



Thomas Moreno, Southeast Alaska Food Bank employee, unloads food at the food bank on Feb. 18, 2021.
(Michael S. Lockett / Juneau Empire)

Amid adversity, Juneau's food banks soldier on

Demand up and donations down is not a good trajectory.

By Michael S. Lockett

Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:15pm | NEWS CORONAVIRUS FOOD BANK LOCAL NEWS

As the pandemic rolls on, Juneau's food banks have been hard-hit by increased demand for foodstuffs and decreased ability to hold fundraisers.

“We’re almost a year into everything we’ve done for COVID,” said Chris Schapp, manager of the Southeast Alaska Food Bank, in a phone interview. “Everything’s changed in the way we do things and the way we think of things.”

Increased demand on Southeast Alaska Food Bank has been as much as double the regular strain. The food bank also works with 42 member agencies to supply smaller food banks in the region, in addition to helping people who come to the food bank, either for themselves, or in many cases, friends or family needing assistance, Schapp said.

“The demand is definitely higher. We track the numbers of food in and food out year to year,” Schapp said. “Before COVID, we were seeing an average of 60 to 90 people a week. Now, 193 was the highest and that was less than a month ago.”

Other food banks are in equally dire straits.

“The demand is quite high. When we open our doors, we get anywhere from 50-100 people a night and we’re open two days a week. One person could be coming in for a family of five,” said Karen Fortwengler, director of the Helping Hands Food Bank of Juneau, in a phone interview. “It’s been steady. We see a lot of the same people each of the nights. The pandemic has hit us hard with our supply coming as well. We do the best with what we got.”

Monetary donations to Southeast Alaska Food Bank are up a little, Schapp said, but physical food donations are down for both food banks.

“Last year, we lost a lot of our funding, and I have a feeling it’s going to be the same way this year too,” Fortwengler said. “We’re struggling but the real purpose is to make sure people in the community who are struggling get help.”



The Southeast Alaska Food Bank, shown here on Feb. 18, 2021 is partnered with dozens of agencies in the Southeast to supply food to their organizations. (Michael S. Lockett / Juneau Empire)

Demands of times

COVID-19 precautions have also decreased flexibility and increased staffing demands.

“When COVID first started, we used to have our pantry where people could file through the building and people could take what they needed. We changed it to pre-boxing of items and handing them out at front. We did that for a while,” Schapp said. “At some point, down the road somewhere, when we go back to a sense of normalcy, we’ll go back to having people file through so we don’t have the demand for pre-boxing.”

Southeast Alaska Food Bank and Helping Hands both rely heavily on volunteers to assist in preparing and arranging food for pickup at their locations. Helping Hands has over 15 people that volunteer over the week,

Fortwengler said, and Southeast Alaska Food Bank has dozens of volunteers in addition to two full-time staff, Schapp said.

“We are all volunteers. No one in our organization gets paid for anything. We give the food for free,” Fortwengler said. “We’re focused on our community. We concentrate on the people in the community.”

Local organizations, including stores like Fred Meyer and IGA grocery stores, are instrumental in keeping the banks supplied, Schapp said. Other organizations have donated money to keep the bank running, including Hecla Greens Creek Mine, Petro Marine, and the Juneau Community Foundation, Schapp said.

“We’ve had some really nice generous donations from local businesses. A lot of local businesses have stepped up and made sure we’re taken care of,” Schapp said. “We buy between \$5,000 and \$8,000 worth of food from local supermarkets each month to keep our shelves full.”

Southeast Alaska Food Bank has been around since the ‘90s, according their website, and Helping Hands has been around even longer, Fortwengler said.

“We started in a garage in 1983. I think we were the first food bank in Juneau, if i’m not mistaken,” Fortwengler said. “It’s been going for a long time. It’s been going with volunteer power and it’s been going with fundraising.”



Chris Shapp, manager of the Southeast Alaska Food Bank, stands outside the food bank on Feb. 18, 2021 as a van full of food donations arrives. (Michael S. Lockett / Juneau Empire)

Want to help?

The Southeast Alaska Food Bank has a number of ways you can help on their website at <http://www.sealaskafoodbank.org/donate/>, including monetary donations, volunteering, or donating food at their warehouse at 10020 Crazy Horse Drive, Juneau, AK, 99801.

Helping Hands accepts donations at their warehouse on Tuesday and Saturdays at 6590 Glacier Highway, Juneau AK, 99801. They also accept donations at their Venmo at @HelpingHands-FoodBank. More information is available at 907-957-6632.

• Contact reporter Michael S. Lockett at (757) 621-1197 or mlockett@juneauempire.com.

Recommended for You

Stay Safe, Stay Home  Outbrain |

ALASKA SEAPLANES

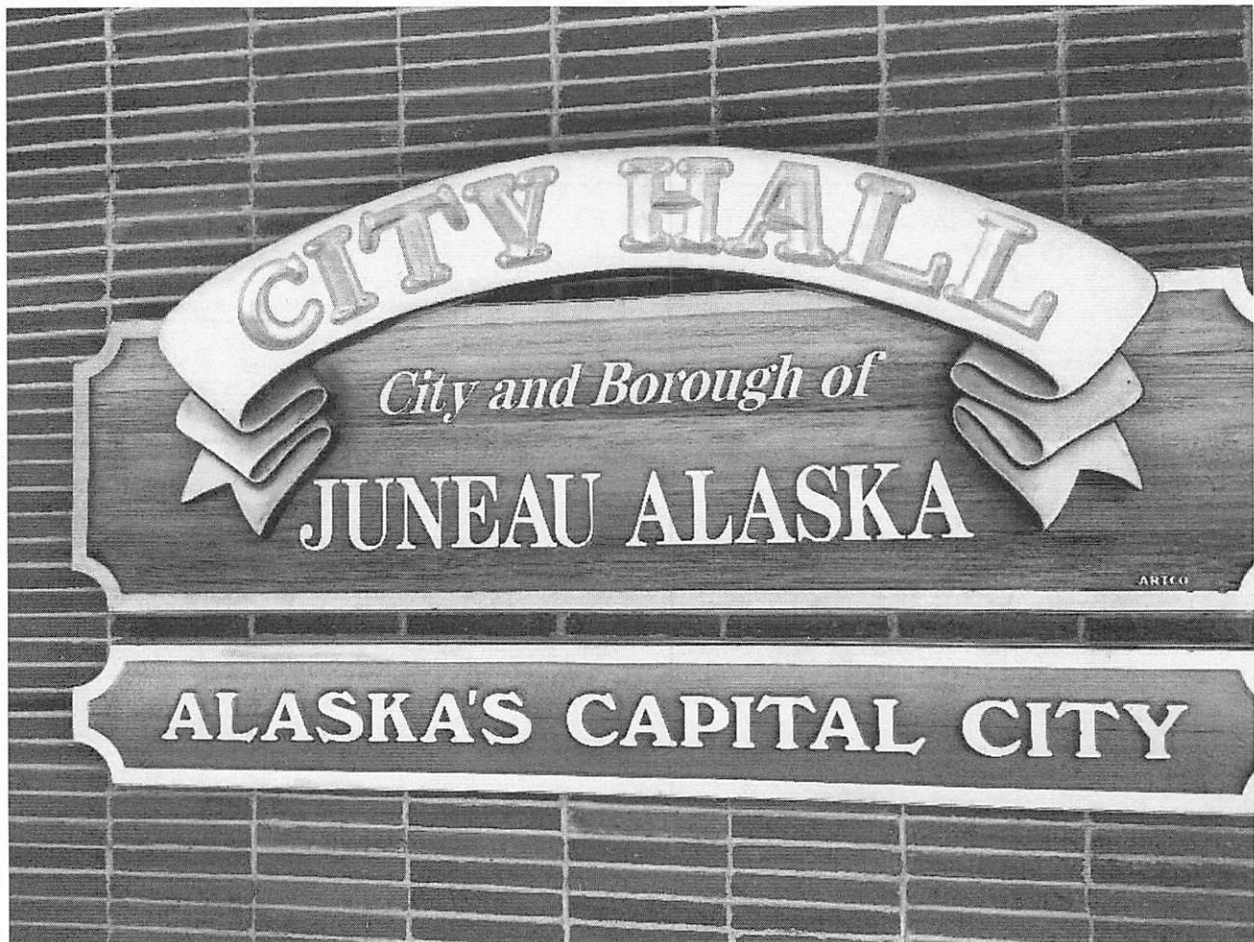
FLYING AT A
HIGHER STANDARD



Assembly acts on COVID testing, emergency assistance, and Centennial Hall study

- [News Home](#)
- [More from News of the North](#)

Friday, February 12th, 2021 5:02am



Juneau, Alaska (KINY) - Due to the likely end to the state emergency declaration orders, the Juneau Assembly voted unanimously to enact an emergency ordinance mandating COVID-19 testing for all travelers into Juneau—just like what was required under the state's health orders.

The ordinance will begin when the emergency declaration ends this weekend, and end when the state reenacts one.

The purpose of the ordinance is to maintain the same level of COVID protocols for Juneau, and will not create any noticeable differences for travelers.

The Assembly voted by a 5-4 margin to approve a proposed \$75,000 appropriation to exploring the possibility of adding a performing arts element to Centennial Hall.

They also decided 7-2 in favor of expanding the Individual Assistance Program by \$700,000, which would help an estimated 300 plus applicants. To pay for the extra assistance money, an ordinance moving the cost of COVID-19 testing equipment from CBJ CARES act funding to Bartlett Regional Hospital's CARES Act funding was passed unanimously.

The assembly also approved \$75,000 for a Homeless Youth Navigator Position with grant funding from the Alaska Department of Labor and a \$325,000 ordinance for a Youth Shelter and Rapid Rehousing Facility, with funding provided by several grants including the Juneau Community Foundation.

An ordinance for enacting property tax abatements to encourage downtown housing development was tabled until the next meeting, due to some miscommunications over whether the item would be on the agenda.

In new business, the Assembly decided to take the Manager's recommendation to take public testimony on the consideration of the Norwegian Cruise Lines dock proposal at the Juneau Support.

In old business, members decided to remove consideration of a one-way for Calhoun Avenue downtown and sent the project back to the Planning Commission for more work.

Fwd: February 2021 Newsletter

1 message

Amy Skilbred <amy@juneaucf.org>
To: Jenna Rutecki <jenna@juneaucf.org>

Tue, Feb 23, 2021 at 9:10 AM

Please add to media files for board. Amy

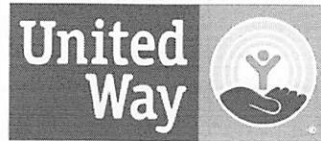
----- Forwarded message -----

From: **United Way of Southeast Alaska** <staff@unitedwayseak.org>

Date: Tue, Feb 23, 2021 at 8:25 AM

Subject: February 2021 Newsletter

To: <amy@juneaucf.org>



**United Way
of Southeast Alaska**

February 2021 Newsletter

AmeriCorps Members at Your Service & Play!



For the required MLK National Day of Service on January 18, the 13 United Way AmeriCorps members spent the day volunteering at one of Juneau's new housing project sites. In the last few months, the Tlingit & Haida Reentry and Recovery Department has been working on several transitional housing projects around the Juneau community to provide spaces for those moving from incarceration. Members were excited to have joined the Alaway Avenue project that is nearing completion and contributed to the final steps by building furniture for each personal room in the house.



"I really believe in the mission of giving people recently out of prison a chance to reintegrate," says Jeffrey Franklin, an AmeriCorps Member serving at Sayéik Gastineau Community School. "It's super important and a cause worth spending a day devoting to."

Our members enjoy learning more about Tlingit and Haida and recognize the long-lasting impact of dedicating time to projects that they are spearheading throughout the communities in Southeast Alaska. Beyond MLK National Service Day, AmeriCorps members intend to continue serving in initiatives that strengthen the beneficial partnership with Juneau community members.

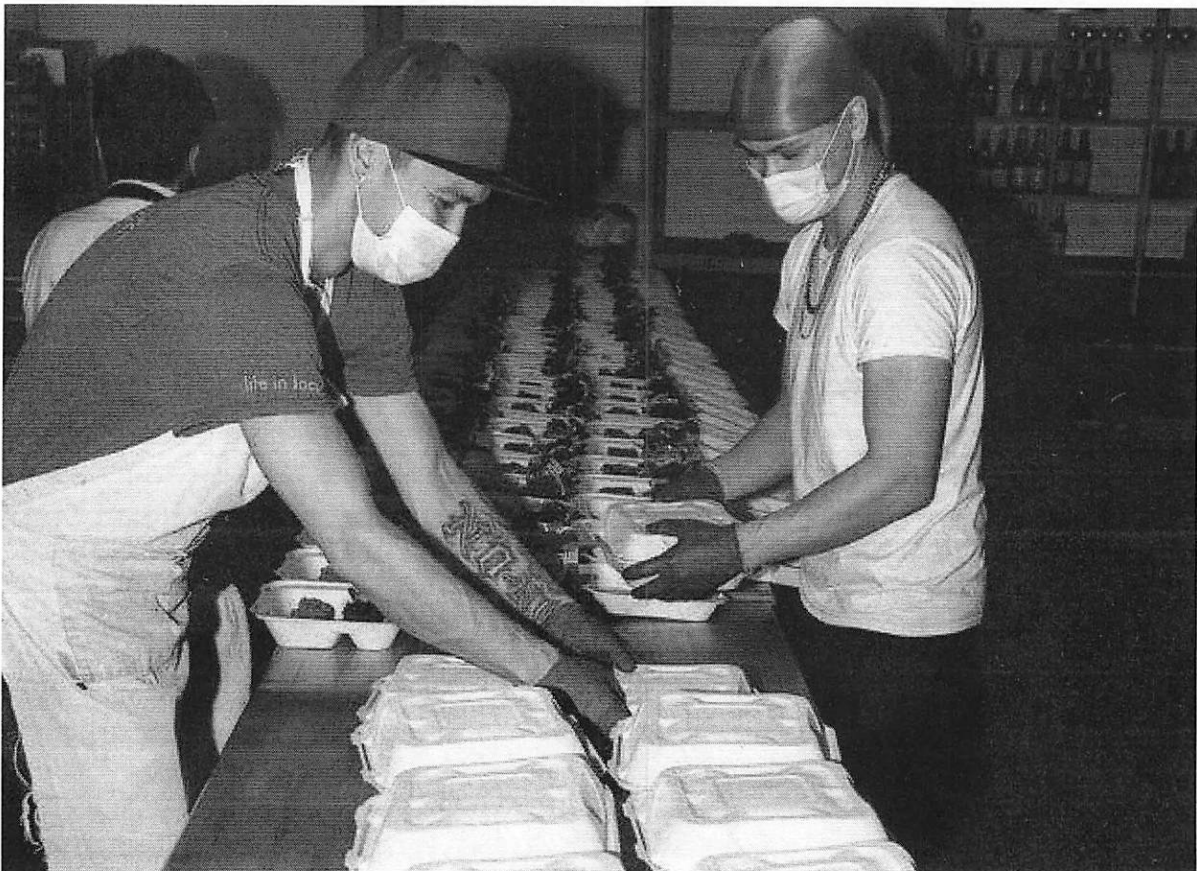
Towards the end of January and into February our members finally received almost one month of sun and took advantage of these blue skies to explore Juneau.

If you would like to learn more about our program or provide a Juneau experience for our members, please contact Shari Paul at AmeriCorps@unitedwayseak.org

This year donating has been made easy. Just click the link below.
Help Your Community Come Together in a UNITED WAY!

DONATE NOW

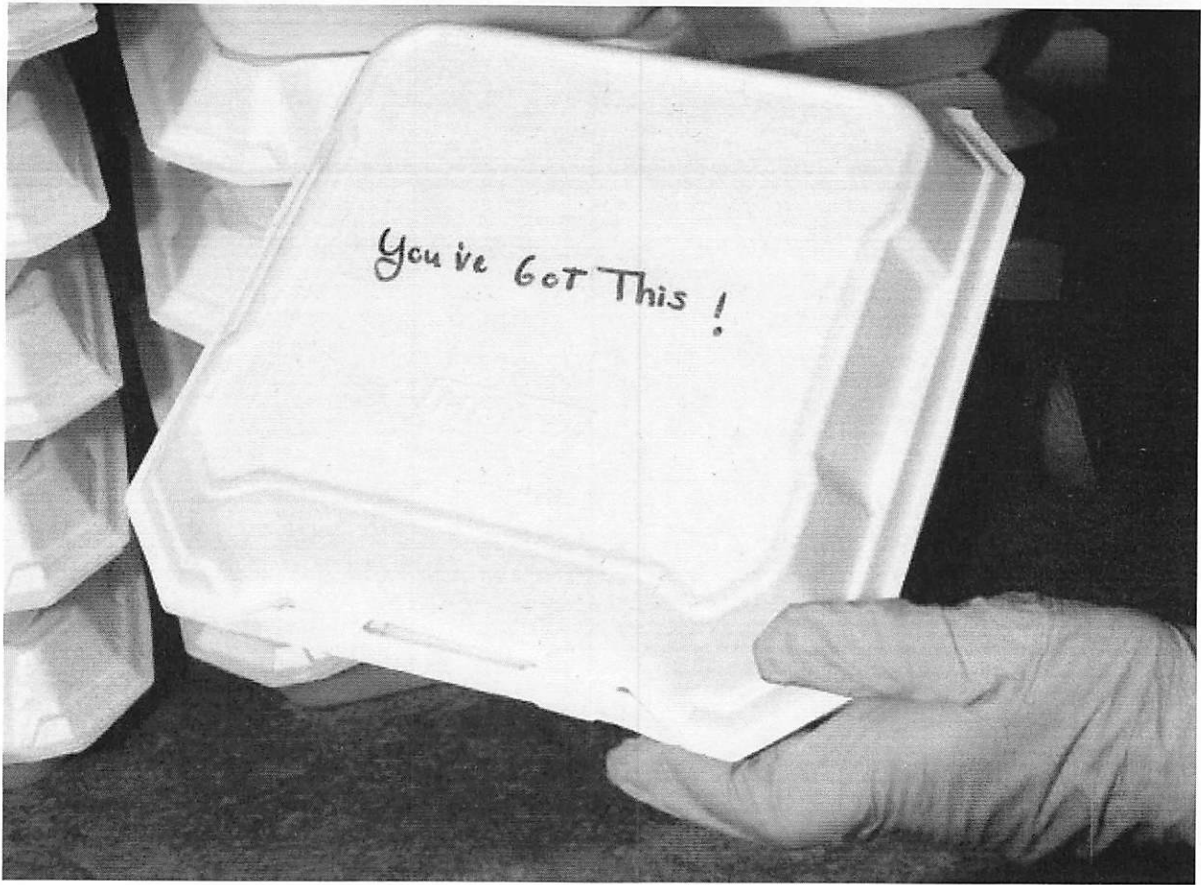
Juneau C.A.R.E.S. Meal Program Update



Five months into the program and with the start of a new year, we saw a reduction in meals due to reduced finances, from 445 to 235 meals a day. The extension of the Original Cares Grant allowed us to continue and with an additional \$50,000 grant from the Juneau Community Foundation, which we are grateful for, has allowed us to continue to serve our community members in need into 2021. We are also hoping for additional funds from The Glory Hall. These much-appreciated funds will allow us to continue on past the end of the original grant amount and to hopefully continue on until the end of March.

1. To date, 43 restaurants have been contacted with 18 participating at this time. We have several that are no longer participating in the program for various reasons but have 2 new ones that have started this year.
2. 62,937 meals have been served by end of January 2021 with coordination from The United Way and delivered by The Glory Hall.
3. 7,540 meals are currently scheduled for February 2021, which is an increase of 35 meals a day over the end of January due to The Glory Hall running out of meals and providing additional funds for these meals.
4. A total of 63,000 total meals have been prepared by end of the original grant.
5. Local businesses have now received roughly \$775,000 for meal preparation, keeping doors open and employees working.

With February going by quickly, we are hoping to confirm funds for March and possibly beyond as the need for meals is certainly not going down. We are working with local videographer Jordan Kendall to chronicle the grant; the people that made it happen, the ones that made it work, and those community members that we share Juneau with that needed a helping hand, as we all do from time to time. Restaurants are eager and willing to keep making meals, and meal quality is still high. Mike, who still delivers the meals, reports that recipients still are very grateful for the meals. As the forecast for our local economy still looks bleak, we as a community will persevere, as long as we can keep working together. This is a project of many moving parts coming together to do the right thing, and we are all better for it.



**Juneau Community Foundation provides
support for the Juneau C.A.R.E.S. Meal
Program**



L-R Jamie Waste, Program Director; Amy Skilbred, Executive Director; Jenna Rutecki, Executive Assistant

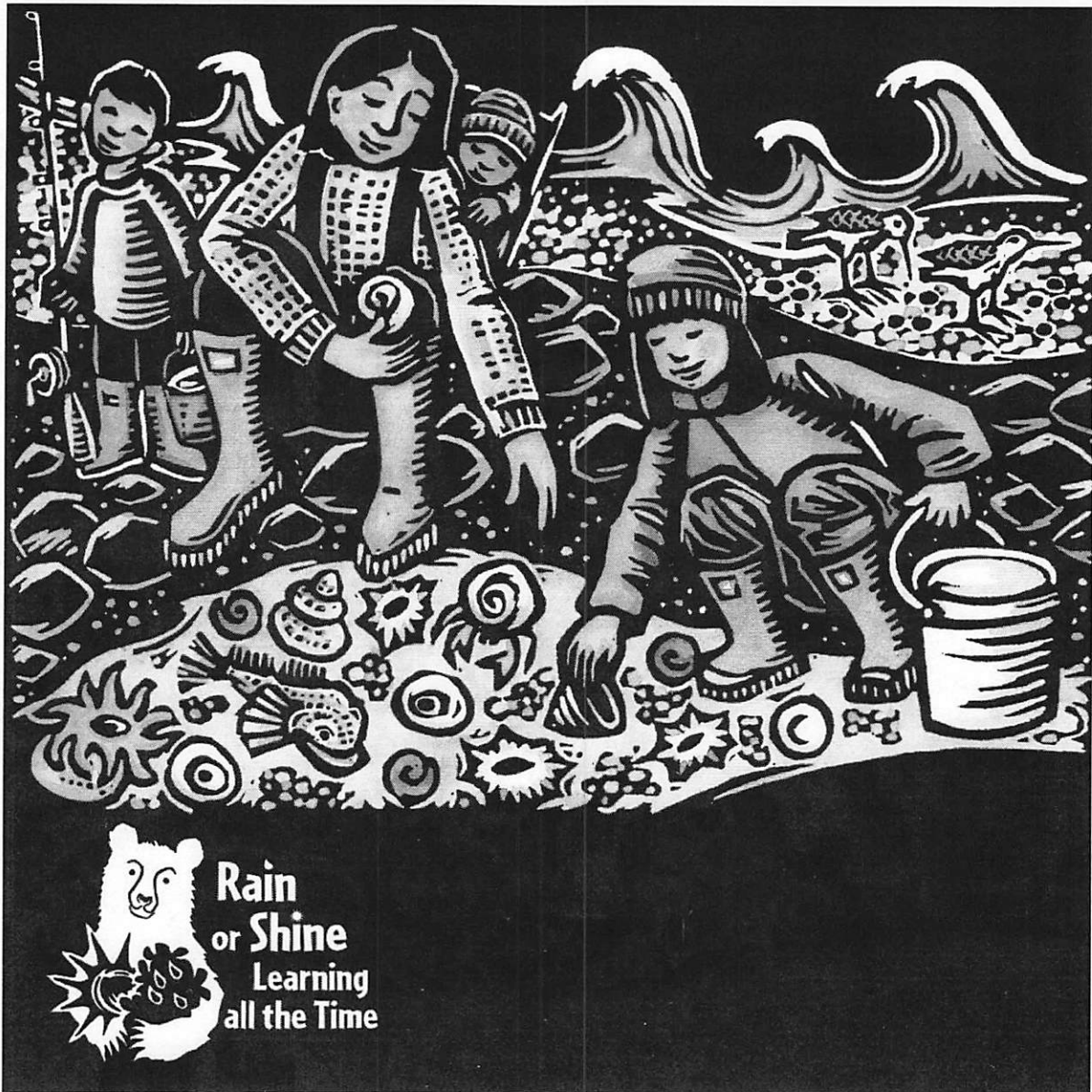
United Way of Southeast Alaska received a CARES Act grant from the Alaska Community Foundation to run the Juneau CARES Meal Program in August of 2020.

We have made considerable progress towards accomplishing the mission of the grant; feeding our underserved community members and improving our local economy by creating business and jobs. This is typically the slowest time of the year in the restaurant business here in Juneau and after the past summer, businesses are struggling.

As the funds have been spent down, the need has not reduced. In an effort to keep the program running into the spring, the Juneau Community Foundation announced the third round of grants for its Covid-19 response fund. Executive Director Amy Skilbred provided a check for \$50,000 to continue the Juneau C.A.R.E.S. Meal Program operated by the United Way of Southeast Alaska. Ms. Skilbred noted the grants were made possible from over 250 donations from community members.

The extension of the Original Cares Grant allowed United Way of Southeast Alaska to continue providing meals well into March. We are grateful for this generous contribution to the program as it has allowed us to continue to serve our community members in need well into the first quarter of the year.

Introducing a New Early Learning Campaign



Rain or Shine Learning All the Time is a new campaign designed to support, engage, and connect families and caregivers of children ages 0-5 with early childhood best practices.

The amazing thing about the brains of young children is that they are wired to learn, no matter when, where or what the weather. Kids are making connections with every interaction and new environment they encounter.

Tips and inspirational images created by Southeast Alaskan artist Evon Zerbetz for the campaign are designed to remind families and caregivers that even simple interactions - talking with a baby, reading with a toddler, splashing with a pre-schooler - can help build the foundation for future learning and growth.

The campaign was created by a coalition of partners including AEYC-Southeast Alaska, Tlingit & Haida Head Start, the Association of Alaska School Boards, Southeast school districts, and other partners working together as part of the STEPS grant. You can take part by sharing, reposting, and finding out more at [Juneau Families](#) or [Sitka Kids](#).

With so much competing for our attention, it can help to remember that simply getting on the floor and playing with a young child can be the most important thing you do today.



Jeff McCoy

3:00pm - 6:00pm

Email

LISTEN LIVE

Home News Weather Greg and Sharon Contests

Calendar Connect Contact

Local artists awarded grants from Juneau Community Foundation

- News Home
- More from News of the North

- [Share on Facebook](#)



TAKU 105
1,571 likes

Like Page

Send Message



TAKU 105

Judge hears arguments in case between Governor and Legislative Council



TAKU105.COM

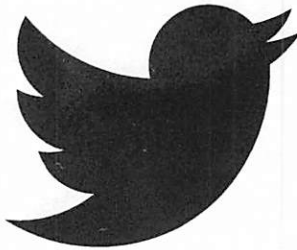
- [Share on Messenger](#)



- [Share on Messenger](#)



- [Share on Twitter](#)



- [Share on Whatsapp](#)



Friday, January 8th, 2021
5:13am

Judge hears arguments in case...

Juneau, Alaska (KINY) - Juneau Super...

Crude Oil Price

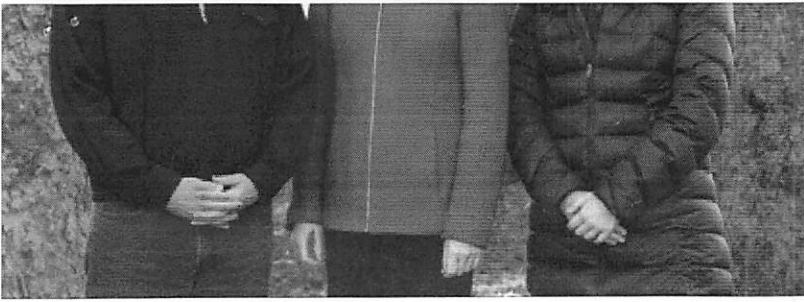


Current Conditions

Light Rain and 37 F at Juneau, Juneau International Airport, AK

Winds are East at 11.5 MPH (10 KT). The pressure is 1007.2 mb and the humidity is 89%. The wind chill is 29. Last Updated on Jan 8 2021, 4:53 pm AKST.





Staff of the Juneau Community Foundation

Juneau, Alaska (KINY) - The second round of grants for local artists is announced by the Juneau Community Foundation.

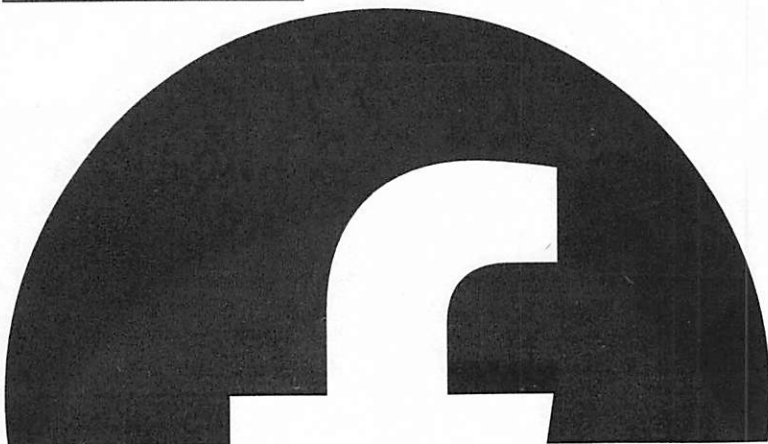
Program Director Jamie Waste tells us that the grants total \$10,000.

The four artists receiving grants in this round include Crystal Cudworth, Christina Apathy, M. K. McNaughton, and Ben Huff. Each will receive a \$2,500 grant. The program is supported through donations, according to Waste.

And during this round, Waste says the foundation also connected Sarah Campen to funding from the Margaret Frans Brady Fund for her storytelling podcasts.

Share

- [Share on Facebook](#)



AK JUNEAU

Local artists awarded grants from Juneau Community Foundation

kinyradio.com | 12h



Juneau, Alaska (KINY) - The second round of grants for local artists is announced by the Juneau Community Foundation. Program Director Jamie Waste tells us that the grants total \$10,000. The four artists receiving grants in this round include Crystal Cudworth, Christina Apathy, M. K. McNaughton, and Ben Huff. Each...

Read Full Story

Program Director KINY Artists M. K. McNaughton Sarah Campen
Christina Apathy Storytelling Crystal Cudworth Jamie Waste
Podcasts Ben Huff

You may also like

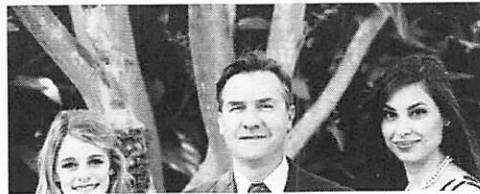


SOCIETY

Samaritan awards nearly \$340,000 in grants to local nonprofits



Sponsored Stories



Advertisement



Community Foundation Update (01/09/2021)

January 9, 2021

Facebook 0 Twitter LinkedIn Google Share 0 Print

Alaska



The **Juneau Community Foundation** has announced three grants totaling more than \$86,000 from its COVID-19 Food and Community Assistance funds. Recipients include the United Way of Southeast Alaska in support of the organization's Juneau Cares Meals Program, Shepherd of the Valley and Resurrection Lutheran churches in support of the Safe Space for School program, and the City and Borough of Juneau in support of the city's first youth shelter.

Arizona

The **Community Foundation for Southern Arizona** has announced that its African American Legacy and LGBTQ+ Alliance funds are accepting grant requests. Founded in 2013 by educator, philanthropist, and civic leader Anna Jolivet, the African American Legacy Fund works to address the educational and economic disparities faced by African Americans in Tucson. The LGBTQ+ Alliance Fund is aimed at fostering charitable giving in support of innovative programs and initiatives that benefit the LGBTQ+ community in southern Arizona. The deadline to apply for a grant from either fund is February 12.

California

The **Sacramento Region Community Foundation** has announced the appointments of Elaine Abelaye-Mateo and Steven Weiss to its board of directors. Abelaye-Mateo is founder and principal consultant of Everyday Impact Consulting. Weiss is a business strategist who has worked with or served on the boards of several local nonprofits.

Connecticut



Trail Mix crew members Justine Webb, Sarah Wallace and Allison Mickleson move bridge approach timbers into place. (Courtesy photo / Ryan O'Shaughnessy)

Fundraising goal met for Treadwell Ditch Trail improvements

Trail Mix raised more than \$230,000 from more than 300 donors, enabling completion by 2023.

By Michael S. Lockett

Friday, January 15, 2021 3:37pm | NEWS ALASKA OUTDOORS

Capping a landmark year, Trail Mix Inc. announced this week that it surpassed a fundraising goal for the Treadwell Ditch Trail.

The funding will allow Trail Mix to complete the trail by 2023, said Ryan O'Shaughnessy, executive director of Trail Mix, in a news release.

“This phenomenal response from our community demonstrates that people don't stop caring about trails when they get back to the trailhead. The number of individual donations to this project shows just how much Juneau values its trails,” O'Shaughnessy said. “We saw more use of our trail system last year than ever before, and that use translated directly into more support than ever before.”



Trail Mix crew member Jessie Harlan during a day of improving the surface of the Treadwell Ditch Trail. (Courtesy photo / Ryan O'Shaughnessy)

More than \$230,000 was raised by members of the community, O'Shaughnessy said. The Treadwell Ditch project fundraising began in 2019, part of a requirement attached to a \$660,000 Alaska Department of Fish & Game grant to Juneau Community Foundation. More than 300 donors contributed, clearing the goal by \$10,000, including an initial \$100,000 commitment from City and Borough of Juneau Parks and Recreation.

Finally, something to stout about: AK Beer Month is here

“Renovation of the historic trail has long been a community priority,” said Jamie Waste of the JCF. “Unique partnerships like this are often required to accomplish good things in our hometown, and Juneau has generously and enthusiastically supported the project.”

The biggest ongoing focus for the Treadwell Ditch Trail will be a 48-foot bridge over Nielsen Creek, the latest of 14 other bridges and 6 miles of improvement with gravel that Trail Mix has accomplished.



Trail Mix volunteers Tom Bornstein, Eric Olsen, Tom Krehbiel, Dave Haas, Joe Sorenson, Bill Janes and Chris Meade complete an approach ramp on the Treadwell Ditch Trail. (Courtesy photo / Ryan O'Shaughnessy)

With Treadwell's final stretches planned and funding allocated, O'Shaughnessy is looking toward the future.

“This spring, I look forward to releasing what we’ve heard from trail users, local businesses and the tourism industry about what our trail system should look like,” O’Shaughnessy said. “This will be another opportunity for feedback from the community.”

• Contact reporter Michael S. Lockett at (757) 621-1197 or mlockett@juneauempire.com.

Recommended for You

Stay Safe, Stay Home  Outbrain |

**Alaska Launches
New Policy for Cars
Used Less Than 50...**
Low mileage drivers are...
Sponsored | My Insuranc...

[Learn More](#)

**Golden
Goose
Superst...**
Golden Goose Superstar...
Sponsored | REVOLVE

[BUY NOW](#)

**Live Poll:
Take the
Official...**
Sponsored | Paid for by t...

[Sign Up](#)

**Tommy Chong:
Throw Out Your CBD
Now**
Sponsored | tommychon...

**[Pics] 40 Of The
Most Useless Planes
Ever Made**
Sponsored | Flights10

**[Pics] The Truth
About His Sickness
Is Pretty Clear Now**
Sponsored | Bon Voyaged



Opinion: Alaska Legislature goes virtual

Alaskans can be confident the public will still be able to visit and observe their Legislature.

Thursday, January 21, 2021 12:26pm | OPINION

By Win Gruening

In some ways, the first regular session of the Alaska State Legislature that gaveled in on Tuesday, Jan. 19, is similar to others in recent years. The session began with a Republican organized Senate and a divided House. Fragile coalitions must negotiate competing fiscal solutions to resolve

festering budget and permanent fund dividend concerns. Past legislatures have unsuccessfully wrestled with these issues and it remains to be seen whether this year will be different.

Beyond that, however, this session will be quite different. Visually, the installation of hundreds of plexiglass panels throughout the Capitol will remind everyone of the Legislature's pandemic safety precautions (and its support of our oil industry – after all, plexiglass is a petroleum-based thermoplastic product).

Under new COVID-19 guidelines outlined by the Joint House-Senate Legislative Council Committee in December, the public will not have access to the Alaska State Capitol. However, the LCC recently agreed to allow one press representative in the House and Senate chambers each day.

Legislators and staff will be subject to regular testing as well as temperature checks and health questions before daily admittance to the Capitol. Anyone who refuses to comply will be denied entrance. Under the approved "Safe Floor Session Policy" legislative members may not congregate in chambers, and may not stand, but must sit at their desk behind a plexiglass screen, when making remarks on the floor.

Clearly, this will be a legislative session like no other.

[Legislative Council sets mask policy for upcoming session]

Fortunately, constituents will still be able to monitor all legislative proceedings in real-time, as if they were there in person, or on-demand if they are unable to watch live. This is due, in part, to several important improvements in Gavel Alaska coverage this session.

Since 1995, Gavel Alaska, a partnership of the City and Borough of Juneau and KTOO — Juneau's public media outlet, has provided unedited live and recorded coverage of state government activities. Last year, funding for

Gavel Alaska totaled almost \$700,000, approximately 65% funded by CBJ, with the balance funded by KTOO and private donations.

Gavel Alaska provides daily television coverage of the Alaska Legislature, and other branches of state government, on KTOO 360TV (formerly 360 North), a full-time Alaska nonprofit public affairs television channel. It is broadcast in 38 locations statewide (on channel 15 in many GCI Cable markets). Gavel Alaska also reaches viewers in Alaska homes, offices and classrooms, with live and archived streams over the internet.

Until this year, live and recorded coverage was limited by camera and crew availability. In the event of multiple committee meetings and floor sessions, Gavel frequently had to prioritize which ones would be broadcast. That won't be a problem this year.

KTOO and the Legislature worked together to install 39 remote controlled cameras in House and Senate chambers and legislative committee rooms in the Capitol. The new cameras will be able to provide more coverage, and in higher quality. Beginning this session, Gavel Alaska will broadcast and/or stream all events live in high definition. Coverage will be archived for instant retrieval on the web for later viewing, if desired.

Rooms are now equipped with multiple camera locations and angles to allow all activity to be monitored. The Senate and House Chamber cameras will incorporate their electronic voting systems so viewers can monitor votes in real time.

The cameras will be operated remotely from KTOO's studios in downtown Juneau. The public will have eyes and ears in almost every room in the Capitol even during the temporary COVID-19 restrictions. Oral and written testimony will continue to be facilitated via teleconference and email allowing constituents to be able to observe and testify at the capitol virtually, without any risk of virus exposure.

Supplemented by \$547,500 from the Juneau Community Foundation — not including \$100,000 in project engineering and installation costs donated by KTOO — the Legislature funded \$448,500, for a total of \$996,000 to complete the project.

While some states are still struggling with how best to conduct their legislative sessions during a pandemic, your capital city's commitment to continuing to enhance constituent access means Alaskans can be confident the public will still be able to visit and observe their Legislature during this critical time.

• Win Gruening retired as the senior vice president in charge of business banking for Key Bank in 2012. He was born and raised in Juneau and is active in community affairs as a 30-plus year member of Juneau Downtown Rotary Club and has been involved in various local and statewide organizations. Columns, My Turns and Letters to the Editor represent the view of the author, not the view of the Juneau Empire. Have something to say? Here's how to submit a My Turn or letter.

Recommended for You

Stay Safe, Stay Home  Outbrain |

**Here's What New
Dental Implants
Should Cost in 2021**
Sponsored | Dental Impl..

**20 Questions to Tell
If You're Ready to
Retire**
Sponsored | SmartAsset

**The Most Successful
Lawyers In Juneau.
See The List**
Sponsored | Find Attorne...

[Learn More](#)