



# North Slope Newsletter

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



Last month we hosted the 4th North Slope Borough oil and gas forum. It was exciting to hold this forum during the 50th anniversary of

Slope residents to work together in planning for future development. When I mention the people of this Borough, I mean all of the residents and the organizations that represent them, including city governments, village tribal governments, the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, village Native corporations, and organizations such as the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission.

We reminded those in attendance that projects like Willow and Pikka are located on the ancestral lands of the Iñupiat people, but these are not Iñupiat or Borough projects. That's because  
continue on page 6....

the creation of the North Slope Borough. We've come a long way over the past five decades but still have so much left to do to advance our people and region into its next 50 years and beyond.

We have designed this forum to bring together the Borough, state and North

## Newsletter Highlights

A Message from the Mayor

CWAT flyer

Guess who

Mayor visits Nome: Storm Impacts

Employee of the Month

**North Slope Borough**

PO Box 69  
Barrow, Alaska

# BOXHOLDER

# NSB Community Winter Access Trails(CWAT) 2023 Northern Route



**Wainwright, Atkasuk and Utqiagvik Trail Under Construction**

**Utqiagvik Meeting scheduled on:**

**Monday, Jan. 23 – Barrow High School Auditorium @ 7PM**

**Utqiagvik to Prudhoe Bay Trail to begin construction at later date**

**Please remain off Trails to avoid conflict with Heavy Equipment**

**For updates and to sign up for  
future caravans contact the**

**CWAT Hotline**

**Phone: 907-852-9463 or  
907-852-3835**

**Email: [cwat@asrc.com](mailto:cwat@asrc.com)**



## AUGUST EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: KIVVAQ NUNGASAK

Kivvaq began working as an office specialist for the NSB Human Resources Department in 2012. She currently holds the position of an HR Specialist II. She does an outstanding job for the HR Relations Division and demonstrates a positive attitude and exceptional skill in her work. Kivvaq goes above and beyond without hesitation, and is a proven leader and role model. Thank you Kivvaq for your dedication and contribution to the NSB, congratulations!



## SEPTEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: VIRGINIA BROWER

Virginia Brower was hired by the NSB back in 1994. She now works as the Water Utility System Operator for Public Works in Kaktovik. Virginia's work performance the Utility Systems has not gone unnoticed. The Public Works Water Utility System Operator's duties consist of maintaining four system types- Water Treatment, Water Distribution, Wastewater Treatment, and Wastewater Collection.



In her position, she has shown professionalism and a courteous demeanor in interactions with the customer and outside agencies. She creates an atmosphere of good work ethics in all types of environmental conditions. She also demonstrates safety in her work and plays a valuable role in maintaining the Water Systems in Kaktovik. Thank you, Virginia, for your hard work and dedication to ensuring the residents of Kaktovik are safely being taken care of.



## OCTOBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: SOLLIE HUGO

Sollie came on board with IHLC in August of 2016 as an Oral Historian. He held this position for 4 years, until the title of the job changed to an IHLC Specialist. He was then promoted to Museum Curator on December 30, 2021. Sollie's past supervisors report that he has done an excellent job capturing historical information of travels on the North Slope from the west coast to the east coast. Sollie took the initiative to seek out residents in his village to share stories and locations of subsistence hunting and travel routes used. He documented the 100 mile walk that his elders took. Sollie also agreed to train his co workers, in other villages, the process he took to obtain the information. Sollie is very committed to his job – to the point that when the building had issues in Anaktuvuk Pass, Sollie did checks on the facility to ensure there was no further damage during 30 below winter temperatures. Sollie is a true cultural bearer for his community. He is active with his community's dance group, served as a City Mayor in the past and continues to strive to teach about our Iñupiaq Culture. Quyanaqpak Sollie!

## NSB MAYOR VISITS NOME: STORM IMPACKS

This Year marked the 50th Anniversary of the Borough. We have witnessed dramatic changes during this period. When oil was discovered in Prudhoe Bay, it started a chain of events that had tremendous impacts on our lives. Because of the visionary leadership of the people who walked before us, we have opportunities to better the lives of all the people that call the North Slope their home. That was the focus of our celebrations this year across the North Slope.

Revenues from taxation have built millions in basic necessities for our region; (dollar value in replacement costs). By basic, I mean basic; things like indoor plumbing and heating and electricity; airstrips, schools, and housing. These basics come with the obligation for replacement when they reach the end of their useful life which we cannot afford yet. Our capital needs are double what we spend each year. We need to see increases in revenue just to sustain what we have. I'm not complaining, it's just the reality we find ourselves in and Covid only made it worse, thank God for our ability to utilize our subsistence rights and resources.

Housing is an important issue for the Borough; When first elected, I thought it was a mistake to get rid of our Housing Department and assume that an underfunded Indian housing authority could solve our problems. So I brought back the NSB Housing Department. We need Public Housing in our communities suitable for elders, young adults, and new families to move into while they plan their future. We can make contractors available to communities to provide services directly to residents who can afford to pay if mobilization, equipment, lodging, and fuel were subsidized. We can create programs for major upgrades when a homeowner is willing to give the Borough an ownership interest until costs are recovered. This would allow many homes that are uninhabitable within our utility grids to become a benefit to the community again. There are many things we can do in addition what we are doing already by working together for one common goal.

Economic Stability and Self-sufficiency is an important issue for the Borough. We increased our Tax Cap Modifier to allow us to budget more operating dollars which can be used for creating jobs, funding wellness initiatives, or even making facility upgrades without the expenses of debt retirement or the restrictions of bond proceeds.

read more on page 5....



January 10, in the NSB Assembly CHambers the Bureau of Land Management Alaska presented an Award to Honor \*Roy M. Nageak " in loving memory or Roy Nageak, BLM Alaska, Arctic District National Resources Program Coordinator July 14, 2013- September 16, 2021.

Roy Nageak will be remembered as a steward of tradition, language, friendship, and for his faith. Roy had a unique ability to both preserve and perpetuate him inupiaq heritage



## NOVEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: LARSHE HOFFLAND

Larshe Hoffland was hired by the NSB as a Veterinarian Technician/ Office Specialist back in 2016. In the past year, Larshe has stepped up to Advocate for the Vet Clinic. Larshe pushed notifications for the X-Ray Machine upkeep which was requiring attention, so the veterinarian can provide the best care possible. She has also prepared for the future by setting the stepping stone foundation for the veterinarian. Larshe has also worked with the current staff to successfully provide services to the villages for the rabies vaccine. Larshe has made great strides in her current role. She's also presented to the Comp Committee for job description changes. It's an honor having someone so dedicated and understanding. Larshe is a great asset to our team!



## DECEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: PATRICK TUKROOK



Patrick Tukrook, of Point Lay, exemplifies commitment to his community. On a daily basis, as Project Laborer, he continuously seeks out and demonstrates (through actions far above and beyond) what is tasked in his job description. As a RISK Management employee, he is the local liaison in environment protection, occupational safety, and emergency management concerns, proving a valuable asset to our Risk Management Team.

Patrick pursues knowledge and skill expansion: in a relatively short time, he has become proficient in delivering relevant safety meetings to staff and genuinely engages in other required training. When attending the first of the Incident Command System (ICS) training he declared, "This is so awesome: getting paid to learn all of this really cool stuff!"

During the triple storm event that caused substantial damage in October 2022, Patrick took a proactive approach and organized volunteers to move boats to higher ground. His quick thinking and leadership alleviated substantial damage and potential loss to many community members. He also volunteers as Search And Rescue Coordinator for Point Lay.

## NSB MAYOR VISITS NOME: STORM IMPACKS

Reduction of transportation costs and improved access to communities and natural resources is an important issues for the Borough. There is a need for both permanent and seasonal roads in the development of the North Slope. Transportation improvements will lead to a lower cost of living and improved access to our communities and responsible development of natural resources that our future depends upon. We have partnered with the State to engage our communities in planning efforts, and they have committed about 9 million dollars to develop the Arctic Strategic Transportation & Resource (ASTAR) Plan. We are working now on permit applications for seasonal roads to several of our communities for early 2023.

We do not have a private housing market because you cannot build a house for its appraised value in most of our communities. We would need nearly 400 more housing units to enjoy the same ratio of residents to homes that Anchorage calls a housing shortage. Our municipality is the economic driver in our region, not simply the provider of essential services folks in the lower 48 may be accustomed to. Our entire economy is as dependent upon revenue from taxation as the State is on royalties from oil flowing out of our region. There are some in other parts of rural Alaska and here in Nome that may be in greater need than we are, but I look forward to hearing from everyone here in attendance and working together to find solutions.

With our geographic location and extremely high shipping costs, we must find more innovative solutions. That means combining the latest technologies with a deep well of traditional knowledge. We Alaskans have always been an innovative bunch. Since the First Inupiat set foot on this region over 10,000 years ago, life has been an almost constant battle to survive, to scrape together enough food for winter, to build shelters that would keep us warm. When it comes to adaptation, we are experts in the field.



The common challenges presented by rurality create opportunities for joint working between Our regions and other Arctic communities and the federal Government. By taking a community-led and human rights-based approach that recognizes the distinct needs of rural areas, we can challenge traditional perceptions and develop innovative solutions to build resilience and empowerment. and representation. Indeed, cooperation between the north slope, feds, and International Arctic regions and organizations like ICC and the AEWG has been ongoing for decades, delivering tangible benefits to people and communities on both sides. We've come a long way, but we have so much more left to do.

Quyanaqpak for the opportunity to speak to you today; I wish all of you a very happy and enjoyable event and a great winter. Thank you and God bless you.

Borough is a unique example of native Americans using the municipal-government model to support themselves. We are able to do this because we have a tax base. We have a tax base because of the fossil-fuel industry.

Our job at the North Slope Borough is to defend the interests of our eight Iñupiat communities, protect our ancestral lands and safeguard our cultural traditions. Subsistence—the ability to care for ourselves and our families—is one of those traditions. The environmental extremists seeking to stop all development of oil and gas in our region, subsistence hunting, and using the land to transport goods and services to build schools, homes, and clinics are trying to rob our people of our right to self-determination.

We also reminded those in attendance, some of our residents still live in homes that aren't connected to running water and modern sewage systems. We have no roads connecting our communities because the federal government will not allow us to build them. This is not an excuse but a painful reminder of how little we still control. We must remain united in our resolve to change this; together. God bless you all and safe travels to our Whaling crews during the upcoming fall harvest and welcome to all the new school teachers on slope. -Mayor Harry Brower Jr.

## FEBRUARY EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: 2023 KIVGIQ STAFF & VOLENTEERS



The staff and volunteers who helped coordinate and execute Kivgiq 2023 went above and beyond to accommodate 500-700 guests a day. Singing and Dancing, serving lunch and dinner, on top of giving rides to 16 different lodging facilities – the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to make Kivgiq successful does not go unnoticed.

We appreciate the hard work that our Kivgiq staff has completed the months leading up to the event. The facilities were taken care of in a professional manner, without complaints. The team put in long days and long nights to ensure the 2023 Kivgiq Celebration was as joyful and healing as possible. Quyanapqak Kivgiq staff and volunteers.

In Recognition of 2023 Kivgiq Staff and Volunteers for planning in the months leading up to the event, and organizing a 4 day Kivgiq celebration. Our guests and facilities were handled in a professional manner. The team put in long days and long nights to ensure the 2023 Kivgiq celebration was as joyful as possible for our people. Our residents of the North Slope region thank you for your service. Quyanapqak!

## JANUARY EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: IDA OKPEAHA



Ida Okpeaha started her career with the North Slope Borough Health Department in 1993 as a temp Homemaker and transferred to a van driver in 1994. Later she took a job as a transportation Supervisor from 1994 to 1997. Now holds the position of a Dispatcher for the North Slope Borough Senior Center. She has been working for the North Slope Borough Health Department for 29 years to date.



She does an outstanding job for the Health Department and demonstrates a positive attitude and exceptional skill in her work. Ida goes above and beyond without hesitation and is a proven leader and role model. Thank you, Ida, for your dedication and contribution to the NSB, congratulations!

