

# Tundra Thistle

The Newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club

Volume 29 Number 6 June 2023

## **Games Tips and tricks:**

# 1. Get there early!

## **Opening Ceremonies at 10am Saturday**

This year the planning committee has changed the time of the Opening Ceremonies at the games. The Opening Ceremonies have traditionally stated at noon, but we're moving them forward to 10am, to open up the schedule for the many other events to happen at noon.

# 2. Bring Your Own Cup

Remember that beer/wine cup you had to buy at the Beer Tent last year (or that you were given in the sponsor tent)? Bring it back this year and continue to use it – you don't have to buy a new one! It'll save you \$10.00.

# 3. Buy tickets in advance and save!

The Book Shelf, Bosco's and Fireside books.



#### Advanced Discounted Tickets SOLD HERE!

Single Day

Adult \$13.00 Advanced (\$15.00 at the Event) Youth (5-17) \$5.00 Family Pack Advanced ONLY-Not Sold at Event

> (2 Adult+2 Youth) \$30.00 2-Day

2-Day Adult \$20.00 Advanced (\$25.00 at the Event)
2-Day Youth (5-17) \$10.00
Family Pack Advanced ONLY-Not Sold at Event
(2 Adult+2 Youth) \$40.00

### Or buy online at:

https://alaskanscottish.ticketspice.com/2023ashg

Discounted Scotch and Mead Tasting Tickets are Available on-line only at:

https://alaskanscottish.ticketspice.com/2023ashg

# 4. Start the Kids at the Gathering O' the Clans

Pick up a Games passport, spend the day collecting stamps around the Fairgrounds all day (and win a prize for doing so!)

# The Alaska Scottish Highland Games Invitational Class Returns



The Alaska Scottish Highland Games has a long-standing tradition of inviting some of the best Highland Games athletes to throw on our fields. We are so thrilled after not hosting any Elite or Professional classes for the past 3 years to welcome an Invitational Class back to our event!

This class is a newly recognized Elite Level class in the highland games. The athletes in this class are incredibly powerful and dynamic and have earned their spot amongst the very best the Highland Games has to offer! We are pleased to present to you the 2023 Alaska Scottish Highland Games Invitational Class, the Lightweight Elites!

Matt Adams traveling from Bourbonnais, Illinois
Anthony Barrasso traveling from Tucson, Arizona
Willis Graves traveling from Nashville, Tennessee
Jacob Langworthy traveling from Derby, Kansas
Nicholas MacPhee traveling from Walpole, Maine
and Hometown Champ Scott Farr representing Alaska!

Thank you to our generous Sponsors who have made bringing back the Invitational Class a reality!

# Last Call For 2023 ASHG Event Registrations

Gathering O The Clans:

https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023ashqclans

Tug-O-War:

https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023ashgtow

Alaskan Scottish Strongman:

https://ironpodium.com/browse/event/alaska-scottish-strongman

Piping and Drumming: <a href="https://www.akpads.com/">https://www.akpads.com/</a>

Midnight Sun Spurtle Challenge:

https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023spurtlechallenge

Challenge Events (Challenge Stone, Farmers Walk, and Salmon Toss):

https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023ashgheavy

# **Now Hiring Gate Cashiers**

We are looking for cashiers to work at the Entry Gate at the 2023 Alaska Scottish Highland Games, June 24 and 25 at the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer. Shifts are 9 hours which includes a 1-hour lunch break, and lunch is provided. Pay is \$15.00/hr. You can work one or both days. You will also receive an admission ticket so that you can attend the games on the day you are not working if you choose to sign up to work only one day.

Must be comfortable:

- 1. Selling admission tickets to customers and handling cash and credit card payments.
- 2. Running a point of sales system.
- 3. Counting money and balancing drawer at end of day.

Education and Experience:

Possessing a good grasp of basic math is a must. You must also be comfortable working with a high-volume of customers in a fast-paced environment.

If you are interested in this position, please email jeni@alaskanscottish.org

# **Sponsorships Still Available**

For over 40 years, the ASHG has showcased our heritage and culture with the people of the State of Alaska. It would not be possible to hold the event without the sponsorship of people like you. Sponsorships help keep our gate fee low, making this an affordable community event. Sponsorships help us bring up excellent musicians from throughout the US and the world, and pay local performers to entertain us throughout the day. You can even be a sponsor (or jointly sponsor one of your favorite events!) Love that Tall Tales competition? Sponsor it!

All of our sponsorship packages include 2-day access to the ASHG, and to the Sponsor Hospitality Tent, where food and beverages are available throughout the day. If you have any questions, please contact Dorothy, Cathy or Tonda at 907-440-6540 or sponsors@alaskanscottish.org





# REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW AT: ALASKANSCOTTISH.REGFOX.com/2023ASHGVOLUNTEER

## **ASHG Promotion Videos**



This year we have released some great games videos

https://www.youtube.com/@alaskanscottish

# **Games Camping**

by Michael Miller, Camping Coordinator

Sponsors, vendor and participants are eligible to camp in the designated camping area inside the gate. All others are welcome to camp in the general camping area.

This year, entry and exit to the camping area will be through the Green gate, starting at 2 p.m. Friday. Please remember that camping is assigned on a first-come basis by a volunteer who firmly believes everyone will be treated equally. Therefore, if you arrive before the person you want to camp next to, that will only happen if they are the next camper in line. You are welcome to stage in the parking lot at the Red gate to await your camp-mates, before entering through the green gate. If two or three campers arrive at the same time, you may need to be patient as the camper ahead of you may need more time backing into a tight space.

Due to increasing demand, the camping areas are a greater distance from the activities than it was last year. Some camping spots are no longer available as these have been assigned to our 100+ vendors.

For those of you requesting power hook-ups, please bring an extension cord and an adapter to reduce your power cord from a 30/50 amp plug to a 110 plug. I recommend you carry at least a 100-foot extension cord and a 30/50 amp to 110 adapter.

The most significant issue last year was campers leaving at the end of the games. There is no exiting through the red gate, as this risks pedestrian accidents. We will post banners directing you to the green gate, the same gate through which you arrived.

More detail may be found on the camping registration page: <a href="https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023ashgcamping">https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023ashgcamping</a>

I look forward to seeing all of you at the 2023 Highland Games and hopefully all of you will have a great experience.

# Whoa!! 2023 Scottish Highland Games Entertainment!

By Dixine Schiavi

This will be yet another exciting year for entertainment at the Games!

There will be four entertainment venues this year: Celtic Stage, Culloden Memorial Stage (at Gathering O' the Clans), Highland Pub, and Cèilidh Theatre (Borealis).

We have two excellent solo artists coming up this year: Retired USMC Sergeant-turned-rockin' bagpiper sensation, the **MarineSandpiper**, and international Cape Breton-style fiddler & step dancer extraordinaire, **Nerea the Fiddler**. They each will be performing multiple shows both days on Celtic Stage and Culloden Memorial Stage. The MarineSandpiper will also do a couple sets Saturday afternoon at The Highland Pub.

Throughout the weekend will be an impressive lineup of local Scottish and Celtic performers; the daily schedules will be posted at Celtic Stage and Culloden Memorial Stage.

Dance entertainment includes: Alaska Treble Makers, Fireweed Fling Highland Dancers, Highland Heather Dancers of Fairbanks, Irish Dance Academy of Alaska, Midnight Sun Cloggers, Northern Lights Celtic Dancers, and highland dance instructor & performer Melissa Scholten.

Musical talent includes: Songs of Scotland by the Alaska Irish Club Singers, the Good Old Good Ones, Jack Lite, and Jubilee...AND Jim the Juggler: Man of Gravity...tell your kids!

We're very happy to have the **Rogues & Wenches** back again this year, who will be performing Saturday at Highland Pub and Cèilidh Theatre.

And there will be some more very awesome stuff happening at Cèilidh Theatre! Back by popular demand and for both days will be the amazing **Harp Twins and Volfgang Twins...**YaHOO! Also scheduled for both days is **Celtica Nova**, performing their beautiful symphonic melodies with mesmerizing violin, fire-shooting guitars, blazing bagpipes, and fire-burning mallets pounding on flaming barrel drums...seriously exciting! The **Alaska Fire Circus** will be performing with Celtica Nova during their Saturday sets. Be sure to catch the final performance after the Games Saturday evening; the Harp Twins and the Volfgang Twins will band together with Celtica Nova for an epic finale!

# **Contests for All Ages**

You don't have to be a trained athlete, piper or drummer to participate in many of the contests at the Games. Here are just a few of them:

## The Midnight Sun Spurtle Challenge

The games will be here soon and you don't want to miss the new Spurtle Contest. We want you to be part of the Spurtle Contest this first year. You ask what is a spurtle? It's the perfect tool that Scots use to make the perfect bowl of oatmeal. Imagine no lumps, perfect texture, and delicious taste. We'll be using Steel Cut Oats from Bob's Red Mill (Bob actually won the Golden Spurtle Contest in Scotland with his oats.)

There are three categories: 12 and under with an adult; 13 - 17 years old; and 18 and older. Teams are made up of 2 people and each team will make 2 pots of oatmeal. The first pot is a traditional pot of oatmeal using only oats, water, and salt. Practice at home to make the perfect bowl and come compete. The second pot will be a specialty pot of oats...use your imagination...fruit, nuts, sweet, or savory. Bring our additions for the recipe you plan to enter. Teams are limited and this is an event you don't want to miss. Come and show your highlander skills. When you preregister, you will receive a spurtle and a bag of oats to practice with. If you register day-of, you will still get a spurtle! Details on registration form at: https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023spurtlechallenge

# **Shortbread Competition**

Enter the shortbread competition any time until 11 a.m. Sunday with your traditional or flavored shortbread (the two categories are judged separately.) Bring three pieces of each type, and you may enter as many flavored varieties as you like. Turn-in will be at the club tent.

#### **Tall Tales Competition**

No need to pre-enter the Tall Tales Competition. Just come to the Culloden Memorial stage at the Gatherin' o' the Clans on Saturday at 2:00, with your best Tall Tale prepared. It's a fun and free-wheeling competition to watch or participate in.

#### **Kilted Mile**

Got a kilt? Can you run, jog, walk or otherwise perambulate a mile? Registration is free at the purple gate wishing well from 11 - 1, and the race starts at 1:30.

### **Free Highland Dance Lessons**

Ever wanted to try Scottish Highand Dancing? Here are four opportunities for a free beginner lesson: Saturday at 11:30 at the Culloden Stage or 2 at the Celtic Stage or Sunday at 11:45 at the Culloden Stage or 2:15 at the Celtic Stage.

4:15 free-style ceildh dancing

### **Breton Step Dance Lessons**

Join Nerea the Fiddler to learn some simple Breton Stepdance steps. On Saturday, 4:30 at the Celtic Stage or Sunday, 2:15 on the Culloden Stage.

### **Haggis-eating Contest**

How fast can you down a pound of haggis? Come give it a try Saturday at 4 on the Culloden Stage

### Learn to Throw like the Big Folks

Games athletes will be helping children learn to throw with mini, light-weight versions of the Scottish athletic implements. Stop by any time between 11 and 4 on Saturday or Sunday. Check the printed schedule for location.

# **Highland Games Promo and Community Outreach Events**

June Events:

June 3: Wasilla Music in The Park

June 9: Military Appreciation Picnic JBER

June 9-11: Colony Days Marketplace (Booth)

June 10: Colony Days Parade

June 15: ASHG Volunteer Training - Q & A

June 16: Friday Fling Booth

June 22 12pm: Live @ The Library Event

June 22 6pm-8pm: Palmer Ale House Concert Featuring Celtica Nova, The Harp Twins and Volfgang Twins and Athlete Demos and Ticket Sales

June 23: Pre-Game LW Weigh-In featuring the Volfgang Twins and Celtic Nova Promo Concert (Ticket Sales) Palmer Alehouse

July Events

July 1 Kachemak Bay Highland Games, Homer

July 29 Tartan Tourney Golf Tournament

## **Meet Islay**

The Alaskan Scottish Highland Coo



Introducing Islay, the Alaskan Scottish Highland Coo. We are so excited to officially unveil our own Alaskan Scottish Highland Coo, designed for us by the Talented Meg Baker of Meg Wilde Art (<a href="https://linktr.ee/meg.wilde.art">https://linktr.ee/meg.wilde.art</a>)! We will have fun merch available at the 2023 Alaska Scottish Highland Games featuring this adorable Coo!

We love this Coo so much and decided to do a naming contest on our social media in May. We had over 300 entries! Members of our 2023 Alaska Scottish Highland Games planning committee decided on ISLAY. We felt this was the perfect name as not only is Islay the southernmost of the Inner Hebrides islands, off the west coast of Scotland, but it is also home to many of these hairy beasts. They roam all over the island!

Congrats to Meg Voss who entered the name Islay.

We had 4 others (Amy MacKay, Wendy Elliot King, Kristina Marie, and Tami Shelton-Barrett) who suggested Islay but spelled it "Isla," so we decided to give them tickets to the games and stickers also!

Congrats to our random winners, Margie Raymore with the name Alasdair and Mellissa Harris with the name Nottie!

## The History of Heavy Athletics

By Sherri Borchert, Games Athlete

If you have ever attended a Scottish Highland Games Festival, you've most likely witnessed athletes throwing implements reminiscent of medieval weaponry. Have you wondered why the heavy athletic events are part of these festivals? It is said they were originally a form of war games in which the strongest and bravest soldiers would triumph. Highland Games Festivals remain an expression of a form of Scottishness with the celebration of pipes, drums, dancing, and brute strength carried around the world in a fond tribute to the motherland. As Scots moved around the

world, so did a version of the traditions and culture that bound them.

Although it has always been traditional for event participants to wear kilts, in 2013 the Scottish Highland Games Association made it an official ruling that all competitors in heavy athletic events at Highland Games are required to wear kilts.

The Caber Toss is probably the most well-known heavy event at the Highland Games. It's the true test of balance, control, technique, and sheer strength. No one really knows for sure what the origins of this contest are. Some say it started out as a way for Scots to bridge fast-flowing streams or rivers using the materials on hand. Others believe Highlanders would flip huge logs up against castle walls as a way of breaching their defenses during siege. There are other, even more unlikely possibilities for the invention of the Caber Toss, but we will probably never know which (if any) are the truth. Scottish Hammer (2 weights), Braemar stone, open stone, Weight for Distance (2 weights), Weight Over Bar, and Sheaf Toss round out the heavy athletic events. If you ask 5 athletes what their favorite (and least favorite) event is, you are likely to get a different answer from each athlete. No matter the origin of these events, they are a crowd favorite of festivals around the world for sure!



We are excited to offer walk-in weddings, handfastings, renewals, and legal civil marriage services at the 2023 Alaska Scottish Highland Games, located at the Alaska State Fairgrounds.

## JUNE 24 - 25, 2023

Our walk-in wedding package includes a legal service with an officiant, photography with the Alaskan kilted photographer, floral choices, a sweet treat, and sparkling cider.

This package is priced at \$300.00 for the legal ceremony.

For those looking to renew their commitment, we offer a recommitment package for \$150.00. This package includes all the essentials for a beautiful ceremony to reaffirm your love and commitment to each other.

Contact Women Warriors Event Planning for more information about our wedding and commitment ceremony services, and let us help you plan the perfect celebration. inquiry@womenwarriorsep.com or call 907-841-0767



# New: ASC Honored School Program



The Alaskan Scottish Club (ASC) is excited to announce a new community outreach program at our Alaska Scottish Highland Games (ASHG), the Honored School Award. Each year the ASC will be selecting a School that we will share the Scottish Culture and Highland Games with. This year we are thrilled to announce the 2023 Honored School is Lake Hood Elementary in Anchorage! As the Honored School, the ASC has donated a ticket to the 2023 ASHG to each student and staff member at Lake Hood.

Along with the tickets, some of our amazing Heavy Events Athletes attended the school's field day and were able to not just demonstrate the throwing events, but got to teach the kids how to throw and give them a chance to be a Highland Games Athletes for the day. Our Athletes even got challenged to a Tug-O-War by one of the Classes! It was a memorable experience for everyone. The ASC also attended the school's multi-cultural night earlier this month and shared fun facts about Scotland, a Highland Dance performance, and shared some Scottish Shortbread!

Congrats once again to Lake Hood Elementary, we look forward to seeing you at the 2023 Alaska Scottish Highland Games!

If you are interested in having your school considered for the Honored School, please email us at ashg@alaskanscottish.org.



# **Second Annual Tartan Tourney**



It's Back! The Tartan Tourney will be on July 29 at Settlers Bay Golf Course. Our first year was a HUGE success and fun was had by all. You won't want to miss out this year! This is not your average golf tournament. This tourney is one of the most entertaining golf events in Alaska. The event hosts up to 30 teams of 4 golfers each and features all things Scottish before, during and after the tournament. Behold bagpipers and drummers. Highland

Dancers, Scotch toasts, and multiple Scottish-themed games, your day will be filled with Scottish amusement. After a day out on the course, golfers and non-golfers are invited to join us for a dinner Ceilidh (Scottish party) which will include delicious food options, Scottish entertainment, and a Scotch tasting.

Registration and Sponsorships are open now:

https://alaskanscottish.regfox.com/2023tartantourney

#### Club News

# **Membership Update**

By Tonda Scott

The membership committee has been busy processing new and renewed memberships! We want to thank all the new members for joining our great organization, and to past members for renewing their memberships.

The membership committee would like to update all members on a Bylaws change regarding membership and membership dues that was adopted at the annual general membership meeting in March. Individuals or families may join anytime during the calendar year upon receipt of a completed application and payment of dues. The Bylaws change now allows this membership to remain in effect till the anniversary month of the following year when an updated application and dues will be required to remain a member in good standing. For example, if you joined in May

2023, your membership would last until May of 2024. The membership committee has a goal for the not-too-distant future that we will contact you and remind you when your membership is due or past due.

Don't forget, as a member, you have first access to events hosted by the club, and you get discounts on tickets to these events. If you have attended any of these events in the past, you know how much fun they are. For new members, you are in for a treat!

As an added note, the success of these events has been in part to all the members that volunteer and become involved in the planning and/or carrying out of the event. Your time and talents are always appreciated to help make these events the best possible experience for you, the club and those that attend the events. So, if you are contacted and asked about volunteering a few hours of your time in some way, please say you will!

Thank you from the membership committee.

## **ASC Gaming Permit**

In 2020, the ASC received our Alaska Gaming Permit. This Permit allows the club to hold our fundraising raffles and auctions. The ASC is also able to use our permit to sponsor raffles for other Non-Profits for their events and fundraisers. If you are in need of a gaming permit for an upcoming event, please let us know.

## Support the ASC at No Cost to You:

Alaska Airlines Easy Biz



Booking Summer Travel? Did you know that you can help the Alaskan Scottish Club earn airline miles at the same time you earn your own? The Alaska Airlines Easy Biz program allows the club to

earn 1 mile for every dollar spent on the base fare portion of all ticket purchases made online through the EasyBiz® website. Simply sign in to EasyBiz for all your travel purchases and each purchase will automatically be credited to you're the Clubs account along with your own! Interested in signing up? Send Jeni an email and she will get you on our account! jeni@alaskanscottish.org

## **Nessie Paint Night**

Club members and friends joined together via zoom to paint a Loch Ness Monster picture under the tutelage of Sara, of Paint Night with Sara. Even though the basic pictures are the same, everyone added their own unique twist. Missed Paint Night this year? Sara is already creating next year's design just for us.

#### **Contact Information for Alaska Pipe Bands:**

#### **Crow Creek Pipes & Drums**

Practice every Monday, 6:00 p.m.

First Congregational Church, 2610 E Northern lights Blvd. http://crowcreekpd.com/

#### **Alaska Celtic Pipes & Drums**

Lessons on Tuesdays - 6:30 pm - Mat-Su College; Lessons on Fridays - 5:30 pm - Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Chugiak: Band Practice to follow.

Contact Richard Christiansen - 907-315-9838

www.alaskacelticpipesdrums.org

#### **Alaska Piping and Drumming Society**

Contact Teddy Krogh at krogh\_teddy@hotmail.com

#### Fairbanks Red Hackle Pipe Band

P.O. 82782

Fairbanks, Alaska

www.fairbanksredhacklepipeband.org

#### **Anchorage Scottish Pipe Band**

Practices Monday, 6:00 to 8:00pm (Anchorage) and Thursday, 6:30 to 8:30pm (Eagle River)

Lessons: Thursday, 6:00pm (Eagle River), or by appointment Contact: Tim Kincaid, 907-360-2585; Email: tim@terntech.com

Find us on Facebook

#### City of Juneau Pipe Band

Juneau, Alaska

www.cityofjuneaupipeband.org

#### **Scottish Club Supporters**



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## **Club Calendar**

## **Scottish Club Board Meeting**

June 12, 6:00 pm **BP Energy Center** 

Trail Cleanup

June 3, 9:00 am

## **Colony Days Parade**

June 10

Be ready to march with us!

## **Alaska Scottish Highland Games**

June 24 & 25

Alaska State Fair Grounds, Palmer

## **Kachemak Bay Highland Games**

July 1

Homer, Alaska

#### Tartan Tourney

Saturday, July 29 Settler's Bay Golf Course

NOTE: Thistle information gratefully received at all times. However, to make the monthly deadline, please submit by the 25th. Send to Cathy at csteen@gci.net.

The Tundra Thistle, the newsletter of the Alaskan Scottish Club, is published approximately 11 times each year. Subscription is by membership to the Alaskan Scottish Club. Send articles for publication, membership info, and advertising rate inquiries to:

> Editor, Tundra Thistle, Alaskan Scottish Club, Inc. P.O. Box 244416 Anchorage, AK 99524-4416

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#### Alaskan Scottish Club **Board of Directors**

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The Alaskan Scottish Club is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) entity and can accept cash and services. Cash donations are welcome at any time of the year. For those with corporate matching programs, we are eligible for those funds. You can contact the Board of Directors at the above address with questions. Facebook and Instagram contacts are:

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