ALASKA SOLES

KICKOFF MEETING

MARCH 11, 2020

REI meeting room, Anchorage

Kathy, Kirstie and Loren arrived at REI early to set up. Kathy brought merchandise to sell and Broad’s pamphlets and set up a table. Carafes of hot water and hot coffee and a water dispenser were also put out along with mugs and tea bags. Snacks were limited to store bought prewrapped cookies and bars because of the Covid 19 concerns. Loren set up the powerpoint projector and worked with REI’s Martin to get it focused and ready. Thank you Martin! Kirstie set up for the group activity, using large paper pads and easels. Posters about Broads and Alaska Soles were put up. Kathy put up a sign advertising that this was a no handshake area, just smile! Name Tags were put out to be filled out and used. Door prize tickets were given to each person signing in.

People starting arriving before 6. We had been warned that it could be a small turnout because of the virus concerns. As people signed in on one of two sheets, Kathy or Loren greeted them and introduced themselves. We asked how they heard about the meeting; some heard through the REI website activity listing, some through the emails sent out or word of mouth, a few from fliers hung around Anchorage and the Mat Su Valley or personal interaction with one of us. Everyone sat in a semi circle with the chairs set a small distance apart. We started by introducing ourselves and thanking REI (introducing Martin) and the Alaska Rock Gym for their assistance. We then showed and narrated the powerpoint presentation adapted from the Great Old Broads 30th Anniversary presentation. Thank you Katya for putting in our personal photos. The upcoming Alaska Soles fundraiser presentation of the women made movie “Pretty Strong”, showing April 23 at the Beartooth Theatre-pub, was described, and we again thanked REI and the Alaska Rock Gym for sponsoring us in this. We also brought up the Great Old Broads website and explained about joining as a national member, and that a portion of the membership went to the Alaska Soles Broadband.

Loren and Kathy answered a few questions and then Kirstie asked the group to introduce themselves and mention a couple of things that describe what their passions are or what made them interested in this group. There were 12 people present in addition to the 3 Alaska Soles presenters. The introductions were lively and interesting, and Kirstie wrote down the key words that each person gave her. (see photo). The various keywords and activities listed included:

 Compassion

 Persistence

 Community Development

 Political Protection

 Stewardship

 Invasive Plants

 Micro Environments

 Advocacy

 Doesn’t want to be Helpless

 Explore Outdoors with Others

 Respectful/Safe trails

 Preservation

 Reusing/repurposing/recycling (RRR)

 Preserving for the next generation

 Education

 Community

 Organizer

 Commitment to the Environment

 Respectful Dialogue/Communication

 Draw People Together

 Honor People’s work

 Litter Pick-Up

 Social Connection/interaction

Long time environmental activist Peg Tiliston introduced herself, saying she was 88 years old. She mentioned her work on the boards of the former Center for the Environment (now the Alaska Center), Alaska Common Ground and Trustees for Alaska. She also mentioned that she put out a regular weekly email “What’s Up”, going to 2,500 addresses, listing all activities, events and deadlines on environmental and land use issues. Anyone wanting to be added to this email list can email Peg; we agreed to put a link on our next Alaska Soles email.

We then had a short discussion on how to attract a diverse membership, a subject brought up by an attendee.

Suggested Native Alaskan Organizations to work with:

 Native Movement

 Health Aide Programs

 Alaska Native Health Consortium

 South Central Foundation

 (also their Native Plant Symposium)

It was also suggested that we work with Alaska-Outdoors.org and perhaps advertise our group on hiking and outdoor Facebook pages. Some of that had been done.

Time was up before we got to advocacy issues themselves. A ticket for the door prize of an Alaska Soles headband was drawn and awarded. We thanked everyone for coming, mentioned that the next meeting was scheduled for April 21 at REI again, with a May meeting to be held in Palmer. We also reiterated that the movie “Pretty Strong” would be shown as an Alaska Soles fundraiser on April 23 at the Beartooth Theatre-pub. After clean up, Kathy, Kirstie and Loren retired to the Spenard Roadhouse for dinner and debriefing. Loren agreed to send out an email thanking everyone for coming, giving a link to the What’s Up email, and mentioning the upcoming April meeting and April fundraiser.