



VALDEZ COMMEMORATIVE STATUE

PRESENTED BY THE RIKER MANEUVER

August 2024

WHO WE ARE

We are a group of passionate Alaskans who want to provide a prominent tourist attraction for the community of Valdez. Looking for ways to vitalize the community, we created a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization toward the erection and maintenance of a bronze statue. The statue will be in honor of Commander William Riker of the Starship Enterprise, as made famous by Star Trek.

CONTEXT

The founder of Star Trek (Gene Roddenberry) was enraptured with the beauty of Alaska during a recreational trip. He was so inspired, he developed a character who is born and raised in Valdez, Alaska for Star Trek: The Next Generation TV series. Cmdr William Riker is born there on August 19, 2335, and is considered a fan favorite in the series.

Riker's character embodies Alaskan values: loyalty, resourcefulness, independence, and a hunger for adventure. The concept of honoring a fictional character is not without precedent; monuments to fictional characters abound worldwide. Some prominent examples include the statues of the Little Mermaid in Amsterdam, Alice in Wonderland figures in New York's Central Park, the "Make Way for Ducklings" figures in Boston Common, and Star Trek's Captain Kirk in South Dakota.

WHY IT MATTERS

"This is probably the most important petition that you can sign in Alaska right now."

—Alaska resident, who signed the statue petition who wished for more culturally modern sights for his hometown.

Valdez is a home-grown town filled with local history of the gold rush, fishing, and as terminus for the Alyeska Pipeline.

This statue will draw in a new demographic of tourists and online attention. Statues of other pop culture representation like the Rocky Balboa statue in Philadelphia influence visitors (in fact, Rocky was so popular, they had to move it to another location). The Spock statue in Vulcan, Alberta, Canada was reported as solely having increased visitation to the town by up to 15%, per the Alberta Visitor Center for the town.

FUNDING OBJECTIVE

Due to thousands of volunteer hours for development, research and maintenance, total cost for this project would be \$125,000 by August 2024, with installation and unveiling by Summer 2025. Sources of funding include art foundation grants, private donors and crowdfunding opportunities nationwide.

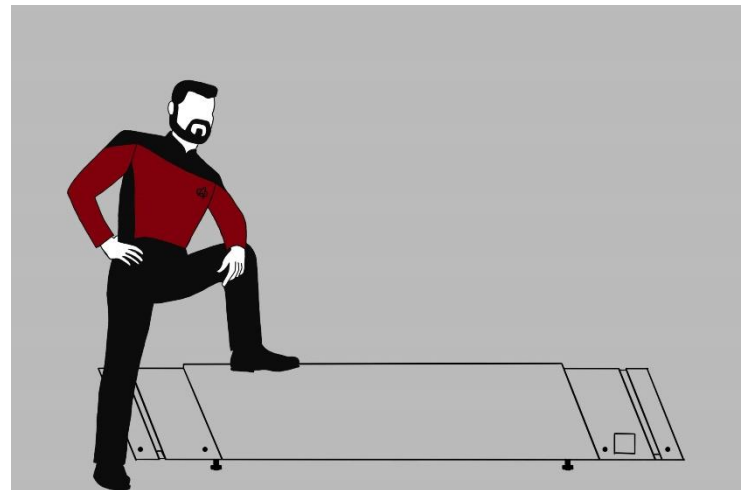
Funding will support:

- Statue fabrication in bronze, by a worldwide acclaimed Alaskan artist
- Concrete bench fabrication and shipping
- Publicity
- Building permits / lease agreement on Valdez city grounds
- Cleaning supplies for volunteer annual upkeep

PARTNERS

Paramount Pictures has provided consent to utilize the character name, lore and likeness of the Star Trek character. Jonathan Frakes (the actor who portrays Riker) has given consent for his likeness. An active petition of worldwide Star Trek enthusiasts is registered in the thousands for endorsing this program.

The Valdez Lions Club has volunteered to do monitoring and cleaning of the statue at no extra cost to the city of Valdez.



“Without trust, there's no friendship, no closeness, none of the emotional bonds that make us who we are.” -- Will Riker

Patrick Campaign, OD
Treasurer, The Riker Maneuver
RikerManeuverAK@gmail.com
<https://www.riker-maneuver.com/>



The Riker Maneuver

501(c)3

A large, futuristic Star Trek Enterprise ship is shown in orbit above the Earth. The ship is a large, saucer-shaped vessel with a complex, multi-layered structure. It has a prominent central nacelle with two red-tipped pylons. The ship is illuminated from within, showing various levels and structures. The Earth below is shown in a dark, night-time view, with the coastline of Alaska visible. The background is a deep blue space filled with stars.

From the Last Frontier to the Final Frontier

Valdez, AK - Future home to
Commander William T Riker

About The Riker Maneuver

The Riker Maneuver is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit formed by Star Trek fans with the goal to erect a statue of Commander William Riker from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

Valdez's arguably most famous citizen wasn't born here – yet. In fact, he's not even real. Yet millions of Star Trek fans know the name and persona of William Thomas Riker, first officer of the USS Enterprise-D, as portrayed by Jonathan Frakes on Star Trek: The Next Generation and subsequent media. The writers of the television program incorporated into the character's backstory his birthplace as being Valdez, Alaska, implying a thriving future for the community into the 24th century.

Commander William Riker

Starfleet Number: SC-231-427

Born: August 19, 2335 in Valdez, Alaska, Earth

William Thomas "Will" Riker was a 24th century male Human Starfleet officer. Riker served as first officer for Captain Jean-Luc Picard for 15 years on the USS Enterprise-D and USS Enterprise-E before finally accepting his own command with the USS Titan.



Alaskan Values

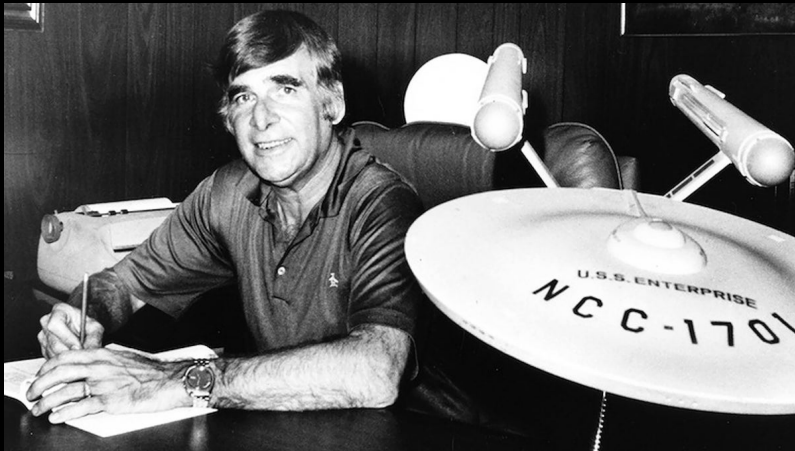
Commander Will Riker embodies the best of Alaskan values by providing unorthodox solutions to difficult problems, his drive to explore, his stellar leadership and improvisational skills, his ability to integrate within alien cultures, and his adventurous nature.



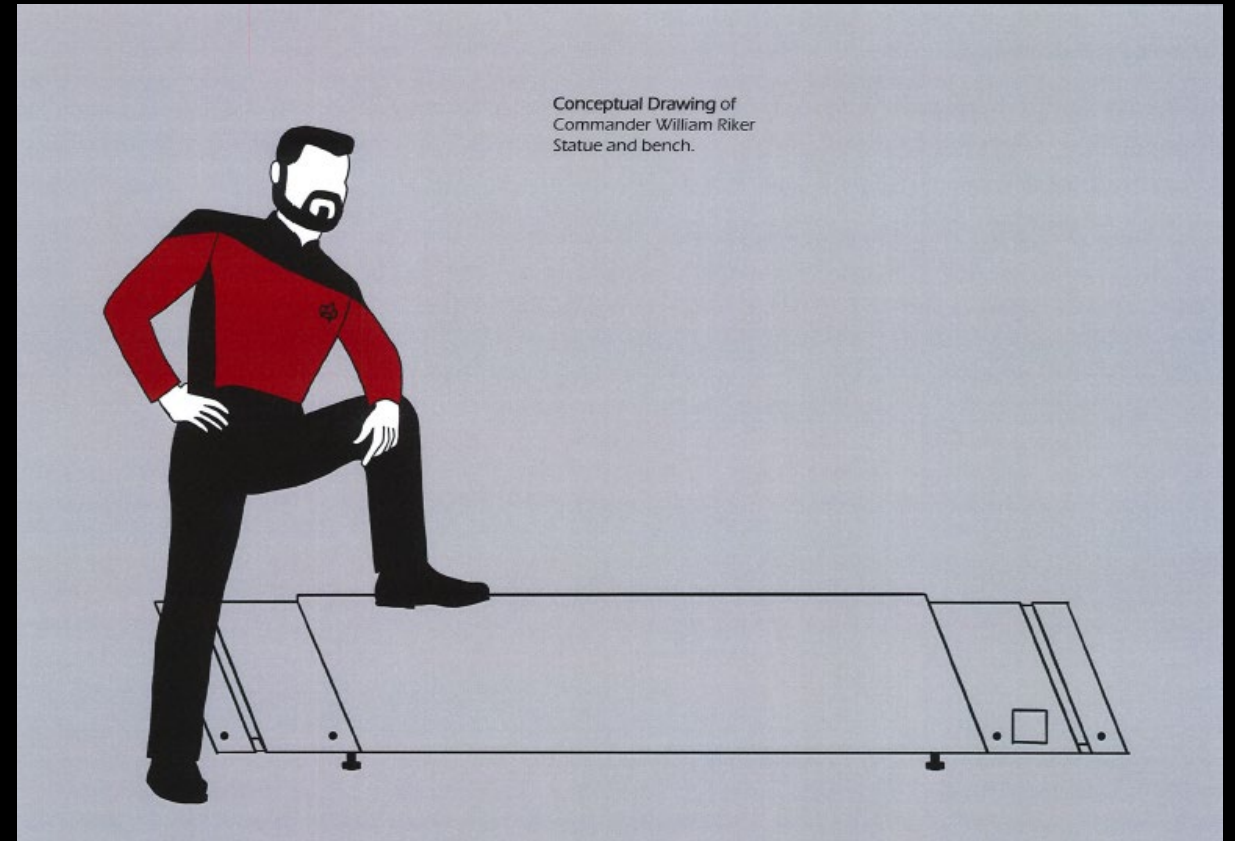
The Project

In A Nutshell

The Riker Maneuver would like to install a crowd-funded, commemorative statue with a bench of Commander William T. Riker in the city of Valdez, AK.



In the 1980s, Gene Roddenberry (*Star Trek* creator) traveled to Alaska on a cruise and marveled at the beauty of Valdez. He was so moved by Valdez that he insisted on a future character having Alaskan roots. He was, at the time, writing a new series called *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.



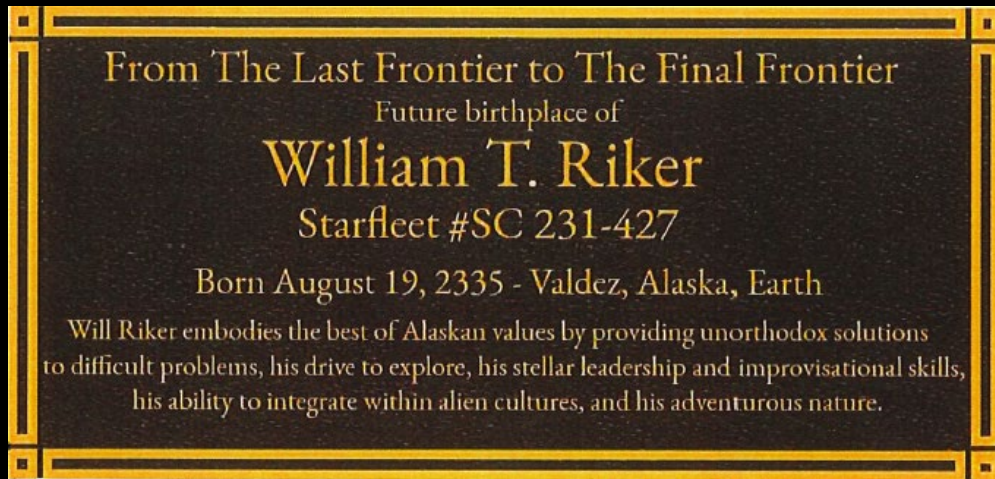
This statue and bench installation for Valdez, AK is to honor the great fictional *Star Trek* character, Commander William T Riker, who is slated to be born in Valdez on August 19, 2335.

The plan is to have a bronze statue of Commander Riker standing with his foot up on the bench, a classic pose by this character that will lend itself to great photo opportunities.

3 Major Project Components



Bench design from Park Warehouse



Proposed bronze plaque for the bench and statue



A bronze statue will be needed for this project. We have gathered pricing and an estimated schedule for a life-size statue by artist Patrick Garley, out of Palmer, AK.

Bronze statue of Jujiro Wada in Seward, AK by artist Patrick Garley.

www.PatrickGarley.com

Location

The Riker Maneuver believes that the best spot for such a unique statue would be at the Valdez Civic Center/Ruth Pond Park. This area can accommodate foot and vehicle traffic, statue stewardship could easily be covered by the city during their routine property maintenance, and it is easy to find. In the following photos, you can see that there is plenty of green space that could be considered without taking away from the scenic view.



Photo of the Valdez Civic Center.



Photo of Ruth Pond.



Photo of the Civic Center from Meals Ave.

In a Change.Org petition, over 1600 people showed their support for a Commander Riker statue by signing!

Did you know that Alaska is ranked 2nd in the nation of highest percentage of *Star Trek* fans?

Why A Statue?

Enhance Community Aesthetics & Increase Tourism

Prominent placement of a sculptural piece would present a perfect photo opportunity for visitors to Valdez, providing one more way in which they can enjoy their stay. The installation of a *Star Trek* themed attraction continues this experience, further tapping into a worldwide audience of *Star Trek* fandom.

New Business-Related Opportunities

There are a handful of other cities that have embraced their ties to various *Star Trek* characters. It has increased tourism and has provided a novelty that some local businesses opt to tribute. In the case with Commander Riker, this could be reflected in his love of cooking (seen throughout *The Next Generation*, *Enterprise* s04e22, and making pizza in *Picard* season 1), his red shirt could lead to a Commander Riker's Red Ale at a local brewery, and there is his time in Valdez where he often went fishing.



Commander Riker loads up on Klingon food in preparation for his posting on a Klingon battlecruiser, in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, "A Matter of Honor".



Will Riker making pizza in *Picard* season 1.



William Riker holding a rod and caught salmon from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, "The Icarus Factor".

Alaska's Growing Space Industry

Alaska has a growing space industry that is predicted to increase significantly over the next 25 years. The most notable of these places are seen in the photos with the Pacific Spaceport Complex, Clear Space Force Base, Poker Flat Research Range, HAARP, the Alaska Satellite Facility, and the UAA Planetary. In the upcoming year, UAF will also be expanding with a new planetarium.

A statue of Commander Riker will inspire future generations to consider space as a new Alaskan industry.

In the near future, we will see the first launchings of commercial space stations, further explorations of the lunar surface, missions to Mars, and the use of new space technology developed by people on Earth.



Photos: [top] Pacific Spaceport Complex (Kodiak, AK), [below] Clear Space Force Base (Clear, AK)



Photos (left to right): Poker Flat Research Range (Fairbanks, AK); HAARP (Gakona, AK); Alaska Satellite Facility at the Geophysical Institute (Fairbanks, AK); UAA Planetary (Anchorage, AK)



Other Star Trek Statues

There are currently 3 other locations with Star Trek statues. Vulcan, Alberta features a statue of Spock. Bloomington, Indiana features a statue of Captain Janeway. Riverside, Iowa features a statue of Captain Kirk.



Statue Unveiling & Annual Festival Opportunity

As we get closer to the day of unveiling, Paramount Pictures is willing to help cover the progress and event through press releases and social media outreach. They will encourage Jonathan Frakes, who played Commander William Riker, to also mention the statue. We may be able to have Jonathan Frakes attend the unveiling.

Cities with Star Trek statues typically have a city-wide celebration during their statue unveiling. This typically includes a street fair, involves local businesses, and sometimes there are additional activities like a themed 5K. Since Commander Riker was a jazz trombone player, Valdez might want to consider including a small jazz festival. Riker was known for his cooking (seen through several series) and a food truck festival or a food competition might be a fun idea to consider. This will only bring in more people and business to the city of Valdez, especially if it becomes an annual event.

Vulcan, Alberta hosts Vulcon in July, a Star Trek convention, as well as Spock Days in June. Vulcon has been occurring for 31 years now.

Riverside, IA now hosts TrekFest annually which includes a celebrity guest appearances, a demo derby, a 5K charity run, live entertainment, food trucks, a parade, tournaments, vendors, and more!

Bloomington, IN does not yet have an annual event for the Janeway statue. The statue was unveiled in October 2020 and it's possible that events may be in the works as we are beyond the threat of covid.

Dollars & Time

We are predicting that this project will cost \$125,000.00.

We are certain that we can raise all of the needed funds through crowd-funding methods.

Statue	\$60,000-70,000
Plaque	\$1215.21
Bench	\$3300
Bench Freight	\$1036 to Auburn, WA
Span AK (Bench)	\$1695.62 - WA to AK
Pre-Install Construction	n/a
Installation Construction	n/a
TOTAL	\$125,000

This project would take an estimated year to complete. The majority of this time is waiting for the bronze statue to be completed and brought from Palmer, AK to Valdez, AK.

Legal Matters	1-3 weeks
Crowd-Funding	2-3 months
Statue	6-9 months
Bench	8-12 weeks
Plaque	4-6 weeks
Pre-Installation	1-3 weeks
Installation	1-3 weeks

The above proposed schedule can be tightened up once we have a firm plan in place and information from a contractor for the dirt and concrete work for the statue installation.



From the last Frontier to the Final Frontier.

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<https://www.riker-maneuver.com/>
RikerManeuverAK@gmail.com