

YOUR LETTERHEAD

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Meet our Staff

Get to know our
staff

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North to the Future

Every January, as we turn the calendar to a new year, Alaskans mark another milestone: the anniversary of statehood. On January 3, 1959, Alaska officially became the 49th state of the United States, opening a new chapter in its history and symbolizing resilience, opportunity, and the promise of the future.

For many, the statehood anniversary pairs naturally with the season of resolutions and fresh beginnings. Just as individuals set goals for the year ahead, Alaska once set its sights on growth, self-determination, and a stronger voice within the nation. That step forward, more than six decades ago, remains a reminder of what it means to embrace change and move with confidence into the unknown.

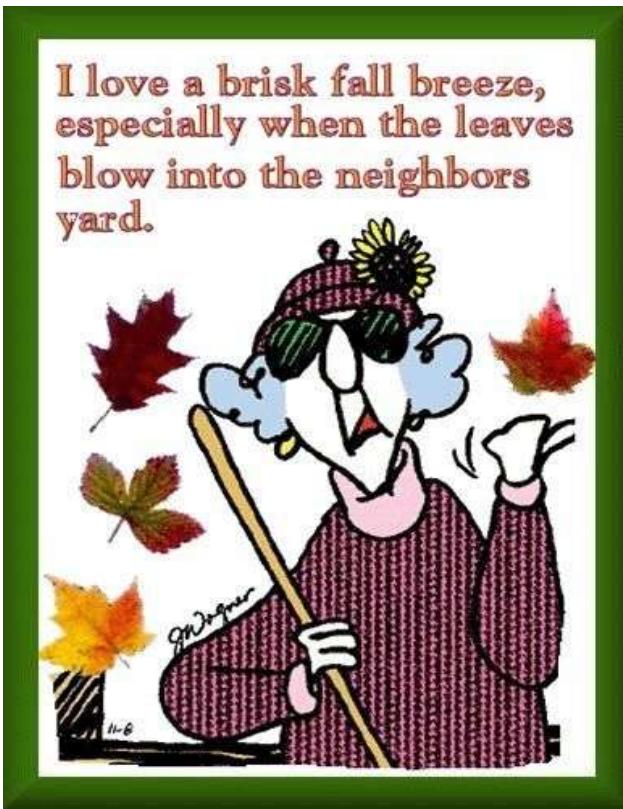
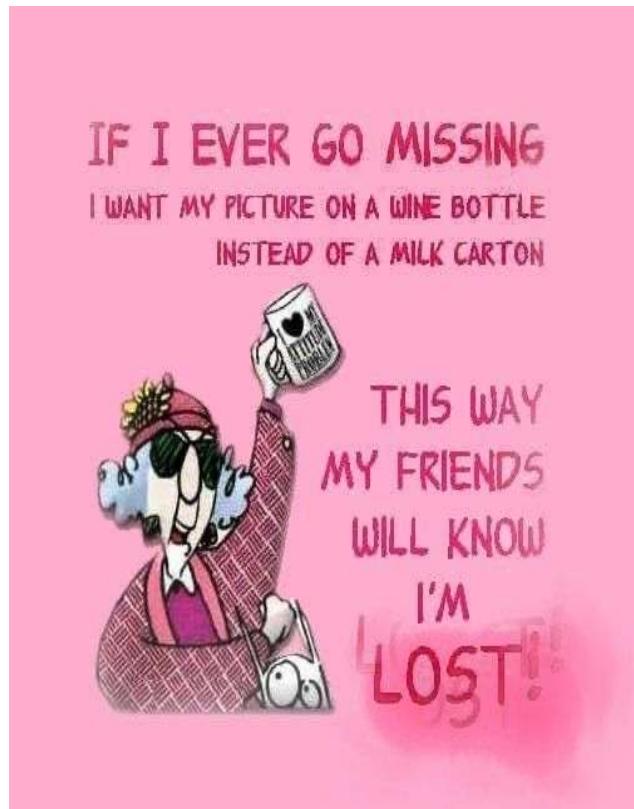
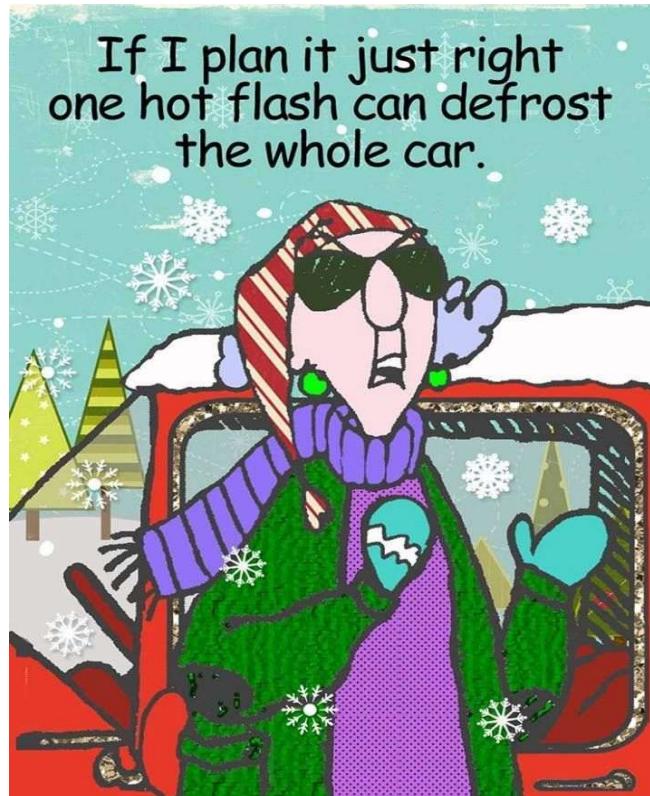
Alaska's motto, "North to the Future," captures this spirit. Chosen shortly after statehood, it reflects both the geographic identity of America's northernmost state and the sense of direction it offers. The words suggest not only exploration but also progress—ideas that fit well with the energy of January, when many people look ahead with renewed purpose.

Moose, a familiar sight to residents and visitors alike, can also serve as a fitting symbol for the season. Towering and powerful, yet able to withstand harsh conditions, the moose embodies strength and resilience. These qualities mirror the challenges Alaskans have faced—from extreme weather to geographic isolation—and the determination that helped them build thriving communities in the years since statehood.

Today, Alaska continues to look forward while honoring its past. Statehood Day isn't just a historical date; it's an annual reminder of endurance, adaptability, and possibility. Whether you live in Alaska or simply admire its story from afar, the anniversary offers inspiration for the start of a new year.

As we settle into January, Alaska's journey can encourage us to take our own steps toward renewal. Like the state that looked north and saw its future, we too can embrace new beginnings with strength, resilience, and hope for the year ahead.

THE FUNNIES



From Playtime to Patents

January 17 is the day of the K.I.D.—that's short for Kid Inventors' Day. This special day honors Benjamin Franklin's birthday on January 17. Most people know Franklin for his bifocals and experiments with electricity, but fewer realize that at age 11 he invented swim flippers for the hands.



But Franklin isn't the only kid inventor. Perhaps the following inventions by kids will inspire you to take your own unique product from idea to "patent pending" (through the federal Patent Office).

In 1905, an 11-year-old boy from San Francisco named Frank Epperson stirred some sugary soda powder into water and left the mix outside all night. He awoke to discover it had frozen solid in the cold. When he licked it straight from the wooden stirrer, he knew he had accidentally made something delicious. The "Epsicle," as he called it, was the first Popsicle.

On the last day of middle school, Sarah Buckel watched as a friend struggled to scrape off the glue used to stick posters and other decor to the locker wall. Over summer break, Buckel came up with a solution: magnetic wallpaper. Fortunately, Buckel's father ran a magnet manufacturing company. In no time, her decorative magnetic wallpaper could be found at Staples, Target, and other large chains.

The list of young inventors doesn't end there. Chester Greenwood invented earmuffs at age 15. Louis Braille invented braille, the alphabet for the blind using raised dots, at age 15. Hart Main, 13, conceived of a line of candles for men called Man Cans, offering "manly" scents like sawdust. At 15, Param Jaggi had the idea to insert algae into a car's muffler to eat up carbon dioxide before it entered the atmosphere. And Mattie Knight, dubbed "Lady Edison" by fans, developed a safety device at age 12 that became a standard fixture on looms.

How's that for ingenuity? All of these kids prove there's no minimum age for having an inventive spirit and leaving your mark in the world.

Click with Caution

When you hop on a computer to browse the Web, how can you be sure no one is watching you? Governments collect data to fight threats. Social media platforms and search engines gather data to personalize their services. And retailers analyze behavior to optimize what you see. As a global reminder of just how much we share online, many countries observe Data Privacy Day on January 28.

Large institutions like banks and insurance firms invest heavily in securing their data. But how should individuals protect themselves? Time-tested advice includes the following: avoid oversharing in online profiles, because people who really know you already have much of that info; use private or incognito browsing to prevent local traces, though it won't hide your activity from websites or your internet provider. Use a password manager to create strong, unique passwords, and whenever possible enable multifactor authentication. Any of these measures can help reduce the risk of hackers stealing your data.

Trading Tomorrow's Gardens

Each year, eager gardeners await the last Saturday in January, Seed Swap Day. It's a chance to connect people with excess seeds to those searching for the perfect additions to their gardens.



Washington Gardener magazine, which organized the first seed exchange in 2006, explains that seed swapping is a fundamental part of the history of human society; seeds were some of the first commodities valued and exchanged among humans. Whether they're seeds for crops or flowers, a vibrant exchange promotes plant biodiversity. American president and avid gardener Thomas Jefferson once said, "The greatest service which can be rendered any country is to add a useful plant to its culture."

Pop Therapy



All those who love the sensation of popping Bubble Wrap can hardly wait for January 25, Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day, to arrive. Why on earth do

so many of us insist on popping those tiny little bubbles? Professor of psychology Kathleen M. Dillon believed that the answer stems from the power of touch.

In ancient Greece, it was common for people to carry a smooth stone called a “fingering piece” or “worry bead” in their pockets. Touching or petting the stone created a calming effect. These stones, Dillon observed, are similar to Catholic rosary beads or needlework projects like embroidery or knitting in their ability to calm the mind. Dillon even went so far as to conduct experiments on her students using sheets of Bubble Wrap. As it turns out, students who popped the bubbles were more relaxed and more focused than those who did not pop. She concluded that releasing muscle tension in the hands reduces stress in the rest of the body.

Sealed Air Corporation, the maker of Bubble Wrap since 1957, has updated its packaging options in recent years. In 2024, the company introduced a new fiber-based wrap that provides cushioning while being recyclable and more space-efficient for shipping. The design is intended to protect products during transit and reduce material use, though the classic poppable Bubble Wrap is still produced for those who enjoy the traditional experience.

That's good news for people like April Holliday, a member of an online group called “Popping Bubble Wrap.” She loves the material so much that she has even wrapped herself in a blanket of it. And if several YouTube videos are any indication, even raccoons would be sad to see the pop go out of Bubble Wrap. If you feel the urge to pop but don't have any Bubble Wrap on hand, you can virtually pop the bubbles in a number of online games. Clicking a bubble and hearing the familiar popping sound is *almost* as satisfying as the real thing!

January, February, March

Birthday's

January

20th ~ Marge

23rd ~ Pat W

February

9th ~Charlie

25th Ellen

March

25th ~ Gisela

Fun Little lunch Outting at the new Balz

