

SOUTHSIDE

Neighbors



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Best Version Media

Cover Photo by Shelly Plum,
AK Love Photography
August 2023

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Dear Residents,

AUGUST IS FIRMLY upon us. If you haven't made it out camping yet, make some time to head out. Coho season is here, so get out there if you can. If you'll be staying in town, there are so many Farmer's Markets and Socials to check out. No matter what you do, make sure you take some loved ones with you and build some memories.

For just over four years, local non-profit **Alaska Adoption Services** has provided loving support to all types of families and little ones. They are joining our publication to share stories of their experiences and successes. As you see just what they are doing, I'm sure you will be inspired to help in your own way. I know I am.

The Baxters are our family feature this month. They have a beautiful story that has it all. From "trouble" to friendship, from travel bans to frozen eyelashes, all I can say is you'll love **Amanda and Matthew**.

You are in for a treat when you check out this month's Artist Showcase. Recommended by **Color Art Printing**, we are viewing the work of local artist **Annie Brace** of **Corso Graphics**. I love her work – what do you think of it?

As always, your input on our publication is most welcome. Until next time, I bid you a hearty farewell.



Happy August, Neighbors!
Nicholas Wiandt
Publisher

SOUTHSIDE *Neighbors*

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FEEDBACK/IDEAS/SUBMISSIONS

Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you!

Deadlines for submissions are the 10th of each month.

Go to www.bestversionmedia.com and click "Submit Content."

You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to:

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Illustration by Amelia Wiandt

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A TASTE OF TANZANIA

By Dr. Janelle Havelka

Cucumber Salad with Grilled Shrimp

INGREDIENTS

- 1 dozen shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 large cucumber, peeled and halved lengthwise
- ½-1 cup shredded carrot
- 1 Serrano pepper, halved lengthwise
- 1 mango, peeled and diced
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- Salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Grill or sauté shrimp over medium heat until fully cooked, 3-4 min per side. Set aside.
2. Use a small spoon to scrape out cucumber seeds then thinly slice.
3. Remove seeds from the Serrano pepper. Cut each half into long thin strips, then cut the strips into tiny pieces.



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- Mix all the ingredients in a bowl. Let stand at room temperature for at least 30 minutes before serving.



Zanzibar Pizza

INGREDIENTS

- Pre-made or homemade pizza dough, enough for 1 pizza
 - 1 lb ground beef
 - 1 tbs olive oil
 - 2 cloves garlic, chopped
 - 1 inch piece of ginger root, peeled and cut into small dice
 - ½ chopped red onion
 - ½ tsp turmeric
 - ½ tsp garam masala
 - ¼ tsp chili powder
 - ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
 - ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
 - 2 eggs
- Salt
 Pana cheese, thinly sliced
 Sliced green onion

DIRECTIONS

- Pre-heat oven to 450 degrees.
- Brown the ground beef in a skillet and drain off excess fat. Set aside.
- Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat and fry garlic, onion and ginger.
- Add the spices and ground beef until blended well. Season with salt as needed.
- Roll pizza dough out on a floured surface and top with beef mixture and cheese. Fold in the corners like an envelope.
- Move the uncooked pizza to a greased pizza brick and crack two eggs carefully in the middle.
- Bake about 20 minutes or until eggs white are cooked through.
- Garnish with green onion.

Vitumbua (Tanzanian Donuts)

INGREDIENTS

- Pancake mix of your choice
 Vegetable oil
 ¼ cup sugar
 1½ tsps. ground cardamom
 Jam or caramel sauce as an accompaniment
 Appam pan

DIRECTIONS

- Make pancake batter according to package directions. Substitute coconut milk for water if desired.
- Mix sugar and cardamom in separate bowl and set aside.
- Grease appam pan and heat to medium, adding ¼ tsp vegetable oil to each hole.
- When hot, spoon batter into each hole, filling ¾ of the way. Cover for a few minutes and, using a wooden stick, turn donuts when they develop bubbles and become slightly browned. Cover and cook another few minutes.
- Remove donuts from the appam and roll in the spiced sugar. Serve with ginger jam or caramel sauce.



Zanzibar Pizza



Vitumbua



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Ask a Doc:

Tips for Exercising Safely

By Dr. Marty Sanchez, PT, DPT, GCS | Photo courtesy Desire Wellness

What is the best way to start an exercise program for a previously injured joint or body region?

When resuming an exercise program following an injury, focus on stretching the target region and adjacent structures using gentle, pain-free range of motion exercises, working towards normal anatomic motion. For example, if you have knee issues, it's important to work on the knee, ankle and hip using normal, comfortable motions while lying on your back or standing at the counter. A seated bike, which allows joints to move freely while minimizing impact, is a great option for those with joint issues. Do these exercises for a week or so to prepare your joints for an increased workload.

Is warming up necessary before participating in strenuous activities?

To reduce the risk of injury and lessen soreness after strenuous exercise, begin your workout with 5 to 10 minutes of light, low-impact activities. For example, walking on a flat, level surface at a comfortable pace can help prepare your body for a strenuous hike or a biking trip around one of Anchorage's many trails.

Cooling down for 5 to 10 minutes can also reduce soreness. This increases blood flow to the region and works your aerobic cardiovascular system, which helps remove waste byproducts from your body.

What is one of the most common mistakes people make when they return to exercising?

One common mistake is returning to strenuous activities too quickly, which can lead to tendonitis and overexertion issues. To prevent injury, start slow, take it easy and let your body tell you when you're ready to progress. This is especially important as we age, as our body tissues need time to adapt and acclimate to reintroduced activities. Extreme soreness following an activity can be a sign you did too much, while no soreness means you're ready to increase your activity level. Mild to moderate soreness is just about right and is the safest way to progress.

Would creating a corporate wellness program be beneficial for my business?

Corporate wellness programs have been scientifically proven to improve employee satisfaction – and if you are a business owner or manager, you know that happy, healthy employees are productive employees. By investing in your employees' health and well-being, you can create a win-win situation for them and your business. ■

Dr. Marty Sanchez is a licensed physical therapist and owner of Desire Wellness. Learn more about his physical therapy exercise programs, mental health education, weight loss and nutritional coaching and corporate wellness programs at www.desirewellness.com.

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Tips for Better Sleep

By Emily Snider

MANY WISH THEY could have a sign on their forehead in the morning that says, "Please don't talk to me until I have had my coffee." Lack of sleep or poor quality of sleep can be a difficult thing to battle and can have significant negative impacts on our life. We can go through years of sleep difficulty and surrender to the fact that feeling rested may be a losing battle. Here are a few tips for longer and more restful sleep:



1. Have a consistent bedtime and wake-up time each day. This helps your body know when to start relaxing and preparing for bed and can help you to fall asleep quicker at night. If your body knows it needs to wake up at the same time each day, it might naturally wake up without an alarm.
2. Add a period of silence before bed. This can decrease the time it takes to fall asleep at night because it allows your body to relax and your mind to process the conversations and events from the day before your head hits the pillow. It can be even more helpful to have this silent time in a dimly lit room as you start relaxing.
3. Don't work or read in your bed. This helps your body understand that your bed is only for sleeping. If your body knows that getting into bed means it is time to fall asleep, you can fall asleep quicker and therefore sleep longer.
4. Sleep with a notepad and a pencil next to your bed. Ideas often pop into our heads as we are trying to fall asleep, or we just think about things we need to do the next day and get anxious about forgetting them. Writing them down right away helps us let these thoughts go, along with the stress and anxiety that might accompany them.
5. Keep your phone on silent and in another room. Our phones have unlimited abilities these days and are constantly pinging with

notifications. Not only does the light from the screen keep us awake, it can be extremely easy to get caught up scrolling for hours without even realizing it. If you sleep without the distraction of having your phone so close, you can relax and detach from it. There are lots of other ways to set an alarm if you need one! ■



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“I love Alaska, but I never thought I’d be able to move back up here. I never thought it would be possible.”

- Matthew Baxter



They Started as Friends Then Became a Family

By Amy Newman | Photography By Shelly Plum, AK Love Photography

Amanda and Matthew Baxter epitomize literature’s “friends to lovers” trope.

“When we met, Amanda was skipping down the foyer at our university with a man on each arm,” Matthew says, laughing. “I told myself I would never date her because she looked like trouble.”

Amanda was just as certain she and Matthew would never be a love match.

“Matthew was a football player with a cocked-up sideways hat,” she says. “I thought, ‘Yeah, I’m not going to date that guy.’”

And they didn’t – for a while, anyway. But

their friendship circles at Eastern Oregon University overlapped, so over the next eight years, they became close friends, even roommates for a time, as they worked their way through undergraduate and graduate school. When they both found themselves single in 2012, their initial anti-dating stance had softened, and they agreed to give it a try.

They married two years later and are now parents to Joy, 2 ½, and Jack, 8 months old.

“Friendship is a really good base for a marriage,” Amanda says. “That’s what makes it

really special.”

Expats in China

The Baxters were living in Arizona when Amanda, who has a bachelor’s degree in music and a master’s in elementary education, heard about an international teaching fair.

“I decided to go because it sounded like fun,” she says. “I wasn’t planning on accepting any positions. I was just going to see what kind of schools were out there.”

But she clicked with the administrators of an international school in China, who offered her a position as

a first-grade teacher. When the school said it had an open position on its leadership team for Matthew, who had recently earned a doctorate in education, they jumped at the chance to live abroad, thinking it would be a good experience before having children. They moved in 2017, and Amanda says they enjoyed living and working in China and took full advantage of the opportunity to travel.

“It was really easy to travel those first couple of years,” she says. “Cambodia, Bali, Tibet, Nepal, Japan, Korea, Singapore, we went all over the world. It was just really

nice to be able to travel.”

But the COVID-19 pandemic made them realize that after four years abroad, it was time to go home. Joy was born in China, but the country’s travel bans prohibited the Baxters from leaving to visit family – and their family from visiting them.

“Joy didn’t get to meet her grandparents until she was 7 months old,” Amanda says. “So, we were definitely out because of that for sure.”

Where they ended up going was Matthew’s home state of Alaska.

“I love Alaska, but I never thought I’d be able to move back up here,” he says. “I remember specifically saying, ‘I don’t plan on ever moving back up to Alaska, even though I love it.’ I never thought it would be possible.”

Home to Alaska

Anchor Lutheran School was searching for a new director of schools/principal when Amanda and Matthew decided to return to the states. It was a perfect fit both professionally and personally for Matthew, who’d grown up worshipping at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, which houses the school. But Amanda, who grew up in Oregon and visited Alaska only a few times when she and Matthew were dating, including a trip to his family’s cabin in Willow, was hesitant.

“There was frost on my eyelashes,” she says of that cabin trip. “That was something I had not experienced before.”

To make sure Amanda was on board with making Alaska their home, Matthew left the final decision up to her.

“When we heard about the job opportunity, I actually made her apply for me,” he says. “She needed to be in agreement with us living here.”

Though Amanda was hesitant about life in Alaska, she decided the move was the right opportunity for the



entire family.

“We could be teachers anywhere, but for him to be at the church he grew up in, for that opening to be there, it was just a nice fit for us,” she says. “And we can afford for me to stay home while the kids are little, so that was a big deciding factor. We like the fact that I get to stay home with and raise our kids.”

The Baxters arrived in 2021, and Matthew is already making changes at Anchor Lutheran. The school community had long talked of expanding its study body to include a high school. Matthew decided to turn that talk into action.

“I’m not a person to just talk,” he says. “If this is something that people want, then let’s just do it. It’s been positive so far and well received. There’s a really high demand for secondary education at this level.”

Though Amanda is no longer teaching, she remains active in music. She’s a

member of the Alaska Chamber Singers and is the worship coordinator at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church. She sometimes misses teaching and the impact she has on students but believes the impact she’s making at home is just as, if not more, important.

“I miss parts of it, I miss that ability to make an impact on kids, but I’m so

busy,” she says. “And I know that I’m making a really big impact on the two little lives that I get to stay with when I’m home.”

Life in Ocean View

Amanda and Matthew rented an apartment from his parents when they moved to Anchorage, giving them the luxury of finding a home. They found the perfect one for their family to grow into in Ocean View.

“I liked the area,” Amanda says. “It’s a really great neighborhood, it has good property lot sizes, and I wanted a safe neighborhood for our kids. We’re really happy here. It’s beautiful.”

Though no longer the world travelers, they were pre-kids, the Baxters continue to have adventures. They visit Amanda’s family in Oregon and Washington and enjoy spending time hiking, biking and fishing. Amanda has also built a community of moms, and the couple often hosts game nights with other couples they meet who have children Joy and Jack’s age.

And at the end of the day, they still have their friendship.

“Becoming parents is hard and throws a wrench in your life,” Amanda says. “But at the end of the day, we’re friends.”

“I still think she’s all trouble, though,” Matthew says with a laugh. ■



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August Calendar

WED., AUG. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

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TIME: 10:30-11AM

COST: FREE

www.alaskazoo.org/zoo-storytime

FRI.-SUN., AUG. 4-6, 11-13, 18-20 & 25-27

Anchorage City Fair

@9031 OLD SEWARD HWY.

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TIME: FRI., 2-8PM; SAT. & SUN., 12-8PM

COST: \$30 FOR UNLIMITED RIDES

www.facebook.com/anchoragecityfair

FRI., AUG. 4, 11, 18 & 25

Burger and Brew

@Anchorage Golf Course

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TIME: 5-8PM

COST: \$23/PERSON

www.anchoragegolfcourse.com

FRI., AUG. 4, 11, 18 & 25

Friday Night Summer Music Series

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TIME: 7-9PM

SAT., AUG. 5, 12, 19 & 26

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TIME: SAT., 10AM-6PM; SUN., 11AM-5PM

COST: FREE

anchoragemarkets.com/anchorage-market

SUN., AUG. 6, 13, 20 & 27

Sunday Fresh Market

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TIME: 10AM-3PM

COST: FREE

www.instagram.com/sfmomalley

SAT., AUG. 12

Family Fun Day

@ALASKA ZOO

Head to the zoo for an afternoon of family-friendly activities, including a scavenger hunt, coloring station, zoo bingo and live music by the Knock on Wood Marimba Ensemble and Silver Train.

TIME: NOON-4PM

COST: FREE WITH ZOO ADMISSION

www.alaskazoo.org/
summer-family-fun-days-live-music

FRI.-SUN., AUG. 18-20

Alaska Greek Festival

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ORTHODOX CHURCH, 2800 O'MALLEY RD.

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TIME: FRI., 3-9PM; SAT., 11AM-9PM; SUN.,

11AM-6PM

COST: FREE

akgreekfestival.com

SAT., AUG. 19

Date Night

@ANCHORAGE GOLF COURSE

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When this month's issue went to print, all event details were accurate to the best of our knowledge. Please check the event website to confirm details.

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Every Alaskan Baby Deserves a Clean Diaper

By Victoria Ross, LCSW, Deputy Director, Alaska Adoption Services | Photos Courtesy Alaska Adoption Services

ONE IN TWO U.S. families struggles to provide enough diapers to keep their children dry, clean and healthy. Government programs do not provide diapers – a basic need for babies and toddlers. The National Diaper Bank Network, a non-profit that works to combat diaper need in the United States, recently reported new statistics on diaper insecurity among U.S. children and families. They found that the need for diapers forces 46% of families to cut back on other basic needs such as food and clothing. Diaper need impacts families across the income board – 66% of survey respondents were categorized as low income, 28% as middle income, and 6% as high income. One in four caregivers with diaper need report missing work because they do not have enough diapers to give childcare providers, resulting in monthly income loss.[1]

Alaska Adoption Services, a local non-profit organization, opened The Community Diaper Pantry in July 2021 to provide Anchorage families with free, supplemental diapers and wipes. The pantry distributes 11,000 diapers on average per month and since opening has provided more than 175,000 diapers to more than 441 unduplicated families. Families may access the diaper pantry once a month and receive 50 diapers per child and one package of wipes per family; they are encouraged to register on the Alaska Adoption Services website to guarantee the pantry has the sizes they need. A newly purchased van allows the pantry to bring diapers to high-need neighborhoods, making the service more accessible to families with transportation needs. The pantry recently began serving the Eagle River and Girdwood communities as well as several neighborhoods in Anchorage.

The Community Diaper Pantry will be hosting its second annual Diaper Dash 5K on September 9 at 10am at Waldron/Bancroft Pond off Shelikof Street to raise awareness and funds to support its operations. Last year, 100 participants joined the race and raised \$4,700 and donated 2,234 diapers. To register for the Diaper Dash, participants can sign up at runsignup.com/Race/AK/Anchorage/DiaperDashAK.

The Community Diaper Pantry has many volunteer opportunities available for community members to get involved. Are you interested in serving young children and families in our community? Contact the Diaper Pantry Coordinator at diaperpantry@alaskaadoptionsservices.org or call 907-302-6339 to ask how you can get involved. ■

[1] nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/the-ndbn-diaper-check



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ANNIE BRACE:
Capturing the Vibrancy of Alaska

By Amy Newman
Photos courtesy of Annie Brace, Corso Graphics

EVEN IF THE NAME Annie Brace is unfamiliar, her work probably isn't. She designed the label for Girdwood Brewing Company's Crow Creek Gold, stickers for Snow City Cafe and Hilltop Ski Area, and Jones Snowboards' women's line and its 2022-23 Airheart series. Her murals brighten the hallways at Alaska Native Medical Center's pediatrics unit and her booth, Corso Graphics, is a regular at markets and festivals.

Annie's inspiration comes from Alaska's "all-encompassing vastness," and she captures it with a mix of vibrant colors and clean lines.


"Some days, I prefer to fling vibrant colors of acrylic paint at a canvas to see what sticks," she says. "Other days, I prefer to be very disciplined with my clean black and white line work."

Annie worked as an in-house graphic designer before opening Corso Graphics and becoming a freelance designer 12 years ago. Though she still does freelance projects, her work these days is focused more on her fine art and illustration.

"Creating art fills my life in a way that can't be explained," she says. "I am grateful I have circled back to it in more of a full-time capacity."

To view more of Annie's work, visit her website at corso-graphics.com. You can also follow her on social media @corsographicsdesign (Facebook) or @corsographics (Instagram).

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