2007 World Eskimo Indian Olympics

July 18-21
Sullivan Arena • Anchorage, Alaska
Tradition.
Let the Games begin!

WEIO a blend of skill, culture and history

By Dawn Dinwoodie

Salmon hanging and drying on the racks under Alaska's midnight sun is a signal to many Alaska Native people that summer is slowly winding down. Many reward themselves for their hard work at fish camp with a trip to the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics – a time to visit friends and family, compete or watch a world-record breaking event such as the one-foot or two-foot high-kick, or buy and sell arts and crafts. This year, athletes and participants travel to Anchorage to mark the 46th anniversary of World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO).

This is Anchorage’s first time hosting WEIO, which takes place July 18-21 at the Sullivan Arena. Spectators have an opportunity to experience a unique cultural and sporting event sharing Alaska Native traditions and

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World Eskimo Indian Olympics

July 18-21 at the Sullivan Arena

Day Performances
11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wed.
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Thurs.-Sat.
(These are approximate times; events may end earlier.)

Evening Performances
6 p.m. to closing from Wed.-Sat.

Costs
The day performances are free. The evening performances are free for children under the age of four, $8 for elders/seniors and ages five to 18 years old, $10 for adults.

Registration
Athletes and participants can download applications at www.weio.org, e-mail weio@weio.org, call 1-907-452-6646, or register in-person at the Sullivan Arena starting at 10 a.m. on July 18 and throughout the week. Registration fees vary by event. All athletes and participants must be at least a quarter (Alaskan, Greenland, Siberian, Canadian) Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and/or American Indian.

Housing
Housing for active participants is available at the University of Alaska, Anchorage (UAA) for $25 per person, per night. Housing registration online reservations is available at http://www.anchorage.net/weio or contact Dave Smith, associate director of conference services, 907-751-7241 or e-mail daves@uaa.alaska.edu or fax 907-751-7377. Free shuttle service is available from the airport.

Shuttle Service
Between 9 a.m. and midnight, courtesy shuttle buses will run between UAA Housing and the Sullivan Arena. For shopping needs, shuttle buses will run between the Sullivan Arena, Dimond Mall and the 5th Ave. Mall throughout the day.

Parking is free courtesy of BP
Welcome participants!

Perry Ahsogeak
On behalf of the Board of Governors of the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics, our staff, and the many volunteers, welcome to Anchorage for the 46th annual World Eskimo-Indian Olympics.

WEIO is a very special event and the largest cultural celebration in Alaska. It is acclaimed both nationally and internationally as the most unique event of its kind in the world.

While visiting WEIO please be sure to check out the many sites that Anchorage has to offer such as the Alaska Native Heritage Center, Music in the Park, Festivities Downtown, and the Saturday & Sunday Market.

Those who have worked on the event over the years, the dance groups and the athletes who have participated, and those who have come to observe, share one thing in common – an unforgettable experience.

Of course such an event would not be possible without our many sponsors and including the local businesses in the many villages around the state that help bring in the many athletes and dance groups to this year’s event in Anchorage.

Without everyone’s combined generosity and support, WEIO would not enjoy the attention it receives today. Please join us in visiting and thanking our many sponsors that we have listed in our program.

To all the Dance Groups, the Athletes, Queen Contestants, and the Arts & Crafts vendors, I wish you all the best! To all of our visitors, who are visiting our fine state for the first time, as well as those that travel from all over the state may your stay in Anchorage be a most memorable one.

Sincerely,

Perry R. Ahsogeak
Chairman, WEIO Board of Governors

Mark Begich
It is my pleasure to welcome you to Anchorage for the 46th annual World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO). We are pleased to host such a prestigious event in our city and our residents and businesses have worked hard to make you feel welcome.

Anchorage is a diverse city with a rich history connected to Alaska Native peoples. In order to honor that history, we recently named our new convention center the Dena’ina Civic and Convention Center. Anchorage is the ancestral home of the Dena’ina people of Eklutna and Knik.

While you’re in Anchorage, I hope you’ll take the opportunity to explore some of our hundreds of miles of paved and unpaved trails, parks, museums, restaurants, shopping and other highlights. We are a growing, dynamic city with an abundance of hospitality to offer visitors.

I understand WEIO is a family event that preserves the cultural games, languages and tradition of Native people. I look forward to watching the competition and demonstrations in the days ahead. This is truly a delight for our city.

Best wishes for a successful and enjoyable time in Anchorage.

Sincerely,

Mark Begich
Mayor

Be a WEIO Winner!
With a bevy of contests at this year’s WEIO event, there’s lots of chances to win these great prizes, and more!
(Contest details can be found on page 17 of your official WEIO guide)

• Win a new car courtesy Worthington Ford •
• Win 20,000 air miles courtesy GCI •
• Win a roundtrip ticket on PenAir •
• Win 4 roundtrip tickets on the Alaska Railroad •

Julie Saupe
On behalf of the Anchorage Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB), I would like to welcome the athletes, coaches, dancers, artisans and their families to the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO). This event is one of the most culturally enriching experiences for Anchorage residents to attend this year.

ACVB and its membership are excited about supporting WEIO and its decision to come to Anchorage, the first time in its 46-year history. Anchorage provides central accessibility to Big Wild Life adventures throughout Alaska, and over the past few years the city has added accommodations, shopping and dining options that attendees will enjoy.

We remain strong in our commitment to supporting your needs and sincerely hope that we can count on working with you in the future. Good luck to all the participants, let the competition begin!

Sincerely,

Julie Saupe
President & CEO
High-kick your way to the Olympic Games!

Welcome athletes!
World Eskimo-Indian Olympics,

For more Big Wild Life™ adventures, activities and local events, explore www.Anchorage.net.
The Blanket Toss event is always a crowd-pleaser at WEIO.
To all Participants and Visitors in the 2007 World Eskimo and Indian Olympics —

WELCOME TO ANCHORAGE!

Doyon, Limited; Chugach Alaska Corporation; CIRI; & Arctic Slope Regional Corporation would like to wish the athletes the best of luck in the games.
Past champion reveals his winning ways

By Dawn Dinwoodie

PROFILE: William Roland, a 27-year veteran athlete of World Eskimo-Indian Olympics

William Roland has tried almost every event at World Eskimo-Indian Olympics, but has earned the most medals in the knuckle hop, with eight first-place wins, and the Race of the Torch, with 20 first-place wins. He grew up in the Yukon Eskimo villages of Akiak and Platinum in Good News Bay and now lives in Bethel with his wife, Agnes, and five children.

Q. What inspired you to compete in World Eskimo-Indian Olympics?

In high school, I was encouraged to compete because I was the record-holder for the seal hop at Native Youth Olympics in 1976. My first year at WEIO, I was second in the knuckle hop and the Race of the Torch in 1977. The next year, I was first in the knuckle hop and first in the Race of the Torch.

Q. What draws you to the seal (knuckle) hop, an event that is so painful?

I grew up doing the seal hop in high school and as a Native. It’s a part of our heritage. The pain is only once a year. I wrestled in high school and during practice we would do the seal hop. My first seal hop, I did five feet. The next time, I did 15 feet and eventually I hopped across the gym.

Q. What is your training schedule when you are preparing to compete?

Ten days before WEIO, I start with push-ups and practicing the seal hop. I don’t actually train for the knuckle hop because I can only mess up my knuckles once a year. The first 10 feet of the knuckle hop is painful and requires mental focus. After 10 feet, no more pain, I can’t feel it. I watch the numbers on the floor go by that tell me the distance. For the Race of the Torch, I start training May 1 and run every day until WEIO. I’ll average eight miles a day and do sprints every other day.

Q. How long do your knuckles hurt after the event?

About two weeks.

Q. Do you know the history of the seal hop?

Not sure, but I think it is about sneaking up on animals.

Q. Has your WEIO records inspired your children?

My oldest daughter, Wanda, won first place for eight years in the seal hop at Native Youth Olympics. In 2002, my daughter and I both won first place for the knuckle hop. My youngest is showing interest, he tells me “Where are my shoes? I want to do the seal hop!”

Q. What type of shoes do you need for the knuckle hop?

Good basketball shoes that are flexible with rubber to grip and move you forward.

Q. What advice do you have for athletes coming up behind you?

For the knuckle hop, do lots of push-ups and leg lifts for the kick. I coach some of the athletes at Bethel Regional High School and travel to villages to coach as well. I like to help the dedicated students. I see younger people getting more interested in WEIO.

Q. How many times have you competed at WEIO?

I’ve competed in 27 WEIO’s. I’ve only missed it six times because of fishing or work.

Q. What keeps you coming back to WEIO?

The seal hop is in my blood. It feels good. I visit with my old friends, Big Bob, Rod Worl and others - the legends (he laughs).

Q. What is your training schedule in the off-season?

Chop wood, fish, play ball, and chase my kids.

World Eskimo-Indian Olympics Game Rules

World Eskimo-Indian Olympics Game Rules
July 18-21, 2007 • Sullivan Arena – Anchorage, Alaska

*The events listed are the athletic portion of WEIO and are not inline with 2007 daily event schedule.

RACE OF THE TORCH

This foot race was designated to be the starting event of the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics celebrating the history of runners and messengers from village to village.

Technical: All contestants will have a common start place and be awarded separately.

Objective: The contestant having the fastest time will be the winner and will be given a lighted torch from which the Olympic lamp will be lit.

Equipment: Approximate 5k trail or running track. Stop watches, bibs, race torch, clip boards, trail markers and checkpoint markers/volunteers.

FOUR MAN CARRY

Often during a successful hunt there comes a time when the game caught has to be packed for long distances. This is also true of packing wood or ice. The four-man carry tests the capability of carrying heaving loads for long distances.

Technical: From a starting point, the athlete lifts four (4) people (each weighing approximately 150 pounds). The persons being carried must hang from the athlete in ‘dead weight’ without touching their feet to the floor. The athlete must carry the weight as far as possible. If the athlete stops, hesitates or falls the officials must mark the heel of the athlete. If the volunteers being carried touch the floor, the athlete must be stopped and marked at the heel. There will be a designated/measured section of the arena floor.

Objective: Each athlete is given one (1) attempt to walk the furthest distance.

Equipment: Measuring tape and masking tape to mark 10 feet increments on the floor from a starting point.

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ONE-FOOT HIGH KICK & TWO FOOT HIGH KICKS

Traditionally the coastal whaling villages would use these kicks as a form of communication. When a whale or other game has been taken, a messenger would run back toward the village and when within sight distance the messenger would jump and kick both feet into the air, signaling the people of the village that a whale or other game has been caught and to prepare themselves to help the hunters.

The high kick events require the athlete to jump and kick a suspended object and land on the floor demonstrating balance to the floor officials. The high kicks are considered the premier events of WEIO.

Technical:

Traditional One Foot High Kick: (Played on odd years.) The athlete approaches the ball hopping on one foot, jumps up and kicks the ball with that same foot, landing on that same foot maintaining balance. There are three (3) attempts at each given height and each athlete has three (3) minutes for each attempt. After each successful kick, the ball is raised four (4) inches until the last five (5) competitors. The last five (5) competitors will proceed to the finals round at a designated time on the WEIO schedule. For the finals, athletes will warm up and officially continue the event at the last documented measurement. The finalists decide to raise the ball anywhere from 1-4 inches at a time. Tie breaking is determined by misses, the finalist with the least amount of misses advances. If more than one finalist has the same amount of misses, the athlete with the later miss places above their opponent.

One Foot High Kick: (played on even years.) The athlete approaches the ball taking off on both feet, jumps up and kicks the ball with one foot, landing on the same foot used to kick the target, maintaining balance. There are three (3) attempts at each given height and each athlete has three (3) minutes for each attempt. After each successful kick, the ball is raised four (4) inches until the last five (5) competitors. The last five (5) competitors will proceed to the finals round at a designated time on the WEIO schedule. For the finals, athletes will warm up and officially continue the event at the last documented measurement. The finalists decide to raise the ball anywhere from 1-4 inches at a time. Tie breaking is determined by misses, the finalist with the least number of misses advances. If more than one finalist has the same amount of misses, the athlete with the later miss places above their opponent.

Technical:

Drop the Bomb

This is a game that was played during the long cold winter months to maintain and test one's agility. Technical: The athlete will sit on the floor with one hand holding the opposite foot. The other hand and foot on the floor to establish balance, from a lifted position the athlete will swing up to kick a suspended target, landing on the same foot used to kick the target, maintaining balance. There are three (3) attempts at each given height and each athlete has three (3) minutes for each attempt. After each successful kick, the ball is raised three (3) inches until the last five (5) competitors. The last five (5) competitors will proceed to the finals round at a designated time on the WEIO schedule. For the finals, athletes will warm up and officially continue the event at the last documented measurement. The finalists decide to raise the ball anywhere from 1-4 inches at a time. Tie breaking is determined by misses, the finalist with the least number of misses advances. If more than one finalist has the same amount of misses, the athlete with the later miss places above their opponent.

Objective: Successfully kick the suspended target at the highest mark maintaining balance.

Equipment: High Kick Stand, string and target. Measuring tape or other measuring device.

Alaskan High Kick

This is a game that was played during the long cold winter months to maintain and test one's agility. Technical: The athlete will sit on the floor with one hand holding the opposite foot. The other hand and foot on the floor to establish balance, from a lifted position the athlete will swing up to kick a suspended target, landing on the same foot used to kick the target, maintaining balance. There are three (3) attempts at each given height and each athlete has three (3) minutes for each attempt. After each successful kick, the ball is raised four (4) inches until the last five (5) competitors. The last five (5) competitors will proceed to the finals round at a designated time on the WEIO schedule. For the finals, athletes will warm up and officially continue the event at the last documented measurement. The finalists decide to raise the ball anywhere from 1-4 inches at a time. Tie breaking is determined by misses, the finalist with the least number of misses advances. If more than one finalist has the same amount of misses, the athlete with the later miss places above their opponent.

Objective: Successfully kick the suspended target at the highest mark maintaining balance.

Equipment: High Kick Stand, string and target. Measuring tape or other measuring device.

Tie Kick

This is a game of athletic agility and balance. You must have quick feet and good balance while negotiating the rotten ice during breakup.

Technical: The athlete stands at a given starting line, toes to the line, and jumps forward to tap/kick a stick backward with feet parallel landing ahead of the stick’s measured mark. There are three (3) attempts at each given distance. After each successful kick, the stick is moved four (4) inches further away from the start line until the last five (5) competitors. The last five (5) competitors will proceed to the finals round at a designated time on the WEIO schedule. For the finals, athletes will warm up and officially continue the event at the last documented measurement. The finalists decide to move the stick anywhere from 1-4 inches at a time. Tie breaking is determined by misses, the finalist with the least number of misses advances. If more than one finalist has the same amount of misses, the athlete with the later miss places above their opponent.

Objective: Jump and kick the stick back at the furthest distance.

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**ONE-HAND REACH**

This game was also played during the cold winter months to help maintain physical fitness. This game was developed to demonstrate balance and strength.

Technical: This game requires the athlete to balance on one hand with the elbow tucked under the lower abdominal area. The other hand is used to steady their balance with the rest of the body off the floor, and then reaches for the suspended target. Upon touching the target the athlete can resume the starting position, demonstrating control of balance to the floor officials. There are three (3) attempts at each given height and each athlete has three (3) minutes for each attempt. After each successful touch, the ball is raised four (4) inches until the last five (5) competitors. The finalists decide to raise the ball anywhere from 1-4 inches at a time. Tie breaking is determined by misses, the finalist with the least number of misses advances. If more than one finalist has the same amount of misses, the athlete with the later miss places above their opponent.

Objective: To touch the suspended target at the highest distance.

Equipment: High Kick Stand, string and target. Measuring device.

**KNEEL JUMP**

Speed and agility are a necessity when out on the ice hunting. The practicality of this event comes from the quickness and control one has to have while out on the ice during break up.

Technical: The athlete sits on the floor with their knees behind a given starting line with the tops of their feet flat on the floor with the soles of their feet up. From this position, the athlete then thrusts their body up and forward to a standing position going for distance and maintaining balance until measured. The athlete is allowed to swing his/her arms back and forth to gain momentum for the leap forward. Athletes are measured from the start line to the nearest heel. Each athlete gets three (3) attempts to jump their farthest.

Objective: To jump the farthest distance while maintaining balance.

Equipment: Measuring Tape, masking tape (to mark starting line).

**INDIAN STICK PULL**

This game is a test of your grip, mimicking grabbing a fish by the tail. For example; people would have to gather their fish from a fish with the foot and toss the fish ashore.

Technical: Grease/shortening is applied to a stick that has been tapered from the center to each end. Competitors then grab the stick, up to the centerline and at a given signal from the floor official attempt to pull the stick from the opponent. They must pull straight back without re-gripping, jerking or twisting the stick. Best two out of three is the winner of the match, each round using a different hand. Athletes are measured from the start line to the nearest heel. Each athlete gets three (3) attempts to pull their opponent over, or pulls the stick away from opponent. Each round, the athletes will alternate positions of their hands. In the event of a tie, athletes will return to the starting hand position on the stick. Spotters will need to be used to support the athletes upright. Ruling is best out of three using a double elimination bracket.

Objective: Successfully complete the bracket.

Equipment: 1.25 inch in diameter dowel, two feet long and six (6) volunteer spotters.

**FIsh Cutting**

This fish-cutting contest derived from the cutting and drying of fish to preserve it for the seasons to come. Because of the volume of fish needed it was important not only to be efficient, but also to be quick.

Technical: Contestant must remove the head, fillet fish keeping tail attached. The contestant must then remove backbone and notch for drying. Contestants are judged for speed and neatness.

Objective: Cut the fish for drying the fastest and neatest.

Equipment: Seal, stopwatches. Floor covering, i.e. plastic and butcher paper. Each contestant must provide his or her own ulu or knife.

**SEAL SKINNING**

This seal-skinning contest derived from skinning seals. The skin is used to make clothing, the blubber is rendered into oil, and the meat can be cooked, dried, or fermented.

Technical: Each contestant must provide his or her own ulu or knife. The contestant must cut around the face and remove or leave them attached to the carcass. Then cut around head and leave it on the carcass. The contestant the must remove skin as neatly as possible. The contestants are judged for speed and neatness.

Objective: To skin the seal the fastest and the neatest.

Equipment: Seal, stopwatches. Floor covering, i.e. plastic and butcher paper. Each contestant must provide his or her own ulu or knife.

**MUKTUK EATING**

This event is played just for fun!

Technical: Each contestant must provide his/her own ulu or knife. Each contestant is given a piece of Muktuk to eat. On a signal from a designated floor official, every contestant will try to eat his/her piece of Muktuk the fastest.

Objective: To eat your piece of Muktuk the fastest.

Equipment: Muktuk, stopwatches. Floor covering, i.e. plastic and butcher paper. Each contestant must provide his or her own ulu or knife.

**GREASED POLE WALK**

This game is used to test the balance one may need for crossing creeks, on a wet and slippery log.

Technical: Each contestant starts from one end and must walk on a horizontal greased log while in bare feet. Sliding is not allowed. Spotters are placed on both side of the log to ensure the safety of the contestant. The log will be greased after each contestant. Each contestant must provide his or her own ulu or knife.

Objective: To walk the farthest without falling off.

Equipment: Shaved smooth log, approximately ten (10) to fifteen (15) feet long, on stands several inches above the ground. Grease and Shortening, measuring device, and paper towels. Floor covering, i.e. plastic and butcher paper.

Questions or comments, email weio@weio.org
The Coffee is in the Mail.

Visit www.kaladi.com and order your favorite roast or pick it up at any of our 8 Anchorage locations.
WEIO Event Schedule

Ticket Information:
WEIO is open to the public, free admission for daytime events. Arts and Crafts Fair free to public from 2-5 p.m. Tickets required after 6 p.m. and can be bought at the door.

General Admission $10
Four years and younger - free
Five to 18 years and Elders over 65 - $8

Wednesday, July 18
10 a.m. Athlete Registration
11 a.m. Toe Kick - Finals
Noon Kneel Jump – Finals
2 p.m. One Hand Reach – Preliminaries
4 p.m. Race Of The Torch

6 p.m. Welcoming Ceremony: Event includes the marching of the dance contestants and Native Veterans Color Guards, Welcome Address from Mayor Mark Begich, medal ceremonies, Race of the Torch, Kneel Jump and Toe Kick demonstrations, One Hand Reach finals, women’s Blanket Toss preliminaries, Four Man Carry finals and Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics Pageant Introduction and Talent Show.

Thursday, July 19
9:30 a.m. Athlete Registration
10 a.m. Eskimo Stick Pull – Finals
12 p.m. Alaskan High Kick – Preliminaries
2 p.m. Greased Pole Walk – Finals/Medals Ceremony
3 p.m. Native Baby Contest (Skin, Fur & Cloth)

6 p.m. Evening Ceremonies. Festivities include the Eskimo Stick Pull demonstrations, medal ceremonies, dance performances, Native Baby Contest parade and award, Alaskan High Kick finals, men’s Blanket Toss preliminaries, Muktuk Eating Contest finals and Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics impromptu speeches.

Friday, July 20
9:30 a.m. Athlete Registration
10 a.m. Indian Stick Pull – Finals
Noon Two Foot High Kick – Preliminaries
2 p.m. Ear Pull – Finals
3 p.m. Native Regalia Contest (Skin, Fur & Cloth)

6 p.m. Evening Ceremonies. Festivities include Ear Pull demonstrations and Two Foot High Kick demonstrations, Native Regalia Contest parade and awards, Women’s Blanket Toss finals, Seal Skinning contest, Drop The Bomb finals, medal ceremonies, dance performances and Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics coronation.

Saturday, July 21
9:30 a.m. Athlete Registration
10 a.m. Arm Pull – Finals
Noon One Foot High Kick – Preliminaries
2 p.m Scissor Broad Jump - Finals
3:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting
9 p.m. Cal Worthington ‘Let ‘Em Fly’ competition
6 p.m. The Closing of the Games: The festivities include the Arm Pull and Scissor Broad Jump demonstrations; finals for the One Foot High Kick, men’s Blanket Toss, Ear Weight and Knuckle Hop; White Man Vs. Native Women Tug-O-War and the dance group command performance.

Free parking courtesy BP

Arts and Crafts Fair free to public from 2-5 p.m.

More than games

WEIO events evolved from hunting skills

By Dawn Dinwoodie

“Native games are what we’ve been doing for thousands of years and what we’ll continue to do,” Perry Ahsogek, chair of the board of governors for World Eskimo-Indian Olympics.

History of the Games

Four years and younger - free
Five to 18 years and Elders over 65 - $8

For thousands of years, Alaska Native people have lived from the land through hunting and gathering traditions. Oral traditions passed down from generations taught the essential skills and spiritual code of conduct – how to treat every living thing - to survive Alaska’s extreme conditions. A person’s strength, agility, endurance and cultural knowledge could tip the delicate balance between life and death in their favor. Survival skills were often honed and showcased as games during festivals and community celebrations.

Festivals are part of the fabric that weaves a community together. Festivals marked the change of seasons, a successful hunt or other special occasions. They showed the deep ties that Alaska Native people have to the land and the importance of sharing and gift-giving. Survival skills combined with community celebrations are the roots of the tree called World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO).

History of World Eskimo-Indian Olympics

Wien Alaska Airways, the first airline in Alaska, is credited for planting the seed and nurturing the early years of WEIO. Wien pilots Bill English and Tom Richards Sr. were recruited by co-workers, A.E. “Bud” Hager and Frank Whaley, who are credited as the first organizers, to spread the word in the villages about WEIO, originally an event of the 1961 Golden Days celebrations in Fairbanks.

English (Inupiaq Eskimo) born in Wiseman, shared his memories of the early days of WEIO, “I served as a conduit between the airlines and people in the villages. I encouraged villagers to come into Fairbanks to participate. WEIO was originally created for the people in Fairbanks and the villagers to come together. We had a great time.”

English, who served as the emcee from 1961 to 1973, laughs at some of the memories of bringing together two cultures with different methods of marking time. “Village celebrations were spontaneous and had no time schedule. They would take
On June 20, 1977, oil began flowing down the Trans Alaska Pipeline. Since then, over 15 billion barrels have made the 800-mile journey south. It’s an accomplishment made possible only because Alaska and the industry have worked together. On this historic anniversary, we want to say “thank you” to Alaskans.

As we look back and celebrate 30 years of accomplishment, we look forward with optimism to a future that is just as bright.

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Royal treatment

Queens embody tradition

By Dawn Dinwoodie

Squirrel parkas, wolf mittens, caribou mukluks, moose-skin dresses, beads, ivory earrings, and silver bracelets adorn the young women traveling from far flung communities across Alaska to compete in Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. Armed with regalia and accompanied by chaperones, they seek a prestigious statewide title and crown that brings honor to the family and community that raised her.

The coronation ceremony on Friday evening marks the end of the whirlwind week of public speaking activities for the contestants. It also marks the beginning of the year-long reign of the new Miss WEIO, who will go on to compete in national Native American pageants representing Alaska and serve as a statewide role model. She will also be the official caretaker of the ivory and baleen crown. The centerpiece of the ivory and baleen crown has six intertwined baleen circles. The circles are the WEIO logo and represent the Alaska Native groups of Haida, Eskimo, Tlingit, Athabascan, Aleut, and Tsimshian.

Wearing this unique crown signifies the winner’s strength of character, knowledge of family history and culture, and her poise and public speaking skills. The crown also represents the behind-the-scenes work of the family and community that encouraged her to enter a well-known and respected cultural pageant in the Native communities. For Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics 2006, it took Kotzebue to prepare a queen.

“I was shocked. I didn’t think that I would win. It boosted my self-esteem,” said Stickman. Stickman was on a winning streak in 2006. She won Miss Mt. Edgecumbe 2006 in Sitka as a graduating senior and returned to her hometown of Kotzebue to win the title of Miss Arctic Circle 2006. Winning Miss Arctic Circle guaranteed that she was on her way to compete for the statewide title of Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics.

Her father, Cliff Short Jr., coordinated many of the details to support his daughter’s run for the ivory and baleen crown. “My father always said that one of his daughters would be Miss

Ashley Stickman wears the Ivory and Baleen Crown as Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics 2006.
Arctic Circle,” said Stickman. With only a couple of weeks to prepare for WEIO, her father pulled together the details. “My father coordinated my regalia, my chaperones and raised funds for expenses not covered. He also helped me understand current topics and issues that I might be asked about,” said Stickman.

There is a spirit of friendship and support among contestants that is felt in all the events including the pageant. The spirit of friendship and the warm and caring environment created by the coordinators quickly assuage any uncertainties and bond the contestants during the whirlwind week of personal interviews, talent presentations and the impromptu question and answer session that are judged. “It did not feel like a competition to me. I got to know the other girls that helped me feel safe. We shared jewelry and fixed each others hair. After a few days, we were close, like sisters. The girls made it fun,” said Stickman.

Stickman’s advice to contestants is that anything is possible. “Reach beyond your fears, open up, and let people get to know you. Don’t be afraid to show who you are. To keep our culture strong, younger people need to start learning from our elders,” said Stickman.

Learning from her elders is not just a message but a way of life for Stickman. For the talent presentation of Miss WEIO, she sang an Athabascan memorial song that she composed to honor her grandfather, Donald Joseph Stickman Sr. She was so moved with emotion after attending a memorial potlatch in 2000, a song came to her. She sought the help of her grandmother, Jessie Stickman of Galena, and together they composed a song about a brother and sister losing a loved one and turning their grief and despair into strength and courage to become leaders.

Stickman’s credits her family roots and living between the Athabascan village of Galena and her Inupiaq home of Kotzebue for her base of cultural knowledge that won her the Most Traditional award within the Miss WEIO pageant. “I am an ambassador for both my Inupiaq and Athabascan Koyukon cultures,” Stickman shared.

During her freshman year at Washington State University, Stickman shared her Miss WEIO platform of encouraging youth to pursue education and ultimately their dreams in life. As Miss WEIO, she understands her important role with youth in Kotzebue. “Young people in Kotzebue need role models that inspire them to leave and pursue education and return to the community to help,” said Stickman.

Her message is simply “don’t be afraid and go for it.”

Stickman is now relaxing back home in Kotzebue for the summer and preparing to deliver the crown to the next caretaker. Another title she carries is the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholar, a program developed and funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help high-achieving minority students that might not be able attend college due to finances. With her family support and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation behind her, she is pursuing her dreams of becoming a pediatrician and taking her own advice and “going for it.”
Young Warriors

Dedicated volunteers take care of the details

By Dawn Dinwoodie

The myriad of details to produce World Eskimo-Indian Olympics requires a team of dedicated and trained volunteers. Picking up the fish and the seals that are flown in from Barrow and delivering them to a freezer, cleaning the floors for the athletes in preparation for the knuckle hop, or mending the walrus skin blanket for the blanket toss are just a few of the unique and many details of WEIO.

How does it all get done? A group known as the Young Warriors, a major volunteer force at WEIO, handles many of the behind-the-scenes details. They come to lend a hand, but with a higher purpose in mind — to honor the Native people of Alaska.

The Young Warriors outreach program is a bridge between cultures — the Alaska Native people and non-Native people. Doug Yates, the architect of the volunteer force, was inspired with the idea of a volunteer program at the first WEIO he attended. He saw a real need for volunteers at WEIO and saw an opportunity for healing between two groups of people with a long history of conflict and misunderstandings. His solution was to bring them together to learn, to help and to heal with each other. “My main focus was to support WEIO. This volunteer program is designed to honor Alaska Native people and to reconcile our relationships between Alaska Native people and non-Natives” said Yates.

As a team, the Young Warriors are the oil in the WEIO machine that keeps the events moving. In the early morning hours, they are preparing the floor that the athletes will jump, kick and knuckle hop on. Throughout the day, they are on-hand with take-down and set-up of each event from hauling seals from the freezer to the seal skinning contest, to cleaning up fish remains after the frenzy of the fish cutting contest, or simply bringing a cup of water to an elder in a dance group. When the last event is done, and the athletes and spectators prepare to leave, they put in another couple of hours of cleaning and preparing for the next day.

A critical factor in joining this team is a sincere heart. “It’s a heart thing. Young Warriors have to be sincere and want to serve and honor the Alaska Native people” said Yates. Besides a sincere heart, a good back is critical because of the physical nature of the job. And, there is no age limit; they range from teenagers to adults in their 50’s.

“These are dedicated people. They are setting up and tearing down when nobody else is there. They are doing things nobody else wants to do. Sometimes they are paying for things out of their own pocket as well,” Yates said. If there was a job description, it might read: Seeking a team of people for hard labor, with sincere heart, no pay and no benefits, must be able to work 15 to 17 hour days, housing provided in an RV, and must be able to lift a

continued on page 18

WEIO Records

Alaska High Kick:
Men: Jesse Franklin 7'10" 2002 AWG
Women: Donna Elliot 6'1" 1994 WEIO

One-Foot High Kick (Canadian Style):
Men: Jesse Franklin 9'8" 2004 WEIO
Women: Ingrid Green 7'4" 1988 AWG

One-Foot High Kick (Alaska Style):
Men: Brian Randazzo 8'10" 1986 AWG
Steve Coulsen 8'10" 1986 AWG
Women: Carol Pickett 7' 1989 NYO

Toe Kick:
Men: George Curran 7'8" 1980 NYO
Women: Luanna Penetac 6'9" 1986 WEIO

One-Hand Reach:
Men: Jesse Franklin 5'9" 2005 WEIO
Ralph Clairmont 5'5" 1991 NYO
Women: Audrey Smith 4'11" 1995 NYO

Kneel Jump:
Men: Jesse Franklin 5'4 3/8 " 2004 WEIO
Women: Eleanor Matthias 4'5"_" 1993 NYO

Knuckle Hop:
Men: Rodney Worl 191'10" 1988 AWG
Women: Louise Charles 45' 1984 WEIO

Seal Hop:
Men: Clinton Johnson 160'2 1/8" 1987 NYO

Women: Luanna Penetac 6'9" 1986 WEIO

Eskimo Stick Pull:
Men: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. 6 Gold Medals 1982-7 WEIO
Women: Chugie Keller 4 Gold Medals 1982-5 WEIO
Drena McIntyre 4 Gold Medals 1986-9 WEIO

Two-Foot High Kick:
Men: Brian Randazzo 8'8" 1988 AWG
Women: Nicole Johnson 6'6" 1989 WEIO

Scissors Broad Jump:
Men: Alan Velasco 36'6 1/4" NYO
Women: Angelica Whitley 28' 9 1/4" 2005 NYO

Indian Stick Pull:
Men: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. 7 Gold Medals WEIO
Women: Chugie Keller 4 Gold Medals NYO

Race Of The Torch:
Men: William Roland 5 Wins 1980-4 WEIO
Women: Doris Abgeak 8'7" 1982 WEIO

Eskimo Dance Team Competition:
Open: The Barrow Dancers 14 Gold Medals WEIO

Indian Dance Team Competition:
Open: The Minto Dancers 10 Gold Medals WEIO

Arm Pull:
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Asta Keller WEIO

Ear Pull:
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. WEIO

Fish Cutting Contest:
Open: Rossman Peetook 3 Gold Medals WEIO

Drop The Bomb:
Open: Rhoda Nageak 3 Wins WEIO

Greased Pole Walk:
Men: Gene Andrew 13'6" 1981 WEIO
Women: Louise Charles 8'7" 1982 WEIO
Doris Abgeak 8'7" 1982 WEIO

Arm Pull:
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Asta Keller WEIO

Ear Pull:
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. WEIO

One-Foot High Kick (Alaska Style):
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. WEIO

Blanket Toss (Nulakatuk):
Women: unknown

One-Foot High Kick (Canadian Style):
Women: unknown

Men: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. 7 Gold Medals WEIO

Eskimo Stick Pull:
Men: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. 7 Gold Medals WEIO
Women: Chugie Keller 4 Gold Medals NYO

Two-Foot High Kick:
Men: Brian Randazzo 8'8" 1988 AWG
Women: Nicole Johnson 6'6" 1989 WEIO

Scissors Broad Jump:
Men: Alan Velasco 36'6 1/4" NYO
Women: Angelica Whitley 28' 9 1/4" 2005 NYO

Indian Stick Pull:
Men: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. 7 Gold Medals WEIO
Women: Chugie Keller 4 Gold Medals NYO

Race Of The Torch:
Men: William Roland 5 Wins 1980-4 WEIO
Women: unknown

Blanket Toss (Nulakatuk):
Men: Reggio Joule 10 Gold Medals WEIO
Women: Jenny Felder 3 Gold Medals WEIO

Four Man Carry:
Open: Homer Lord 2,886'10" 1998 WEIO

Ear Weight Contest:
Open: Michael Paulsen 2,886'10" 1998 WEIO

Fish Cutting Contest:
Open: Rhoda Nageak 3 Wins WEIO

Drop The Bomb:
Men: Jeff Maupin 266' 1987 WEIO
Women: Lady Lareaux 102' 1982 WEIO

Greased Pole Walk:
Men: Gene Andrew 13'6" 1981 WEIO
Women: Louise Charles 8'7" 1982 WEIO
Doris Abgeak 8'7" 1982 WEIO

Muktuk Eating Contest:
Open: Rossman Peetook 3 Gold Medals WEIO

Seal Skinning Contest:
Open: Rhoda Nageak 57 Seconds 1967 WEIO

Eskimo Dance Team Competition:
Open: The Barrow Dancers 14 Gold Medals WEIO

Indian Dance Team Competition:
Open: The Minto Dancers 10 Gold Medals WEIO

Arm Pull:
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Asta Keller WEIO

Ear Pull:
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr. WEIO

Women: Chugie Keller 4 Gold Medals 1982-5 WEIO
Open: Rhoda Nageak 3 Wins WEIO
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Eskimo Dance Team Competition:
Open: The Barrow Dancers 14 Gold Medals WEIO
Indian Dance Team Competition:
Open: The Minto Dancers 10 Gold Medals WEIO
Arm Pull:
Men: Robert Okpeaha, Jr. WEIO
Women: Asta Keller WEIO
LET 'EM FLY!

With the simple flight of a paper airplane, one lucky WEIO attendee will drive away in a New Ford Fusion, courtesy of Cal Worthington Ford!

Cal Worthington Ford is a proud sponsor of WEIO, and invites Alaskans to support the games by enjoying the childhood pastime of constructing and flying paper airplanes! For one lucky World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO) attendee, a perfectly thrown paper airplane could earn them a new Ford Fusion SEL V6, courtesy of Cal Worthington Ford!

Contestants must first “Qualify” at designated Radio Stops to participate in “Let ’Em Fly” during the Championship session of WEIO on July 21, 2007.

Secondary Prizes Include:
20,000 Airline Miles - Compliments of GCI
Roundtrip Tickets for Two - Compliments of Pen Air
Roundtrip Rail Tickets for Two - Compliments of Alaska Railroad

QUALIFIERS:

Mall at Sears, 12Noon - 1PM
103.1 KMXS - Thursday, June 21st
104.1 KBRJ - Thursday, June 28th
103.1 KMXS - Thursday, July 12th

Cal Worthington Ford
July 6th - July 17th
Queens appearance schedule
All times & places tentative. Check www.anchorage.net/weio for the latest updates

Monday, July 16:
Morning • KNBA Interviews
Afternoon • Southcentral Foundation – The Therapeutic Family & Group Home
Evening • Cal Worthington Ford

Tuesday, July 17:
Noon • Town Square Media Kickoff
Afternoon • Children’s Hospital at Providence
Evening • WEIO Reception

Wednesday, July 18:
Morning • Alaska Native Medical Center
Afternoon • Boys and Girls Club (Woodland Park)
Evening (6 p.m.) • WEIO Opening Ceremony
Evening • WEIO Talent Show

Miss WEIO competition brought to you by Shell Oil

WARRIORS continued from page 16
250-pound frozen seal and clean-up fish guts. Yates has no problem filling the positions.

His network is vast and deep as a result of his travels across the country as a motivational speaker for youth and as a trainer for adults. As a result, the Young Warriors come from all over the nation. His first two teams traveled at their own expense from Cape Canaveral, Florida and worked for NASA. When asked how he recruited Floridians to become Young Warriors, he responded “somebody at NASA heard about me and called me up.”

Why do they come? “They want to learn the culture and serve and honor Alaska Native people. This is not charity work or about saving Native people. It’s about them learning about a rich and vibrant culture,” Yates said.

To prepare the Young Warriors for the cultural exchange, Yates leads a two-day orientation called “Alaska Native Culture 101.” Yates, from the Tsimshian and Haida tribes, shares his life experiences growing up in Anchorage and the southeast communities of Metlakatla and Craig. He is sometimes blunt and direct in his training. “I tell them things about their culture that we, as Native people, don’t like,” said Yates.

Yates will be leading his team of 30 Young Warriors and balancing several other duties at WEIO, from performing with the Tsimshian dance group to selling arts-n-crafts.

His main vocation is encouraging and supporting Alaska Native youth and he’ll be looking for recruits at an informational table as well.

No matter how early or late, the Young Warriors in their matching black t-shirts with red hearts and feathers that reads “A Warriors Heart” will be on-hand ready to serve.

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SPECIAL THANKS: Anchorage Convention & Visitors Bureau, Anchorage Museum of History & Art, Alaska Native Heritage Center, City of Anchorage, FNA Ch’eghutsen’, Sullivan Arena, White Mountain Native Corporation, University of Alaska
Traditional Dance Groups

Traditional songs and dances will be performed in the competitive and non-competitive dance competitions at World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. Ancient songs of long ago, from the 40's and newly composed songs, tell stories of a subsistence lifestyle that continues today. The songs and dances are stories of hunting and gathering and the relationship between humans, the environment and animals. Dance groups from villages across Alaska and as far south as New Mexico will dance and sing to honor their ancestors, to keep alive their traditions and to share their culture with Alaska's largest city. They also hope to bring home one of the six trophies for first, second and third place in the Indian and Eskimo dance competitions. They might even sneak in some shopping trips, too.

Competitive Division

LEPOUINM GUMILGIT Gagoadim Tsimshian Dancers (‘our own dance, in our own hearts’ in Tsimshian) was founded by Theo Bayou and Marcella Foster in 2005. With 20 members, this Anchorage-based dance group has earned some travel miles with performances in Washington, D.C., Puyallup, Washington and Bethel. They formed to keep the Tsimshian songs and dance from the island of Metlakatla strong and alive. Foster works with Tsimshian elders in Alaska and Oregon via e-mail to compose new songs and also has permission to perform songs from Tsimshian artist, David Boxley.

TAGIUGMIUT DANCERS (‘people from the ocean and we are dancers’ in Inupiaq). The Inupiat dance group’s homeland is far north of the Arctic Circle in Barrow. Vernon Elavgak, dance leader, saw a need for more dance groups due to the growing interest and started a new group in January. Most of the songs were composed in the 40’s and before, but there are some newly composed songs to listen for, such as the geese hunting song composed by Robert Akpik.

TLINGIT AND Haida dancers of Anchorage have family roots deep in the rainforests of southeast Alaska in the communities of Kake, Yakutat and Juneau. They formed in 1986 to carry on their cultural traditions and to never forget their ancestors. Hazel Turnik is the current president and dance leader for the group of 35 members. The new location in Anchorage allows this dance group to perform for the first time at WEIO.

UTUQQAGMIUT DANCERS (‘people of the Utukok River) are from the Inupiat community of Wainwright, Alaska, located near the Chukchi Sea with a population of 520. Rossman Peetook leads the group of about 40 members strong. Due to the high cost of travel, half the dancers will travel to Anchorage to perform their traditional songs and dance of living in the arctic. The dance group has been fundraising with cake walks and other community events. With many awards from past performances, they are looking forward to another trip to WEIO.

UYAGAGVINMIUT DANCERS (‘people from the ocean and we are dancers’ in Inupiaq). The Inupiat dance group’s homeland is far north of the Arctic Circle in Barrow. Vernon Elavgak, dance leader, saw a need for more dance groups due to the growing interest and started a new group in January. Most of the songs were composed in the 40’s and before, but there are some newly composed songs to listen for, such as the geese hunting song composed by Robert Akpik.

Cal Worthington Ford’s Let ’em Fly promotion!

Cal Worthington Ford is a proud sponsor of WEIO, and invites Alaskans to support the games by enjoying the childhood pastime of constructing and flying paper airplanes! For one lucky World Eskimo-Indian Olympics attendee, a perfectly thrown paper airplane could earn them a new Ford Fusion SEL V6, courtesy of Cal Worthington Ford!

Cal Worthington Ford will conduct “Let ’Em Fly,” a paper airplane toss benefiting the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. Contestants must first “qualify” at designated radio stops to participate in “Let ’Em Fly” during the championship session of WEIO on July 21. Once qualified, the contestants will compete for a chance to win a new Ford Fusion SEL V6!

Anchorage Media Group will host three radio stops in the Mall at Sears parking lot from noon-1 p.m.: KMXS on June 21, KBRJ on June 28 and KMXS on July 12.

Cal Worthington Ford will also host a qualifying stop, July 6-July 17, in which the first 100 people to take a test drive will be qualified to compete in the “Let ’Em Fly” contest.

For additional “Let ’Em Fly” information, please contact Tanya Pont, (907) 279-0618, email pontt@sullivarena.com, or via facsimile, (907) 274-0676.

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Baby Contest

They are all cute, and all winners!

It’s a baby lover’s delight at the annual baby contest during World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. They are running, barely walking, being carried or sleeping, oblivious to the applause and cheers and the flashes and snapping of the many cameras and videos capturing their every move. Behind every baby is an entourage of family members, that are smiling, clapping and full of pride for their young one.

Many hands came together to create Peter Brian Hildebrand’s traditional clothing for his debut in the baby contest at World Eskimo-Indian Olympics in 2005. Hildebrand’s aunt, Miranda Wright, said preparing for the baby contest is a family effort that helps younger generation to understand the customs and protocols from the elders. Months before the contest, the design team of aunties, uncles, grandparents came together to create traditional clothing.

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Arts & crafts

Entrepreneurial spirit strong at WEIO

Alaska Native people have always been involved in commerce for thousands of years. Ancient trade routes cross Alaska’s rivers and mountains and include the waterways down to the pacific coast. This entrepreneurial spirit carries on at the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics arts and crafts fair.

With more than 100 exhibit tables, shoppers can purchase a variety of unique arts and crafts from Alaska Native and American Indian artists. Mukluks, parkas, beaded earrings, ivory bracelets, sculptures, paintings, baskets, baby booties and kuspuks are a sample of items that may be found on all levels of the Sullivan Arena. Shoppers can expect a wide variety of prices from smaller items of less than $20 to more labor-intensive pieces of several hundreds.

WEIO is a family affair in many ways. Many athletes and dance groups take advantage of the opportunity to sell their arts and crafts and bring family members to help with

continued on next page

BABY continued from page 21

parents and parents worked together to gather the materials, design the pattern, and assemble his clothing and sled. The grandparents were consulted on traditional Athabascan baby clothes from the village of Nulato located on the west bank of the Yukon River in the Nulato Hills.

The babies, between the ages of 6 to 24 months, are judged only on their traditional clothing. The judges score the clothing in the areas of authenticity, materials used, quality of work, overall appearance, and crowd reaction. The babies are all winners to the crowd and family, but there are awards and trophies for first, second and third place in the categories of Indian hide, Eskimo fur and Eskimo cloth.

DANCE continued from page 20

from the rocky place” in Inupiaq) are from the North Slope community of Nuiqsut on the Nechelik Channel of the Colville River.

Bernice Kaigelak and John Ipalook lead this young group of about 29 dancers that range in age from 6 to 42. Five years ago, the group was inspired by the youth because of their persistent request to learn the traditional songs and dance.

At first, they had difficulty recruiting a lead drummer, so they turned to technology for help. The determined youth studied the dance movements and learned the songs from old videotapes and they even went on to create some new songs themselves.

With many hours of practice and cakewalk fundraisers behind them, they are excited about their second performance at WEIO.

Non-Competitive Division

INDIGENOUS NATIONS OF NEW MEXICO are students from the University of New Mexico. They bring songs, dance and cultural tidbits to share from the Navaho Nation and pueblos of the Zuni, Jemez, and Isleta of New Mexico for their first performance at WEIO.

Maria Williams (Tlingit), assistant professor of Native American Studies and Music, leads her students back to her homeland for a cultural exchange of language, lifestyles, regalia and to share worldviews.

—Dawn Dinwoodie
The Race of the Torch
5K run lights the way

The opening night of World Eskimo-Indian Olympics begins with the Race of the Torch, a 5K run in the heart of the city, that will decide who gets to carry the torch into the Sullivan Arena that is used to light the traditional seal oil lamp. Before electricity, seal oil lamps provided the critical light in homes for storytelling, eating, sewing or doing chores throughout the long winters. Throughout the four-day event, elders tend to the flame until the last event is done. Perry Ahsogeak, chair of the WEIO board of governors, believes the lighting of the seal oil lamp is an adaptation of the opening ceremonies from the official Olympic Games that originated in Greece.

Runners tend to sign-up an hour before the race, so it’s anybody’s guess at who may win the race and the honor of carrying the flame into the arena on opening night. Last year’s top competitors, who mostly hailed from the Interior communities, were: Casey Ferguson, Joseph DeWilde and Andrew Marks, the men’s first, second and third place, respectively; and Crystal Tobuk, Leona Kriska and Emily Frantz, the women’s first, second and third place, respectively. According to the WEIO website, William Roland from Bethel holds the most wins and the late Julie Jones from Koyukuk has the fastest time. The venue move to Anchorage will attract new competitors and open up the field to runners that have not competed in the past.

For past competitors, the new course is a cool change from the 13 laps around a dirt track in the dry and hot climate of Interior Alaska. This year, the course starts in the Sullivan Arena parking lot and follows the scenic and tree-shaded Chester Creek pathways going west and turns around at Westchester Lagoon and back to the Sullivan Arena. Team in Training volunteers along the route guide the racers along the pathways and at the turn-around point at the Westchester Lagoon.

The Race of the Torch
5K run lights the way

Welcome to Anchorage
Native athletes

CRAFTS continued from page 22
the sales while they compete. While selling their inventory is a priority, they also look forward to the catching up with friends and family they have not seen for awhile.

Brenda Coumbe was one of the first artists to sign up for an arts and crafts table to sell her bead-ed earrings, seals made of sealskin and her signature snowy owls. Last November, she heard that WEIO was in Anchorage and she immediately signed up. “I am excited because the last time that I attended WEIO was in the 80’s,” Coumbe said. Asked what she thought of WEIO held in Anchorage, she replied “I think it will be nice. I will be happy to see my family from Barrow and catch up with them. My family is excited.”

She learned the art of making her snowy owls from rabbit fur from her mother, Ada Ahngasuk, as a young girl in Barrow. The Inupiaq name for her hometown honors the bird – Ukpiagvik means “the place to hunt snowy owls.” Interestingly, Barrow and the surrounding North Slope is the only place in the United States that snowy owls gather to breed. She believes her family learned how to make the owls from their Canadian neighbors. After many years as a bilingual teacher and aide in the North Slope Borough School District, Coumbe and her husband retired to Whittier.

Get a jump start on your Christmas shopping or buy a special gift for yourself. Whatever your reason, you’ll find something special at the WEIO arts and crafts fair, free to the public, 2-5 p.m..
Away from the Games

Activities span the spectrum in Anchorage

Whether a first-time visitor or a resident looking for something different, there is always something exciting going on in Anchorage. From festivals and arts activities to sporting events, theatrical and musical performances, there’s an activity or event to suit every lifestyle and budget.

Long, sun-drenched days giving way to evenings filled with enticing events make summer an ideal time to explore Anchorage.

One of the best ways to see the city is by foot. The heart of downtown Anchorage is just a few blocks up the hill from its tent city roots in Ship Creek in 1915. Between A and L streets and Second to Eighth avenues, find historic buildings dating back to as early as 1915. Pick up a Downtown Walking Tour map from the ACVB Log Cabin at Fourth Avenue and F Street.

Numerous coffee shops are located along the walking route, providing several opportunities to rest weary feet.

• Kaladi Brothers Coffee, 6th and G Street, provides a comfortable setting for sipping quality blends and catching up on the Anchorage buzz.

Who can resist the shopping bug? There are a number of locally owned shops featuring everything from Alaska arts, crafts and curio items to other fun gifts. Kobuk Coffee Co., located in the historic Kimball Building, 504 W. Fifth Ave., will delight all five senses upon entering the door; the sweet aromas of the teas and coffees, the tasty sweets and gift items are reminiscent of days long past.

The Museum Gift Shop, located in the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, 121 W. Seventh Ave., is filled with Alaska treasures created by artisans across the state.

Located in a little house at Sixth Avenue and H Street, Oomingmak Musk Ox Producers Co-op offers qiviut hats, scarves and smoke rings in traditional patterns hand-knitted by Alaska Native women. Qiviut is the warm, soft under-fur of the musk ox — the warmest, softest wool known.

Take a shuttle or short drive to the north end of Anchorage and celebrate culture at the Alaska Native Heritage Center (www.alaskanative.net). The visit will give you a chance to learn more about Alaska’s First People.

Dining sampler

The quality and variety of dining options never ceases to amaze Anchorage visitors and locals alike. Whether it’s seafood or vegetarian, casual or fine dining, talented Anchorage chefs prepare a variety of delicious creations. Here’s a sampler of what Anchorage has to offer:

• A stop at Southside Bistro (www.southside-bistro.com) after a day of hiking or biking on the Hillside is an excellent choice. The restaurant features two sides separated by an open kitchen and wine and beer bar — the “bistro” side is more casual, while the “restaurant” has a more formal feel.

• If you’re enjoying the mountains, sightseeing or one of the many hiking trails in Girdwood, visit to one of Alyeska Resort’s eateries (www.alyeskaresaros.com). The Hotel Alyeska offers six choices, including two mountaintop restaurants.

• If returning to downtown Anchorage from Kincaid Park in the early evening, stop by Kincaid Grill (www.kincaidgrill.com) for a glass of wine and appetizers or dinner. “Fine dining without the attitude” is how owner-chef Al Levinsohn describes it. Alaska regional cuisine, fresh seafood and specialty meats and game are on the menu.

• Glacier Brewhouse (www.glacierbrewhouse.com), in downtown Anchorage, is open daily for lunch and dinner, offering a variety of hand-crafted ales in addition to fresh seafood, rotisserie grilled meats and pizzas. This restaurant also offers free wireless Internet access for those who can’t leave the laptop home.

• For the ultimate fusion in Anchorage’s wild side and its cultured side, be sure to visit the Bridge Salmon Bake and Grill, 221 West Ship Creek Drive in Anchorage (www.thebridgesalmonbakeandgrill.com). The well-appointed eatery literally spans Ship Creek, with diners treated to incredible dishes and incredible views.

• Enjoy beautiful views of Cook Inlet and, on a clear day, Mount McKinley and Mount Foraker from the Snow Goose Restaurant & Sleeping Lady Brewing Co. (www.alaskabeers.com) while enjoying a tasty meal and hand-crafted ale.

• For a fun time and a fantastic meal, stop by Jens’ at 701 West 36th Ave. in Anchorage. Chef-patron Jens Haagen Hansen has been described as a zany Dane, but his attention to details in the kitchen — and to the customers in his restaurant — is a well-known and refreshing. Stop in for a glass of wine in the evening, but don’t leave until you’ve sampled what some consider as Anchorage’s best food. (jensrestaurant.com).

• The Moose’s Tooth Pub & Pizzeria (www.moosestooth.net) in midtown Anchorage serves hand-crafted pizzas and ales.

Active options

It’s easy to stay active in Anchorage year-round. The biking and hiking trail system that meanders through the city in the summer becomes a cross-country highway for Nordic skiers, runners and the occasional moose. More than 128 miles of paved trails, many of which are lighted, offer endless hours of active enjoyment.

• The Tony Knowles Coastal Trail begins in downtown Anchorage. The groomed, mostly flat, 11-mile trail follows scenic Cook Inlet to Kincaid Park. Or travel east at Westchester Lagoon on the Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail six miles along a greenbelt to Goose Lake.

• In west Anchorage, Kincaid Park features 31 miles of trails for cyclists, runners and strollers. East, Hillside/Bicentennial Park has several access points, including Campbell Airstrip Road, Abbott Road behind Service High School, and the northern parking lot of the Hilltop Ski Area. There are more than 20 miles of maintained trails, with lots of single-track offshoots for adventurers.

• In Eagle River just north of Anchorage, the Eagle River Nature Center (www.ernc.org) features an extensive trail network, from easy rolling valleys to rugged passes. Backcountry cabins and yurts are available to rent for those who want to extend a daytrip to a longer stay. Their event-filled calendar features nature tours, day hikes and more.

Fishing

More than 180 southcentral Alaska lakes — 28 in...
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For more information on booking and availability, call (907) 265-2494 or visit AlaskaRailroad.com/Coast. Hearing impaired please call (907) 265-2620.

Payment due at time of booking. Discounts apply to new bookings only. No other discounts apply. Valid for travel in 2007.
Anchorage — are stocked by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Some Anchorage-area lakes are stocked with chinook salmon, and many lakes have good populations of rainbows, grayling, Arctic Char, and lake trout.

Take an overnighter to Whittier, Seward or Homer for some halibut or salmon fishing. Numerous charter services offer a variety of options and prices.

**ATVs**

Check out Alaska’s wilds while zipping across even wilder terrain atop a four-wheel all-terrain vehicle. Several operators offer guided tours, and ATV rentals are available for the self-sufficient. Talk with Chris Maynard at Alaska All Terrain Adventures for the best advice on where to ride. His experienced guides go into the field every day and have keen insight on what trails hide the best vistas and private Edens. (www.atv-alaska.com).

Alaska Backcountry Adventure Tours (www.youralaskavacation.com), based in Palmer, also offers ATV tours as well as other day and multi-day package tours.

**Marine cruises**

Renown Charters and Tours in Seward offers round-trip transportation from Anchorage and a fine selection of Resurrection Bay cruises. (www.renowntours.com).

- Kenai Fjords Tours in Seward gets you up-close and personal with a bevy of marine life. Check out their Fox Island lunch or overnight deal, and indulge yourself in a kayak tour of remote cabin rental. (www.kenaifjords.com).
- Portage Glacier
  Board the MV Ptarmigan for an hour-long cruise and see iceberg-dotted Portage Lake and calving glaciers. (www.graylinealaska.com)
- Phillips Cruises & Tours/26 Glacier Cruise
  Enjoy a historic train ride along Turnagain Arm to Whittier, and the 26 Glacier Cruise aboard a deluxe, high-speed catamaran. (www.26glaciercruises.com)

- Major Marine Tours
  Experience spectacular views of calving glaciers and abundant wildlife while touring the calm waters of Prince William Sound or breathtaking Kenai Fjords National Park. (www.majormarine.com)

**Other activities**

- Chugach Adventure Guides
  Go with the pros on a rail/float combo tour. Ride the Alaska Railroad to scenic Spencer Glacier, then hop into a replica of a traditional Alaska Native canoe and paddle nose-close to lumbering icebergs.

This day-trip combines the best experiences of southcentral Alaska: rugged luxury, splendid views and more adventure than you can fit into a railcar. (www.chugachpowderguides.com)

- Hatcher Pass Lodge
  Check out the views, and this lodge nestled in the Talkeetna Mountains above timberline at 3,000 feet elevation. Outdoor sauna. Guided tours and nature walks at nearby Independence Mine State Historic Park. (www.hatcherpasslodge.com)

- Talkeetna Air Taxi offers flight-seeing around Mount McKinley and other areas as well as Base Camp landings on Ruth Glacier. (www.talkeetnaair.com).

- Alaska Railroad
  Learn for yourself why the Alaska Railroad is dubbed the “World’s Best Railroad” by taking a ride on the tracks, either north or south, to spectacular destinations such as Seward, Whittier, Denali and Fairbanks. (www.alaskarailroad.com)

For more information on the variety of outdoors fun in Anchorage, browse www.coast-magazine.com or visit www.anchorage.net, call the Anchorage Convention & Visitors Bureau, (907) 276-4118, or stop by the Log Cabin and Downtown Visitors Information Center at Fourth Avenue and F Street.

—Compiled by Jeanette Anderson Moores and Laura Tanis
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