

Historic Brown's Lodge
reopens to accommodate
NSSP processors

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memorable trip to Little
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from Brevig Mission

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staff members Banner
Romenesko & Scott Kent

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NSEDC news

NSEDC Mission Statement

"NSEDC will participate in the Bering Sea fisheries to provide economic development through education, employment, training and financial assistance to our member communities."

NSEDC Board Members & Member Communities

Lillian Olanna • *Brevig Mission*
Frances Ozenna • *Diomedé*
Oscar Takak, Sr. • *Elim*
Joel James • *Gambell*
Dean Peterson • *Golovin*
Leo Charles • *Koyuk*
Pat Johanson • *Nome*
Truman Kava • *Savoonga*
Milton Cheemuk • *St. Michael*
Harvey Sookiayak • *Shaktoolik*
Daphne Katcheak • *Stebbins*
Joe Garnie • *Teller*
Frank Katchatag • *Unalakleet*
Sean Komonaseak Jr. • *Wales*
Dan Harrelson • *White Mountain*



Frances Muktoyuk christens the *King Island* with help from Vessel Manager Karl Erickson. Caroline Muktoyuk-Brown looks on.

NSEDC's newest vessel, *T/V King Island*, joins fleet to tender Norton Sound crab and salmon

UNALAKLEET - Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation's (NSEDC) newest tender vessel, the *King Island*, arrived in Norton Sound waters Saturday, June 18, 2016 after a seven-day voyage from Homer, where it was built by Alaska company Bay Weld Boats. The vessel is already at work, tendering Norton Sound red king crab

from buying stations and the crabbing grounds to the Norton Sound Seafood Products (NSSP) Northern Processing Plant in Nome. Once the summer commercial crab fishery is complete, the *T/V King Island* will transition to tendering Norton Sound salmon.

The new vessel accommodates four crewmembers. All crewmembers

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are from the Norton Sound region with Saul Paniptchuk from Shaktoolik as captain. The vessel includes a complete kitchen, bathroom with a shower, and laundry facilities.

The *T/V King Island* was christened at a celebration in Homer on June 9, 2016. Frances Muktoyuk, with help from NSEDC's Vessel Manager Karl Erickson, christened the *King Island*. Caroline Muktoyuk-Brown read a blessing then sprinkled the vessel with holy water. Following the christening, the King Island Drummers and Dancers performed.

"It was a beautiful thing to see the community of King Island celebrated at the christening in Homer," NSEDC Board Chairman Oscar Takak said. "The island, for these Norton Sound residents, remains an incredibly important place, and I am deeply honored one of our vessels bears the name of such a strong and vibrant community."

King Island Tribal Council Member Benjamin Payenna expressed his gratitude to NSEDC for choosing to name the 50-foot vessel af-



Captain Saul Paniptchuk at the helm of NSEDC's newest vessel, the *T/V King Island*.

ter the island he regularly visits.

"While our community now resides in Nome, we have worked hard to maintain our identity and values. It's something I'm very proud of," Benjamin said. "Our lifestyle remains strong, thanks to the strength of those who lived on King Island. It's great to see the

vessel bearing the name of a place of importance now working in the region."

The *T/V King Island* can travel at 9 knots loaded and 12 knots unloaded, powered by two 425 John Deere engines. The vessel is capable of holding 55,000 pounds of salmon and 27,000 pounds of Norton Sound red king crab.

Benjamin Payenna performs a portion of the Wolf Dance during the christening celebration for the *T/V King Island* in Homer.



Historic Brown's Lodge reopens to support processors

Founders' granddaughter, Heather Jones, committed to continuing legacy



Heather Jones stands in her grandmother's kitchen at the Brown's Lodge.

UNALAKLEET—Heather Jones grew up at the Brown's Lodge in Unalakleet. Every summer her grandparents, Leonard and Mary Brown, purchased a ticket for her to spend her vacation in Unalakleet. "This is home," she said. "This building is home. I grew up here, and my warmest memories are here."

Now married with four children and living in Wasilla, Heather finds herself purchasing tickets every year for her and her family to spend their summers in Unalakleet. This year was different. Her grandma Mary passed away last fall and Heather did not want her "Gram's" legacy to go with her passing. This spring, after a lot of thought, she and her husband, Jeff, decided to roll up their sleeves, clean the two-story log building and bring life back to the once bustling kitchen and rooms.

Heather and Jeff heard about Norton

Sound Seafood Product's (NSSP) lodging program and realized the Brown's Lodge would be the perfect place for processors hired from outside of Unalakleet to receive a cozy room and meals.

"It was horrible to see this building just sitting here and not getting used," Heather said of her desire to revive the Brown's Lodge. "There's just so many great memories here. I buried a baby bird on the west side of the building. I remember playing tag on these logs out here and running up and down these stairs. It's in my memory. This building is a part of my life, and to see it kind of fading away, it hurts."

Heather said her Gram had been talking to her about opening the lodge the past few years. They both knew they weren't the only ones with memories of the place. Most people in Unalakleet have stories of eating at the restaurant. Iditarod mushers from the early years remember the Brown's Lodge serving as the Iditarod Checkpoint.

"That's one of my favorite things about opening this building back up," Heather

said. "A lot of stories have come forward and a lot of people have been coming in and sharing what happened here." Heather says these stories are the reason she's doing the hard work of opening the lodge again. "I want people to come in and make new memories."

The Historic Building

Leonard and Mary Brown traveled down the Yukon River in 1966 and eventually settled in Leonard's hometown of Unalakleet. That year they started cooking burgers out of their kitchen for the crew putting in power lines for the Matanuska Electric Cooperative. The business grew, and Leonard and Mary built the Brown's Lodge that was completed in 1974.

"The logs were picked up in Naknek when Grandpa was fishing there," Heather said. "He was at the docks and

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Heather's son and their dog, Wilson, play outside the Brown's Lodge.



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saw the logs piled and asked what they were for. A Nelboro manager told him they were supposed to be for a proposed Nelboro dock, but the proposal was declined due to land issues.” Leonard then purchased the 117 Canadian Douglas Fir logs and managed to get them delivered to Unalakleet on the Northstar barge. He later purchased 58 more logs to complete the building.

From serving burgers in 1966 to managing a restaurant and a thirteen-room lodge in 1974, the Browns were in operation until the mid ‘90s. For ten years after Leonard and Mary’s retirement, Heather’s mother, Leona, took over operations. Starting in 2005, the entire building was simply rented to summer construction crews. Heather has envisioned more than that for the space so important to her, and she and her husband are working hard to

make that happen. During her hard work, distinct memories come to her that make the hard work more fun.

“Grandma and Ray had a very specific way of cleaning,” Heather said with laughter. Ray Caudill was a long-time cook and assistant, and also passed away this past winter. “Everything had to be done perfectly, and I thought they were crazy at the time they were teaching me. Everything was done to perfection, so with little things like making the beds, Gram’s memory is popping up.”

Brown’s Lodge opens opportunity for employment

The Jones are planning on providing room and board for up to 19 seafood processors employed at the southern NSSP Processing Plant. NSSP has a housing program for

those seeking seasonal employment who come from communities outside of Nome and Unalakleet, where the processing plants are located.

“We really wanted a way for residents from any of our 15 member communities to seek employment at our processing plants,” NSSP Operations Manager Middy Johnson said. “Those who provide room and board for seafood processors receive a stipend, and we are so thankful for our partnership with people like Heather and Jeff. Nineteen more residents will have the opportunity to work this summer thanks to their investment into Brown’s Lodge.”

The Brown’s Lodge’s first guests showed up June 21st and immediately began working at the processing plant in Unalakleet. Heather fed them a meal of spaghetti. She imagines she will be working from 6 a.m. to midnight until the commercial fishing season ends in August.

Heather and Jeff Jones and their family sit at one of the booths in the Brown’s Lodge Restaurant.



Applying for scholarships? Find MyCACHE.



Nathaniel Appoloni (Left) and Matthew Appoloni (Right) were the first to be awarded scholarships after submitting online MyCACHE applications.

Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC), Bering Straits Foundation (BSF), Kawerak, Inc., Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC) and Sitnasuak Foundation (SF) joined together to bring their all-in-one scholarship application online for regional residents. The CACHE application has always been a way to apply for multiple scholarships offered by the regional organizations, and MyCACHE now allows the application to be filled out and submitted online.

Brothers Nathaniel and Matthew Appoloni were the very first to be awarded NSEDC scholarships after submitting online MyCACHE applications. Nathaniel is a sophomore at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, studying Computer Science. Matthew is a sophomore at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, studying Foreign Languages.

When applying for scholarships, applicants create secure accounts to store their information, making renewal and future applications a quick and easy process. Recognizing that access to the internet can still be a challenge in NSEDC's member communities, NSEDC will still offer and accept scholarship applications in paper format.

Congratulations, graduates!

NSEDC congratulates all of the 2016 Norton Sound region high school graduates. In the spring of 2016, NSEDC awarded a total 54 scholarships to graduating seniors.

NSEDC offers scholarships to Norton Sound residents enrolled at an accredited college, university, or vocational school. The current award amount for full-time higher education and vocational training students is \$2,500 per semester or session.

The deadline for submitting transcripts for pending MyCACHE or NSEDC scholarships applications is August 31. The **online MyCACHE scholarships application** can be found at **my-cache.org**. The **NSEDC scholarship application** can be found on our website at **nsedc.com**, at NSEDC offices, or from NSEDC liaisons.

If you have any questions about the NSEDC or MyCACHE scholarship guidelines, please call **NSEDC EET Director Jesse Blandford at (888) 650-2477, (907) 443-2477** or email at **jesse@nsedc.com**.

NSEDC staff visits member community Little Diomed

Staff hosts barbeque, informational meeting; enjoys hiking and drumming and dancing



Sistug Ozenna and former NSEDC Board Member Mary Menadalook

“Welcome to my society,” were the first words heard after the eight from Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) jumped onto the landing pad from the helicopter. Sistug Ozenna has lived in Little Diomed her entire life and serves on the NSEDC Board of Directors, representing those in her community. The warm welcome and a handshake from Sistug and those who greeted the mainland crew upon their arrival set the tone for the entire trip.

The trip to Little Diomed took place June 23, 2016 to host a barbeque and an informational meeting on NSEDC’s programs and services. It had been a few years since NSEDC staff visited the island 25 miles from mainland Alaska. Without a landing strip, Little Diomed is the most difficult community to travel to and from in the United States.

“The last time we had a landing strip on the sea ice was three years ago, for two weeks,” Sistug said. “The ice doesn’t get thick enough to build an airstrip, and the City of Diomed doesn’t have the equipment to maintain an ice runway.” The community has relied solely on helicopter service since then.

Yet the residents’ lack of access to the mainland does not dare equate to a lack of richness.

“We have everything,” Diomed IRA President Robert Soolook said. During a hike to the northern side of the island, Robert and Sistug spoke of all the greens, berries, wild potatoes, birds, eggs and animals that are available and

plentiful on the island.

“If you go up there (pointing up a steep cliff), you can pick six gallons of potatoes,” Sistug said. “I hike up there. It’s easy.” As we walked further toward a place called Nunam Izzua, or Land Ends, Sistug pointed down a steep slope where white flowers covered the soil all the way down to the rocks. “Down there you can pick gallons of cabbage - big bouquets of cabbage, like you’re getting married.”

**“We have everything.”
-Robert Soolook**

And it’s beautiful. Tall spires of granite tower above with gulls, puffins and auklets flying all around. Hiking along a foot-wide path, the next sight around a boulder reveals more spires and greens. The ground gets wetter and it’s as if each turn features its own climate and ecosystem. Diomeders like Sistug know that well. With the surrounding beauty and an ever-present reminder how

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Boys climb the rocks on the west face of Little Diomed island. Auklets fly above.



NSEDC Supports Communities



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close Diomedes is to the neighboring country of Russia, a hiker has to be mindful and careful. In some spots along the path, one slip or temporary loss of balance would mean falling straight down the cliff to rocks below. But hiking the path directly gives life with the gathering of plants like Inuqik (beach cabbage), Qunguliq (sour greens) Utqik (Diomedes Eskimo Potato), and Azaiq (Pink Plume plant).

“My favorite thing is to hike out here with a meal and sit before I pick greens,” Sistuq said. “This place is healing.” And it seems that way.

At one stop, Sistuq pointed and said there was a natural water spout near the top. She showed with her hands what the spout looked like and laughed. “Sometimes I go up there just to look at it and smile,” she said.

Little Diomedes is located 25 miles west of mainland Alaska and 2.5 miles to the east of the Russian island of Big Diomedes. Fewer than 100 people make the island their home.

Left: Sistuq Ozenna and NSEDC Chief Operations Officer Tyler Rhodes hike along the rocks on Little Diomedes Island.

Below: The frame of an umiak sits south of the Diomedes School where residents and NSEDC staff enjoyed a barbeque.



Norton Sound Student Highlight

Meet Mary Crockett



Mary Crockett loves her hometown of Brevig Mission. In fact, the 19-year-old University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) student has firm plans to return to the Norton Sound region with the tools to contribute in a meaningful way. A senior, Mary is earning a double major in Secondary

Education and English. Once her degrees are complete, she will return to the Norton Sound region to teach high school English while earning a master's degree in School Counseling.

"There is a wonderful sense of community in the region," Mary said of wanting to return to the Norton Sound. "I come back to Brevig and I have 400 people who are in my family. Every time I come home, I feel like I'm coming home to everybody."

In speaking of her time at UAF, Mary says college has been a great place for her, not solely for institutional education, but as an adjustment to adult life. "It's been a great place," she said. "My housing is paid for. My food is paid for. I'm learning how to manage my own money and become more independent. It's been a great environment for that."

Currently, Mary is working for

NSEDC's Norton Sound Fisheries Research and Development (NSFR&D) department as a fisheries technician, counting salmon at the Pilgrim River Counting Tower. She appreciates the defined purpose in the summer position.

"I am not only supporting myself through school, but I am contributing to the region and the subsistence lifestyle that is really valued and important," she said.

And her work as a fisheries technician is highly valued. "Mary is a complete joy to work with," NSEDC Fisheries Biologist Ashley Dunker said. "This is her second season, and we rely on returning technicians like Mary who know the process and program and keep our projects running smoothly."

Mary is also a recipient of the \$2,500 per semester NSEDC scholarship.

Mary Crockett counts salmon at the Snake River Weir.



Banner Romenesko - NSEDC's Safety Manager



Nome-grown Banner Romenesko was recently hired as NSEDC's Safety Manager and will work from the corporate office in Anchorage.

"Born and raised in the region, I have seen the impacts NSEDC has had on the communities and residents," Banner said. "I look forward to the opportunities that arise within a growing company - not only to help the company grow, but to help individuals in the region succeed at their daily jobs."

Banner graduated from Nome-Beltz High School in 2008 and attended the University of Idaho. In 2012 he graduated with a Bachelor's of Business Administration degree in global logistics and supply chain management from the University of Alaska Anchorage.

As the Safety Manager, Banner is responsible for the administration and management of NSEDC's Health, Safety and Environmental Program.

Scott Kent - NSEDC's Quota & Acquisitions Analyst



Scott Kent first came to Alaska in 2003 to work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in Nome. With 14 years of management experience in the region's commercial and subsistence fisheries, NSEDC looks forward to his contributions in his new role.

"This was a chance to grow professionally in a different realm of the fisheries world," Scott said. "I look forward to contributing to the region from the industry side of Alaska fisheries."

Scott makes his home in Nome and enjoys spending time with his girlfriend, daughter, step-children, and his two labrador retrievers, Ziva and Penny.

Scott graduated from Northern Michigan University with a Bachelor of Arts & Science degree in Zoology. As the Quota & Acquisitions Analyst, Scott is responsible for assisting the Quota & Acquisitions Manager in managing and administering all quota activities and fishery investments.

Join a great team, NSEDC is now hiring!

NSEDC is a great place to work while doing good things for our region! NSEDC offers competitive wages and an excellent benefits package. To find out more, contact Shara English or Zara Ivanoff at **907-274-2248 (in Anchorage)** or **800-650-2248 (toll-free)** or by e-mail at **hr@nsedc.com**. Job postings and applications are also available online at **www.nsedc.com/employment**.

Accountant (Anchorage)

The accountant is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of balance sheet accounts including accrued receivables and payables, fixed assets, trade receivables, and sales tax payable and all activities necessary to maintain accurate balances and must regularly perform reconciliations, send monthly statements, file tax returns and update other accounts. Assists CFO and Sr. Accountants where needed.

The kind voice you hear at the Anchorage office

It's 10-year NSEDC employee and former Shaktoolik resident Pearl Dotomain



Pearl Dotomain's beginning with NSEDC was on a boat in the Bering Sea. In the early '90s, she went to seafood processor training and worked for NSEDC's partner Glacier Fish Company, on the *Pacific Glacier*. "But before that, I commercially fished for herring and salmon with my dad out of Shaktoolik," Pearl said.

For the past 10 years, Pearl has been the kind voice people first hear when

calling NSEDC's corporate office in Anchorage. As the Administrative Assistant, Pearl works as a receptionist and handles all Siu Alaska Board travel, staff travel and donations. She says her favorite part of the position is being able to hear different voices, "from everywhere." She really appreciates hearing familiar voices. "People sometimes remember my last name and try to connect the family tree," Pearl said. "It happens a lot. The sense of connection between family, friends and everyone in the region gives me a lot of joy."

That joy comes across through a simple phone call. "We are very grateful for the warm reception people receive when they call or stop by our offices," Executive Assistant Kathy Whelehan said. "Pearl's professionalism and willingness to assist individuals with requests is highly valued. Whether you're a fisherman or calling to apply

for a scholarship, a job, or if you're one of our partners harvesting CDQ quota, we know you will be well taken care of," Kathy said.

While Pearl now lives in Anchorage, she still enjoys subsisting with her parents and they look forward to driving to their routine spots to go fishing this summer. With two teenage daughters, Aaliyah and Annie, she enjoys teaching them how to harvest and process salmon. "We all enjoy fishing," she said.



Pearl Dotomain in the early '90s in the Norton Sound, relaxing on the boat after cleaning the salmon net with her dad.

With NSEDC's help, a New Fire Truck for Unalakleet



A new fire truck came off the barge on Monday, June 20 and immediately was paraded through the main street of Unalakleet. The NSEDC Board of Directors awarded the City of Unalakleet \$60,515 this year for the new vehicle.

"The old fire truck was purchased in 1981," Unalakleet Volunteer Fire Department (UVFD) member Tony Haugen said. "For the safety of our community, it was time to upgrade. And we're very grateful for the opportunity to apply for and receive this funding."

The new bright yellow and white fire truck was funded from NSEDC's Outside Entity Funding (OEF) program. The deadline for the next round of OEF applications is January 15, 2017.

Upon receipt of applications, packets will be sent to each board member and their committee for review of their community's proposals. The committees' recommendations then go to the NSEDC Board of Directors at the second quarter meeting.

"We want to thank NSEDC and the OEF program for making these funds available to us for this new vehicle," Haugen said. "We're certainly grateful for all the contributions of NSEDC."

Photos from NSEDC's trip to Little Diomedede

NSEDC staff understands the difficulty it takes to travel to and from one of the most remote communities in the State of Alaska. In the short overnight visit, residents of the island community generously showed their lifestyle and love for the island they call home.



Clockwise: Chloe Milligrock and Kristen Ozenna play after the community barbeque; Robert Soolook dances while Stanley Milligrock and Dennis Soolook Sr. drum after NSEDC informational meeting; granite boulders face Russian Diomedede Island and mainland; murre eggs stay cool outside of a resident's home; auklets hang to dry.



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