Attractions • Wildlife • Summer & Winter Activities • Area Resources

NOME

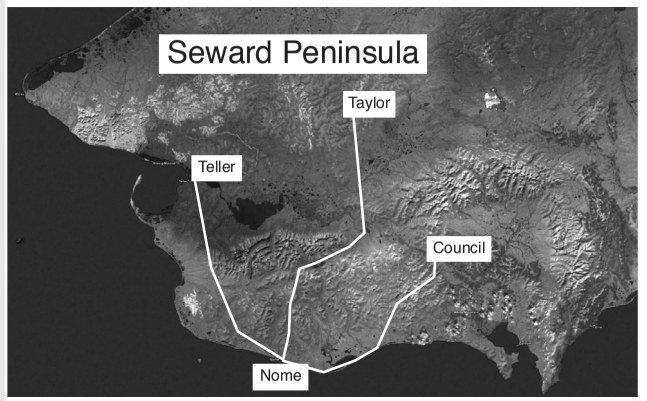
Visitor's Guide

A publication of the

The Nome Nugget

Alaska's Oldest Newspaper

www.nomenugget.net



To Icy View/
Dexter Bypass Rd.

Teller: 72 miles
Icy View: 1 mile
Nome-Beltz High School: 3 miles

97 Public Safety Building
Police, Ambulance

To Gold Hill

Norton Sound Regional Hospital
Quyana Care
65

Richard Foster Bldg.
100

Rec Center
99

Patient Hostel

Nome Elementary School
85

106 Anvil Mountain Correctional Center

To Airport

Bering Street / Nome -Teller Highway

Division St.

Spokane St.

Steadman Street

Greg Kruschek Ave.

E. 6th Ave.

E. 5th Ave.

E. 4th Ave.

E. 3rd Ave.

E. 1st Ave.

W. 5th Ave.

W. 4th Ave.

W. 3rd Ave.

W. 2nd Ave.

W. 1st Ave.

E. Nugget Alley

E. Tobuk Alley

W. Tobuk Alley

Warren Place

King Place

Seppala Drive

Anvil City Square

Lomen Street

River Street

Front Street

Post Office

Harbor

Snake River

Bering Sea

Nome Visitors Center

Swanberg Dredge
1 block east

East End Park
33

Cape Nome 12 miles
Council 75 miles
Pilgrim Hot Springs 60 miles
Safety Roadhouse 22 miles
Salmon Lake 40 miles

Please note: there are no rest stops along the road systems, except for Safety Roadhouse on the Nome-Council Road.

1. Mini Convention Center
2. Nome Nugget Inn
3. Nome Quickstop
4. Bering Sea Restaurant
5. Chainsaw Sculpture
6. Maruskiya's of Nome
8. Breakers Bar
9. Husky Restaurant
12. Board of Trade
13. Polar Arms, Polar Cafe, Polar Bar
14. U.S. Post Office
15. Wells Fargo, ATM
16. Dept of Fish & Game/State Office Bldg.
17. Gold Coast Movie Theater/Subway
19. Covenant Church
21. City Hall
22. XYZ Sr. Center
23. Nome Nugget Newspaper
24. National Park Service
26. BSNC Building (Old Federal Bldg.)
    Bering Strait Native Corp./Milano's Pizzeria/
    Council Native Corp./GCI
28. Pioneer Igloo No. 1
29. Alaska State Troopers
30. The Murre (gift shop)
31. Aurora Inn, Stampede Car Rentals
32. UAF Northwest Campus
33. East End Park
34. TelAlaska
36. AT&T/Trinh's Spa & Nails, Trinh's Floral Shop
37. BSNC Building (Old Federal Building)
39. Bible Baptist Church
40. Middle Beach
42. Nome Grown
43. Aurora Executive Suites
44. Betty Ann's Beauty Salon
45. Methodist Church
46. Teen Center
47. Assembly of God Church
48. Old St. Joseph Hall
49. Anvil City Square
50. Sitnasuak & Solomon Native Corp.
51. Carquest Auto Parts, Nome Outfitters
52. Kawerak Inc.
53. Mai's Guest House
54. Arctic Native Brotherhood Club
55. KICY Radio
56. Airport Pizza, Credit Union 1
57. Hansons Eagle Quality Center/Safeway
58. Rave'n Cuts
59. Sweet Dreams B&B
60. Nome Volunteer Fire Department
61. Morgan's Sales & Service
62. Morgan's Garage
63. Nome Professional Building: Dentist
64. Our Savior Lutheran Church
65. Norton Sound Regional Hospital
66. Arctic Hair
67. Nome Eskimo Community
68. Munaqsi
69. St. Joseph Catholic Church
70. Nanuaq Manor
71. Nazarene Church/Karmun Center/
    Nome Emergency Shelter
72. KNOM Radio
74. Nome Community Baptist
75. VFW
76. Shalom Inn
77. RJ's Auto
78. Wilderness SkiDoo
80. Presbyterian Church
81. Weeks Apartments
82. Noxapaga Suites
83. King Island Native Corp.
84. LLB LLC Bed & Breakfast
85. Nome Elementary School
86. Bering Sea B and B
87. Chateau de Cape Nome
88. Golden Scissors
90. Builders Industrial Supply
91. Larry's Auto
92. Norton Sound Seafood Products
93. Cemetery
94. Nome Animal House
95. Alaska Commercial
96. Grizzly Building Supply
97. Public Safety Building, Police, Ambulance
99. Nome Recreation Center
100. Richard Foster Building - Museum, Library
101. Harbormaster
103. Sew Far North
104. Terry's
105. Public Health
106. Anvil Mountain Correctional Center

Dexter Bypass: Nome Sweet Homes B&B

Icy View:
- Bed for a night B&B
- Old Alaska Rooms
- LDS Church
- 7th Day Adventist

Nome-Beltz Highway: Dredge No. 7 Inn

Other:
- Nome Beltz High School

Hotels
Aurora Inn: **31-P17**
Nome Nugget Inn: **2-R10**

B&B's/Inns/Rooms for Rent:
AKAU Alaska Gold & Resort: **Old Glacier Creek Road**
Bering Sea B&B: **86-H26**
Chateau de Cape Nome: **87-K27**
Dredge No. 7 Inn: **Icy View**
LLB LLC Bed & Breakfast: **84-H23**
Mai's Guest House: **53-L7**
Nome Sweet Homes B&B: **Dexter Pass**
Noxapaga Suites: **82-K8**
Old Alaska Rooms: **Icy View**
Shalom Inn B&B: **76-N23**
Solomon B&B: **Near Solomon**
Sunshine B&B and Tours: **12-P7**
Sweet Dreams B& B: **59-J9**

Apartments
Aurora Executive Suites: **43-P7**
Nanuaq Manor: **70-L12**
Polar Arms: **13-R12**
Weeks Apartments: **81-L19**

Cab Companies
Checker Cab: **443-5211**
EZ Cab: **304-3000**
Mr. Kab: **443-6000**

Churches
Assembly of God Church: **47-M9**
Bible Baptist Church: **39-P15**
Covenant Church: **19-Q10**
Church of Jesus Christ Later Day Saints: **Icy View**
Methodist Church: **45-M8**
Nazarene Church/Karmun Center: **71-N11**
Nome Community Baptist: **74-M14**
Our Savior Lutheran Church: **64-H10**
Presbyterian Church: **80-H18**
St. Joseph Catholic Church: **69-L14**
Seventh Day Adventist: **Icy View**

Emergency:
Anvil Mountain Correctional Center: **106-A2**
Nome Professional Building: **63-I10** (Dentist)
NEST (Nome Emergency Shelter Team): **71-N11**
Norton Sound Regional Hospital: **65-H10**
Nome Volunteer Fire Department: **60-J10**
Nome Police: **97-A13**
State Troopers: **29-Q16**

Gas/Service Stations/Parts:
Bonanza Express: **50-L10**
Carquest Auto Parts: **51-L10**
Crowley Marine (Gas): **95-B10**
Larry's Auto: **91-L3**
RJ's Auto: **77-J17**

Native Organizations
Bering Strait Native Corp: **26-Q13**
Council Native Corp: **26-Q13**
Kawerak Inc.: **52-L8**
King Island Native Corp.: **83-L22**
Nome Eskimo Community: **67-H12**
Sitnasuak Native Corp.: **50-L10**
Solomon Native Corp.: **50-L10**

Media
KICY Radio: **55-K7**
KNOM Radio: **72-M14**
Nome Nugget Newspaper: **23-Q11**

Public Buildings/Misc.
BSNC Bldg./Old Federal Bldg.: **26-Q13**
City Hall: **21-Q11**
Department of Fish & Game: **16-Q15**
Gold Coast Movie Theater: **17-Q16**
Harbormaster: **101-L3**
Library: **100-D13**
Mini Convention Center: **1-R9**
Museum: **100-D13**
Nome Beltz High School: **north**
Nome Elementary School: **85-G23**
Northwest Campus UAF: **32-P18**
Norton Sound Seafood Products: **92-N3**
Post Office (USPS): **14-Q13**
Recreation Center: **99-E16**
Richard Foster Bldg: **100-D13**
Sitnasuak Building: **24-Q11**
State Office Building: **16-Q15**
Teen Center: **46-N9**
XYZ Senior Citizen Center: **22-Q11**

Restaurants
Airport Pizza: **56-K10**
Bering Sea: **108-R11**
Bering Tea: **30-M10**
Husky: **9-Q11**
Milano's Pizzeria: **26-Q13**
Pingo's: **20-M10**
Polar Cafe: **13-Q13**
Safety Roadhouse: **Mile 22 Nome-Council**
Subway: **17-Q16**

Saloons
Arctic Native Brotherhood Club: **54-K7**
BOT Saloon: **12-Q12**
Breakers Bar: **8-Q11**
Polar Bar: **13-Q13**
VFW: **75-M15**

Shops/Stores
Alaska Commercial: **95-B10**
AT&T: **36-P13**
The Murre: **30-M10**
Betty Ann's Beauty Salon: **44-N8**
Bonanza Express: **50-L10**
Bonanza Fuel: **50-L10**
Builders Industrial Supply: **90-L6**
GCI: **26-Q13**
Golden Scissors: **88-N26**
Hanson's Safeway: **57-K10**
Maruskiya's: **6-Q11**
Morgan's Garage: **62-J9**
Morgan's Sales&Service: **61-J9**
Nome Animal House: **94-C9**
Nome Grown: **42-O7**
Nome Quickstop: **3-Q11**
Nome Outfitters: **51-K9**
Norton Sound Seafood Products: **92-N3**
Grizzly Building Supply: **96-B10**
Rave'n Cuts: **58-K11**
TelAlaska: **34-P12**
Terry's: **104-H8**
Trinh's Spa & Nails: **36-P13**
Trinh's Floral Shop: **36-P13**
Sew Far North: **103-H9**
Wilderness SkiDoo: **78-F16**

Points of Interest
Anvil City Square: **49-M10**
Anvil Mtn. Historical Site: **north**
Cemetery: **93-J3**
Chainsaw Sculpture: **5-R11**
East End Park: **33-M29**
Iditarod Arch: **49-L11**
Largest Gold Pan in US: **49-L10**
Middle Beach: **40-S7**
Old St. Joseph Hall: **48-M10**
Pioneer Igloo No. 1: **28-P16**
Port of Nome: **west**
Swanberg Dredge: **1 mile east**
Swimming Pool: **Beltz High School**

Vehicle Rentals
Aurora/Stampede: **31-P17**
Dredge No. 7 Inn: **Icy View**

Visitor Services
Chamber of Commerce: **4-Q11**
National Park Service: **24-Q11**
Nome Visitors Center: **4-R11**

Banks
Credit Union 1: **56-K10**
Wells Fargo: **15-R14**

ATMs:
Anchor Tavern: **7-Q11**
Alaska Commercial: **95-B10**
Credit Union 1: **26-Q13**
Hansons/Safeway: **57-K10**
Wells Fargo: **15-R14**
NSHC: **65-H10**

Western Union
Hansons/Safeway: **57-K10**

NOME'S GUIDE

A Welcome to Nome from Mayor John Handeland

Dear Visitor,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Nome, Alaska!

Whether you are fulfilling a lifelong dream by checking something off your bucket list, or if it was only recently that you heard of the mystique of Nome and it was more spur of the moment, we're glad you are here. I hope you find your visit enjoyable and a rewarding experience.

Nome is one of the best-known cities in Alaska, in part because it is proud to be the official finish line for the Iditarod Sled Dog Race, which celebrates its 50th running in March 2022.

The Iditarod trail is a 1,049-mile course where canine athletes and their human partners travel across the vast and beautiful Alaskan expanse. The race routes through historic Alaska settlements, across Alaska mountains and wide-open spaces toward the coastline where a number of inhabited Native villages that serve as checkpoints welcome mushers, dogs, support and visitors, before the final leg arriving under the "burled arch" in Nome.

The Iditarod was the brainchild of Joe Redington Sr., known as the "Father of the Iditarod." Joe had two reasons for organizing the long-distance sled dog race: To save the sled dog culture and the Alaskan huskies from extinction due to the introduction of snow machines in Alaska, and to preserve the historic Iditarod Trail between Seward and Nome. The trail traces the historic freight route to Nome, used for food and staples, medical supplies, and the delivery of the U.S. Mail, and commemorates the part that sled dogs played in the settlement of Alaska.

Hundreds of volunteers from around the world spend a couple of weeks in the state and along the trail to make the race safe and successful. These include pilots who make up the Iditarod Air Force, logistics teams and a host of experienced veterinarians who take leave from their practices to volunteer to monitor health and care for the dog teams.

These veterinary professionals monitor Iditarod dogs before they start, during the race and after they finish. Most Iditarod dogs have more hours of veterinary attention than most house pets, including my own. The Iditarod has teamed up with various universities in research conducted with the goal of better understanding the sled dog and to improve dog care and health. Visit www.iditarod.com to see for yourself actual footage of yapping, happy and healthy Iditarod dogs chomping at the bit to hit the trail.

Dog mushing in Nome is an activity in both winter and summer. The Nome Kennel Club, the world's oldest sled dog kennel club, founded in 1907, is quite active and continues to organize sled dog races around our area, as well as providing a network bringing together the numerous mushers and teams located in Nome.

Mushing being a traditional way of transportation, it has its roots in Native culture.

Native Alaskans traversed the coastline pursing sea mammals, moose and caribou, wild plants and berries that continue to be a part of a subsistence lifestyle and diet. About 50 percent of the population identifies as Alaska Native or Inupiaq, with some Siberian Yupik and Yupik Eskimo. The friendliness is the same, but there are variants in language.

It was the discovery of gold on the beaches in 1898 that is credited with putting Nome on the map, and at the time it was the biggest town in Alaska. At one time the population had swelled to over 20,000 people; currently Nome's population is about 3,700 people. It grows annually in summer when hearty men and women still trek to the City of Golden Beaches to sift our sands. A few years after the initial discovery on the beach, gold was also discovered inland at Anvil Creek, and the pursuit of the precious metal has been and is still an economic influence. The "Three Lucky Swedes" Erik Lindblom, John Brynteson and Jafet Lindeberg, who was Norwegian, are credited with the Anvil Creek discovery, just a few miles from Nome proper.

Lindeberg also served as president of their Pioneer Mining Company, which was the founding company of what became known as Alaska Gold Company. AGC operated bucketline dredges until 1994, hiring thousands of college students, village and local residents over the years on the dredges and in the thaw fields. Today onshore gold mining uses heavy equipment to pre-classify the gold strata while the ground is still frozen, stockpiling for summer processing through washplants.

Both large- and small-scale offshore mining occurs by diving in to the Bering Sea waters, both in summer off floating dredges and in winter through holes in the sea ice. The high price of gold has generated significant interest by those hoping to strike it rich and has also been fueled by Discovery Channel's "Bering Sea Gold" reality show. If you're interested in picking up a gold pan and trying your luck, the Nome Visitors Center can provide general details on areas where recreational mining is permitted. While a fun activity, it is not an easy task, and we strongly suggest you not depend on selling your gold for your return ticket home.

Nome has had its share of famous individuals and publicity over the years. When asked about Alaska, Nome is more likely to be identified than Juneau, our state capitol, or Anchorage, our largest city. Jimmy Doolittle was a primary grade student at Nome Public Schools. Wyatt Earp arrived to join the Nome Gold Rush in 1899 and "mined the miners" as they visited his infamous Dexter Saloon. Tex Rickard, boxing promoter and builder of the third incarnation of Madison Square Garden, operated a competing saloon. Dog musher Leonard Seppala, a participant in the 1925 serum run, is well known for bringing lifesaving vaccinations during the diphtheria epidemic. Other upstanding citizens and some thugs, too, called Nome home. The 1960 movie "North to Alaska" starring John Wayne with a theme song of the same name by Johnny Horton further instilled Nome in people's minds and hearts.

Today Nome is the "hub city" in Western Alaska. Our airport is a feeder to smaller Native villages. Through our port, which is ice-free for about seven months, come supplies that cannot be transported easily by air: Cars, large equipment, building materials arrive on barges in Nome, with smaller vessel feeding a distribution network to surrounding communities.

We are seeing the effects of global warming in our area. The permafrost which underlies much of our community is melting, temperatures are increasing, and the ice-free port season is becoming longer. We have actively been working on the development of the Arctic Deep Draft Port at Nome and look forward to the expansion of our facilities that will serve the broader strategic and defense activity as the Arctic becomes much more well-traveled and ships navigate a broader area to take advantage of the Northwest Passage route over the North Pole.

While some see mining as not environmentally friendly, we are actually blessed with a plentiful by-product – gravel. From these stockpiles, villages throughout Alaska can construct roads, airports and suitable building plots. Some of the best granite in the world is mined from Bering Straits Native Corporation's Cape Nome Rock Quarry. Locally, the seawall protecting Front Street and the port causeway were built with Cape Nome Rock. This rock is also exported to other communities in the state. And, here in Nome we are extremely fortunate to have around 350 miles of well-maintained roads open during summer months. One road connects us to the Native village of Teller. The other main routes, the Kougarok and Council Roads, offer historical relics that will give you a sense of how hearty the early residents were, and the bonus will be the breathtaking views of rolling hills, clear streams and a large variety of gorgeous wild tundra flowers. If time allows, you may wish to rent a vehicle and get out of town.

I am often asked why I've never left my birthplace and what it is that makes me like Nome. Without hesitation the answer is simple: It's the people! Bar none, you will not find a collection of friendlier people than Nomeites. Sure, we all have our quirks but that in itself can make life much more interesting.

Whether you are here for a day or a week, watching birds, visiting family or exploring, enjoy the wonderful people you will meet. To get a true sense of the magnificence we value every day, do try to venture some miles away.

You then will understand why we say: "There's No Place Like Nome!"

Thank you for making Nome a part of your travel itinerary.

John K. Handeland, Mayor
Nome, Alaska

John K. Handeland, Mayor

Welcome To Nome!

Quyaana Qairuasi (Inupiaq); Quyaana Tailuci (Central Yupik); Quyakamsi Tagilghiisi (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)

Welcome to Siqnasuaq, homeland to vibrant living cultures whose roots go back thousands of years. Nome lies within the Bering Strait Region, and is the regional hub to three Alaska Native cultures: the Inupiat, the Yupik and the St. Lawrence Island Yupik peoples. Each of the region's 20 communities maintain a government-to-government relationship with the United States as Tribal Nations, and have been known to occupy their respective homelands and customary subsistence use areas within this region for several millennia.

Siqnasuaq is known among Alaska Native Peoples of the region, as a historically permanent community. In 2005 and 2006, the City of Nome undertook a port facility construction project. Two subterranean homes, a hunting cache, and a trash midden were found by construction workers during excavation. The homes were radiocarbon dated as 250 to 400-years old.

During the Gold Rush era, Alaska Natives were excluded from staking claims until they were granted citizenship to the United States in 1924. A study done in 2011 by Amber Lincoln, PhD, stated, "By that time [1924], however, the resources from placer mining had largely been extracted and gold strikes had ceased." Dr. Lincoln further states "The historic territorial and federal Jim Crow Laws that were exercised in Nome exemplify discrimination in the first half of the 20th century. These laws denied property, civic, and representational rights to minorities in general and Alaska Natives in particular." In 1898, two Inupiaq boys, Constantine Uparazuck and Gabriel Adams, showed three Scandinavian prospectors the location of a gold deposit near Nome, and were denied the right to stake claims or benefit from the "find" of the "Three Lucky Swedes." There is a beautiful memorial statue, funded by Nome's Native youth, on Anvil City Square commemorating Constantine and Gabriel.

Indigenous Peoples have maintained their values, knowledge, culture, and ways of being and knowing, despite having sustained community-wide injury at contact with colonial powers. Illnesses that were common to European individuals were devastating to Alaska Native Peoples, and in some cases, entire communities perished. The 1900 Nome flu epidemic killed 60 percent of all local Native people, and the 1918 Spanish flu caused 75 percent of the population of nearby Wales to succumb. From the 1920s through the late 1970s the Bureau of Indian Affairs instituted an assimilation policy and many Alaska Native children were removed from their communities and sent to boarding schools where use of Native languages was forbidden.

Although our region's towns are currently experiencing manifestations of historical traumas, many communities are utilizing their cultures to heal. Healing approaches that are based on wellness within a cultural context, with a focus on strengthening cultural identity have proven to be the most effective.

Nome played an important role in the U.S. Civil Rights movement. Nome events prompted strides in Alaska State policy, nearly 20 years before the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 1944, local Nome Inupiaq Alberta Schenck was arrested for sitting in the "whites only" section of the Nomarama Theater with her white date. Alberta wrote a passionate and compelling letter to The Nome Nugget newspaper and a telegram to then Territorial Governor Ernest Gruening on the issue of racism and gained support for a civil rights bill for Alaska. Alberta, along with Elizabeth Peratrovich, Tlingit of South East Alaska, are heroines of U.S. Civil Rights, equity and social justice.

Siqnasuaq and the region's communities have, for hundreds of generations, maintained a complex system of kinship, oral history, trade economy, and intimate knowledge of the region's land, sea, natural resources and technologies necessary to thrive. Harvesting of animals, plants, birds and sea life continues to be very important to all aspects of life for Alaska Native peoples. In the spring, many local hunters can be seen in their skiffs, out on the ocean seeking bearded seal and walrus.

In the summer, families are typically out picking greens, gathering eggs or fishing for salmon.

In the fall, it is time to hunt for moose and caribou, pick berries of all kinds, and harvest Beluga whales.

Winter provides sea ice, and many families harvest crab and cod from holes in the ice.

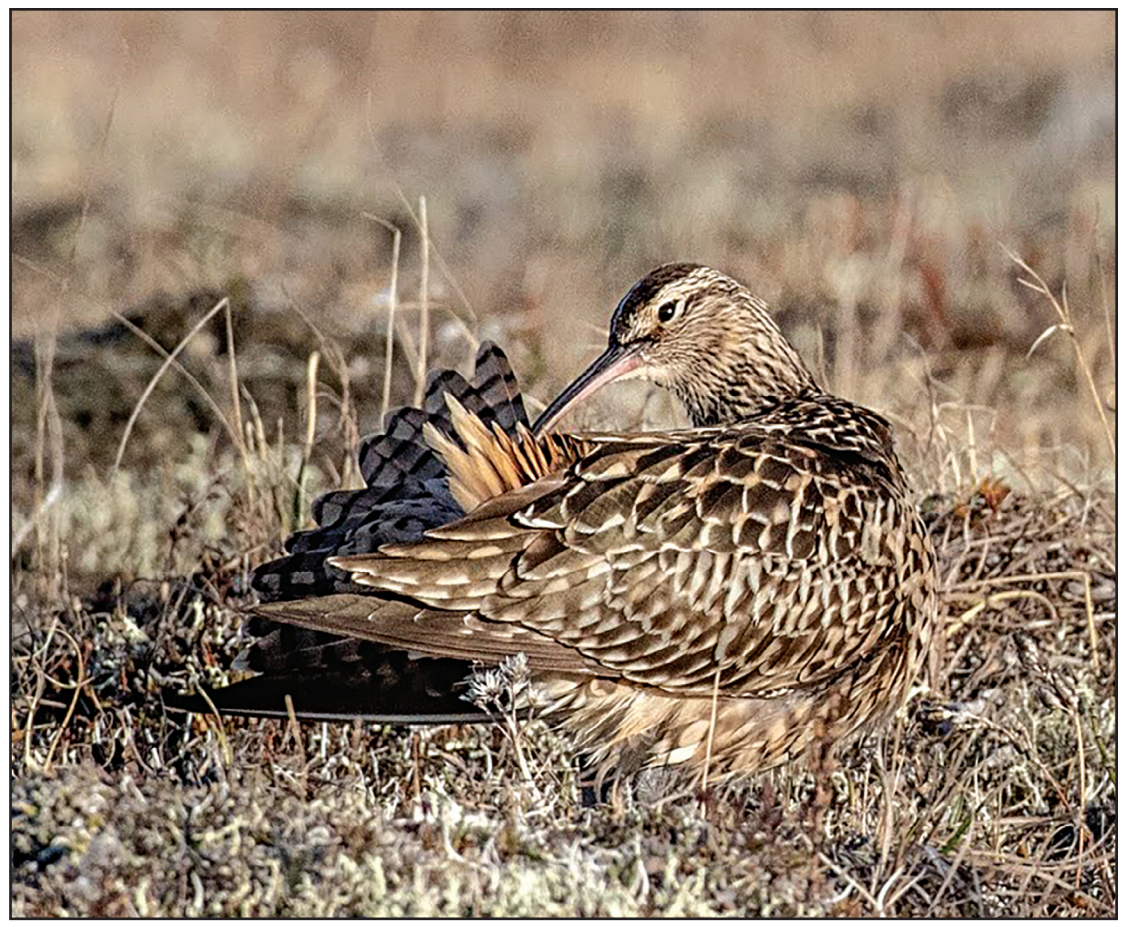
Harvesting is important to Alaska Native existence, sustenance, spirituality and community. As is also traditional ecological knowledge, passing of knowledge to children, connection to nature, cultivation and caring for the environment. The late Inupiaq leader Eileen Maclean of Barrow, shared some important wisdom when she said, "Subsistence is not about poverty, it is about wealth…This wealth is expressed in harvest and in the sharing and celebration that result from the harvest."

Today, Alaska Native agencies in Nome work in partnership toward the common goals of cultural education and preservation, language revitalization, perpetuation of cultural values, and working together toward improving the health, social and economic wellbeing of community members. Partners include Norton Sound Health Corporation – a tribally owned regional health corporation, providing all hospital services for the region; Kawerak, Incorporated – a tribally run non-profit organization, providing the majority of social services for the region; Bering Straits Native Corporation – the regional for-profit Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporation. Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation – the region's fisheries Community Development Quota Program corporation; Sitnasuak Native Corporation – Nome's ANCSA Native village corporation; Nome Eskimo Community – the tribal government for Nome; King Island Native Community – the tribal government for King Island, based in Nome; Native Village of Council – the tribal government for Council, based in Nome; the Native Village of Solomon – the tribal government for Solomon, based in Nome. Local Alaska Native agencies work closely with families and local schools, providing cultural education and partnering in delivery of prevention education, youth leadership development and continued involvement youth wellness initiatives.

Quyaana once again, and welcome to Nome – we hope you enjoy your stay! If you would like more information about Nome's Native community, please see the following links:

www.kawerak.org
www.nortonsoundhealth.org
www.beringstraits.com
www.nsedc.com
www.snc.org
www.necalaska.org

KING ISLAND DANCER— Indigenous Peoples have maintained their values, knowledge, culture, and ways of being and knowing



Photos by Kate Persons

BLUETHROAT *(left)*— A male bluethroat with his catch outside of Nome. This prize find for birders nests in willow thickets along drainages or near water and winters in southeast Asia.

BRISTLE THIGHED CURLEW— This rare and enigmatic bird, belonging to the sandpiper family, winters on islands in the tropical South Pacific and travels to inland areas along the Nome roadsystem to nest.

Nome is a world class birding destination

By Carol Gales

One June morning I awoke to a message from a birding friend in the village of Shishmaref: "Are you going to go see the common cuckoo at mile 10.5 on the Teller road?"

I had no idea what a common cuckoo was, nor how a person in Shishmaref would know that one was to be found along the Teller road.

Turning to the internet, I learned that the bird had been reported on Facebook, and that common cuckoos breed across Europe and Asia but seldom veer into North America.

This was a special event!

I drove to mile 10.5, skeptical that the bird would still be there. I rolled down my window and peered through the light drizzle.

"Cuckoo! Cuckoo!"

I laughed out loud—the bird sounded just like the German cuckoo clock we had at home while I was growing up.

Such surprises are part of what makes observing birds along the Nome road system so fun and rewarding.

Here are a few reasons bird watchers from around the world flock to Nome:

Getting to the birds

Our road system, second biggest in the state, gives almost 300 miles of access to a diverse range of habitats—from coastal tundra to rocky alpine ridges and everything in between—that offer choice nesting sites for many types of birds.

So many species

Over 100 species travel ancient migration routes to our area every spring to breed and raise their young. They come for the food—insects, plants, seeds, aquatic creatures, small mammals—needed to nourish their young. The spring arrivals join a couple dozen Arctic species that stay on the peninsula all year long. This makes for an intriguing and diverse roster of birds to look out for.

Lookin' good!

Spring birds arrive in Nome dressed in their best, with males of most species wearing their flashiest plumage in an attempt to land the mate of their choice. Birders visiting Nome marvel at the brilliant colors of familiar birds that, when seen in the Lower 48 at other times of year, look pretty plain.

Location, location, location

While birds have an amazing ability to fly the exact same migration routes year after year, things can go wrong. Storms, high winds, or just a mistake can take birds to unexpected places. Because of Nome's location near the Bering Strait, birds normally found on the other side of the International Date Line can end up in our backyard—hence the common cuckoo on the Teller Road. Birds of some species that live in Europe, Asia, Africa or on Pacific islands visit the Seward Peninsula annually to breed but don't venture much further into North America. Such birds, including the bluethroat, bristle-thighed curlew, Arctic loon, spectacled eider and northern wheatear, attract birders to Nome.

Our birds do cool things!

• The Arctic tern is the long-distance migration record holder, traveling back and forth between its Arctic breeding grounds and Antarctica every year. During its lifetime, an Arctic tern can fly 1.5 million miles on migration.

• Willow ptarmigan fly into snowbanks to sleep—and they fly in, rather than walk, so as to leave no trace for predators.

• Jaegers, murres and puffins live their entire lives at sea until it's time to come to land to nest and raise their young.

• Most shorebird parents head south three or four weeks before their young are fat and strong enough to migrate—yet the young birds somehow find their way from their Arctic birthplace to join their folks on the wintering grounds.

Birds are easy to spot, appear far more often than the bears, moose, muskoxen, or other animals we seek during our drives, and add beauty and mystery to the Nome landscape.

If you're driving our roads and not paying attention to the birds, you're missing out.

Carol Gales lived in Nome for 12 years before learning to appreciate the area's avian wonders. She shares her enthusiasm for all things Nome, including the birds, through her guiding business, Roam Nome.

Some tips for birders:

• Fill your gas tank before leaving town, and pack plenty of water and snacks. Your trip might extend further and for more hours than you intend due to the long hours of daylight and abundance of birds.

• When you spot a must-see bird, take a moment to pull well to the side of the road before leaping out of your vehicle. Don't forget to shut the doors!

• Pull over periodically and get out of your vehicle just to look and listen. An area that seemed birdless from the car could yield an amazing find.

• For details on where to seek specific species, consult eBird online or pick up a free copy of Alaska's Nome Area Wildlife Viewing Guide at the Nome Convention and Visitors Bureau. The publication can be downloaded at www.tinyurl.com/nomewild

• To travel down the Cape Woolley Road, first get a permit from King Island Native Corporation (907-443-5494).

• To travel into Pilgrim Hot Springs, first get a permit from Unaatuq, LLC (www.pilgrimhotsprings.com/visitors-permit).

Who discovered the Nome diggings?

It was in the early fall of 1898 that two Swedes and one Norwegian – guided by two Inupiaq youth -- struck pay dirt at Anvil Creek, such is the most widespread version of Nome's history. However, different accounts exist as to who earned the honors of claiming the first glimpse of gold in the area.

After gold was discovered, news traveled fast, causing a stampede of gold miners rushing to what would become the city of Nome. A year later, the first edition of The Nome News—which would later become The Nome Nugget in 1901—ran on Monday, Oct. 9, 1899 the headline: "AT LEAST $4,000,000—Output of season's work in Nome District. Of this amount two million is from the sea-beach, the remainder is from the creeks." The U.S. Mint has different numbers, estimating that by January 1900, $2.6 million worth of gold had been extracted from Nome. It was undeniable that the area held a golden promise, and despite the backbreaking work, adverse weather and virtually no infrastructure, thousands flocked to the tent city later called Nome.

The price of gold was at $20 an ounce in 1899, compared to today's price at $1,768 per troy ounce as of June 2021.

Trying to get the story of Nome's beginnings straight, The Nome Nugget newspaper in 1901 asked, "Who discovered the Nome diggings?"

The newspaper wrote that Jafet Lindeberg, a Norwegian, claimed to be the man discovering gold.

"Late in the summer of 1898 my partner, Mr. Brynteson, and Mr. Lindeblom and myself left Golovnin Bay and started to do some prospecting. Hitherto we had had very poor luck in our mining adventures," Lindeberg told the newspaper. "It was on the sixth of September that we panned out our first gold dust on Anvil Creek. The first pan produced $5. Sizing up the situation at a glance we saw that we had made a strike indeed.

"After a hurried consultation we decided to return to Golovnin Bay with all haste, stock ourselves out with provisions, get two other men and form a district in the new region. We lost no time in our return to Golovnin Bay where we were joined by Dr. Kittlesen and C.W. Price. Having the requisite number to form a district we left for Cape Nome where a district was formed and claims were staked."

A second narrative of discovery of gold in Nome involves a man by the name of Ivan Brostol, who credited Lindeberg's partner with the discovery. Brostol told the newspaper, "The credit of the discovery of gold in the Nome mining district belongs to a Swede by the name of Erik O. Lindblom." According to Brostol, Lindblom jumped a whaler from San Francisco when it landed at Port Clarence. Tagging along with local Inupiaq en route to Golovnin Bay, he found colors at the Sinuk River. "During this time Lindblom amused himself by trying to find out if there was gold on the river banks. The only implement at his disposal was a small frying pan...with this crude and greasy miner's tool he succeeded in finding some good colors, establishing to his own satisfaction that gold was there. This was the 11th of July, 1898."

According to Brostol, Lindblom returned with Jafet Lindeberg and Erik Brynteson. "Lindblom knew there was gold at Snake River and induced two Swedes, Brynteson and Lindeberg to go with him.… On the 18th of September they found some coarse gold on what today is known as the Discovery Claim on Anvil Creek. The prospectors staked out claims and returned to Golovnin Bay on October 5."

A third version of who found the Nome diggings came from an undisclosed source in the early Nome Nugget. "The discovery of gold on Anvil and adjacent diggings was originally made in 1898 by two prospectors named Hultberg and Blake. Hultberg came by way of Golovnin Bay where he communicated his information to G.W. Price representing Chas Lane of San Francisco and others, among them Lindeberg, Lindblom, Brynteson and Kjellman. They formed a party, went to Nome creeks and located all they could, starting a great winter's stampede for Nome."

Undisputed, however, is the stampede that followed, laying a foundation for today's city of Nome.

"The little group of men who in 1898 discovered gold in the Nome section and started to mine it had landed on a barren, inhospitable beach, with four miles of sloppy wet tundra to cross to reach the diggings," wrote Will Chase in the book Pioneers of Alaska. "When word spread of its richness, it was remarkable the number of people who rushed there to try for a location for themselves or to work for the operators. A town was quickly built and when in 1899 the beach was found to carry gold in super richness and was open to everyone, then came the deluge! Of the thousands who came, few had any thought of making a permanent home in Nome, and it was not until conditions forced them to do so that they constructed comfortable homes.

"The spring of 1900 was memorable in the history of Seattle as being the beginning of that great rush of travel that has never since subsided. It is safe to say that more than 20,000 people took passage for the new gold fields, and the summer of 1900 saw the entire beach for miles covered with tents, which gave to it the name of the tented city."

Of the immense crowds of people some soon became discouraged at not finding gold in such easy reach as anticipated.

Three physicians, seven lawyers and one real estate agent advertised their services in the first Nome News, next to businesses selling liquor and cigars, coaxing tired miners to spend their day's work on "high-grade wines, liquors and cigars."

How Nome got its name

From the Feb. 22, 1906 edition of The Nome Tri-Weekly Nugget:

"Cape Nome has been for years a conspicuous part of Alaska. Many persons who have read of the gold dust found in the sands along the beach have doubtless wondered how it received its rather unusual name. Was the cape named in honor of some individual or was the word Nome taken from the Eskimo or one of the Indian languages? The question interested a veteran geographer, Prof. George Davidson, of the University of California, and he has traced the name back to a ludicrous blunder. The story illustrates the well-known fact that occasionally geographic nomenclature originates in error.

Prof. Davidson searched every available chart and narrative relating to that region. He finally traced the name to Chart No. 1853 as being the first to use the name. The great atlas of the North Pacific, which the Russians had prepared in the previous year, did not contain it.

Prof. Davidson then looked up the tracks of the British Vessels Herald and Plover, which were engaged from 1845 till 1851 searching for Sir John Franklin in the waters of northwestern North America. He became satisfied that the name was given to the cape in the cruise of one or the other of these vessels. Thinking that the name might have been that of one of the officers of the Herald or Plover, he wrote to the British admiralty for information. He has received a reply that entirely clears up the mystery.

When the manuscript chart of that region was being drawn on board the frigate Herald, attention was called to the fact that no name had been assigned to this point, and the query "? Name" was place against it. There was an opportunity one day to send a mail home, and in the hurry to complete the chart for forwarding the interrogation point was linked in by a rough draughtsman, and the writing appeared as "C. Name." The stroke of the "a," however, being very indistinct. It was interpreted by the admiralty's office, London, as Cape Nome. The cape has ever since appeared on the maps with this name."

However, the area known as Nome had a name before western contact. Among Alaska Native peoples it was known as Siqnasuaq.

Nome Highlights

Swanberg Dredge and Rocker Gulch

Swanberg's Dredge still sits placidly on a still pond in Rocker Gulch. Swanberg Dredge was a self-contained diesel/electric-powered gold recovery machine. Originally known as the Johnson-Pohl Dredge, the dredge was purchased in San Francisco by the Gold Beach Dredging Company and shipped to Nome in pieces in 1946, where it was reconstructed. Due to the low price for gold immediately after World War II and ground conditions around the dredge, the company failed to turn a profit. The local bank took possession of the dredge in 1947 and it remained idle thereafter. It scooped gravel with a 70-bucket digging ladder bringing gravel on board, screening and washing it, and amalgamating the gold with a mercury process. Interpretive signs tell the story of the site, the ship and the environs.

Anvil Mountain White Alice Site

Four stark radar reflectors interrupt the smooth mountaintop expanse of Anvil Mountain behind Nome. Part of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) system of Cold War era surveillance of the Communist bloc, these massive antennas—now still sentinels—are prominent reminders of a more jittery time in American history. A short hike up a dirt road leads to the site.

Last Train to Nowhere near Solomon

Certainly one of the most picturesque — and most photographed—local landmarks is the Last Train to Nowhere near Solomon. Time and the harsh arctic environment have ravaged the trains, and they lie in impressive ruins. Today, the Last Train to Nowhere is preserved for the enjoyment and education of all to illustrate a vital part of the Seward Peninsula's unique heritage. Interpretive signage tells the story of the railroad, the trains, the adjacent ferry, as well as the village of Solomon and its relocation. A boardwalk allows visitors to get a closer look without having to navigate the swampy tundra that surrounds the site.

Fort Davis

Now the home to a subsistence fishing camp, Fort Davis is the site of a Gold Rush era U.S. Army fort that provided the primary government presence in all of Northwest Alaska around the turn of the 20th Century. The fort was dismantled in 1918. After a fire destroyed half of Nome in 1934 some buildings from Fort Davis were relocated to Nome, including the Nome Nugget building, which once was the Fort Davis Guardhouse.

Largest Gold Pan

Take your photo next to the largest gold pan in the United States, or with the statues of the Three Lucky Swedes at Anvil City Square located at Bering Street and Seppala Road.

Foster Building

The City of Nome's public library, the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum and Katirvik, a Native cultural center, are housed in the newly built Foster Building at the end of Steadman Street.

Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum: A wide variety of artifacts, pictures and remnants of the past are exhibited in a state-of-the-art museum. Exhibits include gold rush history, a dog mushing and Iditarod exhibit and Native culture.

Katirvik Cultural Center: Visit with the staff at the Katirvik Cultural Center to celebrate, learn and share in the rich culture and heritage of the Bering Strait Region. The name Katirvik, meaning "Gathering Place" embodies the intent of the center, to bring together not only people, but cultural events, language sharing opportunities, constructive social justice dialogue and artifacts from traditional lifestyles while celebrating and honoring the region and its people. Appropriately the most unique, important and defining feature of the cultural center is the central circular space, designed to emulate the look and feel of the traditional gathering place, the qasgi/qasrgi.

For information and opening hours call (907) 443-4340.

Visitor Information Center

Stop in for information and handouts on Nome, view historic photos, restaurant menus, etc., located at 301 Front Street across from City Hall in the gazebo building. Nome Visitors Center can be reached at (907) 443-6555 or by email visit@mynomealaska.com

300 miles of road

With almost 300 miles of good gravel roads crossing a wide variety of terrain, the Nome area is one of Alaska's best-kept secrets for roadside wildlife viewing. Depending on the time of year, one has a reasonable chance of viewing musk oxen, moose, reindeer, grizzlies and a host of unusual migratory birds. Know before you go

Please be respectful that local people enjoy watching wildlife, too, but they also rely on them as a source of nutritious and affordable food. Please don't interfere with any hunting activities.

Please remember that much of land beyond the edge of the road is privately owned. When hiking into the backcountry make sure you check on land status of your hike and ask the land owners for permission. Also, tell somebody where you are going, which trail you intend to hike and when you are expected to be back.

Don't stress the wildlife —or put yourself at risk—by approaching too closely.

Carry binoculars to improve your ability to locate and enjoy watching our wildlife.

The Last Train to Nowhere

HERE COME THE BANK ROBBERS— Part of the Midnight Sun festivities is a staged Bank Robbery enactment.

Events Calendar

January

Idita-Splash: a three-month long challenge to log 1,049 hours in the pool or swim 1,049 laps, one for each mile of the Iditarod trail.

Idita-Walk: 1,049 minutes of walking for humans and canines.

Nome Kennel Club dog races.

February

Iron Dog Snowmachine Race: Billed as the world's longest, toughest snowmobile race, the Iron Dog covers more than 2,400 miles. The race is scheduled to begin with the Expedition Class starting on February 17, 2022 followed by a Pro Class start on February 19, 2022. Starting in Big Lake racers speed across the Alaska Range to the Yukon River and cut overland toward the Bering Sea coast before reaching the halfway point in Nome. Racers then turn toward Kotzebue then south to finish back in Big Lake.

Nome Kennel Club dog races.

March

Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race: Beginning in Anchorage with a ceremonial start the first Saturday of March, the Iditarod claims to be the longest and toughest sled dog race in the world. The trail crosses the Alaska Range, the mighty Yukon, tundra and finally the windswept Bering Sea coast, with Nome as its final destination. Dog teams arrive anywhere eight to 15 days after their start in Anchorage. The annual event attracts visitors from all over the world, and Nomeites put on several events to celebrate March, a.k.a. Iditarod month. (The Iditarod did not end in Nome in 2021 due to COVID concerns)

Lonnie O'Connor Iditarod Basketball Classic: A basketball tournament with men's, women's and open teams from the region competing for one week in Nome. (The tournament hasn't been held in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 concerns)

Nome-Golovin Snowmachine Race: This 200-mile snowmachine race from Nome to the village of Golovin and back attracts racers from across Alaska.

Bering Sea Ice Golf Classic: A challenge for even experienced golfers, the Bering Sea Ice Golf takes to the white ice in front of Nome and is a fundraising event sponsored by the Bering Sea Lions Club.

Iditarod Arts and Crafts Fair and Art Show: Local artists, knitters, pottery artists, sewers and beaders showcase their art and products in the finest art and craft fair in the region.

Open Mic Night: During the Iditarod, the Nome Arts Council invites visitors and locals alike to take to the stage to perform.

8&9 Ball Pool Tournament: Three days of dart tournament action—singles, doubles, open teams.

Saint Patrick's Day Parade: On March 17, the Irish and the want-to be-Irish wear their green and march down Front Street at noon and finish under the Iditarod Arch.

Nome Kennel Club 200-mile Nome Council Sled Dog race: dog mushers mush from Nome to Council and back.

April

Cannonball Run: The 150-mile snowmachine lap race begins and ends on the frozen Bering Sea in front of Nome.

May

Birding: As snow melts and the sea ice moves out, flocks of migratory birds begin to arrive in the region, making it a world class destination for bird watching.

June

Stroke & Croak Triathlon: This swim-bike-run event encourages Nomeites to come out of hibernation and get into shape.

CAMP Summercise program: The annual Summercise program for children begins June 8 and ends July 23.

Lemonade Day: Kids become entrepreneurs and sell lemonade, cookies and other refreshments throughout Nome.

Midnight Sun Festival: A variety of activities are scheduled around the longest day of the year when there is nearly 24 hours of daylight. Events: The **Gold Dust Dash**, a four-mile run on East Beach; followed by the Midnight Sun Parade starting at the Nome State Office building and the best floats are awarded with Judge's Choice, Most Creative and Best Bicycle awards.

Bank Hold-up: The re-enactment of an old-time gold rush era bank robbery—brought to you by a host of Nome's talented actors—is always exciting for onlookers and a crowd favorite.

The Rotary Club sponsored

DIVE IN— A popular activity is the annual Polar Bear Swim as part of Midnight Sun celebrations.

•Events Calendar

Polar Bear Swim: Brave Nomeites and visitors hit the chilly Bering Sea water for a quick dip. Submersion of the whole body entitles the swimmer to a commemorative certificate.

Nome River Raft Race: Folks hit the road to the country as the Bering Sea Lions Club Nome River Raft race starts on mile 13 of the Kougarok Road. Homemade rafts are paddled almost five miles downriver. While a few teams seriously race for the win, several others lazily float and take every opportunity to soak competitors and spectators.

July

Anvil Mountain Run: This Fourth of July, 12.5-mile run starts at 8 a.m. on Front Street and takes runners up to Anvil Mountain, elevation 1,100 ft. and back to City Hall.

July 4th Street Games: A parade precedes an afternoon filled with foot races, bicycle competitions, gunny sack races, shoe scrambles, egg races and three-legged hopping contests. Highlights are free ice cream at the Nome Volunteer Fire Department.

Wyatt Earp Dexter Challenge: The challenge includes an eight-mile run, four mile walk or 12-mile bike riude. Runners start at Anvil City Square, walkers start at Dexter Bypass and the bikers leave Anvil City Square and ride to Dexter via the Beam Road. All finish at Dexter.

August

Anvil Mountain 59'37" Challenge: Starting at the base of Anvil Mountain, runners race uphill and back down.

Nome Garden Tour: Beginning at Anvil City Square, the tour takes participants to gardens and hidden garden treasures in and around Nome.

September

Bathtub Race: At high noon on Labor Day, this unusual event takes racers on a dash down Front Street. The unusual thing about it: Five-member teams push, pull and shove bathtubs and one member must be in the tub with bubbles apparent in the water.

Rubber Duck Race: Numbered rubber ducks are released in the Snake River on Labor Day. The first three ducks and their owners claim a cash prize.

Wales Kingikmiut Dance Festival: Every Labor Day weekend in Wales, Eskimo dance groups from all over arrive for three days and nights of dancing and celebrating.

Teller Cultural Festival: At the end of September, Teller plays host to Eskimo dancing and a feast of salmon, seal meat and caribou for its yearly cultural festival.

December

Christmas Extravaganza: The annual musical and tree-lighting ceremony ignites spirits to begin the Christmas season. The tree is lighted and local musicians provide tunes to spread the cheer. Santa and a real reindeer pay their yearly early to visit Nome for the ceremony.

Firemen's Carnival: On the first Saturday of December this annual event held at the Rec Center has the Nome Volunteer Fire Department pulling out all stops to entertain a huge crowd with games of chance, concession stands, bingo, cakewalks and a rib dinner.

For more information on dates, times and contacts for local events, go to www.visitnomealaska.com.

NOME RIVER RAFT RACE— Adventurous Nomeites take to the Nome River for the annual Raft Race.

WELCOME TO NOME— Mushers are enthusiastically welcomed at the end of the 1,000-mile trail in Nome.

Iditarod celebrates 50th anniversary in 2022

Nomeites can look forward to a few things once March rolls around.

The sun climbs higher in the sky, finally giving off some warmth. The daylight stretches noticeably longer each day. And the largest celebration of the year is heading for town.

On the first Sunday in March, Iditarod mushers and their sled dog teams depart for Nome from Willow for the 1,000-plus mile adventure that is the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. As the canine athletes and the mushers experience the trials, tribulations and joys of the trail, Nomeites are making the final preparations to ensure the finish line is ready for their arrival. They're also readying town for the influx of visitors who will fill every available room and nearly every spare couch in Nome to witness the finish and share in the revelry.

The race is an annual celebration that commemorates the historic Iditarod Trail and the sled dog. The settling of Alaska could have not happened without the sled dog as a vital transportation and supply link in years past. The race had its origins in the seventies when snow machines began replacing dog teams as a mode of transportation. Musher Joe Redington Sr. decided that something had to be done to not let the noble breed of the Alaskan husky fade away and the idea of a long-distance sled dog race was born. An excellent book, Iditarod: The First Ten Years, chronicles how the crazy idea of running dog teams from Anchorage to Nome became Alaska's most cherished event that each year draws thousands of spectators to witness dog teams start in Anchorage and then continue a remarkable journey through the Alaskan wilderness to Nome. The trail covers terrain that leads across the Alaska Range (home to the United States' tallest peak Denali), into barren and icy sections on the Southfork of the Kuskokwim, onto long stretches on the mighty, frozen Yukon and finally to top off a harrowing journey, coming to the Bering Sea coast with its notorious winds and ground storms. It takes a special breed of person and dog to run and finish this race.

continued on page 12

RED LANTERN— The last musher off the trail is honored with the Red Lantern award.

END OF THE TRAIL— Family members of mushers welcome their loved ones at the finish line in Nome.

OFF THEY GO— The ceremonial start is held in Anchorage on the first Saturday in March.

BURLED ARCH— A musher thanks his lead dogs after finishing the race in 2018.

•Iditarod

continued from page 11

Iditarod mushers are dedicated year-round to their kennels of sled dogs and prepare all year for the running of the 1,000-mile race.

The organization of the Iditarod is also a year-round undertaking as immense logistical efforts need to be taken to get 70 or 80 dog teams on the trail. The Iditarod is mostly staffed by volunteers who travel from all over the world to give their time to volunteer at the race. From the Iditarod Air Force, small bush planes flying supplies and the drop bags of each musher to remote checkpoints, to a cadre of volunteer veterinarians that see to the health of each dog in the race on the trail, to volunteers who man the checkpoints as checkers or cleanup crews, the volunteers are the lifeblood of the race organization.

Since 1973 the race has been run every year and in 2022, Alaska is collective looking forward to celebrating the Iditarod's 50th running. Although challenges abound — sometimes due to the lack of snow in critical sections of the trail, or like last year, a global pandemic— race organizers figure out a way to each year hold a race by adjusting the trail route.

The Iditarod begins with a ceremonial start in Anchorage on the first Saturday of March. The re-start takes place the next day in Willow, when mushers and their teams hit the trail in earnest. The front runners get to the Bering Sea coast the following weekend and usually the winner arrives in Nome the following Tuesday.

While visitors and locals alike mill about Front Street waiting for mushers and teams to reach the Burled Arch, a host of other activities are underway throughout Nome, both indoors and out.

From mild to wild—morning, noon and night—there is an event for every taste. From golf on the sea ice in front of town to a week-long basketball tournament at the recreation center—not to mention all the nightlife in the bars—there is plenty to do while waiting for mushers to arrive.

Housing during the Iditarod

The finish of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race is a very popular event; therefore, hotels and B&B's tend to book up very early, even a year in advance. The race celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2022, and larger crowds are expected to come to Nome. If you are unable to find a room, the Nome Convention and Visitors Bureau may be able to help with a Nome-style solution that has been tried and tested since the beginning of the race: Nome residents will open their private homes to people in need of a place to stay during the Iditarod, and the Visitors Center maintains a list of these individuals. Some residents may rent an entire apartment or home, and some may rent couch or floor space. So, if you are unable to secure a room in a hotel or B&B, and would like to be put on a wait list for a room in someone's private home, please call the Visitors Center at (907) 443-6555, or send an e-mail to visit@mynomealaska.com. Visitors Center staff cannot guarantee being able to place you in a room, but they will do the best they can.