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Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

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STATEHOOD EXHIBITIONS AVAILABLE TO ALASKA SCHOOLS

As Alaska celebrates fifty years of statehood this year, the Alaska State Museum is reminding schools and school districts across the "Great Land" that it has available two traveling exhibitions directly related to the theme of statehood. "Creating Alaska" traces the history of Alaska government and the creation of our constitution, and "Eight Stars of Gold" tells the story of how Alaska's flag came to be and the Native Alaska boy who designed it.

The exhibitions are inexpensive to ship, low-risk, and easy to unpack and display, consisting entirely of wall panels with text and graphics. "Creating Alaska" is appropriate for high school students and "Eight Stars of Gold" is appropriate for elementary and middle school students.

"Creating Alaska" tells how, in November 1955, fifty-five Alaskans took on the task of writing a constitution for a state that did not yet exist. The delegates to Alaska's Constitutional Convention had 75 days to complete their work. Alaskans quickly approved the constitution. When statehood came in 1959, the document became the foundation of our state government. Since then, it has been hailed by impartial observers as a model constitution for its brevity, flexibility and protection of individual rights.

"Creating Alaska" is shipped in one crate and consists of 20 wall-hung panels. It comes in two versions with either 30" x 32" panels, or 15" x 16" panels. These are suitable for display in classrooms, libraries or hallways.

In March 1927, a middle school student at the Jessie Lee Mission Home in Seward received a telegram that left him pale and speechless: he was the winner of a territory-wide contest among school children to design a flag for Alaska. The inspiring story of Benny Benson and his flag is told in "Eight Stars of Gold: The Story of Alaska's Flag."

The exhibition includes reproductions of Benson's winning design as well as many other designs submitted by Alaska students along with informational text panels presented on 30 wall-hung, framed images, 19" x 21," shipped in two crates. Two copies of the exhibit are available for use. Online educational materials that complement the traveling exhibition are available through the State Museum's Web site.

The cost to the school for either exhibition is only for the shipping expense and the museum will work with the schools to find the least expensive shipping cost.

For further information on the exhibits please see the museum's Web site at:
www.museums.state.ak.us/traveling_exhibits/traveling_exhibits.html
or telephone Bob Banghart at (907) 465-2901.

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