

Ilanka Launches Web Site, Online Store

The Ilanka Cultural Center has launched a new web site and online store. The site, located at www.ilankacenter.org, features Native cultural information, news about Ilanka Cultural Center, and stunning Alaska Native art.

The site opens with a slide show of Native heritage, including traditional crafts, elder and youth interaction, subsistence practices, and the songs and dance of the Cordova Ikumat Alutiiq Dancers.

The pages are rich with the stories of Prince William Sound's indigenous peoples. Chugach Heritage Foundation generously gave permission to reproduce sections of their books *Eyak Legends* and *Chugach Legends*. Native Village of Eyak tribal member Virginia Lacy shared stories of her family's history, as well as tasty recipes for cooking subsistence foods. Numerous artists donated their time to demonstrate crafts and skills, providing subject (con't pg 2)

ANA Grant Helps Establish Raw Materials Cache

Innovative bartering program creates business opportunities for artists

Do you need supplies for your latest artistic endeavor? Do you produce beautiful indigenous art, but haven't found a way to effectively market your items? If you create high quality traditional art for retail sales, the Ilanka Native Artists Consortium may be just the ticket for you. The Consortium helps artists gain access to raw materials, provides educational opportunities,

and coordinates cooperative marketing efforts. Our bartering program can even help artists acquire enough raw materials to start up their own cottage industry.

"We know that materials for Native crafts are expensive, and often hard to come by," says director's assistant Anna Pirtle. "As times change, traditions and art forms vanish. Ilanka wants to help preserve Native heritage by



Chris Arend

encouraging artists to pursue skills that have been handed down by elders."

The Consortium houses a cache of raw materials, such as pelts, spruce roots, carving wood, glass fishing floats, and other hard-to-find items. These materials are available to Consortium members for (con't pg 2)

P.O. BOX 322
110 NICHOLOFF WAY
CORDOVA, ALASKA 99574

Forward Service Requested

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CORDOVA, AK
PERMIT NO. 26
ZIP CODE 99574



Oral History Project Links Youth, Elders in New Museum Exhibit

A new oral history project has given high school students the opportunity to learn about the lives of their elders, bringing vivid images of their heritage to life while preserving their culture.

So far the project has employed three teenaged interns. The youth are assigned a list of interview questions and are paired up with an elder. Often the elder is a relative, which creates a bigger impact on the youth by providing a chance to learn details about their own family they might otherwise have never known.

The histories are recorded and transcribed, then paired with artifacts and photographs that illustrate the life story of the elders. LaRue Barnes, the museum's director, has been successful in locating oral histories stored in other locations. Interns have transcribed those histories and will incorporate them into "Weaving Our Strands," the Ilanka Museum's first in-house exhibit.

The project is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

SAVE 10% ONLINE

Ilanka members save 10% on all items (except books) when shopping on our online store. Email info@ilankastore.com to receive a promotional code.



Ilanka Launches Web Site, Online Store (con't from page 1)

matter for beautiful photographs shot by Chris Arend of Anchorage.

"The site is up and running. We certainly faced some initial challenges, but made our first sale right away," said NVE Executive Director Bruce Cain.

Those challenges weren't easy ones, either. Finance director Jim Gittleston contends, "The Native Village of Eyak was one of the first – if not the first – tribal entity to set up an online store. Most

online Native craft stores are sponsored by non-profits. It took many weeks of negotiations to establish a financial agreement that honored the tribe's sovereignty."

The web store features museum quality items created by Alaska Native artists from throughout the state. The site's "Featured Artist" section is reserved for members of the Ilanka Native Artists Consortium, and gives special attention to one artist each month.

ANA Funds Native Artists Consortium (con't from page 1)

purchase at a reasonable cost. The bartering program gives new and low-income artists a foot in the door by providing enough supplies to complete a project. The artist enters into an agreement to provide finished art or monetary compensation at a later date. Some items, such as sea otter pelts, are governed by federal law and are available only to Native artisans.

The Consortium, funded by a recent grant from Administration for Native Americans, also provides comprehensive marketing for artists. The ANA grant allowed Ilanka to create various printed materials and advertising media, launching a local, state, and national marketing campaign. Ilanka also produced a new web site, making Alaska Native art available year-round to the world. (see front page)

Ilanka sponsors educational programs

for artists. Earlier this year, the cultural center hosted a workshop that taught artists how to photograph their items for sales on the World Wide Web. Another class is planned this year to teach individuals how to effectively communicate our unique culture to tourists.

"To be successful, artists need to know more than just how to create their art," says museum director LaRue Barnes. "They also need to know how to communicate the unique cultural qualities of their work that make it so special."

To join the Ilanka Native Artists Consortium, fill out the application on the back of this newsletter. For more information, call the Ilanka Cultural Center at 907-424-7903.



Chris Arend

ILANKA CULTURAL CENTER



P.O. BOX 322
110 NICHOLOFF WAY
CORDOVA, ALASKA 99574

TRIBAL COUNCIL

Robert Henrichs, President
Jack Hopkins, Vice-President
Darrel Olsen, Secretary/
Treasurer
Crystal deVille, Council
Member
Patience Faulkner, Council
Member

ILANKA STAFF

Bruce Cain, Executive
Director
LaRue Barnes, Museum
Director
Mary Babic, Consortium
Director
Anna Pirtle, Directors
Assistant

MISSION

Ilanka, a gathering place to celebrate and safeguard the prehistory and historical legacy of the indigenous peoples of the Native Village of Eyak while exploring and promoting the diverse cultural present of our community.

Ilanka, to educate our people, our community and our visitors to perpetuate the traditions, skills and material culture inherent in our lives as we face the challenge of today and the future.

Traditional Arts Workshops Enhance Community

Native art is thriving at Ilanka Cultural Center. Artists, visitors, and community members have had plenty of opportunities to learn traditional skills this year through Ilanka's workshops and classes.

Mary Babic taught the art of traditional headdress sewing to a group of seven students in April. Participants chose regalia in either the Yup'ik or Aleut/Alutiiq tradition, incorporating leather, beads, and fur. Mike Webber instructed students in traditional northwest coastal designs. According to Webber, specific colors and shapes are used in certain areas of each design, and following the rules is very important if the design is to

be authentic.

Ilanka has hosted two guest instructors this year as well. Students learned ivory scrimshaw and silver smithing from guest Bob Shaw. Each participant was able to carve and finish raw ivory, then set the piece in silver.

Teri Rofkar returned to Cordova to lead foraging artists on a spruce root-gathering trip. Group members learned how to roast, peel, and split the roots in preparation for weaving. Some of the roots will be stored in Ilanka's raw materials cache. Ilanka staff members hope to bring Rofkar back this fall or winter to teach a class in spruce root weaving.

Check the Ilanka Cultural Center web site www.ilankacenter.org for times and dates of upcoming classes, or contact the center at 907-424-7903.



Anna Pirtle



Anna Pirtle



Anna Pirtle



Chris Atrend

Left: Silversmith Bob Shaw demonstrates his craft during a workshop at the Prince William Sound Community College. Center: Ivory and silver ring created by a student in Shaw's silversmithing & ivory scrimshaw class. Above: Students in Mary Babic's class made traditional Yup'ik (top) and Alutiiq (bottom) headdresses.

Did you know...

- Seal intestines were traditionally used for rain gear? Native skin sewers used a waterproof stitch on the seams that prevented water from leaking inside.
- Indigenous (wild) foods such as nettles and berries have much greater concentrations of nutrients than cultivated foods because they know how to better utilize the soil?
- Interior Alaska Natives create beautiful flower motifs by dyeing and sculpting caribou hair?

GET INVOLVED

Interested in Native art classes? Sign up for Fabulous Fridays, mini-classes offered throughout the month of July. Try your hand at skin sewing, drum making, or traditional beadwork. Call 907-424-7903 to sign up or get more information.

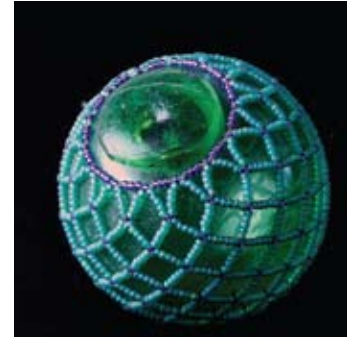
Ilanka Intern Pursues Cultural Arts Degree

Kanisha Tiedeman, a tribal member of the Native Village of Eyak and an oral history intern at Ilanka Cultural Center, has been accepted to the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Kanisha will pursue a Studio Arts degree in IAIA's Fine Arts program.

A motivated young woman, Kanisha became active in her community at an early age. She joined the Cordova Ikumat Alutiiq Dancers when she was eight years old, and still belongs to the dance group, performing at local and statewide events. In high school, she was crowned Miss Iceworm. For her pageant community service project, she created "Cultural Awareness Day," an event that celebrates indigenous heritage and tradition. This year at age 18, Kanisha bought a share in her own commercial fishing boat to fish the Copper River Flats.



Kanisha exhibits a bright enthusiasm for life that is all her own, but she credits her Native Arts teacher with steering her down the right path. Under the guidance of Mary Babic, she learned to sew, dance, appreciate the wisdom of her elders, and



Anna Pirtle

Kanisha submitted photographs of her artwork, such as this hand-carved dancer and beaded glass ball, to gain acceptance to Institute of American Indian Arts.

believe in her own abilities.

"Native Art is important to me because it is a part of who I am," Kanisha wrote in her college essays. "A dream of mine is to help Native people become proud of their heritage and surroundings. Native history, native art, and natural history ... harbor pride and identity. Every day less and less people are thinking about learning their language and heritage. I could change that. I could change some lives the way my Native Arts teacher changed mine."

Cordova gave her strong backing in her academic pursuit—she was awarded six local scholarships, including a "Most Improved Student" award. She awaits word on four more scholarships sponsored by regional Native corporations.

FEATURED ARTIST

Darlene Nichols

is Ilanka Native Artists Consortium's current featured artist. Darlene is a life-long traditional artist who learned to sew and weave by watching her aunt and mother. She creates museum quality grass baskets. Some of her current baskets feature seal gut design work and embroidered beach grass motifs. Darlene has also designed and created beautiful felted wool hats with sea otter trim, and trapper hats made from seal skin and sea otter. Order Darlene's art online at www.ilankacenter.org.

Ilanka Cultural Center Memberships

When you become a member of the Ilanka Cultural Center, you help:

- provide a repository for Native artifacts
- preserve indigenous languages
- sponsor the Cordova Ikumat Alutiiq Dancers
- promote Native artisans and cottage industry
- maintain a tribal reference library
- conduct Native art & craft classes

Yes! I would like to be a member of Ilanka Cultural Center.

Individual Memberships

- Currant Berry (Individual) \$20
- Salmon Berry (Family) \$50
- Cranberry (Supporter) \$100
- Ilanka Native Artists Consortium \$100
- Blue Berry (Patron) \$500
- Nagoon Berry (Benefactor) \$1,000

Corporate Memberships

- Watermelon Berry \$100 - \$499
- Beach Strawberry \$500 - \$999
- Moss Berry \$1000 - \$4,999
- Lingon Berry \$5,000 - \$9,999
- Huckle Berry \$10,000 and above

I am a new renewing member

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip code _____

Email address _____

Please make checks payable to Ilanka Cultural Center and remit to:
P.O. Box 322, Cordova, Alaska 99574.

