

**Alaska Commission on Aging Roster
FY2021**

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ALL 11 SEATS VOTE (6 members attending establishes a QUORUM)

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ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
September 22 & 23, 2020
Via Zoom and Teleconference
Draft Agenda

Tuesday, September 22, 2020

The business meeting on September 22 and morning of September 23 will be accessible by Zoom or teleconference. For public members living outside of these communities, please call in using the toll-free number 1-800-315-6338, pass code 53250#. PUBLIC COMMENT is scheduled Tuesday, September 22, 4:10 p.m. to 4:25 p.m. please use the toll-free number above. DSDSTraining is inviting you to a scheduled

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/9910842668?pwd=R1FERThwYmZ2MkQrNjQzTTVYL2hOUT09>

Meeting ID: 991 084 2668

Passcode: 907

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,9910842668# US (Houston)

+16699006833,,9910842668# US (San Jose)

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------|
| 9:00 a.m. | Good Morning & Welcome!
Call to order. Roll Call, Announcements & Introductions
ACTION: Adoption of the Agenda
ACTION: Adoption of Meeting Minutes, February and May, 2020
Ethics Disclosures
"Safety Moment" and "Teleconference Etiquette:" Paula Pawlowski | Tab 1 |
| 9:10 a.m. | Chair Report – Gordon Glaser
Vice Chair Report – Bob Sivertsen | |
| 9:20 a.m. | Executive Director and Rural Outreach Coordinator Report | Tab 2 |
| 9:40 a.m. | ACoA Committee & Representational Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Committee: Gordon Glaser, Committee Chair• Legislative Advocacy Committee: Bob Sivertsen, Committee Chair• Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education: Nona Safra, ACoA Representative• Pioneer Home Advisory Board: Bob Pawlowski | |
| 10:00 a.m. | Update on the ADRD Roadmap
ME Rider, Kim Champney Consulting | |

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
September 22 & 23, 2020
Via Zoom and Teleconference
Draft Agenda

10:15 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Transitions: Recruiting for a New ACoA Executive Director Gordon Glaser, Chair, Bob Sivertsen, Vice Chair
11:00 a.m.	COVID VIRUS Update Dr. Zink
11:45 Noon	Lunch
12:30 p.m.	Department of Health and Social Services Albert Wall, Deputy Commissioner John Lee, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services
1:00 p.m.	Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Mike Abbott, CEO
1:45 p.m.	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation Jim McCall, Senior Housing Officer
2:15 p.m.	ACTION ITEM: ACoA FY2021 ACoA Meeting Dates
2:30 p.m.	Break
2:45 p.m.	Department of Labor Duane Mayes, Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Rita Gray, Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST) program “Senior Employment Initiative”
3:15 p.m.	Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman Stephanie Wheeler, Long-Term Care Ombudsman
3:30 p.m.	Partner Advocacy Updates Marianne Mills, AgeNet President
3:40 p.m.	Teresa Holt, AARP Alaska State Director
3:50 p.m.	The Association of Mature American Citizens Update Cheryl LaFollette and Mike Coons
4:00 p.m.	On a mission for Veteran’s housing Nona Safra

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
September 22 & 23, 2020
Via Zoom and Teleconference
Draft Agenda

- 4:10 p.m.** **Public Comment**
- 4:25 p.m.** **ACoA Commissioner Comments on Local Issues Affecting Seniors**
What are you hearing from seniors in your community?
Last Comments
- 5:30 p.m.** **Adjourn**

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

The training portion of the ACoA meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 23 and will be accessible by Zoom or teleconference. Public members are invited to participate, please call in using the toll-free number 1-800-315-6338, pass code 53250# or via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/9910842668?pwd=R1FERThwYmZ2MkQrNjQzTTVYL2hOUT09>

Meeting ID: 991 084 2668

Passcode: 907

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+16699006833,,9910842668# US (San Jose)

- 9:00 a.m.** **Call to order. Roll Call, Announcements & Introductions**
- 9:05 a.m.** **Senior and Disabilities Services Grants**
Lisa Morley
- 10:00 a.m.** **ACoA Budget**
Lesley Thompson
- 10:15 a.m.** **Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Report**
Kelda Barstad, Program Officer
- 10:45 a.m.** **Shelly Zylstra**
- 11:15 a.m.** **Senior Centers and their Stories**
Keren Kelly, Homer Senior Center
- Noon** **AmeriCorps RFP Grants – Paula Pawlowski**
- 12:30 p.m.** **Adjourn**

ACoA Quarterly Meeting

September 22 & 23, 2020

Via Zoom and Teleconference

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
Draft Board Minutes: February 10-13, 2020 Alaska
State Library - 395 Whittier Street
Juneau, Alaska

Monday, February 10, 2020

Call to order: Meeting called to order by Chair Gordon Glaser at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call: ACoA Commissioners present:

ACoA Chair Gordon Glaser, ACoA Vice Chair Bob Sivertsen, Rosemary Hagevig, Paula Pawlowski, Cheryl La Follette, Linda Combs, Mike Coons, Nona Safra and, Anna Frank. Absent Sandra Moller and John Lee.

ACoA Staff Present: Lesley Thompson

ACTION: Motion to approve the draft meeting agenda was made by Linda Combs and seconded by Bob Sivertsen. The motion was unanimously approved.

ACTION: Adoption of Minutes, September, 2019 and December 11, 2019 was made by Nona Safra and seconded by Linda Combs. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ethics Disclosures – Gordon reminded Commission members to sign and give the disclosures to Lesley.

ACoA Committee & Representational Reports

- **Executive Director Search Update – Gordon Glaser, Chair & Nicole Wery**
Both Gordon and Nicole talked about how the upcoming Executive Director search and answered any question.
- **Pioneer Home Advisory Board Report - Rosemary Hagevig, PHAB Chair & Clinton Lasley, Deputy Commissioner Family, Community & Integrated Services**
Both Clinton and Rosemary updated the ACoA on capital projects and operating issues.
- **Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education – Nona Safra**
Nona talked about her service on the Governor's Council. She feels like she is the lone senior voice advocating in this area.
- **Acting Executive Director Report – Lesley Thompson – see written report.**

ACoA Legislative Advocacy Committee

- **ACTION: ACoA Resolution 2020-001: Resolution in support of AHFC's Capital Budget request for the AHFC Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund**
Moved to approve ACoA Resolution 2020-1 Rosemary Hagevig and seconded by Mike Coons. The motion was unanimously approved.

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska Pam Kelly, Executive Director

Pam gave a report on what types of services the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska is offering. They have been a very good partner with ACoA in the past and this will continue in the future.

Alzheimer's Association Elizabeth Bolling

Elizabeth talked about the national organization and the legislative initiatives they have in place.

Adjourn

Alaska State Libraries, Archives and Museum
Conference Room 113
395 Whittier Street, Juneau, Alaska

Tuesday, February 11, 2020 Morning

Call to order: Meeting called to order by Chair Gordon Glaser at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call: ACoA Commissioners present:

ACoA Chair Gordon Glaser, ACoA Vice Chair Bob Sivertsen, Rosemary Hagevig, Paula Pawlowski, Cheryl LaFollette, Mike Coons, Nona Safra and, Anna Frank. Absent Sandra Moller, John Lee and Linda Combs.

ACoA Staff Present: Lesley Thompson

Alaska's Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

L. Diane Casto, Executive Director

CDVSA is part of the Department of Public Safety. Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault are crimes and are not just social service problems. It's a cyclical problem and the offenders need accountability and also treatment. They recognize that it is an issue that crosses many other issues. It deals with families and children that are both witnesses and victims of domestic abuse. Older people are victims of domestic violence as well as children. One in 9 women above age sixty have been victims of domestic violence. In March CDVSA will start the third victims of domestic violence survey. It is done every five years. They also use data from the Unified Crime Report that gives reported incidents of domestic violence. The survey talks to individuals who have experienced it but not necessarily reported it. The numbers are very different. Economic and financial abuse also effect older people. In the 2017 annual report it is noted that they are funded through the Victims of Crime act and the Violence against women act. Both of those have emphasized the need to focus on the abuse of elders. It is an area that needs attention that has not gotten a lot of attention. They would like to make sure people are able to recognize the whole broad array of abuse and neglect. A lot of the older population are raising grandchildren and are caught up in the abuse and neglect. Teen dating violence is quite rampant and is often where domestic violence begins. We need to address both ends of the age spectrum. The ACDVSA funds 24 emergency programs for victims of DV which provide shelter, legal advocacy and other programs. A significant number of their clients are over 60. New money for CACs, victims and witnesses of violence and legal advocacy services. It has 9 employees and a board with commissioners.

Rosemary: Are seniors less likely to report? A: They don't have any data but anecdotally this is true, especially with sexual and physical abuse. Reporting is hampered by the element of shame and an unwillingness to get caught up in system.

Nona: Are there services for men? A: All funded programs serve men but there needs to be a greater effort to advertise this.

Anna: Need funding in the villages. All they do is take the guy to the jail but no interventions in villages for the abused woman. Service providers in the general public need to learn how to work with Native people, especially those from the villages.

**Statewide Suicide Prevention Council Beverly Schoonover,
Executive Director**

Suicide in 65 and older population. 60-79 year olds are a huge percentage of those who commit suicide. The number one way to reduce suicide is reducing the lethal means for suicide. Guns and opioids should be kept safe from the suicidal person. 1/3 of people who attempt suicide have depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder. They are not trying to take away guns but someone in crisis or suicidal ideation needs to have their guns stored in a safe place where they are unable to access them. This effort was launched at AFN and they gave away 200 gun locks. If you have guns, keep them safe. They have a grant that goes to schools for suicide prevention with evidence based programs. The rate for people who have expressed depression has gone up and those with no depression are going down. 14% of seniors have been told they have a depressive disorder. Seniors are having increasing issues with opioids and overdose rates in seniors are going up. Grandparents are increasingly raising their grandchildren due to their children dying of opioids. They are having trouble with involvement in OCS. Seniors are selling opioids for money in order to pay their bills. The council has been handing out Naloxone kit in case of overdose. Anyone taking opioids should have one on hand. Opioid disposal bags for excess pills are good to distribute. Would like to partner more with ACoA and SDS in our efforts to improve the lives of seniors.

Mike had question about red flag laws and 2nd amendment. A: This isn't about the 2nd amendment. This is family and friends keeping them safe while in crisis.

Anna: Do something with the family about suicide such as educating them about how to recognize when someone is lying about no longer being in crisis.

Alaska has the largest veteran population in the country. We need to work with VA to get the word out about it. Despondency in them is getting more and more pronounced over last 5 years.

Death rate for suicide is still double the rate but better than a few years ago. Alcohol contributes to the problem. Long guns contribute to suicide more than short guns.

Gordon: An intoxicated person, especially if they're suicidal has no business being around a gun. He noted that there is resistance to putting up information about suicide prevention in senior centers.

AHFC Senior Housing Office Jim McCall

New senior housing will be coming on the market soon. CITC is developing a 50 unit low income complex with senior citizen housing above 55 years. There will also low income housing and market rate as well. There will also be units for homeless individuals and those with disabilities. Wasilla will have a 40 unit property with senior housing for those 55 and above. This will also have low income and market rate units. On the Kenai Peninsula they are developing senior housing for those 55 and above. These will be ranch style construction with heated garage. Also include service coordination, transportation and other services available. Veterans are welcome to apply if they meet minimum qualifications.

Alaska now has 138,572 citizens over 60 years of age. 1 in five residents is over the age 60. As of February 1, there are 1524 seniors on the waitlist for 612 senior disabled housing units. The Northern Panhandle, (Haines, Skagway, Yakutat, Hoonah and Angoon) has the biggest per capita population of seniors in Alaska with seniors making up 30% of the population. Kenai Peninsula has the next biggest with 27% of the population. The Southern Panhandle has 25% and Anchorage and Fairbanks each have 17%. Matsu has seniors making up 19% of the populations and Juneau has 21%.

Handouts show there are loans that the community in Tok could apply for to build an assisted living home.
Mike: Why Matsu is low in seniors? A: Collectively it has a younger population.

Public Comment: There were no public comments.

Updates and Discussion: *What are you hearing from legislators on senior advocacy topics?*

Review of legislation and budget items of interest for seniors: Bob Sivertsen, ACoA Legislative Advocacy Committee Chair, and Lesley Thompson

Advocacy Avenue is a weekly legislative teleconference. We need to get more senior centers to participate in the teleconference. We also need to talk about the Legislative Advocacy teleconference with AgeNet members and encourage them to attend. We now have the Chair sign off on which bills go on watch list to discuss. We need to get input from the public, especially those from senior centers and Pioneer's home. ACoA hasn't supported any bills yet this legislative season. We don't usually oppose bills but we did oppose the bill which cut Senior Benefits.

Association of Mature American Citizens - Mike Coons

Advocate and educate on conservative issues regarding Mature Americans. AMAC met with various legislators about the Pro Bono medication bills and Social Security guarantee act. AMAC considers themselves pro-gun and pro-life.

Gordon: as commissioners we need to separate our own beliefs and make it clear that we serve all Alaskans and not just those that conform with our beliefs.

AARP Legislative Advocacy Meeting Plans – Ken Helander, AARP Advocacy Director

The Alaska office of AARP is a change agent in Alaska which focuses on healthy living, fraud education, financial security and caregiver support. They are currently looking at a nurse compact bill that would allow nurses in other states to practice in Alaska. There is a shortage of nurses and this would address it. Rosemary inquired as to who would do the background checks. The people in the compact have an administrative group that would do them. The Alaska Nurses Association is in support of the bill.

Gordon noted that the Commission serves all Alaskans and not just those that conforms to our beliefs. Whether or not you agree with AARP they are a big player in Alaska.

Legislative Packets and Schedules – Lesley

Gordon: Need to thank Lesley for the work she has done as only one person.

Senate Bill 68 is an attempt to that get dental hygienists to people in long term care facilities. This would trickle down to youth in group homes, too. The connection of your mouth with the rest of your body is extremely important. Poor dental hygiene contributes to Alzheimer's, heart disease, diabetes and respiratory problems.

Legislative packets: Gordon: Stick to the Commission's agenda not yours. Don't get into arguments. Respect they might have different perspectives. If asked a question you don't know, admit you don't have the answer but say you will go find the answer. It's better to say you don't know than make a guess.

Lesley: Going over the packets. Asking for 3% for NTS funding. All regions have grown in population. Alaska is the #1 fastest growing senior population per capita in the United States. Funding has not kept up with growth rate. Seniors contribute at least \$2.5 billion to the economy. There is a perception that all seniors are receiving some sort of assistance. In fact, less than 10% of seniors are receiving some sort of services. The folks that are receiving them are in desperate need. Many are living on \$1000 a month and their rent is \$700. A lot of seniors stay in Alaska when they retire.

Welcome AgeNet! Gordon Glaser, ACoA Chair

Thanking Debra Etheridge and Denise Daniello for their time with the state in Health and Social Services

Lunch was provided by AgeNet and the Alaska Commission on Aging.

Division of Senior and Disabilities Services John Lee, Director

John Lee: SDS needs to do a better job at protecting seniors. SDS received an \$813, 000 grant to provide tools to APS to help them make better decisions, track findings, and improve outcomes. They also received a \$650, 000 three year grant to prevent burnout of family caregivers.

UAF Senior Research - Denise Daniello

She is doing a three year study on the effects of hibernation on the brain. Hibernation study can have applications in humans for a variety of diseases. It even has applications for Alzheimer's disease. Gordon offered letter of support in the future if she needs one.

Office of Veteran Affairs

Verdie Bowen, Director of the State Office of Veteran Affairs

Forrest Powell, Deputy Director of the State office of Veteran Affairs

Veterans become invisible people once they leave the service. Many times you will run into people who will never tell you they were in the military. It is important to reach out to veterans and put them in touch with services. Verdie Bowen gave an overview of the service available to veterans in Alaska.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Kelda Barstad, Program Officer

Kelda discussed the various grants and programs administered by the Authority along with benefits to trustee members. The ACoA and AMHTA would like to partner more in order to improve outcomes for our shared populations.

Discussion on the Alaska Permanent Fund program

The board held a discussion on whether to advocate for full PFD or sustainable PFD. Should the commission support a PFD because it's important to many Alaskans and also ensure it's sustainable? After some discussion it was Bob Sivertsen moved to table the subject and come back to it later. This was seconded by Rosemary Hagevig. Opposed by Mike Coons. Ayes had it. More discussion was held. Bob Sivertsen then moved that the commission's position is that the PFD is important to many Alaskans and should also be sustainable. The position is that we are studying the situation regarding the PFD. The commission does not have a recommendation but will at a later point. Bob believes the PFD should be sustainable and that the PFD is

important to residents of the State of Alaska. Bob moved to say that was our position. Seconded by Cheryl La Follett. Motion approved.

Visit Wildflower Court, Juneau's Nursing Home 5:00 p.m.

Visit the Juneau Pioneer Home

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Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Meetings on Capitol Hill: Legislator meetings scheduled for Commissioners.

9:30 am – 10:00 am meeting with Ben Stevens in Governor's office.

Thursday, February 13, 2020

Call to Order. Meeting called to order by Chair Gordon Glaser.

Roll Call of ACoA Commission members - ACoA Chair Gordon Glaser, ACoA Vice Chair Bob Sivertsen, Rosemary Hagevig, Paula Pawlowski, Cheryl La Follette, Linda Combs, Mike Coons, Nona Safra and, Anna Frank. Absent Sandra Moller and John Lee.

Department of Labor Duane Mayes, Division Director

The Department is helping vulnerable Alaskans who want to work. They currently have the Senior Employment Initiative. Seniors are living longer and there is often no engagement with others outside of their home. They are piloting a class helping seniors develop skills they may need in the office that is being piloted. Board members suggested and offered different spaces where the training could be held and different curriculums to be used.

Mature Alaskans Seeking Employment Services Rita Gray, Director

The program is in its 55th year. It provides the bridge between social security and employment. They are paid for every hour they put in as opposed to other similar programs. People need the income from this program to get into public housing and out of cars and unheated dry cabins where they could easily die during the winter. They serve populations that makes less than \$20,000 a year and must have at least 3 barriers to employment. So far she this year she has served 154 people but they have multiple openings for people to fill. Most of the people who try to get into the program make too much income.

Commissioner Comments on Legislative visits

Discussion on how the visits with the legislature went. Everyone was very positive about supporting seniors. Met with both legislators and staff members.

10:45 a.m. Next Meeting May 18, 2020, Adjourned.
Minutes by ACoA Staff

**ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
Spring Quarterly Board Meeting
DRAFT meeting May 18th via zoom.**

May 18th, 2020

Good Morning and welcome to all
Call to order. Roll Call

Members present: Gordon Glaser, Bob Sivertsen, Mike Coons, Rosemary Hagevig, Cheryl La Follette, Paula Pawlowski, John Lee, Anna Frank, Linda Combs and Nona Safra.
Not present: Sandra Moller.

ACoA Staff Present: Emily Palmer and Lesley Thompson

Action: Motion to approve May 18th and 19th, 2020 draft meeting agenda was made by Paula as amended to do training on the open meeting Act on the 19th, seconded by Bob, motion was unanimously approved.

Ethics Disclosures – Gordon reminded Commission members to sign and email their disclosures to either Lesley or Emily.

Chair Report: Gordon Glaser

Gordon reported what meetings and trainings were held since the last meeting in February. The Commission is working on a potential road trip for next meeting but the trip is on hold until we know more about COVID-19. The Commission will see what the Trust is doing for the meeting in September and ask for financial support for the fall outreach trip.

Thanks to all, especially Nona, for letting us know what is happening in each commissioner's area. This is very helpful for us to know what various areas are doing.

ACoA sent a letter for senior funding for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding to the legislature. It is critical to have enough money to serve seniors in Alaska.

Vice Chair Report: Bob Sivertsen

Bob has also watching what is happening with the CARES Act funding to see how the funds will be used.

Our legislative teleconference committee meetings went well this session. Lesley and Emily will continue to let us know if other issues come up during rest of the legislative session. We have asked commissioners to share successes and issues. Bob has been able to have of conversations with Commissioner Crum about issues in Ketchikan. Even though he is very busy he are responds well to questions.

Executive Director, Report

Emily Palmer, ACoA Executive Director

Emily gave a summary of her written report which can be found in the board packet. She also discussed potentially hosting another webinar to address concerns related to COVID-19. A topic for this has not yet been determined. A topic for this has not yet been determined.

Executive Committee: Gordon Glaser, Chair

ACTION: FY2021 Draft ACoA Committee Assignments. It was decided to defer this conversation for our next quarterly meeting.

Executive Committee: Gordon Glaser (chair), Bob Sivertsen, Paula Pawlowski and Nona Safra, staff: Emily Palmer

Legislative committee: Bob Sivertsen (chair), all other current commissioners, consider adding Denise Daniello, Rosemary Hagevig, Mary Shields. Staff: Lesley Thompson, Emily Palmer

Planning committee: Gordon Glaser, Jim McCall, Pam Kelly, Staff Emily Palmer (chair TBA)

Bylaw committee: Paula Pawlowski (chair), Mary Shields, Cheryl La Follette, Gordon Glaser and Rosemary Hagevig

Training committee: Paula Pawlowski and Emily Palmer

Older Alaskan committee: Linda Combs (chair), Gordon Glaser, Nona Safra, Anna Frank, Rita Gray (MAAST program) staff Emily Palmer

Ad hoc committees:

- Veterans/Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home/Alaska Pioneer Homes: Linda Combs, Mike Coons, Bob Sivertsen, Rosemary Hagevig Staff: Lesley Thompson (Chair TBA)
- Developmental disabilities/traumatic and acquired brain injuries: Nona Safra (chair), Consider adding Duane Mayes, Rosemary Hagevig, and Rita Gray (MAAST program).

ACoA Rural Outreach Meeting Locations, FY2021

ACoA will travel to the Kenai. The trip is dependent on getting financial support from the Trust. ACoA will also follow travel mandates related to COVID-19 and will only travel if it is safe to do so.

Legislative Advocacy Committee: Bob Sivertsen and Lesley Thompson

Legislature had recessed and are now reconvening to take up business. Will likely focus on the CARES Act, but they could potentially take up other things.

- Lesley reported that the new Deputy Director of SDS is Tony Newman who coordinated legislation for Health and Social Services for years. He is very highly thought of with the legislators and has such great experience that will be very helpful in our advocacy efforts.
- HB96 did pass and was signed by the Governor. Rosemary will discuss the bill further in her report. ACoA did not take a position on this bill.
- Overall, it was an interesting year with the budget happening at an accelerated pace.
- Thanks to everyone who helped monitor bills and passed information along to the Commission.
- Bob wondered with the present state of economy, do we expect a special sessions? As mayor of Ketchikan he has also been following the legislature, bills and budgets. He felt that our advocacy program went well this session.

- Tony reported that what may happen in the future with the legislature all depends on how the COVID-19 unfolds. There were lots of bills that were close to being finished that a lot of people would like to see passed, especially before a new session is started in January. If this happens, they will definitely look at the funding side as well.
- Rosemary remarked that it was her understanding that the operating budget was based on \$35 per barrel of oil and we are not anywhere near this. Will this require more work or will everything be dealt with in supplemental?
- Tony is very real concerned for everyone, but we don't have any guesses on what will happen with the future of the legislature. There is little appetite for a large supplemental bill but that was before the pandemic happened.
- Mike pulled up the daily schedule for the legislature and saw that both the Finance, State Affairs, and Rules committee was going over the CARES Act funding during the next 3 days.
- Lesley continues to be concerned about what will happen when there is not enough funding for the current senior grants. We need to prioritize programs to see what is working and what is not and what programs may need to be decreased. SDS has been looking at this and we should work on this together in the future.
- Tony reported that SDS has been successful with getting out additional funding from the federal government which included several million dollars designated for senior programs. There will be more money to do some publicity for ADRCs and for the Long Term Care ombudsman.
- Gordon is happy to see the transition from congregate meals to meals on wheels so people were able to be fed. This has added expense, but seems to be going well. Anchor Point is now getting more food from the food bank to help support seniors. Homer and Nilchik meals on wheels is going well. Now the need is a lot higher, there are 2.5 times more seniors using the meals program, higher than it used to be. Matsu transition also doing well. Fairbanks still distributing food and its going well. Bob has had lots of conversations with community members and has their support. Communications have been great, no one seems to be short of anything right now. Communities sigh of relief as things have started to slowly opening up. Concerns are now for isolation that seniors have experienced.
- Gordon challenges continue with social isolation, as this is also really important.
- Tony – legislature approved some money for COVID-19. The Department is trying to find the best way to get this money out to the entities that provide services. Lots of work with OMB and the Governor's office.
- Bob- local communities will also be getting funding, may be able to use it to pay for utility bills, shelter work or centers, meal programs, etc.
- State has done a good job managing this, while it has been difficult, it could have been a lot worse!

Nominating Committee: Nona Safra, Paula Pawlowski and Linda Combs

Paula reported that the nominating committee was apprised of herself, Nona and Linda. While reviewing who may be eligible to be chair, the committee reviewed both the Bylaws and the Policies and Procedures. Currently, there are only two commissioners who are eligible to serve as Chair. Neither eligible member was interested in serving as Chair. One of the two eligible members was interested in serving as the vice chair.

The recommendation of the nominating committee is:

To nominate Gordon as chair for the remaining of his term through June 2021 with the hope that he will be reappointed so he could serve one more year. If not, the committee will come back together and look at the situation.

To nominate Bob as vice-chair for a regular two-year term.

Rosemary made a motion to accept the nominations of Gordon and Bob, and vote to approve them as Chair and vice chair. She asked for unanimous consent. Nona seconded the motion. There was no opposition to the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Paula recommended that the bylaws committee review the nominating committee section in the near future.

There is a two-year requirement that is in P&P, not in bylaws. Gordon asked the bylaws committee to review both the bylaws and P&P within FY2021.

Pioneer Home Advisory Board Report (PHAB): Rosemary Hagevig, PHAB Chair

Rosemary reported that the board met on Friday, May 8th by teleconference. Heidi Hamilton was officially appointed as Director of the Alaska Pioneer Homes.

HB 96 was signed by the Governor and will take effect on July 1, 2020. To make up some of the funding that will not be paid by residents, the state general assistance line item has had money added to the fund to offset the lost revenue. The way that bill is written it gives a lot of leigh way on how to utilize different funding. Another change from the bill is that the age for eligibility is going to be dropped from 65 to 60 years of age. There are questions on how this will affect the waitlist. Waitlists become much smaller after the rate increase happened this year. In addition to the rate increase, some additional nursing homes and assisted living homes have been built across the state.

With exception on Ketchikan Pioneer Homes, there are concerns with internet access for elders. State IT personnel did not want to expand Internet access for elders, but with the support of ACoA commissioners and DHSS Commissioner Crum helped move this forward.

Rosemary is terming out of the board in June; Bob Pawlowski was elected as chair and will take over July 1, 2020.

The advisory board received a tutorial on aid and attendance program from the VA. They are trying to get this funding available for seniors in Alaska and those in APH system.

Paula thanked Rosemary for her years on service to the Pioneer Home Advisory Committee! It's has grown leaps and bounds under her guidance!

Gordon stated that it has been enlightening serving on a board with her. She did a great job running the meetings. Look forward to working with Bob and will continue to support that board in a positive way. Everyone is encouraging Rosemary to continue with ACoA in some form.

Rosemary, felt hat HB96 was a good compromise in the end! The goal was to keep the homes viable, and this is how it ended. There were changes made up until the very end. Senator Stedman did a great job with attention to detail and his personal experience with the Homes, which was really helpful.

Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education: Nona Safra

Nona is very glad that we hold a seat on the Governor's Counsel. There is a lot of focus on special education and those with developmental disabilities. This population use to not live long enough to

become seniors. They are now living a lot longer and becoming seniors! We need to have a stronger voice for seniors on this board and she wants more seniors and advocates looking at this.

There is also no representation for veterans on the board, this needs to be changed and she will continue to advocate for this.

They do a great job, but it isn't as inclusive as it could be. There is a lot of work to be done, if anyone wants to help with this, please let Nona know!

Traumatic and Acquired Brain Injury (TABI) program committee is working on continuing funding and finding a more permanent board. The goal is to have a location for the next year.

ACoA Board Action items

- **ACTION ITEM: ACoA FY2021 ACoA Meeting Dates**
 - Fall Outreach Meeting, August 10-14, 2020
 - Gordon suggests that if we do a trip we keep these dates. If we can't do it during this timeframe, we should shorten meeting to 1-2 days. If not traveling, will meet August 10-11th, 2020. We may also look at September.
 - Paula thinks this is a good plan forward.
 - Winter meeting, December XX, 2020
 - Paula will be traveling on Dec. 8-15, 2020.
 - Paula recommends Dec 1 or 2, 2020 as earlier is generally better during that time of year.
 - This meeting will be telephonic or by Zoom, not an in person meeting
 - March meeting in Juneau continues to be discussed but also may be held in February 2021.
 - Older Americans Month in Alaska Meeting will be in May 2021 but we don't have a date as yet for the May meeting.

Department of Health and Social Services: Commissioner Crum

Gordon- Welcome on behalf of the Commission

Crum- lot going on as you know. We are looking at the next steps with the response to COVID-19.

Al Wall is in charge of Senior and Disabilities Services, Department of Public Assistance, Health Care Services, and Medicaid.

Clinton Lasley oversees Juvenile Justice, Alaska Psychiatric Institute, Alaska Pioneer Homes and Children's Services which are more interaction based and facility based

Dr. Anne Zink is over Public Health as the chief medical officer

Sana Efird, essentially the CFO, tracks money, human resources, policy, contracts, etc.

Heather Carpenter is the Health Care Policy Advisor.

Other key staff are Doniel Wolfe, is a program coordinator 2 and works on special projects that come up, regulation reform, constituent feedback, point of contact for local manufacturing, helping with testing infrastructure.

Laura Russel is direct support to Al Wall, if you send to COVID questions, she responds and manages these.

Tammie Wilson, direct support to Clinton Lasley to focus on outcomes for families involved with OCS. Kids have a lot of advocates, but parents don't necessarily have this. Helps engage families and increase family resilience

- Initiatives like internet to Pioneer Homes, phase 1 is underway and working with GCI to get correct equipment into the facilities to improve access to visit with family and friends. Hope to get equipment by May 22, then will take 7-10 days to install. John appreciates the support to get this moving forward.
- Phase 2 is figuring out how to get Wi-Fi in individual rooms. First phase focuses on common areas
- HB 96 goes into effect
- Director Lee has been leading the HSS tactic groups for senior living sites, senior day centers, senior centers, etc. His leadership has been great. His team works on responding to a lot of questions.
- Alaska is fortunate in that we aren't seeing the large death rates from long term care facilities. Need to make sure quality of life is maintained
- Been busy with COVID response and there is a lot of work that goes into this

Gordon- thank you for the update, any questions?

Mike- Thank you for being here, biggest concerns around COVID - 19 response, everyone has been doing a really great job here. Still concerned about social distancing, masks, etc. Seniors want to know more about testing and when this can start occurring. Also want to know more about treatment. We have been fortunate that we haven't seen a lot of death, but want to know more about treatments. If we can hear more about what is available for seniors when they get a diagnosis, especially before hospitalization.

Commissioner Crum - testing: there are no barriers to testing now. Especially for those in high risk! We have really broad testing guidelines. Working hard to make sure that location is also not a barrier for testing. From treatment side, this is a conversation with your provider. The state does not get involved with this aspect. If you don't have access to a provider, contact hospitals. Hospitalization rate is dropping as we have done a good job protecting vulnerable populations.

Mike- can seniors that are asymptomatic get a test?

Crum - doesn't know at this point, should review states guidelines

Gordon- work very closely with John Lee, appreciate support from Epi with state wide conference. Concern with the reopening of the buildings for senior centers. Want to have a safe and positive opening and need to provide specific guidance. Great job with press conferences

Mike – do you think senior centers will be open in June?

Crum- this is an ongoing discussion and evaluation. This will be a cautious approach as we move forward.

Nona- we would like you to visit the Anchor Point Senior Center!

Crum – as we move ahead, we have limited or advised against adult day, senior centers etc. If there are creative solutions or ideas on how to keep people safe, please share these. Want to maintain quality of life. We welcome input and guidance. John Lee is the best point of contact for this. Thank you for your involvement and hopefully we continue ahead and have a safe summer.

Lunch

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation: Jim McCall, Senior Housing Program Officer

Jim sent report out for those to review. He went through the highlights of his report and the continuing need for additional senior housing.

- Jim talked about how seniors use the weatherization program however there is still \$2 million available in the program.
- Paula talked about how in teacher and public safety housing is difficult and it makes it harder to keep teachers and first responders in rural areas; one of the biggest reasons is lack of housing. This really bothers her. Is there any contingency plan?
- Jim does not know of any plan. This definitely affects rural areas. Professionals often leave a community after the first year as housing is not what they expected. Will have to see how this unfolds and this is definitely a concern.
- Paula requests that Jim tracks this and reports back to the commission in the future.
- Mike asked Jim with everything being shut down, including construction. What happens if money isn't spent?
- Jim reported that the good news is that projects seem to be moving ahead on schedule. Doesn't see this being an issue right now. This can definitely change as with everything right now.
- Jim reviewed the data in section 2 (please see report).
- Average wage for workers is \$12/hour
- Paula liked the survey question results that he shared with the commission. Looking ahead significant issues, competition and payments seems like the wrong things to focus on, she would be worried about the wages, hard to find people who will do this very hard work for this amount. Alaska is a good place for smaller facilities, as they are less likely to have a large outbreak of COVID-19. Paula feels food costs are really high at \$500-\$600/month.
- Rosemary asked Jim if he looked at other places across the state.
- Jim- only looked at Anchorage for this. Other locations would likely mirror these results.
- Rosemary has concerns of where larger facilities are going to find staff.
- Jim is also very concerned about this and has expressed this to the new larger facilities in Anchorage and Matsu. Maple Springs is working with the university to get people trained to be staff, but wages will continue to be an issue.

- Mike asked what we are going to do to continue senior programs if we get hit with COVID-19. He believes there has only been one case so far; he thinks it was in Southeast. That community did a great job in preventing further spread.
- Bob- person was in Sitka and asymptomatic so they didn't know he had it until tested. Contact tracing went really well to prevent further spread.
- John stated that there was also a positive in an assisted living home in Fairbanks, the person recovered at the facility, state worked with the facility to ensure they had everything they needed
- Gordon echoed every ones comments. Gordon recognizes that the death rate of 30-50% in nursing homes in lower 48. Alaska has managed this very well.
- In section 5, old age dependency ratios show how the population of older Alaskans is growing.
- Paula noted the she could not find Jim on AHFC website, need to make this easier to find on the website!
- Jim is also frustrated with the difficulty to find his contact information on the website. He has received lots of similar comments of an unfriendly website. He doesn't know why it hasn't been addressed, but he continues provide input to make this easier.
- Gordon, please pass this information along. Paula would you like to write a letter?
- Paula recommends a follow up with AHFC leadership.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one called in for public comment.

Division of Senior and Disabilities Services

John Lee, Director

John discussed at length the strategies used during the outbreak of COVID-19. The state was very pro-active right from the start to control the flow into Alaska as well as keeping social distancing, mask protection and more. The grants unit was very proactive in allocating additional funding for meals and transportation getting additional funding out to the senior centers as soon as possible.

In addition to more funding that centers have received for meals and transportation, there will be some funding made available in September. There will be \$2.5 million to invest in sustainable infrastructure for things like making a greenhouse for food security and storage and/or other additional needs. This funding will be made available to not only grantees but others who are not currently funded by the state.

In order to safely manage COVID-19, the State used trackers early on to look at where people were that got COVID-19. This allowed us to work within the industry to help us set up the infrastructure to fight the disease. The department also applied for appendix K waiver and still looking at if they should look at 1115 waiver.

There is \$300,000 to utilize assistive technology to help seniors through the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).

The state supports 70 grantee organizations with grant funding and serve about 300,000 seniors. This number should have increased this year.

There is a task force looking at how and when and how to open facilities. They have reached out all over the US. The relationship with ACoA is as important as it has ever been. We need to help every Alaskan as best as possible.

Mike mentioned that he and his wife are willing to participate in a trial for a vaccine.

Gordon thanked John for his report.

Gordon also thanked Rosemary for all of her work on behalf of seniors. Many others really appreciated her work in this area. Gordon asked Rosemary to continue on the bylaws committee after she has timed out.

Gordon asked commissioners to talk about what is happening in their communities.

There are a variety of activities that are happening around the state. The challenge around the state is how to continue offering services during COVID -19.

Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Stephanie Wheeler, Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Stephanie reported that she sent both the annual report and quarterly report to the ACoA. She reviewed the purpose and work of this program.

During Stephanie's report, she talked about the Long-Term Care Ombudsman volunteers. Some are looking forward to going back into the facilities and two have had to resign. The volunteer program has been so helpful in helping to visit additional facilities. They logged in with 900 volunteer hours.

The Long Term Care Ombudsman office had to make changes due to COVID-19 such as staff working at home and doing virtual visits with residents.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Mike Abbott, Chief Executive Officer, and Kelda Barstad, Program Officer

Mike updated the commissioners on what is happening with the Trust. Some of the highlights to his report were:

Later this week will be the Trustees quarterly meeting on Wednesday and Thursday of this week. They will be laying the groundwork for the budget. They are looking at doing different types of grants as well as updates on current projects. The meeting is being held remotely.

Mike updated the changes in Trustees. Rhonda Bowles has been seated as a Trustee replacing Mary Jane Michaels as her term has ended.

The new board chair is Chris Cook with elections when the Trustees meeting Wednesday

The Trustees reallocate \$1.5 million to be used for COVID-19 impact grants. They have allocated \$1.2 million. There have been about 60 individual grants.

Kelda reported that the FY2022 & FY2023 budget discussions have been held around the state. The August board meeting will be when the budget will be approved.

They have been reviewing different types of grants including the new ADRD roadmap. They have hired someone to help with this document and Kelda should be able to announce this name soon.

Gordon thanked them for their reports.

Alaska Training Cooperative, Lisa Cable

Action item: Consider letter of support

Lisa talked about what the Training Cooperative offers. She talked about what types of training that they do and the number how many there are able to offer (please see their report.) They are funded by the Trust to do continuing education.

Lisa asked for a letter of support for funding from the Trust for the program.

Paula made a motion to write a letter of support for the Alaska Training Cooperative program, Rosemary seconded the motion. Motion carried by a voice vote.

Department of Labor and Resource Development**Duane Mayes, Director**

Duane continues his work on helping seniors find jobs especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are many seniors and people with disabilities that need jobs. Staff is working from home and are helping people find jobs. This has been working well.

There are 13 job centers throughout the state. They have been closed but hopefully there will be a partial opening soon.

They have added 140 extra positions for to process unemployment cases. There are 9,000 new clients since March.

They have been working very hard to work with other agencies, divisions and others to help people find jobs. They are using Skype and Facebook to help people get jobs.

They are still working on the senior jobs initiative although the recent COVID-19 issue has slowed this work.

Advocacy Partner Updates**AgeNet President: Rebecca Parker**

Rebecca reported on how AgeNet is doing.

Mary Shields received the Hammond award this year for outstanding volunteer leadership.

Rebecca also let the commission know that the Anchorage Senior Activity center had a successful campaign on proposition 7 for a capital campaign for the building. Also the Chugiak Senior Center received some funding in that proposition.

Rebecca has put together over have 13 pages of protocols for opening the Anchorage Senior Activity Center. Rebecca is very willing to offer a copy of the protocols. Gordon thanked her for the generosity of sharing the report.

COVID-19 is a huge issue for all of their members. Some centers are utilizing Zoom to offer different programs.

AARP: Theresa Holt, Executive Director

Theresa reported that there have only been two outbreaks in nursing homes in Alaska of COVID- 19. This is a very low number and they have been doing a great job. There are still no visitations available in nursing or assisted living facilities.

AARP is working on the voting situation and how people can vote either in person or by mail.

AARP is also working on getting virtual trainings up and going and she is excited about this.

They are working hard on getting people to take the census. Alaska is still the lowest in the nation per capita to complete the census.

AMAC (Association of Mature American Citizens)

Mike Coons, Chapter Director for AMAC Action Chapters

Mike updated the Commission on AMAC. Their next meeting will be held on June 13. He is looking for a speaker for this meeting.

Mike has been working with the state and watching the federal government is going to do for COVID-19.

Cheryl reported that the Fairbanks chapter continues to work through email and texts.

ACoA Commissioner Closing Comments

Commissioners commented on how well the meeting went. Some reported on what is happening in their community due to COVID-19.

Recessed at 4:50 p.m.

**Alaska Commission on Aging
May 19 via Zoom**

Gordon welcomed people on zoom

Roll Call: Members present: Gordon Glaser, Bob Sivertsen, Mike Coons, Rosemary Hagevig, Cheryl LaFollette, Paula Pawlowski, Anna Frank, Linda Combs and Nona Safra.

Not present: John Lee and Sandra Moller.

Staff members present: Emily Palmer and Lesley Thompson

ACoA Board Training: Paula Pawlowski, Emily Palmer

Emily introduced Stuart Goering from the Department of Law who will talk about the Open Meetings Act.

The Open Meetings Act is located in the Alaska Statutes (AS 44.62.310-.312).

Mr. Goering presented a Power Point on the subject of Ethics Act Procedures for boards and Commissions.

Areas covered:

- Every time there is a commission meeting, it must be open to the public. There are a few exceptions. If we have questions we should not hesitate to ask or go back to the policies.
- Materials that are covered in the meeting must be made available to the general public and at the teleconference sites. It does not have to be available in advance.
- If there are at least four members of board there should not be discussions about issues that we are considering. This would be considered a board meeting.
- If there are conversations that were not pre-arranged to take other actions, decisions making authority than they don't need to be open (only if there are spontaneous.)
- If there are committees of more than two talking about a specific thing they are subject to the open meetings act as well.
- For public notices, it just says reasonable accommodation to get the information out. Must be consistent on "reasonable accommodation". We also need to decide how much information to put on the public notice and we should publish the agenda on the State Notices Website. We also need to post information on any meetings in the office.
- If there would be a formal vote from the executive committee it does not have to be noticed unless the board requires the executive committee to make a decision. There are not really having a meeting but asking the executive director to send a letter out.
- If the commission were to go into executive session, the group must keep it to the issue(s) stated but there several limitations on executive session.

Paula thanked Mr. Goering for his time and information.

Older America Act

- Emily gave an overview of the Older American Act, please refer to the PowerPoint attached
-

ACoA statutes, mandates, goals

Emily reviewed the ACoA statutes and goals. Please also see information in the board packet.

Emily reviewed the last Commissions audit report. Paula pointed out that the auditors were looking at the demonstrative need for the Alaska Commission on Aging and if we should continue to exist.

Gordon wanted to reinforce that fact that we are all about seniors and when we look at doing additional projects we need to do so with caution and ensure that we take care of older Alaskans first and foremost as that is our core function.

Lesley talked about the audit and how everything was so positive and the two things they found that needed changed were very minimal. She noted that the two bills that they felt should not be on our Watchlist were a gun bill and Erin's law bill. She also noted that we hadn't noticed all of the committee meetings and quarterly meetings within 10 days. We did make these procedural changes and have been noticing committee meetings since then. This helped us comply with those issues.

Where are we going, what will it look like when we get there?

Who are we?

Paula reviewed the following information:

We have three men and five women on the commission

We have three seats on the commission for the Pioneer Home Advisory committee, Department of Community and Regional Affairs and Department of Health and Social Services are part of the commission.

Between the commissioners and staff we have 378 years of experience working with seniors

We are very diverse,

We have a wide range of careers and specialty training

We share many interests but especially the love of family, grandchildren and serving on multiple boards and commissions.

Looking at the breadth, diversity and knowledge that we currently have as commissioners, we have the right people to do the work of the Commission.

Linda feels very strongly that we need to get involved in other forums to get the word about the commission and our services. When we traveled to Tok, seniors really appreciated the fact that people were there to listen to their needs and to also let them know what services are available. We need to do more of this.

Why can't we do outreach in different areas? We should develop innovative ways to do travel. Maybe go to more rural areas than just one.

That is one of the reasons Nona wanted the commission to go to the Kenai. We could go to quite a few of the senior centers in different communities and meet with more people. We could utilize media to get the word out about if they have problems with an issue we could help people.

Paula reminded us to look at the State Plan and do what we have planned but maybe do it in a different way.

Rosemary stated that as we need to do advocacy we might need to do something very different as the resources are going to be much less available.

Gordon states ACoA have a duo function and we must talk to as many people as possible for when we talk to the legislature on senior behalf. We get one chance and funerals and one chance in reopening. It is crucial to help agencies especially in rural Alaska.

Lesley shared that this training is crucial and we should continue to do 15 to 30 minutes each meeting to do some sort of training. It could also be very beneficial to take some time each meeting to have each person share what he or she has done with the information that we heard at the last quarterly or committee meeting. We need to celebrate our successes and continue being there for our seniors.

Emily thanked everyone for their help as she has become more familiar with the Commission.

Paula suggested that they should have an executive committee meeting to go over the minutes that Paula took during the discussion.

Anna added that Denakkanaaga, Inc. is working with Tanana Cross to get supports to seniors. Anna related a story about the 1918 pandemic in which every day someone put a dish by the door. If it didn't get eaten that meant that the person died during night. Alaska Natives are struggling with the fact that they currently cannot bury the elders like they would like to culturally do after 3 days, but must do it earlier.

Mike reminded people that this crisis should to pass.

Gordon thanked everyone for the leading the training and participating.

The Commission adjourned at 11:35 am.

Upcoming Meeting: August 10-14, pending approval of Rural Outreach meeting travel

Minutes completed by staff

Alaska Commission on Aging Staff

Interim Executive Director

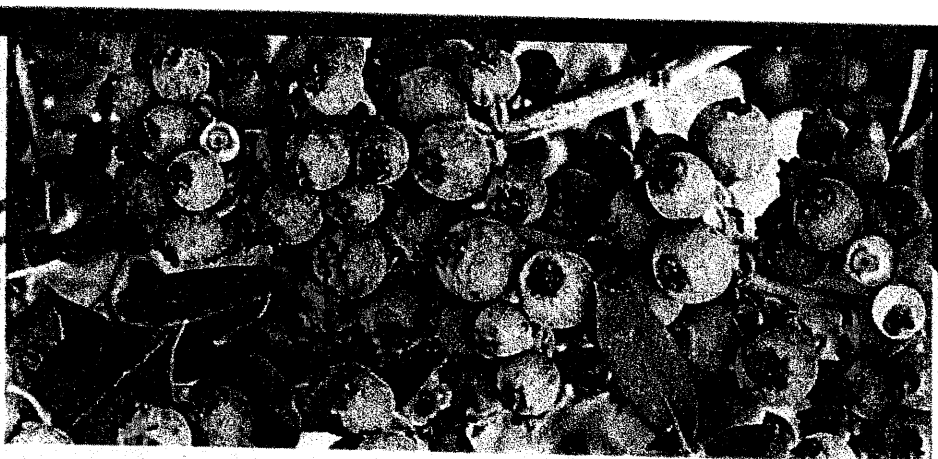
Lesley Thompson

**Program Coordinator I (Rural Long Term Services and
Supports Coordinator)**

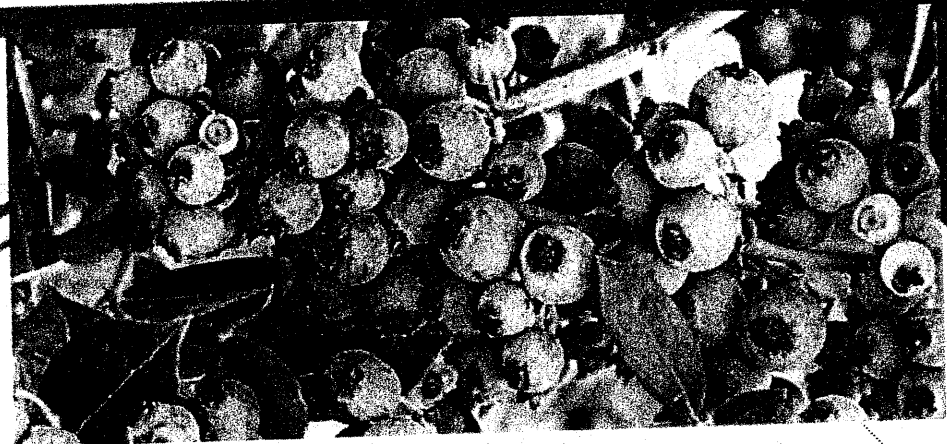
Michelle Rogers (will start on Monday, August 31st)

Planner I

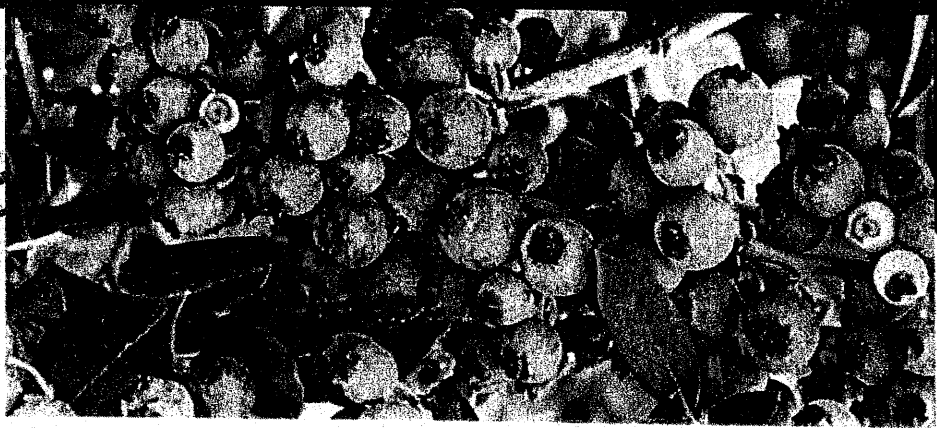
Lesley Thompson



Alaska Commission on Aging



- **Mission:** To ensure the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans, and to assist them to lead useful and meaningful lives through planning, advocacy, education, and interagency cooperation.
- **ACoA** consists of 11 commissioners and three staff members
- **Represent** Alaskans that are 60 and older

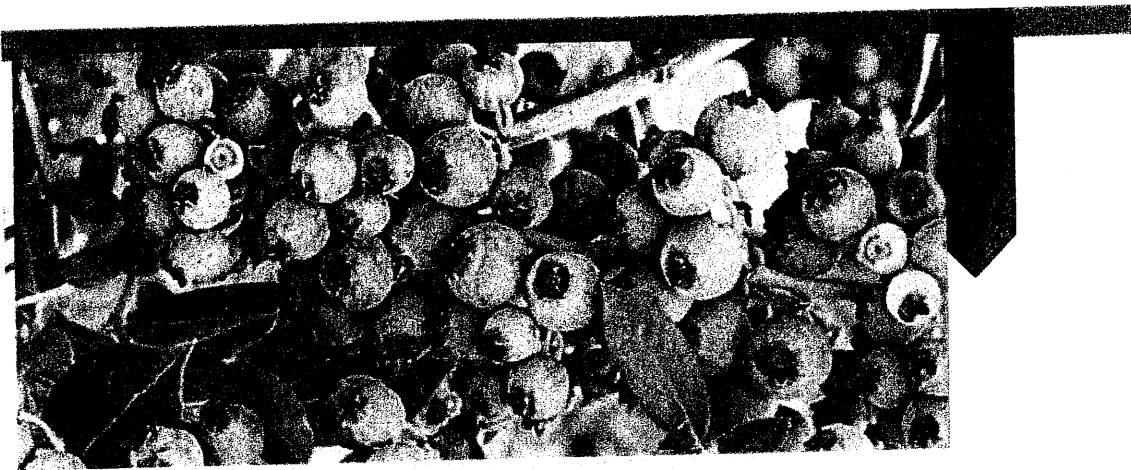
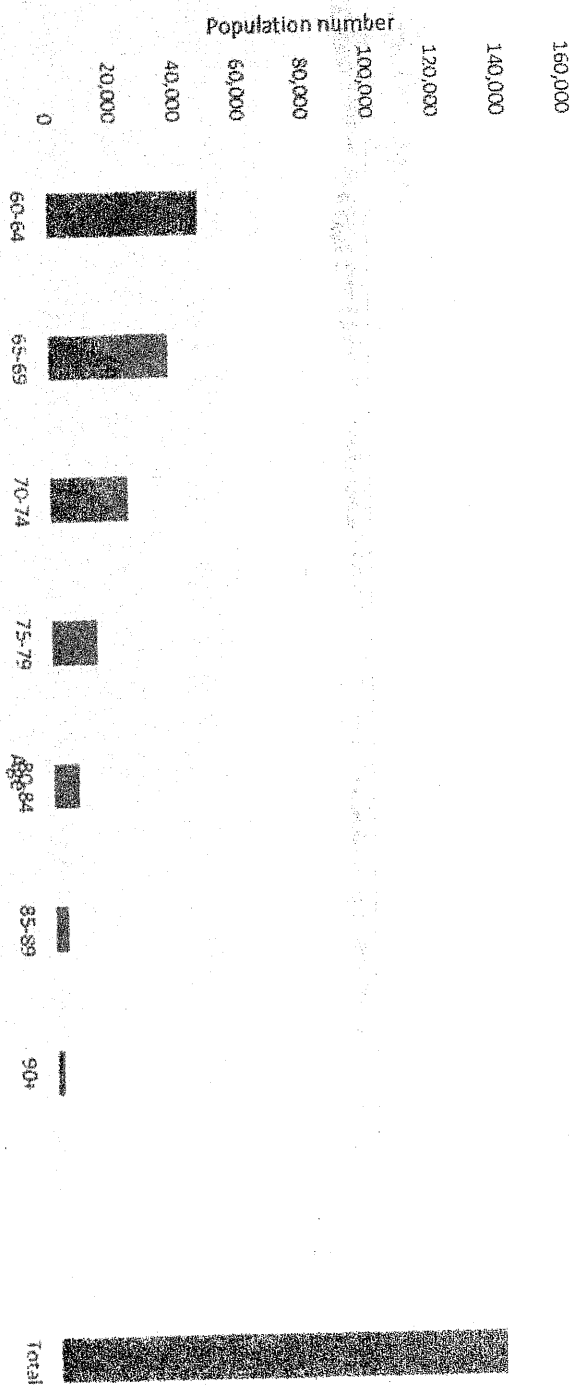


Alaska Commission on Aging

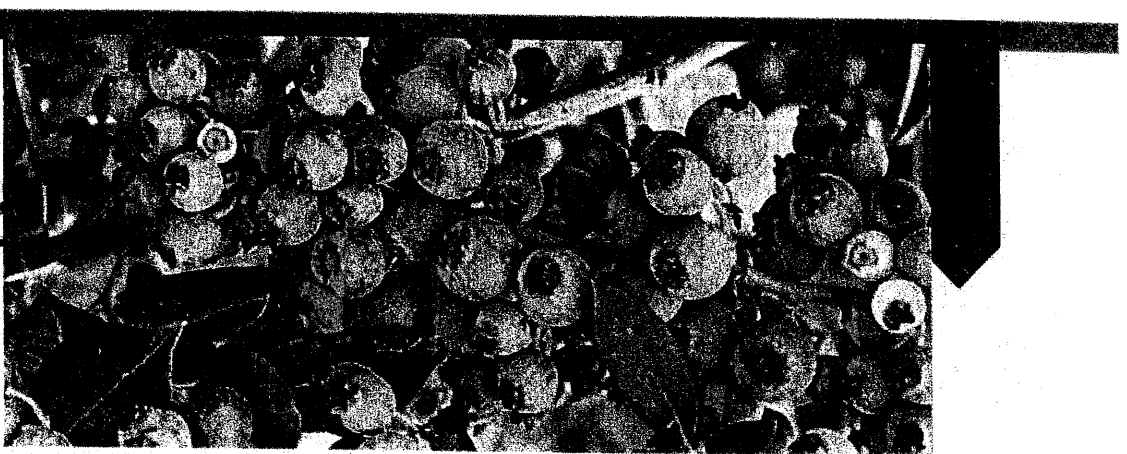
- ➡ ACoA Mandates:
 - Prepare and approve a comprehensive state plan for senior services and produce annual reports
 - Make recommendations directly to the Governor and Legislature
 - Provide recommendations to the Mental Health Trust Authority

2019 Population of Alaskan Seniors 60+

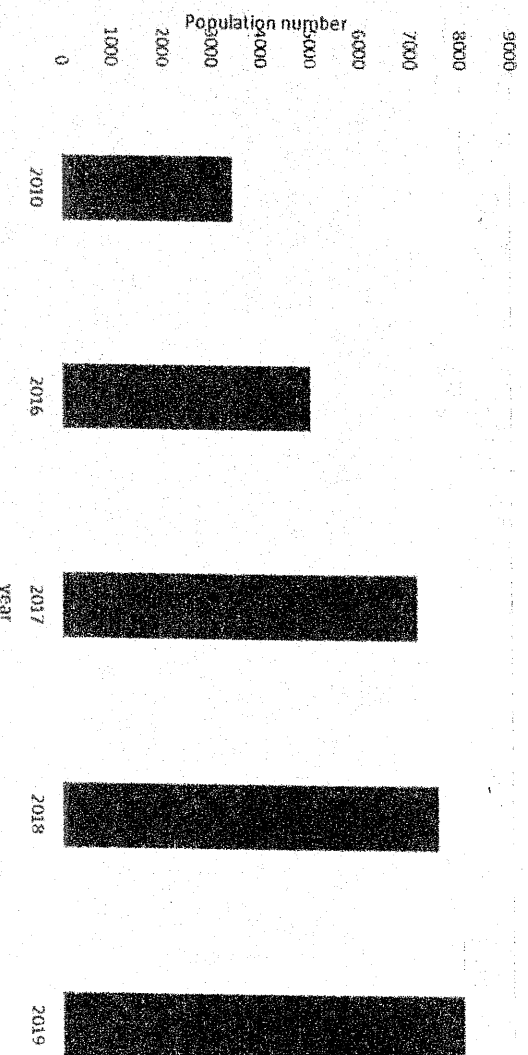
2019 Population of Alaskans aged 60+



Alaska Seniors with Alzheimer's and Related Dementia-ADRI

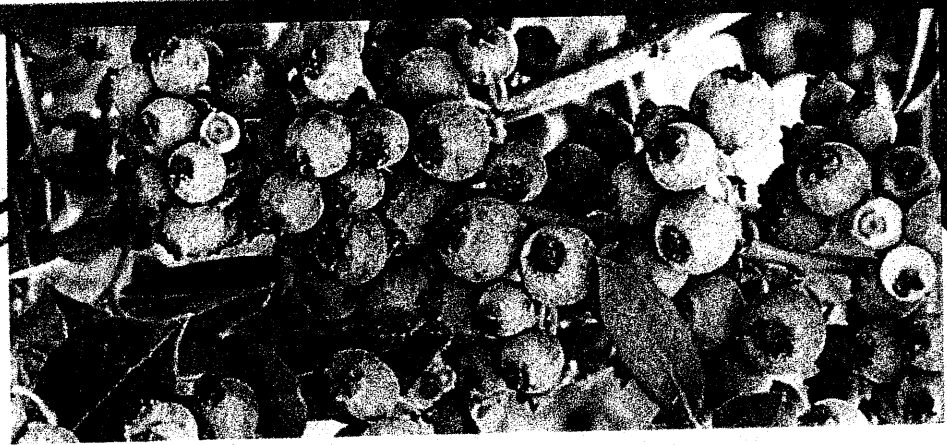


Alaskan Seniors with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (ADRD)



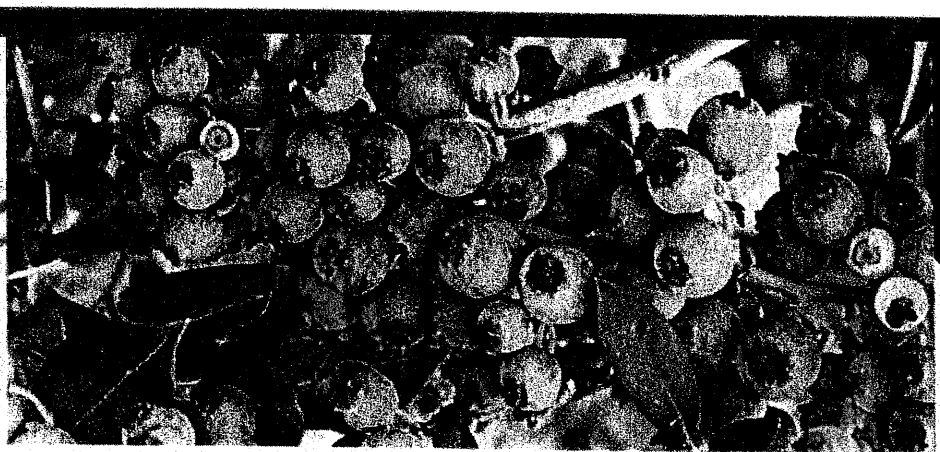
Source: ADRD information is based on national prevalence rates, an estimated 10% of Alaskans aged 65+ have ADRD.

Covid – 19. Impacts on the Senior Population with ADRD which will be included in the new updated Roadmap



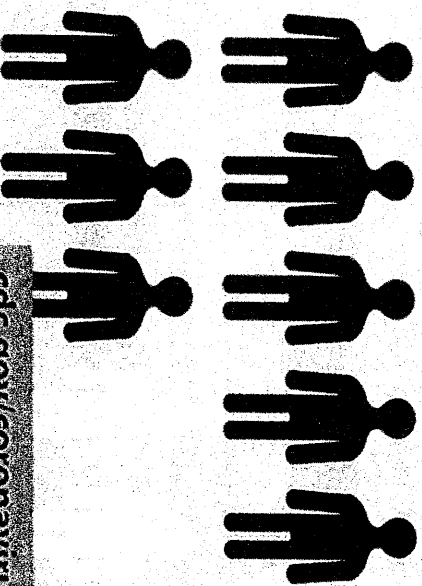
- **Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (ADRD) roadmap**
- Description: The population of older Alaskans is increasing and those that suffer from Dementia is also increasing. The road map is a guide for prioritizing and implementing strategies that will improve the quality of life for Alaskans with ADRD and their caregivers. The Trust has awarded a contract to get this plan updated and several members of ACoA are working on this project.

Covid - 19 Impacts on the Senior Population



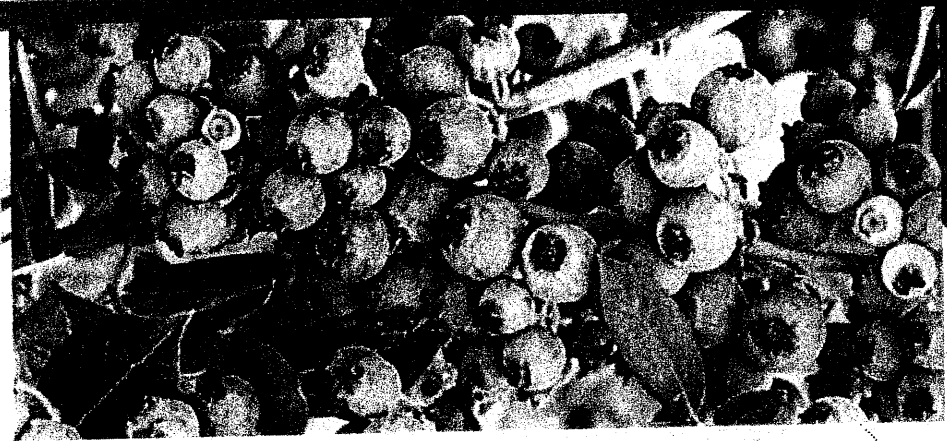
CDC Has Information For Older Adults at Higher Risk

8 out of **10** COVID-19 deaths reported in the U.S. have been in adults 65 years old and older. Visit [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) for steps to reduce your risk of getting sick.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Covid – 19 Impacts on the Senior Population

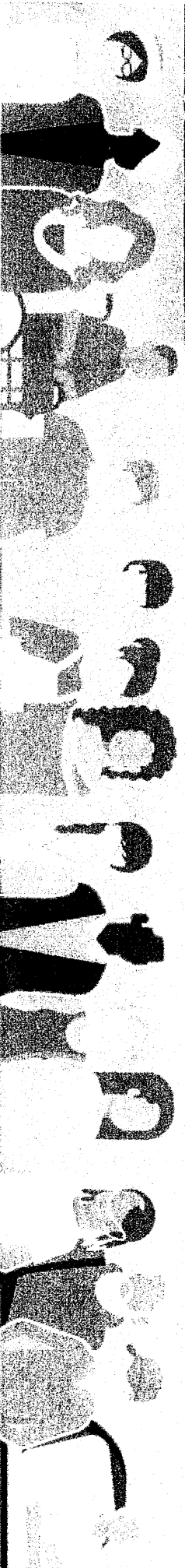
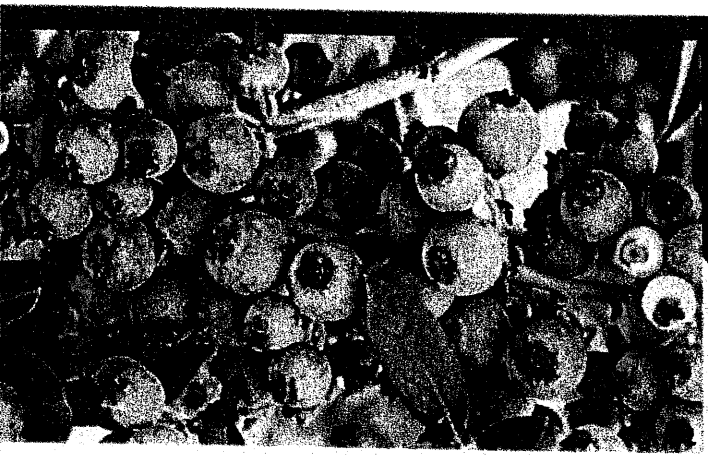


➤ COVID employment task force

- Description: Duane Mayes, Director of Division of Vocational Rehabilitation with the Department of Labor, holds a monthly webinar with a variety of state partners to understand the employment concerns of different stakeholders due to COVID-19 and to help establish relationships and collaboration to help solve the concerns.
- Seniors are especially affected with finding employment during Covid – 19
- The Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training program is having some success but also is struggling to find people during the Covid – 19 Virus able to be employed

Covid - 19 Impacts on the Senior Population

- Other potential long term impacts of the Covid - 19 Virus



FY2021 Legislative Session

New Legislators in Key Positions

Educate current and new legislators on the senior population

Look for cost savings in senior grant programs and within the ACoA

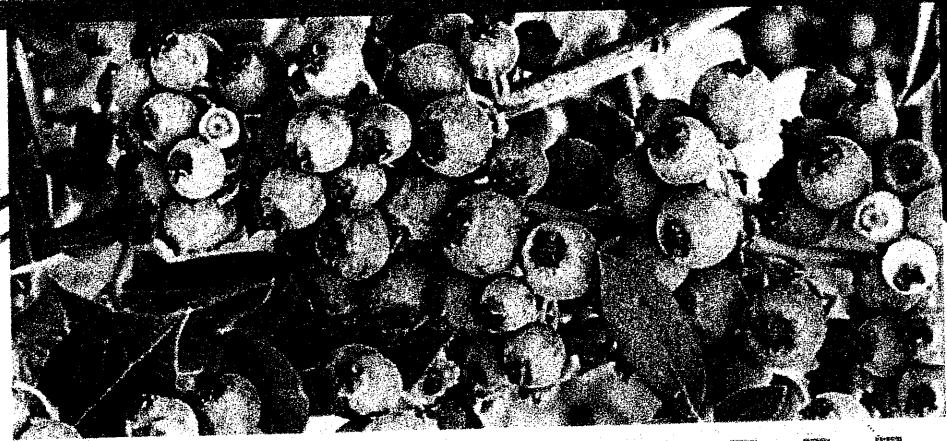
What programs are yielding positive outcomes

Federal programs were we might receive additional percentage of federal funding

Work with DHSS to review the cost savings of telework

Continue to educate legislators on the importance of Home and Community Based Services

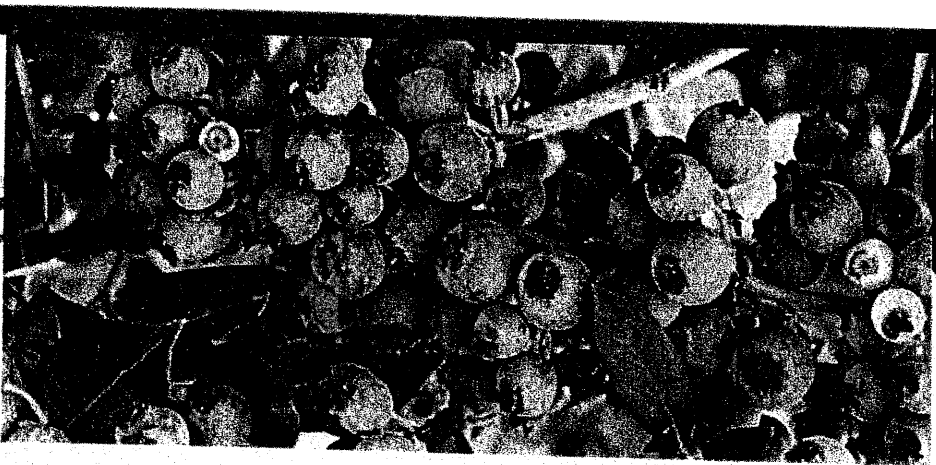
Continue to monitor and advocate for bills and funding that will affect Alaskan seniors.

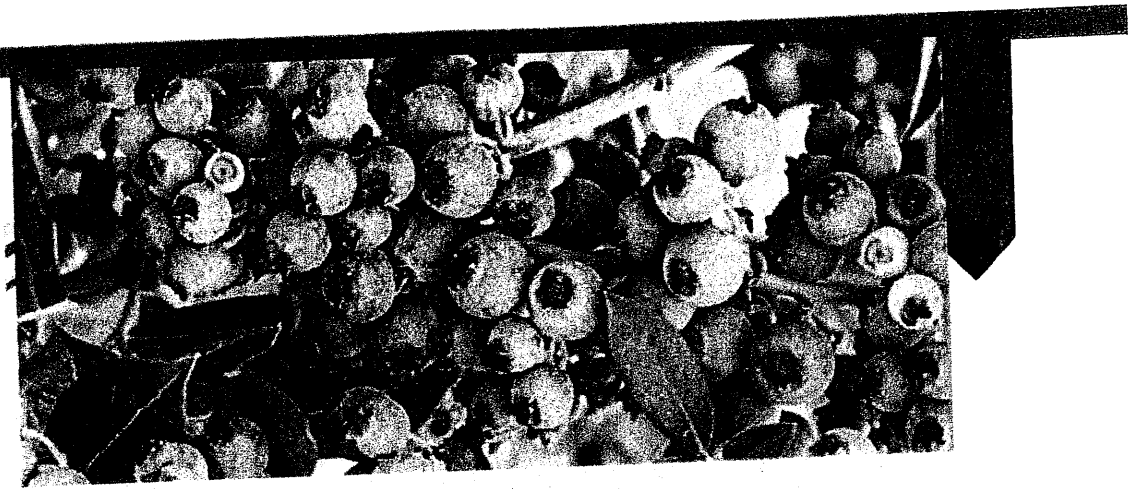


FY2022-2023 Trust Budget Requests

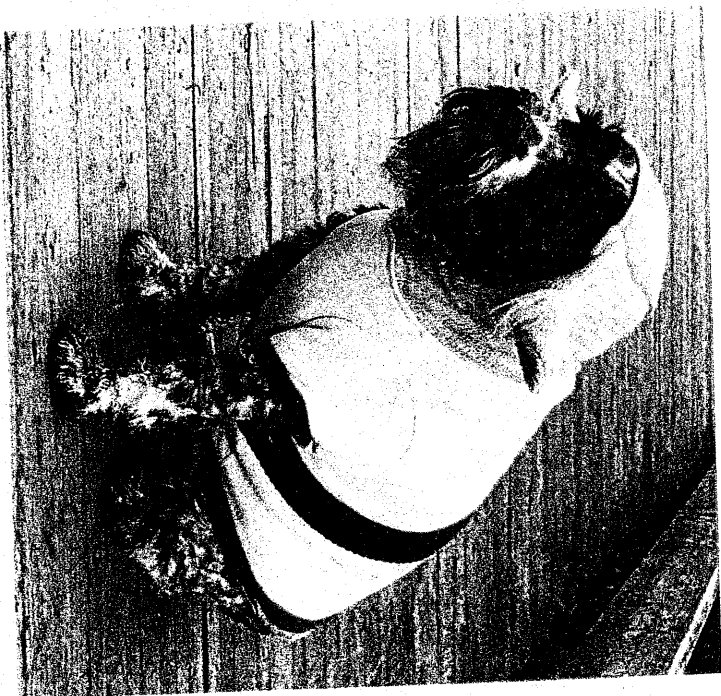
Encouraging restoring cuts to the program Alaska Training Cooperative
Supports Workforce Development
Supports Early Childhood Programs
Housing and Home and Community Based Services policy coordination and
capacity development

Thank you so much for the continuation of the Planner I position and the new
Program Coordinator I (Rural Long Term Services and Supports Coordinator)





Questions?



"Feel the force!" - Yoda

DIVISION OF SENIOR & DISABILITIES SERVICES

GRANTS UNIT MANAGER

LISA MORLEY



Alaska's

Aging Services Network includes

- Administration on Community Living (ACL)
- Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS)
- Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS)
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Tribal Partners
- Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA)
- Local providers
- Caregivers
- Older Alaskans

SDS Programs for Seniors

- Adult Protective Services: Investigates reports of harm to vulnerable adults
- Personal Care Services: In home, hands on care (Medicaid)
- Alaskans Living Independently Waiver: Home and community based services for seniors who meet nursing home level of care (Medicaid)
- Community First Choice: Home and community based services for seniors who meet nursing home level of care, includes personal care services
- General Relief: Emergency placement in Assisted Living Homes for needy adults.
- Grant Services: Home and community based services for seniors (State and Federal grants)
- Medicare Information Office

Grant Services for Seniors

- Senior grant services provide support to older Alaskan and their caregivers who may not qualify for other programs, but still need support to remain in their homes and communities.
- Services are targeted to Older Alaskans who are at risk of nursing home placement.
 - 80 and over
 - Live alone
 - Difficulty performing one or more activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, toileting)
 - Difficulty performing one of more independent activities of daily living (shopping, cooking, housework, laundry)
- Dementia

Grant Programs for Seniors

- Adult Day Care
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Education and Support
- Centers for Independent Living
- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- Medicare Information Office
- National Family Caregiver Support Program
- Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services
- Nursing Facility Transition
- Senior In-Home
- Senior Residential Services

How do I access grant services?

Aging and Disability Resource Centers - ADRCs

- ▶ Alaska's ADRCs are a trusted resource for seniors, people with disabilities, and their caregivers in helping provide information about and connect them with long term services and supports available in their communities.
- ▶ ADRC specialists can answer questions about how to access benefits or conduct a person centered interview to learn more about an individual's unique circumstances. ADRC specialists provide options counseling to the individual based on their needs and preferences.
- ▶ There are currently six ADRCs serving Alaska

Grant Program Overview

- ▶ Adult Day Care: Center based program that provides therapeutic activities in a safe environment for individuals with dementia or who are not safe at home
- ▶ ADRD Education, Training, and Support: Education and training to providers, individuals, and caregivers specific to ADRD
- ▶ Centers for Independent Living: Independent living skills training, transition services, peer support, advocacy and information and referral
- ▶ Health Promotion Disease Prevention: Evidence based activities for seniors that reduce the risk of disease, disability, and injury

Grant Program Overview

- ▶ National Family Caregiver Support Program: Support for caregivers includes counseling, education, respite, support groups, information, and legal assistance
- ▶ Nursing Facility Transition: Assistance moving from a nursing home to a lower level of care
- ▶ Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services: Congregate and Home Delivered Meals, Transportation, Volunteer Services, Homemaker, Nutrition Education, Outreach, Legal Assistance
- ▶ Senior In-Home Services: Case management, Chore, Respite, Supplemental Services
- ▶ Senior Residential Services: Assisted living for elders living in rural communities. (Tanana and Galena)

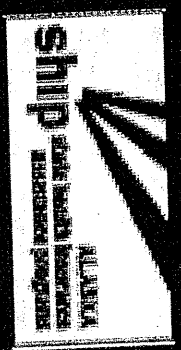
The Caregiver Connection Pilot Project

- ▶ The Caregiver Connection provides people helping someone with dementia assistance managing their stress and burden.

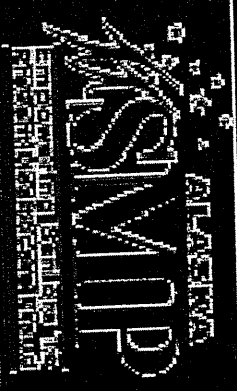
How does it work?

- ▶ The program includes two parts, a proven caregiver stress reduction process called TCARE® and funds to pay for services such as respite or adult day care. TCARE® includes a short questionnaire that identifies whether and how caregiving is impacting your stress. The results of that questionnaire determine if you are eligible for the program. If you are eligible, a trained specialist will work with you to develop a plan for reducing your stress.
- ▶ The program is a pilot being operated by the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska (ARA) in partnership with the State of Alaska Senior and Disability Services (SDS) and the Municipality of Anchorage ADRC. The pilot is only offered in Anchorage, but if it proves successful, the goal is to expand it statewide.

Medicare Information Office



1-800-4-A-MEDICARE



- Provides one-to-one counseling
- Assists with enrollment and coordination of benefits including:
 - Choosing a prescription drug plan, Part B and Medicare gap plan
 - Understanding Medicare premiums, and co-insurance costs
 - Additional benefits: Medicaid, Disability, and Social Security

Importance of Grant Services

Each quarter we receive stories from grantees, illustrating the difference that grant services have made in the wellbeing of their clients and caregivers.

- We hear that 'services assist them to live independently, avoid or delay placing aged family members into nursing care facilities – which often means leaving the community in which they've spent their lives.
- We hear that legal services prevent loss of homes, financial abuse, and help clients to obtain benefits essential to independence and wellbeing.
- We hear that services improve the health status of clients, through better nutrition, physical activity and creative cognitive engagement, through transportation that ensures access to needed services and decreases social isolation.
- We hear that the congregate meals provide important nutrition, social sharing, and even decrease in blood pressure and cholesterol! Home delivered meals not only provide food to those unable to leave their homes: the delivery drivers also provide important personal contact and an eye on the welfare of clients.
- We hear how the many hours of service provided by Senior Volunteers benefit their communities and provide a sense of pride and continuing contribution.

FY2021 Senior Grant Funding

Program	All Sources
Adult Day	\$ 1,517,466
ADRC	\$ 885,000
ADRD Ed and Training	\$ 346,036
Centers for Independent Living	\$ 1,256,044
Health Promotion	\$ 163,302
Nursing Facility Transition	\$ 60,000
National Family Caregiver	\$ 1,295,368
Nutrition, Transportation and Support	\$ 7,620,434
Senior In-Home	\$ 2,651,868
Senior Residential Services	\$ 400,000
Total	\$ 16,195,518

<https://states.aarp.org/alaska/election-voting-guide>

How to Vote in Alaska's 2020 Election: What You Need to Know

By Merry MacKinnon , August 18, 2020 09:52 AM

Alaskans will be able to apply for no-excuse absentee ballots online this year, as election officials have made it easier to vote safely from home amid the coronavirus pandemic:

- Older voters should have already received absentee ballot applications in the mail. Election officials in July sent absentee ballot applications to all registered voters 65 and older for the Aug. 18 primary and the Nov. 3 general election.
- Early voting for the general election will begin Oct. 19, helping voters to avoid longer lines on Election Day.

ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP via Getty Images

Here's what else you need to know:

How do I register to vote?

Most Alaskans are automatically registered to vote when they fill out their annual Permanent Fund Dividend applications. The system automatically updates addresses and other important voter information.

If you opted out of registration, you can register online, by mail or in person. You can register through the state's online voter portal using a valid Alaska driver's license or state-issued ID card. If you don't have either form of identification, you can complete a mail-in or in-person application.

You can also download a registration application and mail, fax or email it to your regional election office, along with a copy of your current driver's license, a state ID, a passport or a birth certificate.

Or you can apply in person at your local election office, at any other division of election office, at the Department of Motor Vehicles, at a voter registration agency, or at participating public libraries or tribal government offices.

The voter registration deadline is Oct. 4. You can check to see whether you're already registered through the state's voter information portal.

How can I get an absentee ballot? Are there important deadlines?

Alaska offers no-excuse absentee ballots, so there are no restrictions on any registered voter

getting one.

In July, election officials mailed absentee application forms to all voters 65 years and older. If you didn't receive an application or are under 65, you can complete an application on the state's election website or print one out and mail it to the absentee and petition office at the Alaska Division of Elections. Applications can also be faxed in or emailed using the contact information included on the ballot application.

Election officials must receive your application by Oct. 24. Ballots must be postmarked by Election Day, Nov. 3, and received within 10 days of the election. Voters using an absentee ballot must have a witness sign the ballot envelope to validate it; this year that can be done by anyone over age 18.

A personal representative can pick up or drop off ballots for those who are disabled or ill and will not be able to make it to the polls on Election Day. Your personal representative must return your completed ballot to a voting location on or before 8 p.m. on Election Day.

How do I know that my absentee ballot is secure?

Voters must complete an oath-and-affidavit envelope that includes their signature and that of a witness. Election officials check those signatures and the information included about the voter against the information they have on record. All ballots are also reviewed by a bipartisan supervisory board.

When is Election Day?

Tuesday, Nov. 3. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. You can find a list of the state's polling places on the state's election website, or you can use the state's voter information portal to determine where to cast your ballot.

Can I vote in person before Election Day?

Yes. Early in-person voting begins as soon as Oct. 19 in some locations. More information will be available from the Alaska Division of Elections closer to the start of the early-voting window. You can also drop off your absentee ballot before Election Day at polling locations.

What form of identification do I need to vote?

When voting in person, you'll be asked to show a valid ID, which could be a voter identification card, an Alaska driver's license, a state-issued ID, a military ID, a passport, or a hunting or fishing license. If you don't have any of these forms of ID, you can use a bank statement, utility bill, paycheck or other government-issued document that confirms your name and address.

What is being done to make polling places safe from the coronavirus?

Polling places will follow recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

and the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services. Voters are encouraged to wear face coverings, and those with health concerns are encouraged to cast no-excuse absentee ballots. Poll workers will be provided with personal protective equipment and are expected to regularly disinfect frequently touched surfaces. Hand sanitizer will be provided, and those inside polling places will be encouraged to practice social distancing. Depending on local conditions and public health guidance, you should also bring your own mask and hand sanitizer.

Will I be able to vote in the same place as I always have?

The Division of Elections expects all polling locations to be open. But the availability of election workers may cause some consolidation. Find your polling site using Alaska's voter portal.

You can also call the state's polling-place locator at 888-383-8683 (outside Anchorage) or 269-8683 (within Anchorage).

What are the key races in my state?

- U.S. President
- U.S. Senate: Incumbent Dan Sullivan (R) v. Al Gross (I)
- U.S. House: Incumbent Don Young (R) v. Alyse Galvin (I)
- State Senate: 10 of 20 seats
- State House: All 40 seats

Alaska's Pioneer Homes attempt to navigate a complicated path to stave off COVID-19

• Author: Annie Berman

Jeanne Grasser brings cut flowers from the garden at her Sutton home to her mother, Marilyn Grasser, who is a resident at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer. (Bill Roth / ADN)

Jeanne Grasser brings cut flowers from the garden at her Sutton home to her mother, Marilyn Grasser, who is a resident at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer. (Bill Roth / ADN)

PALMER — Jeanne Grasser's 88-year-old mother established her Alaskan grit as a teenager in the 1940s, when she moved to a tiny coal town near Palmer to share a one-room cabin with her parents and four siblings.

Marilyn "Sis" Grasser is resilient, her daughter says, but her Alzheimer's disease makes it hard to explain to her why she can't walk out of Palmer's Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home for lunch or a craft fair.

"She doesn't understand. She doesn't retain the information you give her," Jeanne Grasser said. "Five minutes later she says, 'Why can't I leave?'"

Protecting some of Alaska's most vulnerable populations is proving to be a moving target as Pioneer Home administrators balance policies to halt the spread of COVID-19 with the mental health of residents who need support from loved ones to thrive. The state runs six homes serving nearly 500 Alaskans aged 60 and older in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Palmer, Juneau, Sitka and Ketchikan.

The homes enacted visitor bans in March, early in the pandemic's appearance in Alaska. Right now, the Anchorage and Fairbanks homes remain closed to visitors. The other four homes allowed visitors starting in mid-July, though Palmer halted the practice last month. Visitors are screened, wear masks, and stay 6 feet apart in designated visiting areas.

Other COVID-19 precautions within the Pioneer Homes system include training staff about infection control, doing health screenings of anyone entering the building, checking residents for symptoms multiple times a day, discouraging residents from leaving the homes unless absolutely necessary, and testing anyone with symptoms.

"The people living in the homes are at very high risk if they do get exposed to the virus," said Heidi Hamilton, state director of the Alaska Pioneer Homes division, adding staff have prioritized COVID-19 safety education. "I'm pretty confident that a huge percentage of our residents are doing a good job, just like our staff is."

Nonetheless, the virus has gotten into several facilities.

Containing the spread

Two residents have died at the Anchorage Pioneer Home, part of an outbreak that began in early August and now has stabilized at 19 positive cases, most in residents. A smaller cluster of six cases, all but one in staff, surfaced more recently at the Fairbanks Pioneer Home.

A staff member at Palmer tested positive in mid-August, which is why the facility stopped allowing visitors. That home is monitoring and testing residents, and so far no one else has tested positive, officials said last week.

It's not known how the Anchorage outbreak began, and "it may never be known," state health department spokesman Clinton Bennett said in an email. It's hard to know whether a staff member or resident was the first

case, especially with the possibility of asymptomatic cases complicating the question. The first case in the Fairbanks cluster was an employee who tested positive in June.

Measures in place now are reducing the risk of additional infections, and education is ongoing about COVID-19 mitigation, Bennett said.

“One thing that the Pioneer Home System does not want to do is blame or villainize someone for contracting COVID-19,” he wrote.

Testing, one of the state’s strategies to control the spread of the virus, is conducted on residents experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, officials say. If a positive case is discovered in the home, residents are tested once or twice a week depending on their risk of exposure. Testing continues until at least two weeks have passed with no positive cases.

The state has not enacted a universal mask policy within the homes, another Fairbanks care center credits with halting its own COVID-19 outbreak. Pioneer Home officials say they don’t require residents to wear face coverings if they’re not comfortable doing so.

Masks

At the Denali Center care facility in Fairbanks, COVID-19 safeguards prompted a “window party” for a resident who turned 100 a week ago.

Mary Cappiello got a cake, cards and balloons on one side of the window. Several staffers celebrated with her. On the other side of the glass were more than a dozen friends and family members, including daughter Caroline.

Her mother moved to the center about five years ago. They see each other using the center’s plexiglass visiting booth. Caroline Cappiello tries to call every day. But connecting is hard.

Cappiello asks the nursing assistant to put the phone to her mother’s ear.

“Hi Mom! It’s Caroline. I love you. I miss you,” she’ll say. “And sometimes, I hear a little bit of a noise, and sometimes they tell me she just pushes the phone back to them.”

The long-term care facility is operated by Foundation Health Partners, which also runs Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. Administrators opted for a universal masking policy after experiencing the state’s first coronavirus outbreak in a congregate care setting, starting in late March. Three residents and four staff initially tested positive for the virus.

Now center director Tina Rein credits the mask policy with halting a more recent outbreak after three certified nursing assistants tested positive.

The initial outbreak came before the center began mandating masks, Rein said. The staff cases came after the mandate was enacted.

“We have tested all of our residents, all of our staff, and we have not had additional positives. So the evidence shows universal masking is effective,” she said.

“I knock on wood, because we’re all vulnerable,” she said.

At the Pioneer Homes, Hamilton said, staff are required to wear masks at all times in the homes. Residents wear masks “when they’re comfortable with it,” she said. The reason a universal mask mandate at Pioneer Homes isn’t feasible is that many of the residents aren’t able to remove their mask independently, she said.

“We don’t want them to have a mask on and choking on something but not able to take their mask off,” she explained. “So that limits the number of people in the homes that are able to wear masks safely.”

She said residents are encouraged to wear masks when they're going to be in close contact with other people or leave the home.

State Rep. Zack Fields, a Democrat from Anchorage, says the Dunleavy administration should mandate masks in state facilities, especially Pioneer Homes. The governor in July started requiring state workers and visitors to state buildings to wear face coverings when they can't maintain at least 6 feet of social distance from people not in their household.

Fields, who co-chairs the House State Affairs Committee, presided over a late July workplace safety hearing during which several experts called for universal masking and better ventilation practices in state buildings. Experts testifying at the hearing included Shelly Miller, a mechanical engineering professor at the University of Colorado Boulder, who recommended the state transition to MERV 13 air filters to remove aerosolized COVID-19 particles more efficiently.

"This is not hard," Fields said last week. "Wear a mask. Upgrade your filters."

Three of Pioneer Homes are using MERV 13 filters now, according to Bennett: Juneau, Ketchikan and Anchorage. The Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home (Palmer) has MERV 13 filters on order. Sitka and Fairbanks are both using intake of 100% fresh air with no recirculation.

Outings

Given the bans on visitors at some state-run homes, it may be surprising to learn that residents are allowed to move in and out.

State officials say they legally can't block people from leaving the facility on outings, some of which may be medically necessary. They also say there's no reason to believe residents leaving the homes have brought the virus in.

It's not clear many residents do leave — or want to, given the virus-changed world they encounter.

At Juneau's Pioneer Home, which is open to visitors, administrators say the goal is keeping coronavirus out. But at the same time, residents need to connect with their families, said administrator Gina DelRosario.

"It keeps them hopeful and alive," DelRosario said.

A group of residents actually took a trip to the local Fred Meyer this summer, with staff members, during the store's senior hours.

The state's guidance on leaving the home is clear, yet officials say they can't really enforce it.

Back in March, statewide Pioneer Homes director Hamilton wrote a letter urging residents not to leave the home where they live as COVID-19 began to take hold within the state.

"The risk of them being exposed to the virus outside the homes has increased," she wrote. "In addition, the risk of residents bringing the virus back into the home and causing infection in others has increased."

But during an interview last week, she explained that residents in the Pioneer Homes legally have a right to come and go.

"All people, including older adults, have rights," Hamilton said. "And so not leaving your home is not something generally speaking that you can mandate for someone."

At the Juneau home, however, residents making that trip to the store faced a moral dilemma, DelRosario said.

One of the residents was fearful of being recognized and questioned by a family member about why she was out, DelRosario said. The resident decided not to go.

Fear of bringing an infection back into the home, and worry about how community members would respond if they were seen out in public, caused the residents to make a collective decision soon after to not leave the home anymore, DelRosario said.

"It's like, you've been inside for so long, and stepping out and going there for the first time, there was fear," she said.

'Mom, I'm so proud of you'

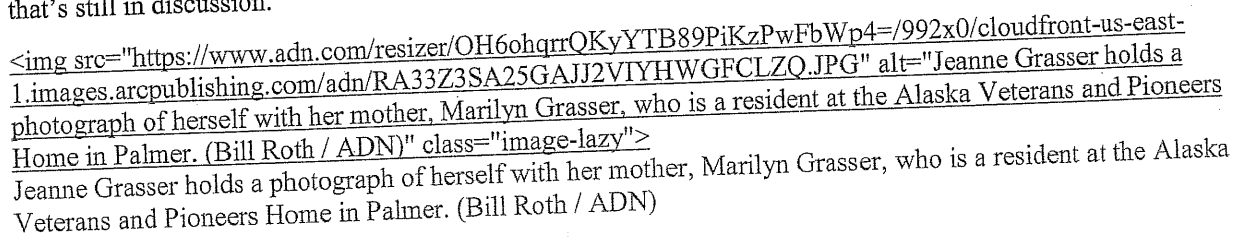
Pioneer Homes officials say they are all too aware of the difficulties balancing COVID-19 protections with the mental health of the seniors, especially with the darkness and cold of winter approaching.

Hamilton said she expects the vaccine for the virus — which could start to be available as soon as November — to be "a game changer" for the homes' vulnerable residents.

[CDC tells states to be ready to distribute vaccines on Nov. 1]

"The other thing that will change things is if communities are able to reduce their cases," Hamilton said. Her team tracks local alert levels to determine whether a home is relatively safe for visitations, which is why the Anchorage and Fairbanks homes have remain closed: Both cities have more than 10 cases per 100,000 population.

It's also possible the Pioneer Homes could start testing family members hoping to visit loved ones, though that's still in discussion.


Jeanne Grasser holds a photograph of herself with her mother, Marilyn Grasser, who is a resident at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer. (Bill Roth / ADN)

Jeanne Grasser holds a photograph of herself with her mother, Marilyn Grasser, who is a resident at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in Palmer. (Bill Roth / ADN)

Jeanne Grasser doesn't know when she'll get to visit in person with her mother again at the Palmer home. They talk on the phone every day, and other friends and relatives do the same.

But Sis Grasser finds support inside the home too, her daughter said. She sees herself as a caretaker for a good friend next door, reminding her about meals and helping at bingo games.

Jeanne Grasser said she's grateful for the lessons her mother has provided about surviving hard times and coming out of challenges on the positive side.

"I tell her all the time: Mom, I'm so proud of you," she said. "To be in this situation, and you're handling it so well. She likes to hear that."

Daily News reporter Morgan Krakow contributed.

[Because of a high volume of comments requiring moderation, we are temporarily disabling comments on many of our articles so editors can focus on the coronavirus crisis and other coverage. We invite you to write a letter to the editor or reach out directly if you'd like to communicate with us about a particular article. Thanks.]

<https://olderworkers.workforcegps.org/resources/2020/09/15/19/12/New-Posters-for-NEOWW-and-SCSEP-at-55>

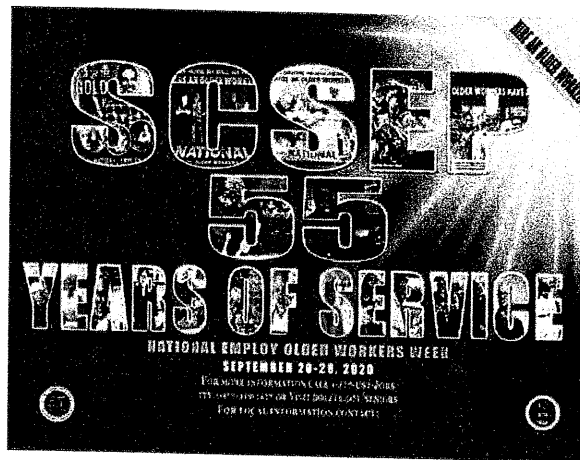
Rita Grays Report:

September is an exciting time for the SCSEP program and for all older workers in communities across the country.

As you all know, National Employ Older Workers Week (NEOWW), is held annually the last full week of September. This year, NEOWW takes place from Sunday, September 20th to Saturday, September 26th. This week recognizes the vital role of older workers in the workforce.

This is a great time to highlight the important contributions older workers make to the American workforce. To raise awareness of NEOWW in your community there are new posters available in print and web-based quality. The posters will be available on the COP for download and distribution this week. This year's NEOWW is particularly significant, as the SCSEP program turns 55! As you know, in those 55 years, SCSEP has made a difference across our nation in both the lives of the older workers who participate and in the communities in which they live and provide services.

This year's celebration is special since SCSEP will be officially old enough to be a SCSEP participant. Throughout the month, we will be taking a look at the history of the program, how it continues to build on its legacy of lasting service, and what the next 55 years might look like. Our NEOWW theme is Building a Legacy From a Solid Foundation. We celebrate all Older workers and their continued contribution to today's workforce and we celebrate 55 years of contribution that SCSEP has made to every program participant and community across the nation. Here is a preview of this year's NEOWW poster and SCSEP 55th anniversary's poster.



Do you have any plans or are you hosting any events in your community? If you have anything planned, we want to hear about it!

FY 2021 Committee assignments

Executive Committee: Gordon Glaser (chair), Bob Sivertsen, Paula Pawlowski, Nona Safra, Staff: Executive Director

Legislative committee: Bob Sivertsen (chair), all other current commissioners plus Mary Shields. Staff: lead: Lesley Thompson, Executive Director

Planning committee: Gordon Glaser, Jim McCall, Pam Kelly, Staff: Executive Director (Chair TBA)

Bylaw committee: Paula Pawlowski (chair), Mary Shields, Cheryl La Follette, Gordon Glaser, Rosemary Hagevig. Staff: Executive Director

Training committee: Paula Pawlowski, Staff: Executive Director

Older Alaskans committee: Linda Combs (chair), Gordon Glaser, Nona Safra, Anna Frank, Rita Gray (MASST program) staff Executive Director

Ad hoc committees:

- Veterans/Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home/Alaska Pioneer Homes: Mike Coons, Bob Sivertsen, Rosemary Hagevig Staff: Lesley Thompson (Chair TBA)
- Developmental disabilities/traumatic and acquired brain injuries: Nona Safra (chair), Pamela Samash Staff: Executive Director

<https://olderworkers.workforcegps.org/resources/2020/09/15/19/12/New-Posters-for-NEOWW-and-SCSEP-at-55>

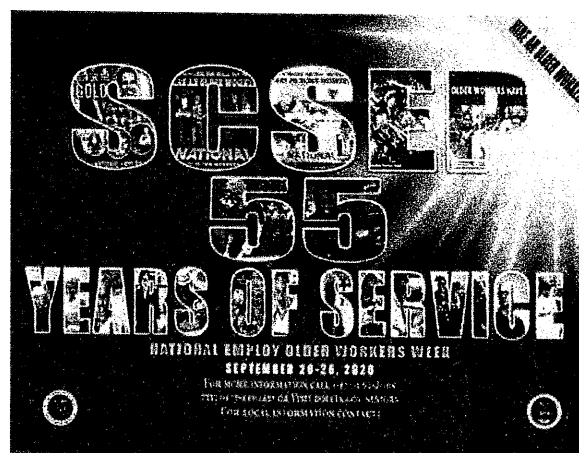
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