

COMMUNITY

Our journey to ‘Keep Talking’

Erinarpet OUR VOICES



K by Alutiiq Language Speakers & Learners

By Melissa Borton,
Native Village of Afognak
Tribal Administrator

In 2010, the Native Village of Afognak was successful in being awarded five-year match funding from the Afognak Native Corporation to pursue Alutiiq language revitalization efforts in partnership with the Native Village of Port Lions. Through this funding, in concert with several other federal grant projects, we embarked on building our conversational skills while also increasing our educational resources, including many storybooks, curriculum materials and the alutiiqlanguage.org website in partnership with several Kodiak archipelago tribal organizations.

We decided early on that we needed to learn how to master film editing software so that learners and teachers could produce their own film shorts as a means of sharing the Alutiiq language. NVA staff planned an intensive film-editing workshop at Kodiak College for Alutiiq language learners and program staff. This was how Karen Weinberg first came to Kodiak.

Karen had been working as a film editing software instructor, when she decided to take one final job teaching Final Cut Pro in Kodiak.

After returning to her home in Chicago, Karen reached back out to us with a documentary pitch, sharing with us



Courtesy photo

Kodiak Alutiiq dancer Sadie Coyle dances with Margaret Roberts and Samantha Heglin in their snow falling parkas.

her fascination for our story. At first, we were unsure about having someone film us, as we had learned from past experience that not all outsiders come in to a community with genuine motives, which made us apprehensive. We soon learned that Karen’s passion for our culture and our efforts to keep our language alive made her the perfect person to tell our story on screen.

When we initially agreed to the film, we really had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. Little did we know that she and her film crew would come to be our frequent eavesdroppers on language activities in Kodiak and at our Dig Afognak Language and Music Camp for over five years.

One of the biggest challenges for this new project activity was to secure the funding needed to produce the film. We knew that fundraising was going to be hard and that it was going to take a significant amount of time and resources to complete the film. NVA along with Afognak Native Corporation’s help provided some seed money to get the project going, which stretched

into the beginning of a whirlwind of filming, editing, viewing rough cuts and anticipating a final product.

For Karen Weinberg, the film’s producer and director, the effort was a labor of love, and she admits that if she’d known fully how hard of a job it would be she probably would not have started the project. We are so grateful that she did though.

After five years of filming and watching the stories develop, we finally had a finished film, and it was time to hit the film festival circuit. One of the language learner teachers featured in the film, Lynda Lorensen, and I were honored to attend the world premiere of the film in Vancouver, British Columbia in October 2017.

It was emotional seeing the finished version with all of the added artwork and music. We couldn’t be more proud. As the film finished, we took the stage to engage in our first Q & A session.

We fielded many questions from film aficionados and a few First Nations people inquiring about language revitalization efforts. Our

very last “question” was more of a comment, from a First Nations mother who had brought her daughter to watch the film. She asked us to please express her gratitude to Sadie Coyle for sharing her story through the documentary.

She expressed that watching Sadie’s story develop had inspired her own daughter to learn her language. This was the perfect ending to the first-ever public premiere of the documentary. The film has gone on to inspire many other similar comments during its screenings in Chicago, Honolulu, Washington, DC, and Anchorage.

The film’s purpose has continued to evolve over the life of this five-year process. What started out as a film to document our language efforts blossomed into the film it is today. The film follows four women through their journey of healing by embracing their culture and learning and teaching their language.

Today, we realize that this beautiful film has many potential impacts for our Kodiak community and Indigenous communities around

the world. Our initial purpose was to show other Native communities the obstacles and challenges a community faces when revitalizing a language, which to some extent the film does. But more so it shows how beneficial embracing and living your culture can be to one’s health and overall well-being.

We hope you join us on Saturday, May 26 from 6-8:30 pm at the Gerald C. Wilson Auditorium for the second Kodiak public showing of “Keep Talking.” Following the film will be a brief panel of the women featured in the film as well as educational and promotional booths in the foyer. The Sun’aq Tribe of Kodiak, the Alutiiq Museum and the Native Village of Afognak will all have booths available to share their language resources and fundraising efforts with the Kodiak community.

Maligeskut! – “Come along with us”

Learn more about the Alutiiq language at www.alutiiqlanguage.org, www.alutiiqmuseum.org or on Facebook at Alutiiq Language Speakers & Learners

MARKET

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

excited to have found a new home, Deplazes said.

“I think it’s going to be more convenient for a lot of people,” said Deplazes. “On nice days, [the Baptist Mission] has absolutely beautiful views of the ocean. They said we can use their gym if the weather’s not good, so that will be really nice.”

The market will begin at 11 a.m. Deplazes said that she is not yet sure how many vendors will make it. She added that it’s “not uncommon for the first market of the year to be kind small,” and that they tend to build momentum as the season progresses.

Kodiak now has three separate farmer’s markets.

A farmer’s market will continue to take place at the fairgrounds beginning June 2 at its normal time of 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Kodiak’s other farmer’s market, now organized through Kodiak

Area Native Association’s economic development programming, is also seeing some changes. Although the market will continue to take place on Wednesday, it may no longer take place in Sutliff’s parking lot.

“We are going to be trying to work with the city to hold the farmer’s market on the sidewalk in front of the AC building. That covered space is owned by the city,” said Tyler Kornelis, a project manager at KANA.

According to Kornelis, KANA’s economic development programming staff is drafting a letter to send to the city to obtain a permit. They’re hoping to hold the first market on June 6.

“Five to 7 p.m. would be the likely time, pending adjustment to best accommodate people who work a full time job during the day,” said Kornelis.

KANA staff could be making their bid at the right time. Two city councilors, Laura Arboleda and Daniel McKenna-Foster, put a

discussion item on the agenda of last night’s city council work session regarding community farmer’s markets being held on city property downtown.

McKenna-Foster said the item isn’t specifically for the Wednesday farmer’s market, but rather aimed at initiating a discussion over what the city can do to help stimulate local trade.

“I wasn’t thinking about one in particular,” he said. “It just seemed to me that the city can play a role in facilitating commerce.”

McKenna-Foster said that council discussions over downtown revitalization have been taking place for a long time – farmer’s markets are simply a tangible and simple way to provide a boost foot-traffic and interest in the downtown area.

“If the city is really interested in downtown economic development, what better way to do that than encourage people to get downtown?” he said.

Bison from Alaska going to Russia for permafrost research

Associated Press

FAIRBANKS – A dozen bison from a ranch near Delta Junction are being sent to Russia in an attempt to recreate an ice age ecosystem in eastern Siberia.

Haines filmmaker Luke Griswold-Tergis has been coordinating the bison shipment for the geoengineering project called Pleistocene Park, the Daily News-Miner reported . The project is an experiment to determine whether the re-introduction of large herbivores can slow the acceleration of global warming caused by permafrost melt.

The bison are set to be transported to the park next Monday.

Griswold-Tergis is producing a documentary on the 8-square-mile fenced enclosure near an Arctic research center.

Wild horses, yaks, reindeer, musk oxen and a lone male European bison already roam Pleistocene Park, which was founded in 1996.

The 12 bison from Alaska will be the first American plains bison in the park.

Bison are an important part of the project because they had the largest biomass of all the large animals of Siberia during the last Ice Age.

COMMUNITY FORUM

TUESDAY, MAY 29, 2018, 7 P.M.

KODIAK PUBLIC LIBRARY

MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM (612 Egan Way)

Eileen Raese, a local government specialist with the Local Boundary Commission will present information to the community on consolidation, unification, annexation, and mergers.

A quorum of the City Council may be present at the community forum.

For more information, contact the City Clerk at 486-8636 (voice), 486-8633 (fax) or by email at clerk@city.kodiak.ak.us.

Don't let your advertising
get thrown out with the junk mail.

Connect with more
potential customers:
call 907-486-3227
to advertise,
in print and online.

Plug into the power of print and online newspaper
advertising today. Newspaper advertising gets attention,
and it gets results. In fact, newspaper websites are the
number-one local site in 22 of the top 25 markets.

* Statistics published by the Newspaper Association of America from independent researchers.

The Kodiak Daily Mirror
kodiakdailymirror.com