



ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Alaska Life

Thousands of rubber ducks float Anchorage's Ship Creek during second annual fundraiser

✎ Author: Emily Mesner ⌚ Updated: September 17, 2020 📅 Published September 12, 2020



People line Ship Creek in Anchorage and watch rubber ducks float past them during the second annual Great Alaska Duck Race on Sept. 12, 2020. The event was held by Alaska EXCEL, a local nonprofit that provides educational programs to rural Alaskan youth. (Emily Mesner / ADN)

Volunteers released thousands of rubber ducks into Ship Creek in front of a growing crowd that waited eagerly in the warm September sun on Saturday evening.

The Great Alaska Duck Race, typically a local event, saw participation statewide this year after Alaska's online gaming laws were changed due to the pandemic, said Jamie Klaes, marketing director and aviation instructor at Alaska EXCEL. This enabled participants across the state to purchase tickets online and watch the streamed event from the comfort of their own home.

Alaska EXCEL, a local nonprofit that provides educational opportunities to rural Alaska youth, hosted the second annual event. As of 5 p.m. Saturday, the nonprofit sold \$103,450 in tickets. Around \$10,000 came from Utqiagvik and the surrounding area, Klaes said.

The nonprofits people could choose from included Alaska SeaLife Center, Arctic Education Foundation, Alaska EXCEL, Anchorage Hockey Association, Beans Cafe, Scotty Gomez Foundation, AK Firecrackers Fastpitch Softball Organization, Anchorage Opera, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, Anchorage Downtown Community Council, and Wasilla Youth Soccer Association.

"It really allowed us to have a statewide event," Klaes said of the law change.

The crowd trickled out after winners were announced. Volunteers worked to remove the rubber ducks from the water. "No duck left behind!" one shouted as another raced across the creek to grab the remaining wandering ducks.

Tobey Priest was the day's \$10,000 grand prize winner for the \$20 raffle ticket while Shelle Cover's rubber duck placed first in the \$10 raffle ticket draw, earning her \$5,000. A full list of winners can be found at the Great Alaska Duck Race Facebook page.

About this Author

Emily Mesner

Emily Mesner is a multimedia journalist for the Anchorage Daily News. She previously worked for the National Park Service at Denali National Park and Preserve and the Western Arctic National Parklands in Kotzebue, at the Cordova Times and at the Jackson Citizen Patriot in Jackson, Michigan.

