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Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SILVER TSUMANI PREPAREDNESS

Homeless Outreach Director Discusses Oncoming Wave of Low-Income Seniors

JUNEAU – While many Alaskans know what to do in the event of a tsunami, what about the rapidly approaching “Silver Tsunami” of aging Baby Boomers? What will happen when 75 million Americans become senior citizens all at the same time? What havoc will this wreak on social security, corporate pensions, health care, and other aspects of public welfare?

Join Juneau St. Vincent de Paul Society general manager Dan Austin on Wednesday, March 7 at noon at the Alaska State Museum as he presents “The Silver Tsunami: The Approaching Demographic Wave of Low-Income Seniors and Homelessness.” Austin will discuss the Silver Tsunami phenomena in general, as well as its specific influence on both Alaska and Juneau, which has the fastest growing senior populations in the country. Juneau also leads Alaska in homelessness per capita, with a rate three times that of Los Angeles County. Within ten years, Austin estimates senior citizens of the Boomer generation will make up nearly half of Juneau’s homeless population.

Austin appears as part of a lecture series inspired by the current exhibit on display at the State Museum, “Out of the Rain,” focusing on the impact of homelessness in our community. In conjunction with the Juneau Homeless Coalition, the State Museum hosts a free lecture every Wednesday in March, featuring a different speaker each week. Admission to the lectures is free; visitors are invited to bring a brown bag lunch and encouraged to make a canned food donation to the Southeast Alaska Food Bank.

Remaining speakers include:

March 14 – Haifa Sadighi, Student Supplemental Services Coordinator, Juneau School District: “Student Homelessness in the Juneau School District”

March 21 – Mandy O’Neal Cole, AWARE Direct Services Manager: “Homelessness and Domestic Violence”

March 28 – Scott Ciambor, H&SS planner for the Alaska Mental Health Board/Advisory Board on Drug and Alcohol Abuse: “Alaska’s Inadequate Housing Stock: Gaps that Impact the Homeless, Low-Income, and Middle Class”

Winter hours at the museum are 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. **Free admission to the exhibit that will run through April 21 is available to those who bring a donation of canned food for the Southeast Alaska Food Bank.** Regular discounted winter admission is \$3. Visitors 18 and under are admitted free of charge. An annual pass that allows unlimited visits to the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka is available for \$15. Assistance is available for visitors with special needs. Please contact Visitor Services at 465-2901 before the visit.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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www.museums.state.ak.us

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