you are living this way and feel comfortable, I would like to talk by phone, or if Internet allows, by Zoom. Then, when it's safe to do so, we would like to come visit in person.

If you're interested in learning more about National Geographic Channel and what we hope to accomplish you can reach me by phone or email -

Ally.siegel@bbcstudiosproductions.com  
(818) 521-6376

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,  
Ally Siegel



# YOUTH PREPAREDNESS APPLICATION OPEN!

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is looking for students in grades 8 through 11 interested in supporting disaster preparedness and making a difference in their communities to join the Youth Preparedness Council (YPC). During their two-year terms on the council, members will take on projects at both a local and national level and develop their leadership and project management skills.

**APPLICATIONS ARE DUE MARCH 7, 2021**



# FEMA

## **CORNERED BEEF SOUP** **A FAVORITE RECIPE SHARED BY VICKI WILLIAMS**

### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 48 ounces of beef broth
- 2-3 cups of water
- 2 cans of corned beef, cut into pieces
- Half a hand full of rice
- Chopped potatoes
- Chopped onions
- Stewed tomatoes
- Celery
- Carrots
- Cabbage



### **DIRECTIONS:**

1. Pour the broth and water into a pot and bring to a boil.
2. Next add rice and vegetables and reduce heat to simmer.
3. When the potatoes are almost done, add the corned beef.
4. You can even add some noodles if you want.
5. Cook on low heat for about 20 minutes and enjoy.



## DEVELOPING OUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

**BY: CHRIS PRICE**

In “Why Some People Get Burned Out and Others Don’t,” By Kandi Wiens and Annie McKee of the Harvard Business Review, they focus on developing emotional intelligence as a way of coping with burnout on the job.

“Everyone faces stress at work, but some people are able to face the onslaught of long hours, high pressure, and work crisis in a way that wards off burnout. You can get better at handling stress by making several mental shifts.

- Don’t be the source of your own stress. Resist your perfectionist tendencies and your drive for constant high achievement. Recognize when you are being too hard on yourself, and let go.
- Recognize your limitations. Don’t try to be a hero. If you don’t have the ability or the bandwidth to do something, be honest with yourself and ask for help.
- Reevaluate your perspective. Do you view a particular situation as a threat or something you value? Or do you view it as a problem to be solved? Change how you see the situation to bring your stress levels down.

Stress and burnout are not the same thing. And while we know that stress often leads to burnout, it’s possible to handle the onslaught of long hours, high pressure, and work crises in a way that safeguards you from the emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and a lack of confidence in one’s abilities that characterize burnout. The key is tapping into your emotional intelligence...”

Developing and maintaining a high degree of emotional intelligence (EI) is a way to ward off burnout and cynicism on the job, but also in life. Let’s work together as a tribe and as a community to develop ourselves as high functioning emotionally intelligent persons and in a healthy way we can help others around us do the same. Something to think about.

# WE ARE <sup>^</sup> UNANGAX.

## SHARING OUR VOICES

BY: KAYE GUMERA

In light of February as Heart Health Awareness month, our Wellness Program is kicking off a storytelling project to start conversations that we believe will help us connect with one another.

For the month of February, Lydia Dirks offers her story on how grieving through art has empowered her as a woman and Unangax<sup>^</sup>. She shares her love for her culture and art with her father, Michael Dirks Sr. who passed not many years back. Michael Sr. had a love for making masks, and after his passing, Lydia picked up on that same love which healed her heart along the way. From learning and experiencing a sense of peace by connecting with art, the earth, and her culture, to remembering the rougher aspects of Unangan history, Lydia has learned to move gracefully through these transformative experiences.

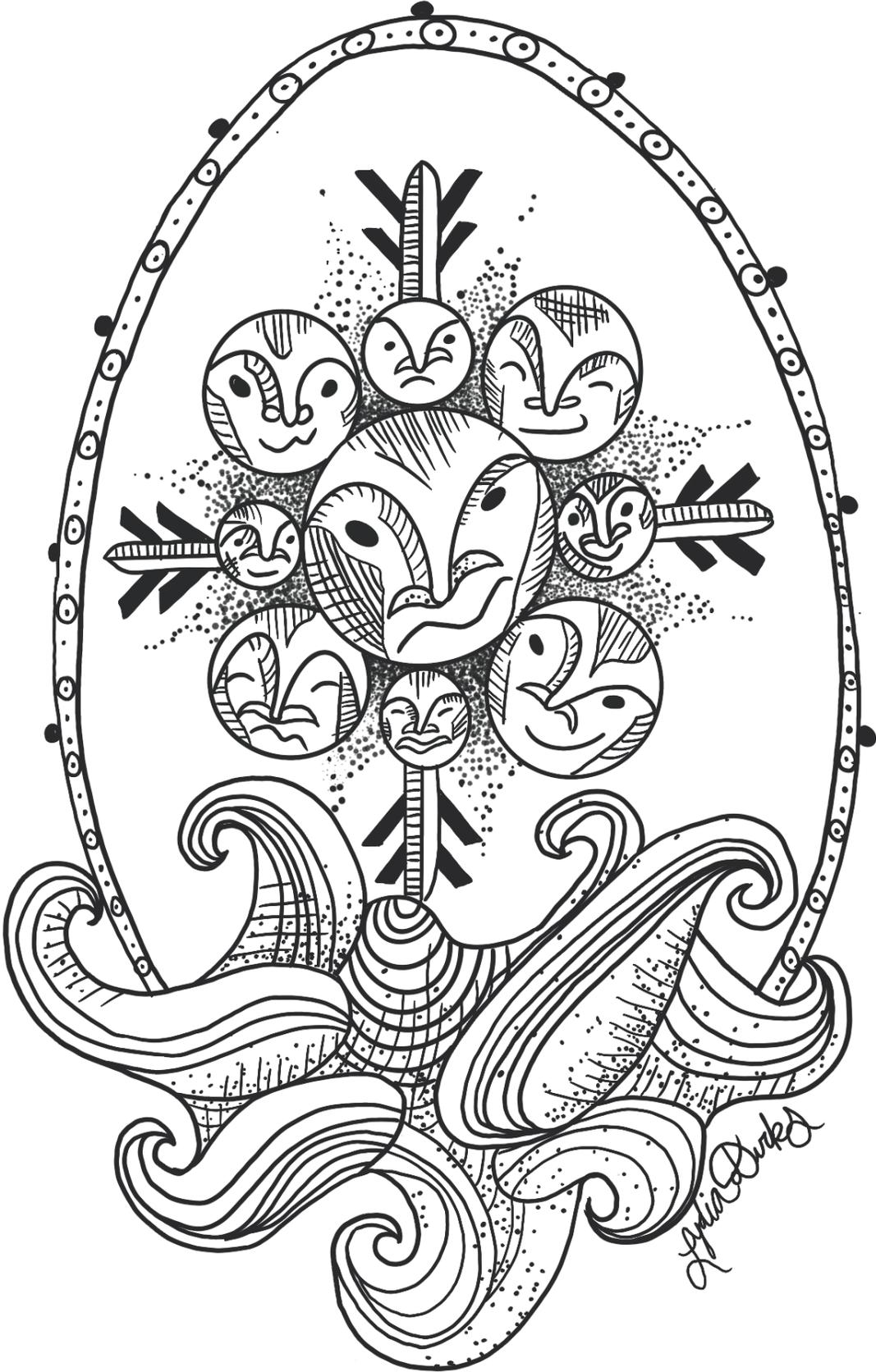
Today, she focuses on creating things that embody the love she has for her culture, and to reflect the beauty and happiness that she feels from within. She hopes to inspire others through her journey of discovering who she is as a woman, and who she is as an Unangax<sup>^</sup>.

For now, please enjoy these pieces that Lydia shared with us as coloring pages. Tune in on our Tribe's Facebook and Instagram for her words, which are coming soon.



# COLORING PAGE

BY: LYDIA DIRKS



# COLORING PAGE

BY: LYDIA DIRKS



# COLORING PAGE

BY: KAYE GUMERA



March 25th-27th, 2021

# Virtual Festival of Native Arts

**WE ARE SEEKING:**

- DANCE VIDEOS TO SHARE
- ARTISTS WILLING TO HOST VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS
- ARTISTS WHO WANT TO SELL THEIR WORK IN OUR MARKETPLACE.

**WE WILL BE AWARDING \$250 FOR DANCE VIDEOS AND ARTIST PRESENTATIONS.**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE E-MAIL  
TMTIDWELL@ALASKA.EDU**

# MEMES OF THE SEASON

TOP AND BOTTOM MEMES CREATED BY SHAYLA SHAISHNIKOFF

CENTER MEMES FOUND BY CHRIS PRICE

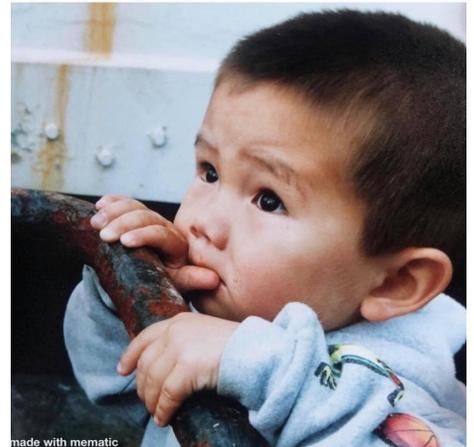
Natives thinking about the qawaâ that got away



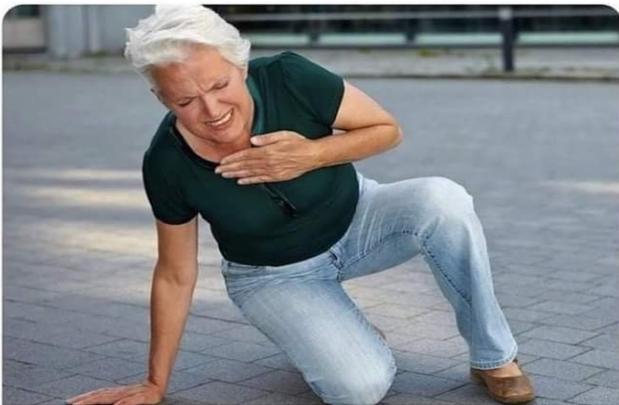
When everyone's asking for your berry spot but you won't tell them



When you don't win any door prizes at the village corp meeting



When you overhear some teens refer to 90s music as "classics" or "oldies"



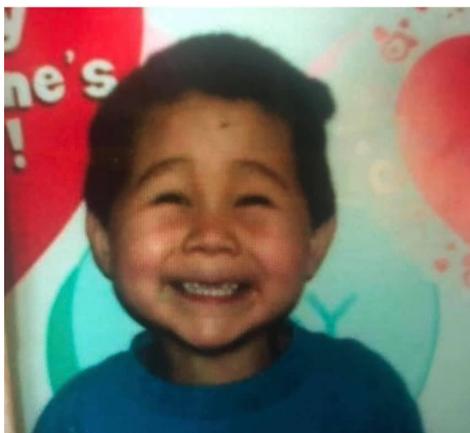
When you can't find a parking spot so you turn down the volume to see better



when you're headed to the outhouse and your cuzzin tells you to watch out for the outside man



When your sibling's mad at you for taking the last alaadik



when your dad tries to tell people he caught a hundred pounder



# QAWALANGIN TRIBE OF UNALASKA

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The Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska, a federally recognized sovereign nation of the United States since 1989, vows to exercise its powers to further the economic and social well-being of all its members, and in doing so, will safeguard and support the Unangan language, culture, customs and traditions for those generations to come.”

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: (907) 581-2920  
Fax: (907) 581-3644  
Email: [info@qawalangin.com](mailto:info@qawalangin.com)

## PHYSICAL ADDRESS

1253 E Broadway  
Unalaska, AK 99685

## HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday-Friday: 9am - 5pm  
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

## MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 334  
Unalaska, AK 99685

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- If you have changed addresses, phone numbers, or email, please update that information with us. You can do this by calling us at (907) 581-2920, or by emailing us at [info@qawalangin.com](mailto:info@qawalangin.com).
- The Tribe has free masks available for anyone who needs! The masks were kindly donated by Tom Bihn based in Seattle, WA.
- If you would like to provide support for the children of Nick McGlashan, please visit the [Go Fund Me](https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-for-nick-mcglashans-children?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link_all&utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet) account at [https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-for-nick-mcglashans-children?utm\\_source=customer&utm\\_medium=copy\\_link\\_all&utm\\_campaign=p\\_cp+share-sheet](https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-for-nick-mcglashans-children?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link_all&utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet).
- If you are interested in working on the Head Start project, please visit [our website](#) for information on how to apply or call the Tribal office.
- The Higher Education Scholarship is now renamed to the Frederick C. Lekanoff Scholarship.
- The Tribe is opening up a flag design contest. Submit designs that you think may represent our Tribe!



[Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska](#)



[@q.tribe](#)



<https://www.qawalangin.com/>