
Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2026

ALASKA FOLK FESTIVAL

Save the date for AFF 52:

April 5-11, 2027

A Note from the President

After a few weeks catching up on sleep and trying to remember what to do with a free evening, I'm still holding on to an immense amount of gratitude and joy after another successful Alaska Folk Festival. Our membership remains near an all-time high, volunteers keep showing up to make the whole thing run smoothly, and we continue to receive far more performer applications than we have slots; in other words, the festival is still going strong!

We were treated to nine incredible concerts at Centennial Hall, including two magical sets from this year's Guest Artist, Willi Carlisle. Over at the Juneau Arts and Culture Center, folks were dancing up a storm thanks to a great line up of dance bands. I want to give an extra special thanks to our Guest Dance Band, The Red Hots, and our guest caller, Connor Maguire. And we may have hit a record for workshop applications this year, so I hope everyone had a chance to learn something new!

Another special part of this year's festival was getting to share the documentary we made of last year's festival: "50 Years of Folk Fest." We couldn't have done it without my co-director, Paige Sparks, and our co-producer, KTOO, which was gracious enough to host two free screenings of the film during the festival. If you weren't able to catch the documentary at KTOO, it's now streaming for free on their website—go relive some Folk Fest magic whenever you need a little boost!

One bittersweet part of each spring is saying goodbye to our outgoing board members, and welcoming some new members. The board really is a pretty tight knit family—planning this event each year is a real labor of love, and we spend countless hours together to make sure we deliver the experience you've all come to expect. So I want to recognize the work of two members whose terms ended in April: Tessany Alrich and Annie Bartholomew. We have Tessany to thank for bringing up Willi Carlisle this year, and Annie to thank for The Red Hots, in addition to all of their other contributions which are honestly too vast to list in a letter. We also must sadly say goodbye to our Vice President, Meghan Chambers, who is stepping away from the board this summer to spend more time with family. Meghan is an absolute force of nature, reliable as all get out, and was an ideal partner to run a festival—I'll miss all three of these folks so much! But as always, goodbyes also mean hellos—we're thrilled to welcome Chris Meade and Cyde Coil to the board! You can read a short introduction about both of them below—I know they're going to fit right in.

We've already started scheming for next year, and we're always available if you have feedback (though we may be slow to respond over the summer)! As Willi implored during his sets, I plan to do my best to carry the magic of music and community around with me all year, remembering there are still spaces in the world that feel hopeful. And I hope all of you are able to do the same.

- Josh Fortenbery

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Alaska Folk Festival Membership Form

All members receive AFF newsletters and are invited to the AFF Annual Meeting in April. Benefactors, Patrons, and Friends will be listed in the future festival program. Donations are tax deductible according to law (EIN #92-0098258).

NAME _____
MAILING _____
CITY / ST _____
ZIP _____
EMAIL _____

Please select your membership level and write your desired donation amount.

- BENEFACTOR (\$500+) \$ _____
 PATRON (\$150 - \$499) \$ _____
 FRIEND (\$50 - \$149) \$ _____
 MEMBER (\$25 - \$49) \$ _____
 PAY AS YOU CAN \$ _____

List me in the program as:

Anonymous

Newsletter - we're going green!

Unless you specifically request it, we'll email all future newsletters to you!

- EMAIL _____
 PRINT (send to mailing address)

NEW! YOUR DONATION ONLINE CAN NOW BE RECURRING! Never forget to renew again! Visit www.akfolkfest.org to make your contribution online. If you prefer paper, please fully complete this form and mail back to: Alaska Folk Festival, PO Box 21748, Juneau AK 99802

Payment Method

- CHECK ENCLOSED
 CASH ENCLOSED
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exp: ___ / ___ cvc: ___ ZIP _____

Signature: _____

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

The Alaska Folk Festival wouldn't be possible without you!

Amanda Bent, Andrew Heist, Anna Mattox, Anne Fuller, Avery Hill, Ben Hohenstatt, Ben Landes, Benjamin Hoffman, Beth Leibowitz, Blake Jones, Brock and Chance Tabor, Caleb Hart, Callie Connerton, Carly Lehnart, Cathy Anderegg, Ceann Murphy, Cecily & Art Morris, Chrissy McNally, Connor Berry, Conor Lendrum, Craig Millard, Dale Brandenburger, Dan Cannon, Doug Edgar, Ed Schoenfeld, Elizabeth Ekins, Emily Chapel, Emily Kane, Eric Douglas Antrim, Erin Coenen, Erin Heist, Evan Coombs, Grace Elliott, Greg Albrecht, Greg Burger, Greta Healy, Hannah Schlosstein, Heather Parker, Heni Barnes, Jack Fontanella, Jan Beauchamp, Jane Hale, Jeff Smith, Jess Stanley, Jesse Higdon, Jim Powell, John P Lauber, Jon Heifetz, Julia Nave, Kaitlyn Conway, Kanaan Bausler, Kate Flynn, Kayla Harmon, Kelsey Riker, Kiel Rennick, Kirsia Hughes-Skandijs, Koren Bosworth, Leah LaBar, Louise Champagne, Luke Tabor, Maggie Priest, Margeaux and Christy, Mark Ridgway, Martha Murray, Max Blust, Max Stanley, Meg Schutt, Michael R. Truax, Mike Janes, Naomi Staley, Nick Murray, Nicole Lantz, Noa Parra, Nora Harper, Norm Cohen, Odette Edgar, Olivia Sinaiko, Peter Anderegg, Rachel Weston, Robyn Anderson, Rory Hamilton, Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Ryley Oliver, Sally Donaldson, Sara Cohen, Sarah Wallace, Shea Post, Sherri McDonald, Stephen Warta, Susan Cox, Susan Phillips, Taylor Vidic, Tim Borden, Tom Paul, Tony Schwarz, Ximena Ramos, Yvonne Krumrey

SNAPSHOTS FROM AFF 51

All photos courtesy of Reber Stein



WELCOME ON BOARD



Cyde Coil

Cyde moved to Juneau in the fall of 2013 and has been a Folk Fest enthusiast since her first festival in 2014. Music and community have been staples in her life since the get, and having the opportunity to help bring music to her community now is a full circle moment. She loves chasing her dogs on trails, frolicking on mountain tops, and hanging out with her cat and a good book. She's excited to be a part of the board and is looking forward to many magical festivals to come!



Chris Meade

Chris is a semi-retired semi-guitarist who plays half old time and half Irish. Coincidentally, "Half Irish" is one of his favorite old time tunes, and it also describes his family tree. Chris enjoys volunteering for worthy endeavors such as trails and conservation, and he has served on two other boards in Juneau. As his daughter Heather likes to say, he is "calmly excited" to work behind the scenes to bring AFF52 to fruition. He and his wife first met in Fairbanks in 1981, and their family has lived in Juneau since 1991.

Board of Directors

President Josh Fortenbery (exp. 2027)

Treasurer Hannah Bailey (exp. 2028)

Secretary Hiram Henry (exp. 2027)

Board Member Reber Stein (exp. 2027)

Board Member Dylan Proudfoot (exp. 2028)

Board Member Hannah Wilson (exp. 2029)

Board Member Cyde Coil (exp. 2029)

Board Member Chris Meade (exp. 2029)

Alaska Folk Festival

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