

October 2013

As we transition from one season to the next in Alaska, so too we are experiencing transitions in Alaska Common Ground. After many years as Chair of the Board of Directors, Peg Tileston has stepped down. Happily however, she continues on the board and has assumed leadership of the Program Committee to direct the development and planning of Alaska Common Ground's events. I am endeavoring to fill her big shoes as the current chair. As we move forward, we are looking to our membership for your continued support of our vision and our programs.

As a follow-up to the board's strategic planning session last year, we have updated Alaska Common Ground's Vision and Mission statements, our brochure, and are updating our website. We will let you know when the new website is up and running! We are also strengthening partnerships with other organizations to plan and present informative and engaging programs. We have a Facebook page, and for those of you on Facebook, we welcome you to "like" us! We are using this page and our website to stay connected with you and the community and to let you know of our programs and related events and to encourage discussion of public policy issues.

Regarding programs, at our May annual meeting we held an informative and interesting panel discussion on the importance of early childhood education. The panel included representatives from the Anchorage School District, Best Beginnings and the Alaska Legislature. We also welcomed suggestions from members for future forums and discussions and are now working to implement these ideas.

On November 1st, we are co-sponsoring a program with the Alaska World Affairs Council entitled **I Can See Russia from Here: A Celebration of the Friendship Flight and 25 Years of an Open Border Between Two World Superpowers**. Speakers are

Former Governor Steve Cowper, Willie Hensley, and Lt. Governor Mead Treadwell. The program is Friday, November 1st at the Hilton Hotel. See www.alaskaworldaffairs.org for more information.

We are starting to plan programs and events for the winter and spring, so stay tuned for more information! We are also looking toward holding sessions during the summer on the state initiatives that will be on the August ballot. We would love to have you help us plan and hold our events. Please contact us at info@akcommonground.org if you are interested.

Let's Talk Anchorage, a collaborative program of Alaska Common Ground and the Anchorage Public Libraries is moving forward. This program seeks to engage citizens in thoughtful discussion of current affairs. Weekly facilitated dialogs will be held Tuesdays from 6:00-8:00 pm in the Ann Stevens Room at the Loussac Library. The third week of each month is reserved for UAA to hold discussions. We will post the weekly topics on our website and Facebook page and welcome you to join these dialogs!

As always, we invite your ideas and suggestions for forums and programs and we would love to have your participation as we plan our programs. You are always welcome to attend our board meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. You can find us at our website, www.akcommonground.org, on Facebook at our [Alaska Common Ground page](#), or contact info@akcommonground.org. We'll do our best to keep you informed, and hope you will stay engaged with us as well.

As you renew your membership with us please let us know if you would prefer to receive your renewal electronically. We are happy to continue mailing out the renewals but know that some of you might prefer receiving them via email. Contact Kari at info@akcommonground.org and she will send your renewal in the format you prefer.

Thank you for your continued support of Alaska Common Ground. It is what keeps us energized to present relevant and informative programs, and also supports us financially.

Mary Lu Harle, Chair

Alaska Common Ground Board of Directors