

2009

September

# V Alaska S Vegetarian Society

## Consuming Healthy Information

by Delisa Renideo

If I made the decision to become a vegetarian many years ago, why is it important for me to keep learning more about it? After all, I'm already convinced!

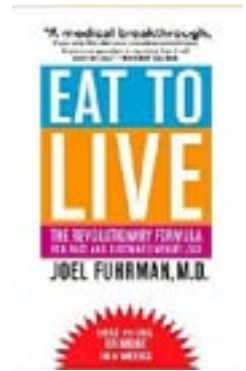
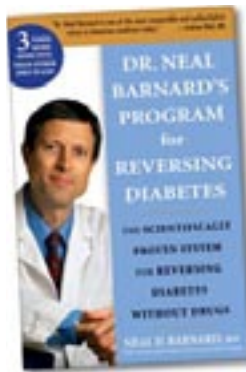
Even though I've eaten a plant-based diet for 20 years, I learn new things about plant-based nutrition, cooking techniques and recipes, and how our food choices affect others all the time. As a result, my diet is much healthier, more varied and interesting than it was 20 years ago. So whether you are a seasoned vegetarian or vegan or new to this whole thing, learning more is helpful and can be exciting and life-changing.

Fortunately, there are innumerable good books, websites, documentaries and podcasts that offer opportunities for us to expand our knowledge. I'd like to share just a few of the books and ideas that have changed my life.

I used to believe, like most of us, that using oil, particularly olive oil, was healthy and necessary for sautéing and

for foods to be tasty. However, then I read *Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes*. Reversing diabetes? How could that be? I learned that excess fat in our diet is the culprit in causing type 2 diabetes by making our cells resistant to insulin, so by reducing the fat we eat, we can not only prevent diabetes but reverse it by removing the cause. Incredible! And when we remove the cause, our bodies can again begin to handle healthy carbohydrates as they are supposed to. I immediately began cooking without oil and discovered that food actually tastes better, fresher, and lighter without oil.

When I read Dr. Joel Fuhrman's book, *Eat to Live*, I gained a new understanding of the importance of the nutrient density of foods. The more nutrients per calorie a food contains, the more nutrient dense it is. One of the keys to maintaining optimal nutrition and a healthy weight involves eating foods see *Healthy Info*, continued on page 4





## My Veg Story

by Naomi Feaster

My name is Naomi Feaster and I am eleven years old. When my grandma asked if she could interview me for my “Veg Story,” I said yes. I stopped eating meat two years ago and I’m glad I did. None of my friends are vegetarians but most of them don’t give me a bad time about my choice. Well, except for one friend but I just ignore it.

My mom and grandma eat a plant-based diet but that’s not why I decided to not eat meat. First, I want to be healthy but mostly I love animals and I don’t want them to be killed and I really don’t want them in my body. Plus, I know that not eating animals keeps our planet healthy too.

Of course, I’ve been asked “the question.” “Where do you get your protein?” I answer, “Beans and broccoli.” Actually, my favorite meal is tacos. I love refried beans! I like

broccoli and mandarin oranges. Sometimes I miss marshmallows and Jell-O but I don’t want to eat them because they have gelatin in them. Did you know that gelatin comes from horse’s hooves?

There are lots of delicious substitutes that my mom buys. I like the Boca burgers, soy ice cream, mini-dogs, soymilk and “not-chicken” nuggets. One thing I really don’t miss about my old diet is dead animal parts. Yuk!

I decorated my school notebook with stickers that say, “Kick the meat habit,” “Change your diet, change the world,” “Cut class, not frogs,” and “Must love tofu.” I didn’t do this to offend anyone. I wear a shirt that says, “I don’t eat my friends” with animals on the front. I never do this to start an argument.

I do it because the best part of being vegetarian is being myself and helping all living creatures.



*One thing I really don't miss about my old diet is dead animal parts. Yuk!*



### Watch for Upcoming Holiday Cooking Classes

This fall, Delisa will again be offering a Healthy Holiday Cooking class consisting of two sessions. The Anchorage classes will be held on November 11 and 18 in the evenings. The Valley classes have not yet been scheduled, but we will provide information when it becomes available. Come learn how to maintain your commitment to healthy eating through the holidays without sacrificing taste or tradition.

# Childhood Obesity

By: Mary L Gavin MD

From: [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) February 2009

The percentage of overweight children in the United States is growing at an alarming rate, with 1 out of 3 kids now considered overweight or obese. Many kids are spending less time exercising and more time in front of the TV, computer, or video-game console.

Today's busy families have fewer free moments to prepare nutritious, home-cooked meals. From fast food to electronics, quick and easy is the reality for many people in the new millennium.

Preventing kids from becoming overweight means adapting the way your family eats and exercises, and how you spend time together. Helping kids lead healthy lifestyles begins with parents who lead by example.

Obesity increases the risk for serious health conditions like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol—all once considered exclusively adult diseases. Obese kids may also be prone to low self-esteem that stems from being teased, bullied, or rejected by peers. They often develop unhealthy eating disorders and are at risk for depression and substance abuse. Their future health

and quality of life can be greatly affected by obesity.

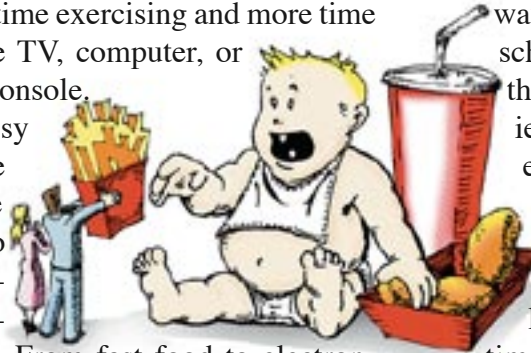
Much of what we eat is quick and easy—from fat-laden fast food to microwave and prepackaged meals. Daily schedules are so jam-packed that there's little time to prepare healthier meals or to squeeze in some exercise.

Portion sizes, in the home and out, have grown greatly.

Plus, now more than ever life is sedentary—kids spend more time playing with electronic devices, from computers, to handheld video games, than actively playing outside. Television is a major culprit.

Kids younger than 6 spend an average of 2 hours a day in front of a screen, mostly watching TV, DVDs, or videos. Older kids and teens spend almost 4 hours a day watching TV, DVDs, or videos. When computer use and video games are included, time spent in front of a screen increases to over 5 and 1/2 hours a day.

Many kids don't get enough physical activity. More and more schools are eliminating PE programs or cutting down  
*see [Childhood Obesity](#), cont'd on page 8*



**Obese kids may also be prone to low self-esteem that stems from being teased, bullied, or rejected by peers.**

## *Consuming Healthy Information*

*continued from the front page:*

that are nutrient dense, rather than calorie dense. The Standard American Diet (SAD) is very calorie dense and nutrient poor, but even many people eating a plant-based diet could improve their health and weight by shifting to more nutrient dense foods. After reading *Eat to Live*, we began eating more green, leafy vegetables and more fresh fruits. I soon lost ten pounds and my hot flashes disappeared!

When I read *The China Study*, by T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., I was amazed to discover that animal protein causes cancer to grow. I was even more shocked and dismayed to find out in this book that this information wasn't new, but had been prevented from reaching the public by the economic and political forces that seek to maintain the status quo and protect the interests of industry rather than the individual! I became even

*Reading and learning help keep my commitment level high.*

more committed to sharing the message myself, to help unsuspecting Americans make food choices that would support health rather than promote illness.

The health benefits of a plant-based diet would be enough to keep me eating my veggies, but John Robbins' book, *The Food Revolution*, deepened my commitment by helping me understand the more far-reaching effects of my food choices. I now realize

that what I eat is not just a personal decision because my diet affects the forests, the air and water, the topsoil, and greenhouse gases. It affects the 10 billion farmed animals



slaughtered each year in the U.S. and the wild animals whose habitats are destroyed by animal agriculture. It affects the world's hungry people because it takes

16 pounds of plant foods to make 1 pound of beef. Understanding how my food choices affect the web of life allows me to make choices that are not only good for me, but for the planet and all beings who live here.

Reading and learning help keep my commitment level high. If reading isn't your thing, taking the Food for Life Nutrition and Cooking Classes (see p. 5), watching videos and listening to podcasts may be more helpful. It can be easy to slip into old routines or bad habits if we don't refresh our memories about the reasons we made the commitment in the first place. So I'm grateful for all the women and men who keep this message in front of us, and I encourage you to consume this information with me as an important part of a healthy diet.



**Mission Statement:**  
To create a compassionate and sustainable world by inspiring and supporting reverence for all life and the adoption of a plant-based diet.

## AVS at the Alaska State Fair!

One might expect that with cotton candy, turkey legs, funnel cakes, and other traditional Fair fare, healthy garden-fresh roll-ups in a beet leaf would receive a cold reception. Not so! The Alaska Vegetarian Society's demonstration booth in the Borealis tent helped kids and adults create their own delicious, nutritious, refreshing wraps.

The experience was something like an edible craft project. First, we gave our eager participants a wet wipe to clean their hands, then provided a beet leaf to act as the green canvas for their art. Next came a dollop of cheesy-beany spread to smooth on the leaf, followed by a sprinkle of colorful, sweet, organic shredded carrots and freshly grown sprouts. Then, starting at the small end, they rolled the leaf into a wrap bursting with flavor and nutrients.

"What is this spread? This is really good! Can I have the recipe?" With curly sprouts peeking from between their lips, most of our participants savored every bite. A few kids handed their roll-up to their parents after trying it, but the majority of kids and adults discovered what we already know: healthy food can taste great!



### Many Thanks to Rempel Family Farms

We owe a debt of gratitude to Rempel Family Farms for donating over 40 pounds of incredibly delicious, organic carrots plus several large heads of celery for us to share at the Alaska State Fair.



## *Food for Life*

*Nutrition & Cooking  
Classes for Cancer  
Prevention and Survival*

• *Anchorage* •

### Providence Cancer Center

3851 Piper St. Bldg. U2  
Room 2281 (Media Center)

**Sept. 21 – Nov. 2, 2009**

Mondays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

• *Palmer* •

### Mat-Su Regional

#### Medical Center

2500 S. Woodworth Loop

**Sept. 22 – Nov. 3, 2009**

Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

• *Willow* •

### United Methodist Church

Milepost 67.8, Parks Highway

**Sept. 24 – Nov. 5, 2009**

Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

**Each class meets weekly  
for 7 weeks. Cost: \$90**

### Pre-registration required!

**To register contact Delisa at  
907-373-1526 or  
delisa@yestolife.info**

## Nutrition Nuggets – BLENDED SALADS

by Delisa Renideo

I first learned about blending salads from Dr. Joel Fuhrman in his book, *Eat to Live*. It sounded like a strange idea at first. Blending fruits into smoothies, yes. But green leafy veggies? After learning more and trying it, I became convinced.

First, we need to realize just how important green, leafy veggies are. They are loaded with antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fiber and protein, and very low in calories. They win the nutrient density competition hands down! We should all eat as many green leafies as possible, both raw and lightly cooked.

This is where blending comes in handy. Sitting down to a huge plate of salad every day can seem daunting. It takes a lot of chewing, and a lot of time, to consume the amount we should strive for. But putting this same huge salad in a blender and drinking it not only saves a lot of time chewing, but increases our body's ability to absorb the nutrients so bountifully provided by these green veggies.

The nutrients in greens are encapsulated within the cell walls, which are mostly made of cellulose. Our body doesn't break

down the cellulose very well, so much of the punch of these nutrient powerhouses is flushed down the toilet. Chewing very thoroughly helps, but none of us are going to chew as efficiently as the blades of a powerful blender. Blending the salad releases the nutrients from the cell walls and allows us to absorb many times more of the life-supporting nutrients provided by leafy greens.

You can make a variety of blended salads, from green smoothies with lots of fruit added, to a more traditional tasting salad with a bit of vinegar added, to a savory blend that might be considered more of a

soup, if you add enough liquid. If you want to lose weight, drinking a fiber-rich blend of low calorie veggies before eating the more calorie-dense foods to follow will help fill you up with fewer

calories. On the other hand, if you want this blended salad to be a complete meal, you can add some grains or beans to the mixture, making it creamy and a bit higher in calories. (See the recipe of the month on page 7 for an example.) If you are an athlete needing to increase your calorie intake because

see ***Blended Salads***, cont'd on page 7

**Blending the salad releases the nutrients from the cell walls and allows us to absorb many times more of the life-supporting nutrients.**

**Be sure to add plenty of leafy greens and you'll get an instant infusion of high quality nutrients and energy.**

## ***Blended Salads***, *continued from page 6:*

of increased energy needs, you can add an avocado, nuts, or seeds to the mix. No matter how you make your blended salad, be sure to add plenty of leafy greens and you'll get an instant infusion of high quality nutrients and energy.

Be brave! Be creative! Experiment! You'll discover what works for you and what you don't much care for. If you make something that doesn't taste too great, don't worry. Try some other combinations. You'll discover that these blended salads help you feel great and your taste buds will begin to crave them, as well.

An example of a simple green smoothie:

- 10 ounces greens  
(spinach or romaine lettuce)
- 1 cup grapes
- 1 cup pineapple

Blend fruits first, than add greens and blend thoroughly, until smooth.

Add a little ice to make it colder if desired.

You could also add a banana for creaminess. Try a frozen banana!

Mmmmm good!

## ***Recipe of the Month*** **Blended Salad/Soup**

A favorite from the kitchen of Toni Truesell

I enjoy variations of this blended salad/soup every day for lunch. What goes into it depends upon what's in my refrigerator!

A Vita-Mix is very helpful in making this salad. But give it a try if you have any good, powerful blender.

**Ingredients:** Veggies of any kind. I suggest: Carrots, celery, green, red or yellow peppers, onion, bok-choy, spinach, swiss chard, cabbage, tomato... Be creative! Wash and cut veggies before blending.

**To thin:** add water to desired consistency.

**To thicken:** add garbanzo beans (or bean of choice), cooked rice or oven baked corn chips.

**To spice:** add salt, pepper, cumin, Tabasco sauce, etc. to taste. (I add ground flax seed as well.)

Blend above ingredients until smooth. The amount you blend is dependent upon how many you wish to serve. Serve either cold or hot.



## Movie Showing



Saturday  
September 12  
7:00pm  
In Palmer

United Protetant (Presbyterian) Church  
For more information, go to:  
<http://adelicatebalance.com.au/>

*A Delicate Balance* documents the latest discoveries of some of the most prominent experts on nutrition in the world. Over 50 years of research is skillfully woven into what feels like a detective unraveling the mysteries behind the disease epidemic which has struck affluent countries with a vengeance; disease has been escalating over the last 50 years resulting in 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women being diagnosed with cancer.

Watching this film will help you make informed choices about your health and the environment and how to reduce your personal environmental impact *A Delicate Balance* debunks the myths surrounding the production and consumption of animal products and exposes the harsh realities.

- Why are you three times more likely to die of colon cancer if you eat meat?
- How is meat production causing water shortage, starvation and poverty?
- Are you inflicting Type 1 diabetes on your children by feeding them milk?
- Why don't our medical schools teach doctors about nutrition?
- Can becoming a vegan really lead to worldwide social equity?

## Childhood Obesity

*continued from page 3:*

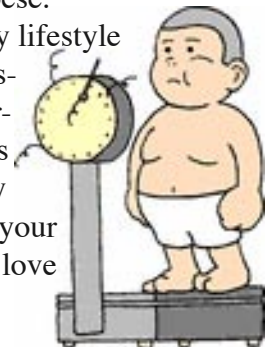
the time spent on fitness building activities. One study showed that gym classes offered third-graders just 25 minutes of vigorous activity each week.

Current guidelines recommend that kids over two years of age get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.

Genetics also play a role. Genes help determine body type and how your body stores and burns fat just like they help determine other traits. Genes alone, however, cannot explain the current obesity crisis. Because both genes and habits can be passed down from one generation to the next, multiple members of a family may struggle with weight.

People in the same family tend to have similar eating patterns, maintain the same levels of physical activity, and adopt the same attitudes toward being overweight. Studies have shown that a child's risk of obesity greatly increases if one or more parent is overweight or obese.

Model a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising regularly, and incorporating healthy habits into your family's daily life. Most of all, let your kids know that you love them - no matter what their weight.



# Vegan We Are

by Pat and Don Myers

For each of us that become vegan, there is usually a story behind the decision. Here is a brief look at our story.

Ten years ago! A prediction! The Myers will be vegan in ten years.

To this prediction, we would have responded, “No way! That is fanatical and

not in keeping with our beliefs. And besides, we try to be careful with our diets—getting plenty of protein and calcium, drinking plenty of milk, following the American



recommended diet.” We had friends that were vegetarian/vegan—all the same to us. We did not judge them, but it was not for us. Besides our religion is Bahá’í, and as such, we associate with people from all around the world representing many different cultures. Hospitality and providing food for guests is the norm, and many cultures consider it rude not to eat what the cook prepares. So how could we offend people at this basic level—not eating the food provided—never!!

Ten years later, we are vegan! What happened?

Pat had her first bout with cancer

at the end of 2000. She began to hear that a vegetarian diet was good for cancer patients. Things went well with the treatment, and we went overseas in August of 2001, first to India for three months and eventually to Haifa, Israel, for nearly five years. In India at the school where we volunteered, the food served was vegetarian (mostly vegan), and we loved it. In Haifa, we worked at the Bahá’í World Centre with people from over seventy different countries, many of whom were vegetarian or mainly vegetarian. The major meal of the day—a large buffet—was prepared for the 700 plus volunteers, including much vegetarian food to meet the needs of folks from vegetarian cultures. Pat, in keeping with what she had learned from her bout with cancer, became mostly vegetarian.

Additionally, we had a son living in the Seattle area who had been vegetarian for years, and on visits to see him it was most often vegetarian fare. Then in August 2006 Pat had a reoccurrence of

***Pat began to hear that a vegetarian diet was good for cancer patients.***

cancer; it had metastasized. We returned to the states, and Pat began treatment again. Dr. Harmon at the Avante clinic recommended primarily a vegetarian diet. So we see *Vegan We Are*, continued on page 10

## *Vegan We Are*, continued from page 9:

attempted to become vegetarian. Wow! What a struggle! It was not as easy as eating all that great food prepared for us overseas. Pat was disabled at the time, and Don was responsible for the cooking. Vegetarian just did not fit our recipes, and how could we get the protein and calcium that Pat needed?

A friend started taking Delisa's classes and kept calling Pat to go with her. After much nagging, Pat finally agreed and shared with Don that she wanted to go.

To her surprise, Don said, "Well if you are going, I am too." So we both went. And here were the missing pieces of the puzzle—wonderful, easy to prepare recipes and the scientific information about a vegan diet. Now we even knew the difference between vegan and vegetarian, decided it was important enough to investigate, read several books, and became vegan. But the story does not end there.

Soon after, Don's mother at age 84 became vegan, and his sister and a friend of hers became vegan—all living in the Midwest. Then, a friend visiting from Haifa joined the vegan crowd as well, and friends in Colorado became mostly vegan. And our vegetarian son is working on being vegan.

And that is not all. Most have

seen health benefits. Don lost about thirty pounds and is no longer on cholesterol medicine. His sister has MS and has been able to get off much of her medicine, and she has more energy. The friend in Haifa lost weight and has found she no longer has headaches and has overall much better health. Pat's overall functioning has continued to improve in spite of progression of disease. The list goes on.

The big worry about offending people, espe-

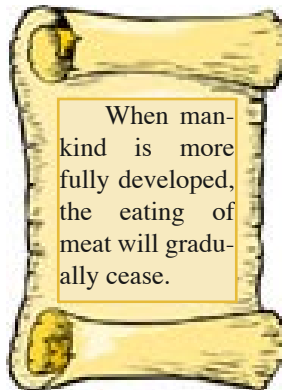
cially those from other cultures with language barriers, is no longer a concern and certainly not a reason to avoid being veg-

an, we decided. We figure we will just take it as it comes, and if on rare occasions it seems necessary to eat non-vegan food, we can just eat enough to be polite, and our bodies will most likely survive.

And vegan living is really compatible with our religious beliefs. One Bahá'í

teaching is that humanity is developing. A quote from the Bahá'í writings states, "As humanity progresses, meat will be used less and less, for the teeth of man are not carnivorous.... When mankind is more fully developed, the eating of meat will gradually cease."

*Here were the missing pieces of the puzzle—wonderful, easy to prepare recipes and the scientific information about a vegan diet.*



# BOOK REVIEW

## Quantum Wellness Cleanse

by Kathy Freston, reviewed by Toni Truesdell

*Quantum Wellness Cleanse* was born from the many questions author Kathy Freston received concerning her previous book, *Quantum Wellness*. Ninety percent of the questions and letters she received from that book dealt with navigating the 21-day Cleanse.

After reading *Quantum Wellness*, I too was inspired to give my body a “retreat” for a mere 21 days. During this time I would set aside certain foods and drinks that are counter-productive to my well-being.

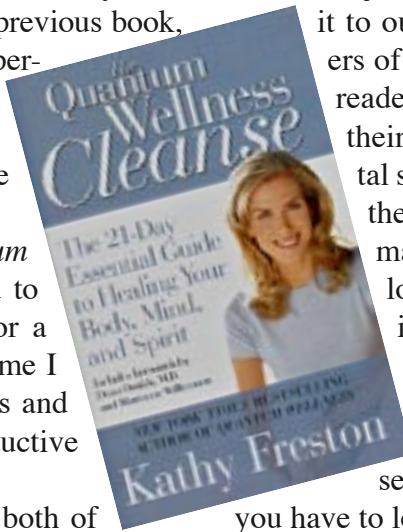
I highly recommend both of these books, but for practical reasons I was drawn to the simplicity of her second book, *Quantum Wellness Cleanse*. It is divided into 21 chapters, one for each day of the cleanse, and is followed by 98 pages of delicious recipes to see you through this time of renewal and revitalization.


This book is more than informational, though it certainly is that. I found it to be profoundly inspirational. Her gentle persuasion helps one to ask pertinent life questions so that we might better honor our bodies, our minds, this earth and all other inhabitants and our spirits.

This 281 page book addresses many topics: dietary myths, the treatment

of animals, how our diet affects so much more than just ourselves and why we owe it to ourselves to be better caretakers of our body. Freston invites the reader to “lean into” the cleanse at their own pace, taking incremental steps. As one takes these steps they will find the rewards to be many: mental clarity, weight loss, improved health and spiritual awareness, just to name a few.

This is a book that is life changing. See for yourself. Just 21 days! What do you have to lose?



<h2>Who to Call</h2>	
	
Elaine Albertson: AVS Newsletter Editor.....	746-4668
Peggy Robinson: Treasurer and Membership.....	373-1901
Toni Truesdell: Advertising Coordinator.....	745-4404
Delisa Renideo: Rays of Hope Director.....	373-1526
Charlie Renideo: Bookstore and Website.....	373-1526

## Upcoming Events



### Saturday, September 12

Movie showing of *A Delicate Balance*, 7:00 p.m. at the United Protetant (Presbyterian) Church in Palmer. See article on page 8.

### Friday, September 18

Deadline for articles and information to be included in the November AVS newsletter. Call Elaine at 746-4668, or email to [elaine@alaskaveg.org](mailto:elaine@alaskaveg.org)

### Friday, September 18

Rays of Hope board of directors' monthly meeting, 10:00am. If you are interested in knowing more about AVS' parent organization, call Delisa at 373-1526.

### Mon, Tues, Thur, September 21, 22, 24

Cancer Project's new series of 7 classes begins. Fee \$90. Space is limited. For information, see notice on page 5.

### Saturday, September 26

AVS potluck dinner, 6:00- 8:00 p.m. at the United Protetant (Presbyterian) Church in Palmer. There will be informtion, an educational program and opportunities to meet new people. Call 373-1526 for information and for a map, visit: [alaskaveg.org/PotluckDinners.html](http://alaskaveg.org/PotluckDinners.html)

## Animal Quotes

“Think occasionally of the suffering of which you spare yourself the sight.”

~*Albert Schweitzer*

“I ask people why they have deer heads on their walls. They always say because it's such a beautiful animal. There you go. I think my mother is attractive, but I have photographs of her.”

~*Ellen DeGeneres*

“The fact that man knows right from wrong proves his intellectual superiority to the other creatures; but the fact that he can do wrong proves his moral inferiority to any creatures that cannot.”

~*Mark Twain*

“I believe in animal rights, and high among them is the right to the gentle stroke of a human hand.”

~*Robert Brault*

The Alaska Vegetarian Society is non-profit and under the umbrella of Rays of Hope, a 501(c)(3) organization. To join AVS, contact Peggy Robinson at 373-1901, or send an email to [peggy@alaskaveg.org](mailto:peggy@alaskaveg.org).

**V** **Alaska**  
**Vegetarian**  
**Society**

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