

VALDEZ MUSEUM PRESENTS



# VALDEZ AT THE MOVIES

**NOW - DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup> 2025**

Learn about media in early Valdez and  
movies made in the area including:  
**Pipe Dreams, On Deadly Ground,** and  
our own Telly Award Winning, **Between  
the Glacier and the Sea.**

**FREE WITH ADMISSION**



# MISSION

THE VALDEZ MUSEUM PRESERVES, PRESENTS, AND INTERPRETS  
THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF VALDEZ, COPPER RIVER BASIN,  
AND PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND, ALASKA.

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Wendy Langseth  
Kent Runion  
Dorothy M. Moore  
Haden Bricker  
Erik Haltness  
Sue Moeller  
Angela Obren  
Carol & Bill Harris  
Jonathan Goold  
Barbara Bryson  
Pat Day

The Valdez Museum & Historical Archive extends its appreciation to all on this page for supporting exhibitions, education programs and museum operations. Please accept our apologies in advance for any omissions as we transition to a new database.

# ACCOUNTABILITY

Each October the Valdez Museum Staff present an annual report to the Museum's corporate board at City of Valdez, outlining Museum Board and Staff and a summary of the years' activities. It documents revenue vs. expenses for the reporting year up to late September. It reveals comparative data linked to visitation and budget performance for both 2024 and 2025.

Lastly, it summarizes the proposed 2026 budget with projections for how the new year will play out. Upon reading this document you will see the Museum's challenges and successes and better understand how the VMHA will move forward in 2026 and beyond to remain an economic driver in the community and key venue for locals and tourists alike to learn about the region.

The more resources we can invest at this stage of development, the more we stand to gain from our efforts and the more valuable we can be in strengthening community ties, giving visitors a reason to stay overnight and spend in local establishments and preserving and interpreting the meaningful and relevant culture and heritage of Valdez, Copper River Basin, and Prince William Sound.

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This is your museum. Valdez! I look forward to working with you, the Museum Board, and our staff as we move into 2026 with visions for the future.

**April Vasher-Dean**

**EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR**

**HAVE A QUESTION  
WE SHOULD ANSWER ?**

**WISH TO COMMENT?**

Write me:  
[director@valdezmuseum.org](mailto:director@valdezmuseum.org) and  
we may publish your comment or  
question and answer.





# 2025 IN REVIEW

In 2025 there have been significant personnel changes at the Museum. After 1.5 years with an interim executive director, the Museum hired a new Executive Director, April Vasher-Dean, who began her tenure in January. Shortly afterwards, Amber Dennis became the full-time Manager of Marketing & Communications, and Emma Brainerd the permanent part-time Curatorial Assistant. In July, the Museum's longtime Curator of Education and Programs, Faith Revell, returned to the East Coast to continue art and work pursuits.

Early in the year, the Museum began working to bring the operations into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with updates to our tech stack, retail operations, and membership & donor databases, reducing both staff time and printing expenses.

The tourist year started with an abundance of Heli skiers and ice climbers visiting the Museum in February and March. During the late spring and summer, Museum staff welcomed people from around the world to learn more about the region's history through our exhibitions and programs.

We continually serve the community of Valdez year-round with educational programs and events. Throughout 2025 the VMHA collaborated with Valdez community members and organizations to enhance the lives of all its citizens.

## **New Memberships For Residents, Businesses, and Organizations**

We are providing free memberships to Valdez residents, Prince William Sound College students, and Valdez Native Tribe members. Donors expanded the Museum collections and volunteers made the imagined possible. We are truly grateful for the support and long-standing partnerships. Teamwork prevailed with both Museum staff and Board members working together towards a common goal, that of preserving, presenting, and interpreting the history and culture of the region for all!

## **Partnering, Teaching and Learning**

Museum staff brought the beauty, history, and unique nature of the region to life for cruise ship passengers and visitors from afar in 2025 and in so doing, became wonderful ambassadors for Valdez and Alaska. Museum tour guides shared what they know and love about the area with the hometown crowd and newcomers alike. Peak season tours stopped at Old Town, Solomon Gulch Hatchery, Keystone Canyon and Crooked Creek Information Site. Shoulder season tours took visitors to Worthington Glacier and Thompson Pass where they were spellbound by the beauty of this place. All the while the Museum sites were open for extended hours to provide our visitors with a place to begin or end their exploration of Valdez.

*"Excellent experience. Helps to better understand Alaska and its people."  
- Franklin, Indiana*



# ACQUISITIONS

## NEW ACQUISITIONS: 24 OBJECTS FROM EIGHT DONORS

New acquisitions are reviewed by the Collections Committee and considered in terms of how they tell the stories of Valdez, Copper River Valley, and Prince William Sound in new ways.

Pictured:

- 3rd Infantry Company E Fort Liscum 1904-1906 and Company F Fort Liscum, 21st and 59th Infantry, 1919-22 lapel pins
- *Revolt in Full Bloom*, oil on canvas by Faith Revell
- *The Pied Piper* 2025, metal print by Shrimp Whisperer, Al Laudert
- Kal Doughman's 1950s Timebook, paycheck stub, loose paper at the back covered in calculations, and a handwritten Forman's Meeting Committee Report



*"The Witness Stone was so cool to see!  
My father was the BLM surveyor who found it."  
- Wasilla, AK*



# COLLECTIONS

In 2025, the Museum prioritized active engagement with the collection and improving accessibility. A primary focus was the Native Collection, aligning with the 2024 NAGPRA updates. Local elders and knowledge keepers provided essential context for previously unidentified or undescribed objects:

- John Boone and Pat Olson contributed insights on sewing implements
- Sonya Selanoff identified trade beads and explained historical distinctions from contemporary beadwork
- Diane Selanoff and Bill Smith demonstrated the use of a stone scraper, offering first-hand knowledge of traditional techniques

A particularly notable discovery occurred when a bone half-circle, once thought to be a headband, was correctly identified by Bill Smith as the broken handle of a hunting kit. This, “reunion” of separated items underscored the value of community expertise.

## RESEARCH REQUESTS: 56



*“Beautiful museum. Learned so much, want to know more about the area.  
Staff very helpful.”  
- Los Altos, California*

## Oral History Grant Award

In September 2025, the Museum was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Trust Management Services/Braemar Charitable Trust (Oregon) to launch Maritime Valdez: Collecting Our Stories Today to Educate Tomorrow.

This oral history initiative will record the experiences of 10 Valdezans, with a focus on maritime engagement since 2000. This project represents one of the Museum’s first deliberate steps in documenting 21st-century local history, while also re-centering maritime traditions within the Museum.

## Digitization and Collections Access

In 2025, the Museum digitized approximately 300 photographs to support educational programming, research, and marketing initiatives. Building on this work, a framework is under development to guide ongoing digitization efforts. This framework addresses critical considerations, including copyright, intellectual property, and the fragility of original materials. The framework emphasizes that digitization creates digital surrogates to enhance accessibility and minimize the handling of artifacts but does not replace the physical objects themselves. With more than 13,000 photographic materials in the collection, this work represents a long-term, ongoing commitment to preservation and access.



# EXHIBITIONS

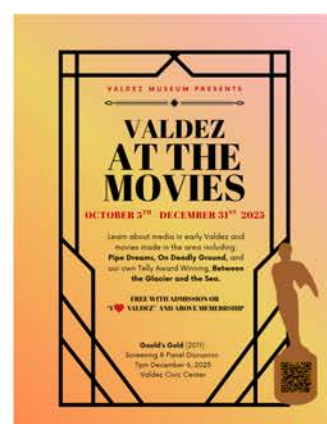
In 2025, the Egan Commons gallery provided an important platform to highlight the intersections of art, science, and human experiences. *Stacked Extensions*, by Homer-based sculptor Cynthia Morelli, presented a visual study of tenderness as a form of vitality. *In a Time of Change: Boreal Forest Stories*, a collaborative initiative originating in Fairbanks, examined the effects of change in Alaska's Boreal Forest. This traveling exhibition featured the work of 44 collaborators who interpreted this environment through literature and the visual arts.



During the summer, *Rarefied Light* returned to Valdez. As Alaska's premier annual juried photography exhibition, *Rarefied Light* celebrates the work of Alaskan photographers while also providing visitors with a broad view of the state's contemporary photography.

The final exhibition of the year, *Valdez at the Movies*, will open in October 2025. Movies brought the world to Valdez and Valdez to the world.

This exhibition examines the role of film in shaping community identity, featuring artifacts from the Museum's collection, including a 1904 movie projector and a poster from the 1994 film *On Deadly Ground*.



*"Fascinating exhibits. Love the video presentations."*  
- Rick May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025



# EDUCATION

The Valdez Museum inspires a love of learning with place-based educational experiences, working with students and visitors of all ages.

Seventh graders kayaked to Old Town to learn local history with Museum staff. At the VMHA, 6th graders learned about the nature of oil and water and the impact of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill in a make-shift laboratory; 4th graders went to Old Town Valdez Museum to learn about the 1964 Earthquake; 2nd graders visited both Museum sites and learned through exploration; and Pre-K children visited our Egan St location and had a scavenger hunt. The Museum partnered with the Valdez Senior Center to offer self-guided visits to our seniors.



## WORKSHOPS & TUESDAY NIGHT TALKS

**Our Home**  
A Tuesday History Talk with Emma Brainerd  
Presented by Emma Brainerd  
438 S. HAZELET  
23 SEPT 2025 \$7  
DOORS 6:30  
PRESENTATION 7:00  
FREE TO "I ♥ VALDEZ" AND ABOVE MEMBERS OR WITH ADMISSION

**THE PRINSENDAM RESCUE AND LIFEBOAT #4**  
OLD TOWN VALDEZ MUSEUM  
438 S. HAZELET  
12 AUGUST 2025 \$7  
PRESENTED BY CAREN OBERG  
FREE TO "I ♥ VALDEZ" AND ABOVE MEMBERS OR WITH ADMISSION  
DOORS 6:30  
PRESENTATION 7:00

**FIRES, FLOODS, AND FIENDISH FOES:  
A DESTINY OF DESTRUCTION**  
VALDEZ MUSEUM 22 JULY 2025 \$7  
PRESENTED BY DAVE & TOM OLSON AT  
THE OLD TOWN VALDEZ MUSEUM AT 438 S. HAZELET  
FREE TO "I ♥ VALDEZ" MEMBERS OR WITH ADMISSION  
DOORS 7:00  
PRESENTATION 7:30

**MEET AT THE MUSEUM  
WITH VISITING PHOTOGRAPHER ANGELO LILLO**  
**SOLSTICE  
CYANOTYPE**  
Explore the art of making cyanotypes,  
camera-less photographic prints, that  
illustrate accordion books (leprello).  
JUNE 21 | \$25 PER PERSON  
10 AM | UPPER ELEMENTARY STUDENTS  
2 PM | ADULTS  
EMAIL EDUCATION@VALDEZMUSEUM.ORG TO SIGN UP

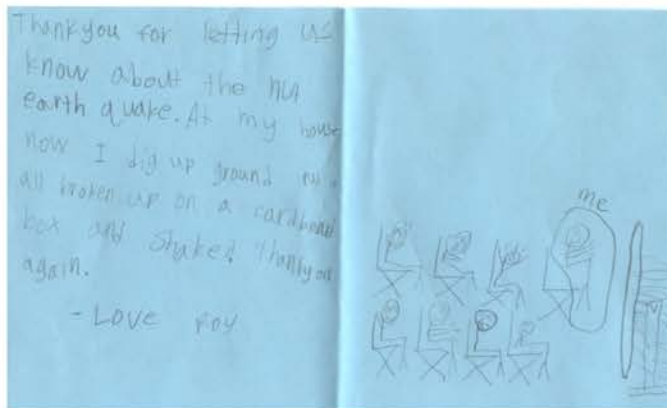
**A TUESDAY NIGHT HISTORY TALK @ VALDEZ MUSEUM**  
**GORDON & CAPS  
OF EARLY VALDEZ**  
CAREN OBERG  
5:30 PM 22 APRIL 217 EGAN DR  
FREE TO "I ♥ VALDEZ" AND ABOVE MEMBERS OR WITH ADMISSION  
DOORS 6:30  
PRESENTATION 7:00

**AROUND THE WORLD AT THE MUSEUM 207 Egan Drive**  
**WILDLIFE OF  
INDIA'S TIGER  
RESERVES**  
WITH SHERRY MILLER  
**APRIL 25  
5:30 PM**  
FREE MUSEUM ADMISSION 9 AM TO 5 PM FOR  
VALDEZ RESIDENTS  
EVENT FREE TO ALL  
VALDEZ MUSEUM  
HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

**ART AT THE MUSEUM**  
**NATURE  
JOURNALING  
FOR ALL**  
CELEBRATE EARTH DAY WITH JENNIE KELLY  
APRIL 22, 12-2 PM | ALL AGES | FREE  
Take time to explore, observe and wonder about our beautiful  
natural world. Nature journaling is for everyone and opens us up to all  
our senses. Join us for a fun and educational experience.  
Email education@valdezmuseum.org or walk in to pre-register.

**A TUESDAY NIGHT HISTORY TALK @ VALDEZ MUSEUM**  
**FISH FAMILY HISTORY**  
PAT OLSON  
5:30 PM 25 MAY 217 EGAN DR  
FREE TO "I ♥ VALDEZ" AND ABOVE MEMBERS OR WITH ADMISSION  
DOORS 6:30  
PRESENTATION 7:00

**HYPOTHERMIA  
IN VALDEZ**  
25 FEB 2025 5:30 PM 217 EGAN DR  
FREE TO "I ♥ VALDEZ" AND ABOVE MEMBERS OR WITH ADMISSION  
DOORS 6:30  
PRESENTATION 7:00



## Skills Building

Including guides, the museum employed ten part-time seasonal staff. Some of our seasonal staff are as young as 15 and receive customer service and museum services training. Staff are given opportunities to learn about customer service, operations and merchandising, developing skills in Excel and other office platforms.

*"The videos on the earthquake and oil spill were the best."  
-Ross, July 2025*



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

In 2025, we formed a marketing committee that would combine and streamline the efforts of fundraising and membership committees while engaging the board in creative and marketing strategy.

Working with the Marketing Committee, permanent and seasonal staff, Museum Marketing has executed a larger and more consistent presence while creating efficiencies in our tech stack and internal communications processes.

This includes on brand marketing tools for Museum programs and exhibitions across physical and digital spaces and a presence at community events such as Valdez Fly-In and Gold Rush Days, print advertising, social media and email.

In six months, Museum Marketing conducted a successful Annual Appeal with a new, no cost digital platform (saving \$3200 per year), created a new membership structure to increase community engagement, visibility to community organizations and businesses, and provide Valdez residents a basic free Membership year-round while increasing support from corporate sponsors and the level of Museum services we can provide to both the community and visitors.

After a soft launch of memberships at Gold Rush Days, we have gained 50 new member sign-ups. We expect this number to rise in October with promotion.

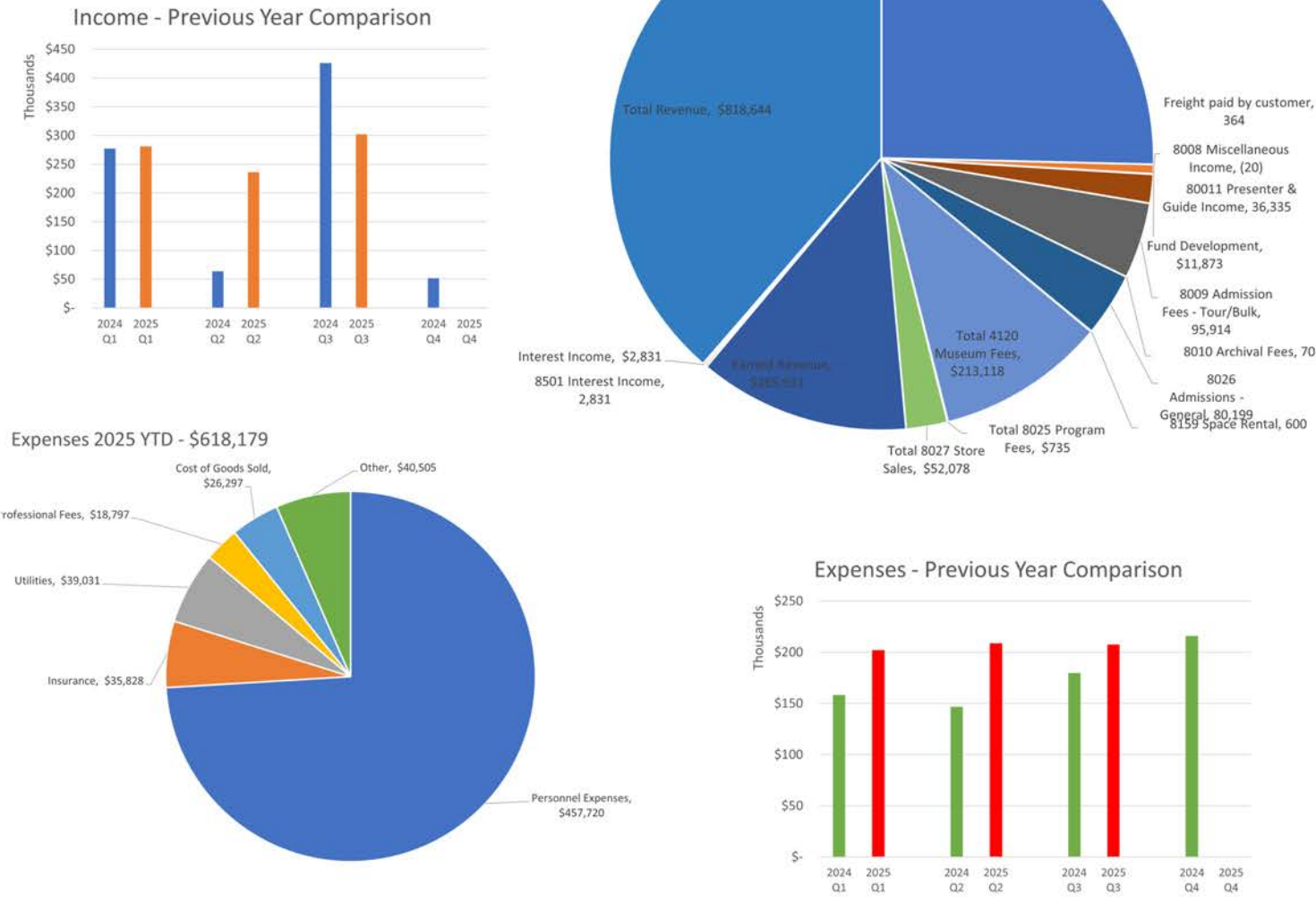
Even with the demand of cruise ships, we have been able to maintain routine marketing & communications while developing our local and Alaska Native consignments and overall shop inventory to see a growth in sales of around 20% compared to last season. In 2025, our shop grossed \$10k more from these consignments.

As visitor season comes to a close, Museum Marketing will be focused on cleaning up and updating website, local community engagement, promotion of educational programs and events, and further development and promotion of group sales and collections-based products.

We are gearing up for a streamlined Roadhouse fundraiser and in-house exhibition both titled, *Valdez at the Movies*.



FINANCIALS



The VMHA requests \$535,000 from the City of Valdez, as reflected in the Board approved 2026 budget to sustain full operations and work more closely with the corporate board on steering the direction of the museum’s growth.

EST 2026 BUDGET TOTALS

TOTAL REVENUE \$883,100.00  
TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$881,992.95  
NET REVENUE \$1,107.05



# THANK YOU

## SUPPORTING MEMBERS AND GRANTORS



KAREN ALLRED

KCHU RADIO

MAGPIES



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THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF VALDEZ, COPPER RIVER BASIN,  
AND PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND, ALASKA.