

Village of Solomon PO Box 2053 Nome, Alaska (907)443-4985

Celebrating Indigenous Peoples Day

Fall/Winter 2023



Pictured at Indigenous Peoples Day celebration in Nome held on October 9th, 2023; Tristan Hudson and Tessa Timbers-Payenna

President Kirsten Timbers, Staff Deilah Johnson and NSHC employee, Maggie Miller coordinated the 2nd Annual cultural celebration on Indigenous Peoples Day, which will continue each year. Pictured above; Fashion Show Models showing off their traditional regalia during the event. Early afternoon interactive activities, local artist vendors, Canadian comedian Keith Nahanee, Musician Witty Youngman, Speakers included; Melanie Bahnke, Kirsten Timbers, & Cordelia Kelly,

IN THIS ISSUE:	◇ YOUTH CAMP PICS
◇ PRESIDENTS REPORT	◇ VOS TRIBAL COURT
◇ AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMS	◇ TC AND B&B REPORT
◇ TRIBAL SCHOOL	◇ TRIBAL MEMBER NEWS
◇ COVID FORMS	◇ PHOTOS
◇ ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT	◇ OTHER NEWS





Summer 2023 So Far

Tigiuks, Aqpiqs and Blues have been plentiful this year. I think everyone is praying for more fish. This is going to be a hugely busy year for VOS we have many exciting projects that are underway and continue to provide important ongoing tribal members services.

Please check out our awesome website for up to date info and services applications. <https://www.villageofsolomon.org/> With the fervent drive of the Developmental Coordinator Deilah Johnson, VOS has more revenue streams than ever before expanding benefits and services to our tribal members.

Housing Development

We are working with our Project Management Team Arcadias on water/ sewer and utility expansion for our new construction housing development located at the end of 6th Avenue in Nome and circled on the map below. In the fall of 2022 Q-Trucking filled the lots with 10,846 cubic yards or 39 dump trucks of gravel in addition they laid the necessary geotextile fabric as required by the geotechnical review by Bristol Engineering who completed the Phase I Development for the project. We are pleased to have Phase I of the project complete and are looking forward to completing

Phase II in partnership with NJUS this summer. In addition to the lots being graveled, George Krier local surveyor has completed the road survey along 6th avenue This will allow us to update the grading plan with CRW to solve the sewer design grade issue. This is all the necessary prep work to lay down the water and sewer line in the summer of 2024. We are working on putting out an RFP for construction for the homes as well as the design for a new community center.

Affordable Housing

VOS has provided 9 tribal members with home improvement grants to help with renovating their homes. VOS has also provided 1 tribal member with Down Payment Assistance.

Tribal Court

We are in the process of setting up our own tribal court. We are receiving technical support from Kawerak’s legal team5. We have completed our first sentencing hearing for a tribal member who was charged with a Class A Misdemeanor. Our tribal judges, the offender and our legal team found the tribal sentencing process to be more personal, relevant, and appropriate than our state justice system. We look forward to expanding our tribal court services going forward.



2023 Officer Reorganization

President – Kirsten Timbers
 Vice President – Cameron Piscoya
 Treasurer – Elizabeth Johnson
 Secretary – Annette Piscoya
 Youth Seat – Wilma Amaktoolik
 Council Member – Deilah Johnson
 Elder Seat– Cheryl Kalerak

Staff

Tribal Coordinator – Sherri Lewis
 IGAP Coordinator – Deilah Johnson
 Development Coordinator – Deilah Johnson
 ICWA Worker – Elizabeth Johnson
 Environmental Assistant—Amy Johnson
 Bed & Breakfast Coordinator—Wilma Amaktoolik

Tribal Education

VOS in partnership with King Island Native Community (KINC) has been awarded a \$100,000 State Tribal Education Compact Grant. We have developed an education committee consisting of tribal members from both councils and have begun negotiations with the State of Alaska on compacting education. Madelyn Alvanna Stimpfle has been appointed as our lead negotiator with Cameron Piscoya serving as our alternative/supportive negotiator. Our team will be supported by Kawerak’s Legal Counsel, Meghan Topkok. The third meeting was held Aug 2 meeting has been held with the next eight months scheduled for ongoing negotiations and negotiations will be ongoing through December. We know that as native people we experience higher drop out rates and lower than national test scores when compared to our nonnative peers. That is not an indication of individual failure but rather a systemic problem of the existing education system. Developing a tribal school will be a tremendous project to undertake however we feel passionately that our children will exceed all expectations given a nurturing education that is designed for them. Stay tuned as we continue to report on this existing opportunity.



On August 24th, Cam and I were honored to show dignitaries; Mitch Landrieu -White House Coordinator for Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Shirley Kelly - EDA, and Susie Feliz, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs our B&B out in Solomon

Sept. 27, I was able to meet Mr. Michael Connor, Asst. Secretary of the Army for Civil Works at a Kawerak Board Meeting. Mr. Connor is appointed by Biden to influence policy to require acknowledging indigenous environmental knowledge in all project permitting



AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATES

The Village of Solomon Traditional Council has been managing their AFH sub-programs; the majority of support has been through the Home Improvement Applications. The tribe has successfully approved 9 applications, financially supporting ways to improve current homeowners on efficiency upgrades, comfort, quality, increased equity, safety, health and well-being of occupants residing in the home.

A tribal members' home with full window replacement to hire a licensed contractor to replace old and cold windows, to efficient windows.



A tribal members' home with full window replacement to hire a licensed contractor to replace old and cold windows, to efficient windows.



Another tribal member was able to get his home completely re-leveled, a new fridge (from not having a working refrigerator) and an upgraded, larger heating fuel drum.

Pictured is a brand new hot water heater installed into a home

Check out this before and after photo of an updated and completely re-done chimney for a tribal homeowner. She stated that bricks would consistently fall down into her home, off the roof and rain would leak through.

What a much needed safety, health, efficient issue this homeowner needed. Thanks to the Traditional Council at developing their US Treasury budget toward assisting our homeowners with such necessary improvements.



A before and after photo below; VOS approved an application for a homeowner to get a ductless heat pump installed, a full upgrade from wall heating vents to filter, sanitize the outside air into the home for ventilation, heating and cooling. You can see the wall heater which has a knob to set the heat, which was placed in each room; upgraded to having to only use this ductless heat pump with a digital thermostat for all housing needs.

Continued on next page



The Council has also been able to approve one Down Payment Assistance application to a tribal member for purchasing a home.

The programs will close when obligated funds have been expended or until November 2024—whichever comes first.

Although this particular funding may come to a close, the VOS Council would like to continue to advocate and seek for additional housing funds to meet the need. The Council has known that the housing challenges will not be over by the end of 2024 and will continue to work toward serving the Village of Solomon community in housing needs.

As the new Affordable Housing Plan was intended to support the Village of Solomon in having access to healthy, safe living; the Council had noticed the demand for rental assistance. Within the AFH plan, instead of using the Emergency Assistance program the Council added a sub-program to assist those tribal citizens that need financial support for a new lease/rental agreement or support in sustaining their housing, recognizing that not everyone is ready to make the commitment to purchasing a home.

The tribe will be hosting a housing education workshop in Spring 2024, partnering with Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority, First National Bank, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation and Michigan State University. We're excited to have the partners on board for an all encompassing education workshop to understand how to prepare, sustain, financing, operations and maintenance all within and/of being a homeowner. More updates will be announced on our [Villageofsolomon.org](https://www.villageofsolomon.org) website.

Current AFH Sub-programs being offered to the VOS community;

- ⇒ Down Payment Assistance
- ⇒ New Construction down payment assistance
- ⇒ Rental assistance
- ⇒ New construction—tentatively available Fall/Winter 2024, pending. 3 single family homes in Nome, Alaska.

All information, applications and guidelines including our Affordable Housing Strategic Plan are available on the village of Solomon website, <https://www.villageofsolomon.org/affordable-housing>

On the tab, *Housing Resources*, are available resources for those acquiring new housing in Alaska.

For questions, comments, assistance please contact Deilah at deilah@villageofsolomon.org

TRIBAL SCHOOL EFFORTS

The King Island Native Community and Village of Solomon jointly submitted an application to the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development for a demonstration project, titled, "State Tribal Education Compact Demonstration Tribal Partnership." The project was initiated after the signing of Senate Bill 34. VOS and KINC are jointly in active negotiations with the State of Alaska to recognize Tribal Authority to operate and oversee education in Alaska. These would be public schools open to all students but would be Tribally owned and operated. As a Tribally owned and operated school, we will have control of curriculum, teacher certification, funding, etc. For more on Tribal Education Compacting, please see the AFN page: <https://www.nativefederation.org/education/> and the State of Alaska page: <https://education.alaska.gov/compacting>.

VOS at Youth & Elders Conference & AFN



First Alaskan's Institute hosts the Youth & Elder Conference immediately before the Annual Federation of Natives

convention in Anchorage, Alaska each October.

Pictured are Solomon enrolled, far left; Isabella Bohn, grandmother Helen Larsen and VOS Member Kim Henry.

It is always such a joy to see another Solomon member representing at statewide events.

Tribes as Nations

The governmental status of tribal nations is at the heart of nearly every issue that touches Indian Country. Self-government is essential if tribal communities are to continue to protect their unique cultures and identities. Tribes have the inherent power to govern all matters involving their members, as well as a range of issues in Indian Country.

The essence of tribal sovereignty is the **ability to govern** and to **protect and enhance the health, safety, and welfare of tribal citizens** within tribal territory. *National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Tribal Nations and the United States: An Introduction* -(Updated February 2020 Edition) <https://archive.ncai.org/about-tribes#>

A **federally recognized tribe** is an American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States, with the responsibilities, powers, limitations, and obligations attached to that designation, and is eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Furthermore, federally recognized tribes are recognized as possessing certain inherent rights of self-government (i.e., tribal sovereignty) and are entitled to receive certain federal benefits, services, and protections because of their special relationship with the United States. At present, there are 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages. <https://www.bia.gov/faqs/what-federally-recognized-tribe>

CURRENT COVID RELIEF APPLICATIONS TO SUPPORT MEMBERSHIP

INTERNET SUPPORT - to provide financial assistance for the high cost of internet services per household on a monthly basis

UTILITY ASSISTANCE - to provide financial assistance for the high cost of UTILITIES per household on a monthly basis

LAPTOP - You may apply for a chromebook online due to a more virtual world during the pandemic

Environmental Coordinator

By Deilah Johnson

The Environmental Dept. has had tremendous staff turnover. The resiliency of our management did not allow for projects to fall apart. The Environmental Dept. has been able to hire Assistant, Amy Johnson to ensure there are feet on the ground in Nome and for management of administrative responsibilities. When you have grants, workplans and budgets, it is not all just events, outreach and fun. There are a ton of reporting requirements, as such, it is easier to have larger capacity. Amy will be growing the Gardyn at the office, so please watch out for fresh produce for delicious salads, if you are in Nome. We are continuing to implement our Renewable Energy Plan, developing a quality assurance project plan to address and tackle greenhouse gas emissions, as well as developing a watershed protection plan now that our habitat study is just one of the many documents needed as a resource.

VOS has also been learning how to manage the 7kW rooftop solar panel and battery storage system utilizing the new Aurora generator as backup power out in Solomon. This upcoming spring, VOS is hoping to host a training with the Sol-Ark Inverter master, Kyle Bogler who has worked with our generator maintenance man, Donnell Erickson out in Solomon to ensure the systems are connected and working together. This spring training will be open to VOS tribal citizens and all VOS staff/council members.

With the Army Corp of Engineers Habitat Study concluding, the tribe is working on another partnership to locate the mass burial gravesite near the Solomon watershed to memorialize and mark the area, where the 1918 Spanish flu victims were buried. Using the habitat study, the tribe will



also gain more funding opportunities to restore, protect and advocate the health of the watershed going forward. Unfortunately, the IPOP, LLC mining applicant had been granted the appeal for the Pacific Ocean Division General has re-opened consideration of the mining permit application. More details will be made available as updates progress. VOS Council members and invitees will participate in a Government to Government tribal consultation with the Pacific Ocean Division General and his staff mid-November 2023. VOS Environmental Dept will continue to advocate and protect in all capacities to ensure our way of life is not threatened.

Pictured above; Environmental & Development Coordinator Deilah Johnson with Isabella & Helen Bohn collecting and refilling Youth camp water jugs from the mountain clean water source on the Nome-Council Hwy.



Development Coordinator

VOS has been able to successfully close out their first Housing of Urban Development ICDBG grant, funding the tribe's quarantine tiny home which is currently parked at the office. This upcoming Spring, Deilah Johnson will learn how to setup the solar panel system to energize the tiny home. VOS was able to apply for and receive grant awards to fund the annual Frances Wright Youth and Elder Camp, MMIWG Day, Indigenous Peoples Day,

Tribal Court Development and operating costs, Denali Commission for Affordable Housing New Construction funding, Rural Cap for design/architect and project management funding for affordable housing, Tribal Victim Services funding to advocate for MMIP and victim services, NSHC Tribal Wellness and Tribal Youth Fund, Bering Strait Regional Housing Youth Grant and connecting with other entities/organizations for partnerships or sponsorships.

Staff were able to host a Halloween party at the office where games, popcorn, face painting and cookies/snacks were all fun to be had. The Development Coordinator is tasked with continuing to progress the LEDP village priorities, as well as coordinate tribal gatherings, celebrations, events and advocacy.

2023 FRANCES WRIGHT YOUTH & ELDER CAMP



VILLAGE OF SOLOMON TRIBAL COURT DEVELOPMENT

With assistance from Kawerak Tribal Attorney's, Ali Wykis and Meghan 'Sigvanna' Topkok the Traditional Council has been able to approve a VOS Tribal Court Ordinance and Children's Code for enrolled VOS Youth matters.

VOS has also been able to sign a Civil Diversion agreement with the 2nd judicial district/Nome Trial Courts in providing sentencing recommendations for misdemeanor charges against our tribal members; whom request VOS to step in and ask the presiding Judge if VOS can utilize Rule 11 for sentencing.

Offenses Eligible for Civil Diversion

By this Agreement, the State and the Tribe agree that, in lieu of state criminal prosecution, the Tribe will offer civil tribal remedies for the following offenses and crimes (as listed in Exhibit C):

- a. Certain Class B misdemeanors under Title 11 of the Alaska Statutes (including those involving domestic violence as defined by AS 18.66.990). the State of Alaska and [Name of Tribe]
- b. Minor consuming or in possession offenses, including non-misdemeanor violations and misdemeanors (AS 04.16.050; AS 28.35.280).
- c. Local option alcohol possession offenses in communities that have voted to ban the possession of alcohol, making it a violation of state law to possess alcohol in that community (AS 04.11.501).
- d. Assault in the fourth degree (AS 11.41.230) (including those involving domestic violence as defined by AS 18.66.990) and reckless endangerment (AS 11.41.250) (including those involving domestic violence as defined by AS 18.66.990) if the offender has
 - no assault conviction in the past ten years;
 - no prior felony convictions for crimes against a person;

and

- had no prior referrals to a tribal court for any assault in the fourth degree; or
- ii. the District Attorney—in consultation with the Tribe—has determined that the offender should be referred to tribal court in the interests of justice.
- e. A matter will not be referred to tribal court if the offender commits an accompanying crime, in addition to those enumerated in this Section 4, and the accompanying crime is not covered by this Agreement.
- f. The Tribe has authority to decline any case referred to its tribal court.

TRIBAL COURT JURISDICTION in CHILDREN'S CASES:

ICWA intervention for any minor investigated by Children's services for any state

Should both biological parents wish to do so, the VOS Tribal Court can request Case jurisdiction of the ICWA case and handle all matters for the child(ren) in question
VOS legal/voluntary Adoptions

Support for Struggling Families

VOS May appoint a selected foster parent using VOS' foster parent application, not the same as the State's application process and foster parenting management is done by the Council and Children's committee

VOS Traditional Council members are working directly with Kawerak Staff Attorneys and seeking Tribal Court training as the tribal court is expanding, ensuring that the forms, hearings, legal procedures are done correctly.

When the new VOS community building is constructed, there will be a private tribal court space for hearings to be held in person.

VOS is also receiving Office of Victim Services funds to implement VOS Victim services advocacy staff and ensure all referrals, needs, support are provided to any tribal citizen who is a victim of crime. The tribe will also be developing Domestic Violence codes and will be able to provide Protective Orders through tribal court.

A Word from your Tribal Coordinator

The Village of Solomon always keeps me busy with the various projects and financials, to include the programs and services provided to the community. It has been rewarding to get to know this side of my family, and now that I am also enrolled with the Village of Solomon, I can say that I work for my tribe. We were able to conclude our first mandatory financial audit back in April, due to the US Treasury funds. We will continue to be audited and we, at VOS now know what to expect with our accounting records, it was a learning experience. Deilah keeps me busy, Wilma as my alternate Coordinator is helpful and I am looking forward to seeing the big projects come to fruition in 2024. If we have not met yet, I hope to meet you soon. I likely know your name already from my work so please introduce yourself if you are around Nome.

Quyanna,
Sherri Lewis

Bed & Breakfast Update

The Solomon Bed & Breakfast had very few reservations over the 2023 summer season. There were several interior repairs that took place, thanks to hiring Alaskan Arcticman Services, LLC. We were able to repaint the interior, replace and repair the non-working bedroom bathroom, we had generator work done to make sure the new generator works with the solar system, fix all of the structural damage due to leveling, also got the B&B leveled again. During all of these much needed repairs, we were able to approve our new Bed and Breakfast Plan that will be used to apply for an Economic Development Administration grant to start a touring package, marketing plan, equipment to provide for our tour package, staff, transportation and a manager's lodging area. The 2024 Summer will be a busy summer and more now that we have all working bathrooms. If you are interested, check out our website:

<https://solomonbedandbreakfast.com/>

We will be hiring for housekeepers for the upcoming summer season and I would love all the help,

Wilma Amaktoolik, Bed & Breakfast Coordinator

FORMS/ APPLICATIONS ACCESS

The Village of Solomon recognizes a more virtual world today, as well as our tribal community members that reside outside of Nome, Alaska. Thus, we have all of these forms available on our website:

- ◇ School Reimbursement
- ◇ Tribal Wellness
- ◇ Mailing Address Update
- ◇ Bed Bug Info
- ◇ Hunter Subsistence Agreement
- ◇ Emergency Assistance
- ◇ Employment Application
- ◇ Grants for online education
- ◇ Under the COVID Resources tab: Utility/laptop/Internet/COVID Emergency forms

Please note that each form/application does have guidelines and instructions accompanying each file form or application. Please follow all instructions for prompt processing.



Indigenous People's Day photos; Pictured VOS members, Tristan Hudson, Llayna. Tessa & Kirsten Timbers-Payenna, as well as many local youth and eventgoers



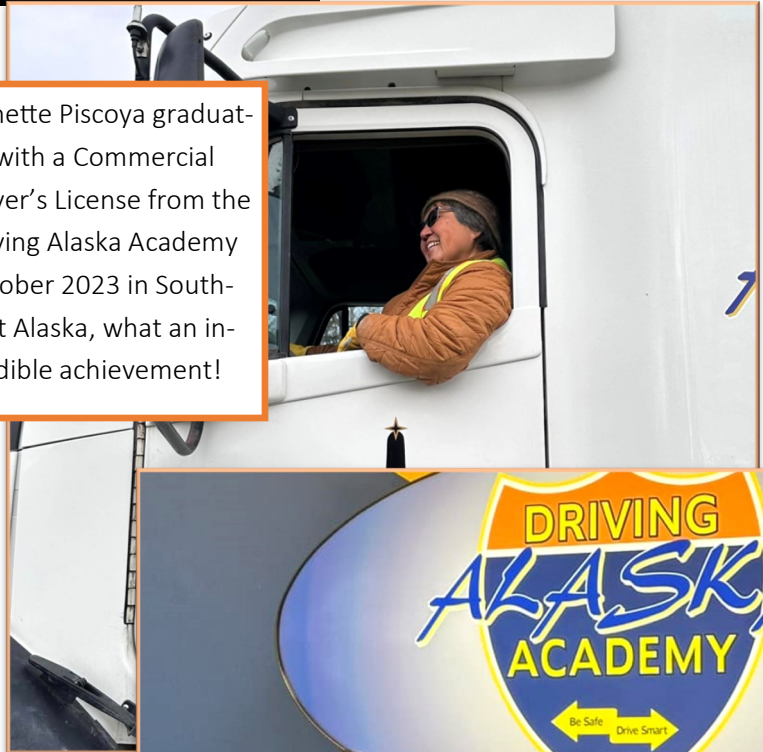
News & Noteworthy from Solomon



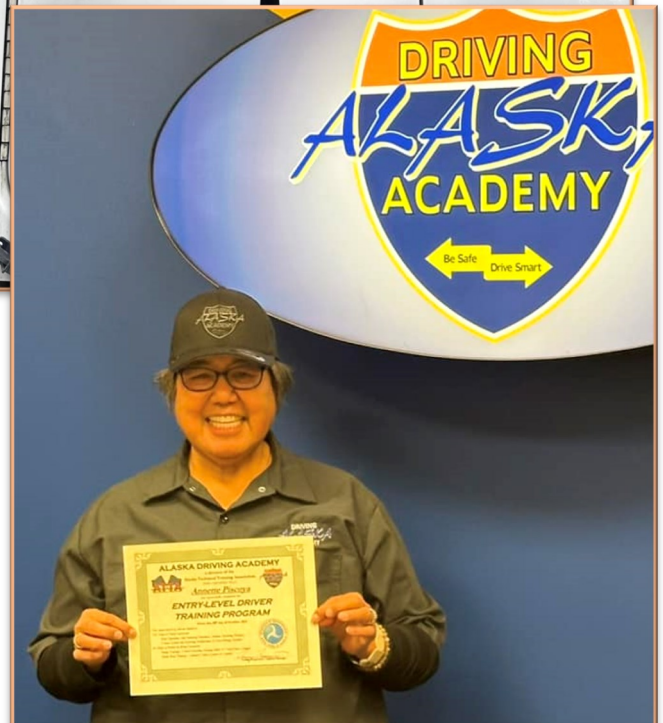
Tribal Member, Bronson Bohn pictured with grandmother Helen Larsen at his Highschool Graduation. Photo on the right is of the newest addition to the United States Navy. Bronson graduated from Alaska Military Youth Academy, Highschool and Bootcamp, all since December 2022. VOS is proud of you Sailor!



Annette Piscoya graduated with a Commercial Driver's License from the Driving Alaska Academy October 2023 in Southeast Alaska, what an incredible achievement!



Pictured on the left with his dad, Cameron and his brother Fitz; is our young Solomon fisherman, Ethan Piscoya showing off his first Kenai Red for 2023. That is one BIG catch Ethan and one proud smile





In a partnership with Michigan State University as a grantee to the National Science Foundation; the Environmental Dept. has collaborated with this team to provide Home Energy Assessments. Photo credit by Annette Piscoya, "We had our energy Audit today. They will email the results. They did mention the possibility of where we're losing heat. Also give us monitor the read air quality, temperature and humidity inside the house. Also give us a monitor that read how much watt hours outlets use." Aug. 11, 2023

The Village of Solomon expects to continue this partnership with grad students, engineers and Doctor's studying energy in cold climates through the next four years. With this, the team will continue to travel to Nome periodically to provide energy efficiency tips, education and home energy audits with full results to review together in effort to alleviate such high cost of energy in rural Alaska. This team will also assist the Environmental Coordinator in completing the Priority Climate Action Plan with ways of decreasing energy action items as a stepping stone to applying for EPA's implementation funding next Spring of 2024. There are a lot of big things happening energy wise, VOS has also partnered to serve under this Climate Priority action planning with Nome Eskimo Community, Native Village of Council and King Island. All of this work is under another EPA grant called the Climate Pollution Reduction Act. The tribe has hired a contractor to conduct the Greenhouse Gas Emissions inventory to develop a pollution data collection, more announcements to come, please watch out for future education on energy and home energy assessments!

Do you have any news, noteworthy stories to share with the VOS Tribal community?

If so, we're always looking to highlight our tribal members in the newsletter. Send an email to tc.sol@kawerak.org with photos, stories, accomplishments and we would love to consider printing in our newsletter.

We will do our best to include as much as possible, and we'll do our best to distribute a newsletter bi-annually.

Ways to contact the tribe:

Tribal Coordinator: Sherri Lewis, tc.sol@kawerak.org

Development/Environmental: Deilah Johnson, deilah@villageofsolomon.org

B&B Coordinator: Wilma Amaktoolik, wilma@villageofsolomon.org

President: Kirsten Timbers, oonga4me@hotmail.com

Vice President: Cameron Piscoya, capiscoya@gmail.com

Treasurer: Liz Johnson liz@villageofsolomon.org

Secretary: Annette Piscoya, sookinuk@gmail.com

Environmental Assistant: amyj@villageofsolomon.org



HUD/ACF/ANTHC—WHAT DO THOSE MEAN?

HUD—Housing of Urban Development, a federal agency with various programs to address the housing crisis. VOS received funds to contract and build a custom tiny home to serve as a quarantine tiny house for those impacted by the coronavirus or any variant thereof. This project went over the \$115,000 in contract, so **ACF *Alaska Community Foundation*** had a funding opportunity the tribe sought to accommodate the funding shortfalls to purchase the tiny home, making sure this included an off-grid solar panel/battery/inverter system, on top of the barge expenses to Nome. The Tiny home has finally arrived to Nome at the end of June 2023, it is currently at the VOS parking lot.

ANTHC—Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium is our statewide consortia serving primarily as our go-to hospital. They have an Environmental Dept that has massive capacity, including grant funds to provide to those promising projects. Back in 2019, the Environmental Dept. had focused on a campaign, 'Ban the Bag' and the momentum almost made it all the way, that is until Covid19 took over the globe. VOS applied for a \$24,000 solid waste grant through ANTHC's solid waste program and received the funding to relaunch the campaign by hiring two highschool aged interns to learn how to launch a campaign. It is absolutely overdue yet incredibly exciting to be able to teach the outreach and education aspect of something so meaningful, we have hired Madi McClaren who is a senior at Nome-Beltz Highschool to tackle this relaunch and she has shown nothing but great potential and massive amounts of enthusiasm. She will be distributing our logo totes for free all throughout the year.

