



# COMMUNITY CONNECTION



## Local Boy Scouts Complete Community Projects

By Sarah Spanos, SCF Advisor

The Seward Boys Scouts, Troop 568, currently has four Scouts who have been working on Eagle Scout projects. All four Scouts applied for individual Seward Community Foundation (SCF) mini-grants and were each awarded \$1,000 to help complete their projects. Three Scout projects were located at Caines Head State Recreation Area and one Scout project was located at both Lowell Point and Bear Lake.

When asking each Scout about their projects, this is what they said:

John Van Buskirk, "For my project, I built two 12' x 12' tent platforms with tarp frames out at Caines Head. The project took two days. One day to build each tent platform. It was a great learning experience for me and a lot of fun. Earning Eagle Scout has always been my biggest goal in Boy Scouts. It has been something that I have wanted to earn since I joined Cub Scouts in 1st grade."

Nickolas Ambrosiani, "My project is improving visitor safety at Fort McGilvray, I built a safety rail around an old fuel pit and covered holes in the bunker. The hardest part of my project was the location. Since the bunker is a little ways away, a lot of planning went into logistics and figuring out how to get the materials out to the site. Building the safety rail took a lot of thought. The posts were screwed into the concrete using a drill and concrete screws. We were able to use the Caines Head State Recreation Area's ATV to haul the material to the site. Many hours and projects in Scouting have led me to my Eagle Scout rank and will be my greatest success with Boy Scouts."

Bengimin Ambrosiani, "For my project I made two kids don't float loaner boards. The boards are at Lowell Point and Bear Lake. Both of the boards are capable of holding upwards of 20 life jackets. The loaner boards are five feet wide and about seven and a half feet tall. Scouting has given me many skills, obtaining an Eagle Scout rank will be the final confirmation of my skills and hard work."

Casey Bryden, "My project was to build a new outhouse at Caines Head on the North Beach. Throughout the project, I learned a lot about woodworking and planning a project from scratch. Throughout Boy Scouts I learned a lot of life skills; first aid, fire starting, and much more. Earning the Eagle Scout rank is a huge achievement and shows just how far I have come since the Scout rank." All four boys are moving onto the Eagle Scout board of review in preparation of attaining their Eagle Scout ranking. From all of us at SCF we wish to congratulate the Scouts for nearing their Eagle Scout rank and supporting the communities you live in!

The Seward Community Foundation is extremely happy to award mini-grants to local youth; the payout is priceless. If you would like to apply for a mini-grant to reach a personal goal that serves our community, we can help to find local nonprofit groups in the area that may partner with you! For more information, please visit [sewardcf.org](http://sewardcf.org) or email [seward@alaskacf.org](mailto:seward@alaskacf.org).

These grants were funded by the Seward Community Foundation Fund.



From left to right: John VanBuskirk, Nickolas Ambrosiani, Bengimin Ambrosiani, Casey Bryden, and Karl VanBuskirk, Scoutmaster for Troop 568.

**Visit [sewardcf.org](http://sewardcf.org)! It's your hub for grant opportunities, news, and contact information!**

## Bingosize Comes to Seward!

By Ryan Fisher, SCF Advisor

Receiving a \$1,000 mini-grant from the Seward Community Foundation, the Seward Senior Center is implementing a fun way to get seniors exercising and socializing. Bingocize incorporates the popular game of bingo with some light-duty exercises to help keep our local elderly population healthy. Dana Paperman writes, "Active volunteers lead three games, then follow with a standing at the table holding onto the chair exercises; rubber tubing exercises and soft, squishing balls to improve hand strength. The catch. Prizes, prizes, prizes. Better health. Better balance and a sense of independence through gained strength." Bingocize is scheduled to start this December 1st after the Center's volunteer has completed the online training. Bingocize will meet on Fridays from 1:15 pm to 3:00 pm in the senior center dining room. For more information visit [sewardsenior.org](http://sewardsenior.org).



Fun times at the Seward Senior Center

This grant was funded by the Seward Community Foundation Fund.

## SCF Advisor Spotlight

By Ryan Fisher, SCF Advisor



From left to right: Son Pete, husband James, Sarah, and son Connor.

Alaska is a melting pot of people from all over, and how they came to our communities and why they stayed is always an interesting conversation. Our newest SCF board advisor, Sarah Spanos, came to Seward for a two-week visit in 1987, but instead of catching her return flight, she sold the ticket (old school system) and got a job working at Seward Fish. She stayed in the cannery through college and met her husband, James. She called it a "cannery romance"! Sarah remained at Seward Fish for 16 seasons, worked for the City of Seward for 12 years, and worked eight years as the Procurement Coordinator for the Sikuliaq.

Sarah and James built their house in 1995, have two boys in their early 20s, and have become integral to our community fabric. Sarah has served our community on Little League, PTA, Seward Providence Board, Site Council, and now the SCF. She also put in her time traveling to many

sporting events for her boys and as she says, "put more miles on our vehicles traveling to sporting events than Bob driving for the Seward Bus Line."

She became even more interested in philanthropy work, and after mentioning her desire on Facebook, she was contacted by a Board Advisor to join the SCF. "SCF is by far the most rewarding board I have been involved in," Sarah said. "To be able to financially partner with organizations in the community to enhance the lives of Seward and Moose Pass residents, that is what making a difference is all about." The board is lucky to have someone as experienced in the nonprofit world as Sarah and a long-term Sewardite who is interwoven into our community. We agree with Sarah when she says, "volunteering my time is time very well spent." Welcome to the team, Sarah!

## Seward Business Partners

Our local business partners, who primarily collect donations from summer tourists, have been instrumental in supporting our cause. Their dedication to Seward Community Foundation has resulted in an astounding contribution of over \$24,000 to our Operating Endowment since the pilot program began during the summer of 2021. Thank you, Business Partners! If you have an interest in becoming a partner, email Ginger Allen, BPP Lead, at [seward@alaskacf.org](mailto:seward@alaskacf.org).

## SCF Let's Get Social Events



For a fun way to connect with the community and nonprofits, SCF began hosting social events at the Gateway Hotel. The events are meant to be a no-agenda, casual get together for pure, genuine connection. These events are a great way to feel the pulse of our

community and meet some amazing people or hang out with old friends. Stoney Creek Brewhouse always has tasty beverages to purchase! This is a family-friendly venue, so bring your kids! We hope you'll join us next time. Follow us on Facebook to learn when the next event is happening.

Pictured from left to right: Marc Swanson and Mark Kansteiner, SCF Advisors and truly great folks to hang out with.



ADVENTURE SIXTY NORTH

## Coffee Sleeves Launch on GivingTuesday

By Amy Hankins, Program Manager

On GivingTuesday, which fell on November 28th, SCF joined forces with five local coffee shops to host an engaging social media event aimed at raising awareness about the incredible nonprofits in our area. SCF Advisors and staff popped up at participating coffee houses and purchased up to \$100 in coffee at each location. This gave SCF the chance to chat and mingle with our donors, community, and nonprofit employees and volunteers. Customers were treated to a steaming, to-go beverage and were encouraged to snap a selfie and share it on social media with the hashtag #SCFsp4Seward. They were also asked to comment on their favorite local nonprofit. The response was truly awesome!

From all the wonderful posts, SCF randomly selected four participants and had the privilege of awarding a \$250 grant to each of their chosen nonprofits. We're thrilled to share that Seward Area Hospice and Moose Pass Library each received one grant, while the Seward Seahawks Booster Club was doubly lucky and received two grants!

Additionally, we want to give a big shoutout to the talented artists who graciously contributed their artwork for our coffee sleeves. Sarah Glaser, Marissa Amor, J. Leslie, and Susan Swidirski's art graced these sleeves, making each one a beautiful work of art in itself. Next time you're in town, visit Resurrect Art Coffee House, Ranting Raven, Zudy's, The Cup, or Frontier Trading Post for a hot beverage and admire Seward's new mini murals!

"I donated the use of this artwork to the Seward Community Foundation because I wanted to support all the great ways that SCF helps our community. From supporting the arts to education, and youth sports, the SCF plays a critical role in our small towns," wrote J. Leslie.

Susan Swidirski shared, "I love the strong sense of community that I feel living year-round in Seward, and I thought this seemed like a fun way to share creatively with people and bring more joy to our day-to-day lives." The sleeves sure do bring joy!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who participated and congratulations to the grant winners. A special shoutout goes to the talented artists, the coffee houses, and the nonprofits that continue to enrich our community. Your collective efforts truly make our community thrive!



## RBCA Helping Bears Stay Alive

By Sarah Spanos, SCF Advisor



The Defenders of Wildlife and the Seward Community Foundation (SCF) are two funding partners for Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance (RBCA). Currently, RBCA is sold out of bear cans for 2023, but watch for more info on bear-resistant cans in 2024.

Many Seward and Moose Pass residents might not know that RBCA also has information on a Bear-Resistant Electric Fence Rebate. If you have been thinking of putting up an electric fence for securing bear attractants, such as garbage, fruit trees, gardens, livestock, etc., you might qualify for a rebate of up to \$500 for supplies for your electric fence. Defenders of Wildlife will review applications and, if you are eligible, Defenders of Wildlife will reimburse 50% of the cost of your electric fence, up to \$500.

If this sounds enticing, go to the RBCA website at [rbca-alaska.org](http://rbca-alaska.org) and click "Living with Bears" for details. The website also has many links to other agencies that provide additional rebates. Living with bears is definitely a way of life in our neck of the woods; finding ways to coexist is critical for all Alaskans. SCF connects people who care with causes that matter. We are proud to partner with RBCA and thank them for their continued work in helping us live safely with bears.

## Imagine a Day When...

Imagine a day when every cause is funded, when every ask is granted, and when every organization serving Seward and Moose Pass is well-supported. Imagine a day when area residents have improved health and wellness, enhanced economic prosperity with better employment opportunities, increased community engagement, social bonds, and access to quality education and skill development. Imagine a day when we see a flourishing cultural and recreational scene, improved safety and lower crime rates, greater environmental consciousness and sustainability, and equitable access to essential services. Creating a vibrant and interconnected community where residents lead healthier, more fulfilling lives is a path worth pursuing! Your year-end gift can make a profound difference in our ability to say "yes" to every eligible funding request.



## Major Grant Cycle Dates to Remember

**January 5th**  
Annual Nonprofit Luncheon

**January 8th**  
Major grant cycle opens

**Feb 2nd at 5 PM AKST**  
Major grant cycle closes

**April 12th**  
Grant Award Event

## GROWING ENDOWMENTS, EXPANDING IMPACT



Current Fund Balance: \$3,648,452  
Total Contributions: \$3,536,482  
Total Grants Awarded: \$1,352,062

# Big Beach Bicycle Cooperative

By Marc Swanson, SCF Advisor



Brenan Hornseth and Tamara Filipovic

Sometimes, a personal passion can end up being a community service. Such is the story of Brenan Hornseth and Tamara Filipovic. During their time in Washington, D.C., they fashioned a lifestyle that relied on bicycles for transportation. Both worked remotely and were anxious to get out of the big city. Seven years ago, that's what brought them to Alaska. But it was our town's potential to lead a bike-centric life that led them to Seward.

During their time in Alaska, they learned how other towns, such as Sitka and Anchorage, have established bicycle cooperatives and advocacy groups. They realized that Seward had the potential to do so, also. Drawing from other bicycle cooperatives, Tamara and Brenan envisioned a service that would provide a venue for folks to learn to repair their bikes and discarded bicycles. This idea came to them around the time they attended SCF's Annual Nonprofit Luncheon at the Alaska SeaLife Center, which is held each January. This event is designed to help area nonprofits interface, discuss challenges, and brainstorm how SCF can help with funding and training solutions.

From this initial contact with various SCF board members, Brenan and Tamara realized the benefit of a pop-up event aligned with recurring local events. This vision would negate the necessity for a permanent venue. Sustainable Seward became their nonprofit fiscal sponsor, and the summertime Farmers' Market would be their venue.

They applied for an SCF mini-grant, including bicycle tools, parts, and a work stand, but were denied funding. The board was excited with the premise of the pop-up clinics but had concerns about competition with the local bike shop and the need for sustainability through diverse funding sources, among other things. Working with SCF, Tamara and Brenan developed an action plan that included working with the Bike Shop and developing a more diverse funding strategy. Brenan and Tamara found a path forward with SCF assistance, and a \$1,000 mini-grant was awarded.

Last summer, a number of pop-up clinics were held during the Farmer's Market and at Safeway, and will continue next year as well. Working with The Bike Shop's owner, Karl Mechtenberg, they will also offer refurbished bicycles but only to employees of area organizations (the Bike Shop provides an 'adopt a Bike' program to others.) Also on the future docket are group rides and other events to connect local bicycle riders and micro-mobility enthusiasts.

Looking down the road, they hope that Seward will become a certified "Bike-friendly City" (see [bikeleague.org/bfa/](http://bikeleague.org/bfa/) for more information) that will reduce the need for more motor vehicle parking lots. When asked how biking translates to their personal life here in Seward, the response was..." Well, we filled up the car once last summer."

Good Job, Brenan and Tamara! We look forward to seeing how your passion helps other bike enthusiasts in Seward. This grant was funded by the Seward Community Foundation Fund.

## Pick.Click.Give.

We extend our gratitude to this year's Pick.Click.Give. donors! Your generous contributions have bolstered SCF's operating endowment by \$4,987, ensuring the sustainability of our operations. Your gifts will have an impact by providing support to area nonprofits. Together, we uplift, support, eliminate barriers, champion social justice, and create opportunities for a brighter future. Thank you!

Find us on 

SCF's Facebook page is a vibrant hub of good news! Discover the latest updates, get the scoop on upcoming events and nonprofit fundraisers, celebrate heartwarming success stories, and find out about grant opportunities. Don't miss out!



Seward's youngest riders enjoy the pop-up bike clinics! From left to right: Sierra Roland, Eleanor Roland, Neely Shepard, Katie Shepard

## Mini-grants Available Monthly

Up to \$1,000, Apply Now!



Mini-grants of up to \$1,000 are a flexible funding opportunity that may support a broad range of community needs throughout the year. Mini-grant applications are evaluated monthly. Submit your application by the 5th of the month and it will be reviewed on the third Wednesday of the month. Reach out to the foundation's Program Manager or an SCF Advisor with your questions. We are happy to help and support you! Contact information can be found at [sewardcf.org/members](http://sewardcf.org/members).

“ **INDIVIDUALLY, WE ARE ONE DROP. TOGETHER, WE ARE AN OCEAN.** ”

- RYUNOSUKE SATORO

# Exciting News for Seward's Youth

By Sarah Spanos, SCF Advisor



Seward Children's Museum pop-ups engage young minds.

HYPER - Happy Youth Programs & Educational Resources - is a volunteer board dedicated to providing care, education, and engagement opportunities for Seward-area kids, ages 0 to 5, and their families.

The Seward Children's Museum, "Little Seward," is an ongoing HYPER project that started in 2021. Their mission is to build a space where kids feel the awe and wonder that inspires them to explore, discover, and create. Since the museum's inception, HYPER has made five pop-up exhibits, including one where they partnered with the National Science Foundation; Search of Earth's Secret. Other pop-ups included Gateway to Alaska, Hygge in Nature, Help the Kelp, and Ron's Construction Site. Many of the pop-ups occurred this summer at the Seward Farmer's Market. The permanent museum is slated to open in 2025 at Temple Studios.

Seward is not the first in the state to have a children's museum; Fairbanks has a permanent location, and Anchorage is in the process of having pop-up exhibits. All three sites aim to have an Alaskan children's museum group to interface and share information and exhibits.

"Little Seward" will have everyday places like a post office, garden, construction zone, a Mt. Marathon Climbing area, and a Ranger Station. You might even see Brown and Hawkins and Res Art. But wait, there's more! A room will be dedicated to kids 8-12 with a rock wall, Lego pit, art station, STEM activities, educational games, and books. With the Teen and Youth Center catering to teens 13 years old and up, something will be available for all of the kids in Seward.

The Seward Community Foundation (SCF) is thrilled to contribute to HYPER and the Children's Museum. Their mission aligns with SCF in improving education, arts and culture, and youth and community development. If you want to learn more about HYPER, please visit their website at [hyperseward.org](http://hyperseward.org). Hyper is always looking for partners to make their projects a reality. Support is needed through volunteers, monetary donations, and help to advocate for their mission. Please contact Rhonda Bohart, Program Developer for the Seward Children's Museum, at [rhonda@spcalaska.org](mailto:rhonda@spcalaska.org) for more information.



Are you new to the grant writing world? This article is for you!

## Getting to the YES!

By Marc Swanson, SCF Advisor

Are you a new grant writer or a organization looking for financial support? Every year, Seward Community Foundation funds several major grants and many smaller mini-grants, totaling \$124,574 in 2023. Due to the generosity of our donors establishing a sizeable endowment, a large percentage of proposals receive at least partial funding. Within the constraints of funding capabilities, SCF's goal is to support as many viable requests as possible. But, a solid proposal is still required for success.

However, few organizations have a professional grant writer. So, how does SCF work with organizations to "Get to the Yes?" First, the requesting organization needs to be a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. For organizations that do not have this 501(c)(3) charitable status, SCF can offer suggestions of organizations with the status who may be willing to partner if proposed activities or programs align with their mission.

Strong proposals have multiple support sources and, as appropriate, show a plan toward sustainability. The SCF grant team will remind requesting organizations that 'in-kind' support can go a long way to show funding diversity and sustainability. In-kind support can come through volunteer hours and already acquired, donated, or borrowed materials/equipment.

Strong proposals will describe specifically how funds will be used and the ultimate goal—what will be the end product and in what way will it positively affect the community. It's not uncommon for proposals to stray beyond the project parameters. In cases like this, SCF will work with the organization to refine the proposal to match desired outcomes. More parameters are essential for a strong proposal. However, the intent is clear: SCF does not want to be a gatekeeper to funding but rather a bridge to help organizations implement solid projects that benefit the local area.

Download the grant guidelines at [sewardcf.org/grants](http://sewardcf.org/grants) for detailed information. We're here to help and offer guidance, so don't hesitate to contact any board advisor or SCF's Program Manager.

# Pick.Click.Give.

JOIN US IN CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

*Happy New Year*

PFD APPLICATIONS OPEN JANUARY 1ST!

# \$124,574 AWARDED to 25 Organizations to Fund 39 Programs!

Our community, area nonprofit staff and volunteers alongside the SCF's generous donors are working together to create a more vibrant community for those who live in Seward and Moose Pass. Thank you, everyone, for your commitment to humanity and our beautiful corner of the world! We're in it together, and it shows! From all of us at SCF, thank you. We are honored to work with you to support the important services you provide!

## 2023 Mini-Grants

Seward Middle School Support for SMS Foods Class	\$1,000
Chugachmiut Seward Community Health and Wellness Fair	\$500
Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance Invasive Weed Removal	\$306
Seward Arts Council Seward Nature Journaling Community Workshop	\$988
Moose Pass School Cross-country Ski Boot	\$500
Seward Senior Center - Emergency Food Distribution	\$900
Seward Senior Center - Meals on Wheels	\$360
Seward Community Library Association Preservation of the Seward Phoenix Log newspapers, 1960-2017	\$1,000
Seward Community Library Association StarLab Planetarium & Solar Eclipse Community Activity Event	\$1,000
Boy Scout Troop 568 - Caines Head Tent Platforms	\$1,000
Boy Scout Troop 568 - Improving Visitor safety at Fort McGilvery	\$1,000
Seward Community Band Community band rental, conductor, and banner costs.	\$1,000
Boy Scout Troop 568 - Kids Don't Float Loaner Boards	\$1,000
Boy Scout Troop 568 Caines Head State Recreation Site Outhouse	\$1,000
Big Beach Bike Cooperative Popup Bike Workshops and Group Rides	\$1,000
Seward Senior Center - BINGOCIZE Fun and Exercise	\$850
Seward Arts Council Pieces of Hope" Partnership Mural 2023 with SeaView Community Services	\$1,000
Seward Community Health Center Full Spectrum Lights for Staff & Patients	\$1,000
Alaska SeaLife Center - 2023 Community Holiday Party	\$1,000
Seward PTA Seward National Ocean Science Bowl Team Research Charter	\$1,000
Sprouts Preschool - Ice Cleats	\$480
Seward Seahawks Athletic Booster Club SHS Cross-country Ski Team Equipment	\$1,000

## 2023 Major Grants

Seward Rotary Club Rotary Park Fish and Wildlife Viewing Area Project	\$2,000
Seward Community Health Center Professional Development for Healthcare Staff	\$1,390
Seward Nordic Ski Club Ginzugroomer Replacement	\$7,325
SeaView Community Services Removing Barriers to Behavioral Health Services for the Underinsured	\$10,000
Seward PTA - Kids to Slopes 2024	\$5,000
Seward Seahawks Athletic Booster Club and Seward PTA Help Purchase a Sports Travel Van	\$10,000
Independent Living Center TRAILS support FY24	\$4,000
Marathon Wrestling Club Team Travel Support	\$5,702
Safe Harbor DVSA Transitional Housing Program	\$10,000
Seward Sprouts Preschool Support Teacher Salaries	\$5,500
Seward Sports Association New 4-wheeler & Field Dragger	\$5,245
Cooper Landing Emergency Services Inc. 2023 Water Rescue Equipment Upgrade Project	\$4,500
Seward Arts Council - Seward Artists in Schools	\$4,550
Alaska SeaLife Center Collaboration with Chugiachmiut to incorporate Native language into ASLC exhibits.	\$10,000
Seward Prevention Coalition Wellness for All Meditation Program	\$6,065
Kenai Mountains -Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor Passenger Van to Expanding Heritage Area Learning	\$8,000
Seward Little League Senior League Charter and Equipment Purchase	\$4,250





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### Planning for Your Legacy

A planned gift allows you to make a meaningful difference in your community. Planned giving can support your future needs and allow you to create a legacy for the future of your community. To learn more, please contact a SCF Advisor.

### Legacy Donors of the Seward Community Foundation



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Amy Hankins	Mark Beals and DeAnna Hill	Mark Kansteiner

### We All Have that Friend

*Honoring Lives, Inspiring Change*

Do you want to give a gift to someone special but you are stumped about what to give them? Consider a financial gift to Seward Community Foundation in their name. You'll both be recognized on our website, and you'll feel good knowing that your gift will help provide more grants to the Seward area, forever.



If you are in crisis call  
Seward's Safe Harbor  
24/7 DVSA Crisis  
Line at 907-362-1843.

# Seward Community Foundation

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Connecting People Who Care  
With Causes That Matter

## CLES Rescues 20 Individuals

By Marc Swanson, SCF Advisor



Cooper Landing Emergency Services (CLES) was a 2023 recipient of a \$4,500 major grant award. These funds were used to provide swift water rescue gear. Swift water gear (dry suits, helmets, gloves, etc) provides rescuers the protection needed when responding to a water-related emergency. It helps accomplish the mission while keeping responders confident and safe. It's always nice to know how funds provided do affect people's lives.

This story was related by Clay Adams, Deputy Chief EMS with CLES: The tones came in a bit after 11 at night on June 17. A driftboat was in trouble. It was taking on water and ultimately capsized, sending the six occupants into the water. CLES was dispatched to Mile 57 of the Sterling Highway, a section of the Kenai River known as the Whirl Pool. This portion of the river was particularly treacherous since it divided into a series of sweeper-laced tributaries immediately down the river. The situation was further complicated by the late hour; few boats that could assist were on the river. In the end, all parties survived. CLES was able to coordinate with other fishermen on the river who were able to assist in bringing survivors to the boat launch where CLES was staged, treating the rescued boaters for mild hypothermia. Although CLES did not have to enter the water in this rescue, the swift water gear allowed them to respond quickly and confidently, knowing that they could initiate a response with a degree of safety.

CLES responded to 12 water rescues this summer, culminating in the rescue of over 20 individuals. The Seward Community Foundation would like to thank CLES for responding to motor vehicle accidents and water rescues. CLES is part of the Eastern Kenai Peninsula Highway Emergency Service Area. It works closely with Moose Pass and Bear Creek Fire to keep citizens and visitors on the Eastern Kenai Peninsula safe.

