

SPECIAL REPORT

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A Note from the State Association President

Sue Lampert

Greetings from Juneau.

First, I would like to thank each one of you for all that you do to feed the children of Alaska during this unprecedented pandemic. Both school years 2020 and 2021 have been the most challenging and difficult years that school child nutrition has ever had to endure. But you did it, and for that you should be very proud!

AKSNA's virtual annual conference that was held the last week of January was a huge success. Over 80 people attended the three-day event that included inspirational speaker, Maureen G Mulvaney (MGM) who made us laugh, cry, and motivate us to Thrive, Don't Just Survive!

During the AKSNA Annual Business Meeting, which was held during the conference, unopposed candidates Trevor Bridgewater (President-Elect) and Gavin Northey (Treasurer) were unanimously voted by members to begin serving their positions on August 1, 2021. Also, several other committee chair positions were appointed; Adrienne Schwartz (Membership Committee Chair), Jennifer Miewes (Public Policy and Legislation Chair), Debbie Soto (Communication Chair), and Bethy Whalen and Theresa Wilson (Members at Large).

We also honored members who received state and regional awards; Amy Rouse (Alaska Director of the Year and Western Regional Director of the Year), Michelle Powers, (Alaska Manager of the Year), Gavin Northey (AKSNA President's Award), and Walter Williams (The Dean Hamburg Award).

We also paid tribute to Rocky James (Food Service Director-Yukon Flats School District) who passed away in early 2021. Rocky will be remembered for his devotion to all the students within the Yukon Flats region.

In closing, I would like to encourage all of you to take pride for all that you do to ensure that children receive nutritious meals during what is sure to go down as one of the craziest times in recent history.

Sue Lampert
AKSNA President

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Lettuce Grow-Cordova Schools Incorporate Hydroponic Lettuce

Sandie Ponte



Cordova City School District partnered with Kale'N Thyme, a local hydroponic farm, to serve these beautiful Chicken BLT salad. It takes eight weeks from seed to harvest for 410 salads.



Juneau Buried

Photos of our friends and colleagues in Juneau...



FILE PHOTO: Capitol Building, photo taken on an unusually sunny day in Juneau

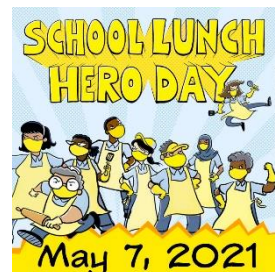


Capitol building photo taken March 2021, don't mind that the sun is coming from the northeast, I didn't have time to photoshop it better.

Celebrate our School Lunch Heroes

Gavin M. Northey, MBA, SNS

School Lunch Heroes don't wear capes, they wear aprons... and masks, and gloves, and hairnets, because it's a pandemic and they're still serving children across this great state! Be sure to celebrate and recognize your local School Lunch Heroes on Friday, 7 May 2021. More info from SNA's [SLHD web page](#).





New LEAD to Succeed™ Training from the School Nutrition Foundation

We are excited to announce the new [LEAD to Succeed™ training program](#) from the School Nutrition Foundation is now live in the SNA Training Zone! You can register now for "LEARN to Master Difficult Conversations," (you'll earn 3 CEUs, too!) the first of four self-paced training modules in the Communication for Impact series. This module is a 3-hour, self-paced training that was created specifically for school nutrition professionals; additional modules in the Communication for Impact series are scheduled for release in 2021. All LEAD to Succeed™ training materials are available at no cost. [Register now.](#)

School Nutrition Launches Electronic Edition

In challenging times, you can count on School Nutrition (SN) magazine to rise and meet every new hurdle! School districts, meal service departments, manufacturers, distributors, farmers, individual families—the coronavirus pandemic is exacting an enormous financial toll across the U.S. economy. We know how much school nutrition professionals and industry partners look forward to receiving the reliable and relevant content SN delivers every month. For nearly three decades, you, our readers, have declared it to be your preferred trade publication, far outranking all competitors. eSN, our new electronic edition, will debut in a few days with its March issue and we are excited for you to see it and tell us what you think! [Learn more.](#)

eSN Brought About by The Great Toilet Paper Shortage of 2020

As a responsible organization, the School Nutrition Association prints SN magazine on paper comprised of no less than 41% grade 3-B1-H and 41% grade F-00-L recycled pulps, the same pulps that are used in the creation of consumer toilet paper.

The 2020 Toilet Paper Shortage resulted in a 4100% increase in the cost of these pulps as suppliers like Georgia Pacific and Kimberly-Clark purchases increased by 50-fold in April, May, and June of 2020. While the toilet paper shortage has ended, the impact on the price of pulp has had a lasting impact on our publisher.

Our publisher notified us in January the cost to produce each magazine would increase by \$1.03, a cost that would have to be passed to members in the form of increased annual dues or we would have to print the SN magazine using freshly harvested lumber product. We thought it best for our members and the environment to produce the first ever eSN.

We hope you enjoy the new eSN magazine and its environmental and cost savings!



Download SNA's Strive to Thrive App for New STEPS Meditations

Be sure to upgrade to the latest Strive to Thrive app version. Try any of the 3 in-app meditation sessions for your daily mindfulness practice. Put on your headset, find a quiet location that suits you best, and use any or all 3 different meditation modules in the Challenge app to go through the seven-minute meditation sessions. During any active Challenge period, you will automatically receive 500 bonus steps for each meditation session you complete (limit of one bonus grant per session a day). [Learn more.](#)

Walk With a Purpose

Want to have fun, take care of your own mental and physical wellness and support the School Nutrition Foundation (SNF) at the same time? Then join your school nutrition colleagues for SNF's virtual "Walk With a Purpose" 5K Walkathon, held from April 15-22, 2021. The Welcome Pep Rally will be held April 14th at 3:00 pm EST.

SNF's first-ever virtual fundraising walk will join school nutrition professionals and SNA industry members from across the United States. You'll form teams, compete for prizes, raise funds and walk straight into Spring and more hopeful times ahead. Here's how:

1. Commit to doing something for yourself.
2. Register here. <https://give.classy.org/SNFWalkWithAPurpose>
3. Ask your friends, family and colleagues to support you.
4. Walk, jog, run, dance or skip a 5K distance (3.1 miles) during the week of April 15-22, 2021.

Your involvement is critical to our success. Thank you again for your support and for participating in our 5K Walkathon.

SNA Monitors Related Federal Register Notices

SNA monitors the Federal Register for notices impacting school nutrition programs including recent Proposed, Interim, and Final Rules, and changes to existing Rules. Check for updates, including SNA comments, and share your comments on [SNA's Action Network](#).

- Federal Register: Meal Operations Study. FNS published the [Federal Register notice](#), "Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request."
- Federal Register: Child Nutrition Database. FNS published the [Federal Register notice](#), "Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request."

Share your success! Send articles, photos, success stories, and more to share with your colleagues working across the Great State to fuel our future. Email: news@aksna.org.

SPECIAL REPORT: The Great Toilet Paper Shortage of 2020

ONE YOU LATER, we bring you the story of the greatest almost-crisis of the century. We dispatch reporters to their home offices to bring you the stories of School Nutrition professionals impacted by the crisis and their journey to greatness in the face of the adversity.

Toilet Paper: SN Professionals' #1 Reason to Work in 2020 Says Study

By Anita Gho

W. LAFAYETTE, Ind.—Economists at Purdue University report access to toilet paper was the number one reason that school nutrition professionals reported to work during the 2020 calendar year. In a survey, to be published in volume 92 of the *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics*, Doctors Itsa Brown and Vera Gross found 82% of nutrition professionals listed “Availability of Toilet Paper” in their top three reasons to come to work, compared to 61% who listed wages, and 54% who listed fringe benefits including health insurance.

The longitudinal study, part of the American Perspectives of Employees Survey (APES), includes quarterly responses from 97,441 US workers, including 853 SN professionals, during 2019 and 2020. Availability of Toilet Paper peaked in the second quarter of 2020, with 93% of SN professionals listing it as their #1 reason to work, in the same quarter, pay and benefits fell to #3 and 6 respectively with, “Normalcy”, “Public Service”, and “Comradery” taking the #2, 4, and 5 ranks.

“It wasn’t unusual among essential hourly workers,” Gross said, “toilet paper was scarce and for employees working earlier in the day, such as school nutrition workers, it was just easier to poop at work than to try to get to the store in time to get a roll.” Brown said that although similar trends were found among other APES respondents, none were as high as SN professionals. 51% of employees from grocery stores and 48% from warehouse stores ranked the king of rolled papers in their top three.

“Schools tend to buy supplies in bulk,” said Ned Bachel, president of the Association of School Business Officials, “so employees feel a lot of confidence that when they come to work they’re going to find plenty of staples supplies like toilet paper. Uh.... You know, when I think about this, it’s actually easier to get toilet paper than to use the copy machine with those Department codes and copy quotas.”

Brown and Gross’ study will be published in the June 2021 issue of *Behavior and Experimental Economics* which will be available on Elsevier.



Alaska SN Professional Retires at Age 47 Because District Compensated Employees in TP During Financial Crisis

Roland Spindall



GANGRENE GULCH, Alaska—Paresa Buzzwell was just as surprised as her supervisor when she submitted her PERS retirement paperwork February, but she did, retiring at just 47 years old with over \$3.7m in savings.

Buzzwell, a 19-year veteran of the Gangrene School District, had just over \$1.1m retirement savings in her PERS and IRA accounts as of January 2020. Her financial situation took a 28% dive in March to \$790k. Her situation worsened in early April when the school district sent letters to its 73 employees saying that they had become insolvent and would not make payrolls. “I thought it was an April Fool’s joke, I was like ‘haha this can’t be real,’” Buzzwell said, “then my mom, who teaches at the same school, called and said that she just came out of a meeting as was told they might not be paid until July. We were devastated.”

Adam Upp, the district’s school business official worked with the School Board to creatively solve the problem. “I saw that we still had 10,000 jumbo rolls of toilet paper in the Conex, and 3,500 regular size rolls. These things usually sell for \$4 a roll but right now they’re \$10 a roll and the prices is going up like crazy,” Upp said. “I said, ‘what if we give 90% of that to our employees? We have 73 employees and the students aren’t coming back to school for the rest of this year.’ So that’s exactly what we did.” Buzzwell received 146 jumbo and 50 regular rolls.

Buzzwell sold the jumbo rolls for an average of \$45, and the regular rolls for \$18 each. She used the \$7,500 and bought 72 shares of Tesla (TSLA) at \$103 and sold it in January 2021 for \$771, a 649% increase in just eight months. Buzzwell reinvested the \$55,512 in GameStop the following morning at \$18.49, selling close to the peak at \$425.91 a 2,203% increase to \$1.3m. She bought again at \$54.19 but didn’t reap as much return after getting scared and selling at \$192.62 in early March, a 255% increase, putting her portfolio balance at \$4.6m.

She took one more go at GameStop but lost \$1.1m, “That’s when I knew I had to stop. I had to stop; this was gambling. So, I cashed out \$1.1 short of my high and had to pay another \$1m in estimated taxes, it kind of sucked but I’m still ahead about \$2.5m.” Buzzwell said her PERS balance had also climbed back to \$1.2m giving her a combined total of \$3.7m.

Buzzwell will work until the last day of school in May.

"She Saved Our Behinds!" Alaska SNA Member Innovates Solution in the Face of Toilet Paper Shortage

By Tupe Lye

FLUSHMOORE, Alaska—It was early April 2020 and Flushmoore residents were in a panic. At the height of the Great Toilet Paper Shortage of 2020, not a roll had been stocked at the local ACC. There was a real tissue issue in town and even those flush with cash were unable to procure the coveted "therapeutic paper." Mayor Bill Azar famously pleaded with the residents to separate their two-ply rolls, exclaiming, "One Ply, that's all!!!"



The town was desperate, roll call was taken and the town was projected to run out of toilet paper by 3:30 p.m. on 15 April. Tax Day may have been deferred, but 15 April was sure to be a pain in the rear. Great adversity can invigorate our everyday heroes; Neva Ichbum was one such hero.

Ichbum, the kitchen manager at Flushmoore High School, had just passed her Administrative Review with flying colors. The only finding, an observation really, was that Flushmoore City Schools had not purged its records since 2004 and they were consuming substantial amounts of space in the dry storage room. It was that fateful Friday night when Ichbum realized she could purge her records and save the town's collected behinds in one go.

Ichbum recalled her staff at 5:30 p.m. that evening and told them they would be working the weekend. She grabbed the paper shredder from the school's front office and brought one from Flushmoore Elementary, and a few from home. Her staff got straight to work shredding over 1,500 pounds of documents.

Ichbum fired up the steam kettles and began heaving the shredded documents into the kettles. Surely this would be a big production, but she knew it would count for something! The fully steamed documents were placed in the dough mixers for 15 minutes resulting in a pseudo-pulp weighing approximately three tons.

Ichbum and her merry team had little time to waste, the pulpy blob would only be malleable for a few hours. The pulp was first compressed through the dough sheeter to press it down to one inch of thickness. The rest would be hand-rolled.

By Saturday morning, staff from the Flushmoore Elementary kitchen had heard of the production and volunteered to help. Kitchen staff were used to making rolls, but not this kind of roll.

School administrators noticed the lights on and upon learning of the kitchen staff's operation volunteered to canvas the town to collect cardboard toilet paper roll cores.

The hand rolled pulp was laid on sheet pans and baked at 200°F for 20 minutes to dry the paper. By Sunday, Ichbum had teachers, administrators, kitchen staff, custodians, maintenance staff, and bus drivers from both schools helping rotate the pulp in and out of the ovens and roll it onto the cardboard cores. Together, they produced 3,357 rolls which were distributed amongst the town's 953 residents.