

Meet Carla Stanley, representing the City of Homer

Our Board of Directors brings a diversity of skills and backgrounds to the Council. Our representative from the City of Homer, Carla Stanley, is no exception. She is an artist, teacher, boater, outdoor enthusiast, EMT and marine scientist. She is also a mother of two with five grandchildren. Although technically retired, Carla works intermittently for the US Fish and Wildlife Service and has been on the Cook Inlet RCAC Board for 9 years. Driven by her eclectic interests and background she contributes extensively to making Homer a great place to live.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Carla met her husband, Wayne, while teaching in Colorado. Together, they came to Alaska in 1970 to teach for the Kenai Peninsula School District in Soldotna. Carla has degrees in earth science and life science and master's degree in education and art. From 1975 to 1997, Carla taught Junior High and High School science, anatomy and physiology, and art, sharing her passion for nature with her students by bringing the outdoors into the classroom, and taking her students outdoors. Carla's field trips often consisted of ferrying her 8th grade students to Petersen Bay, hiking the beach weighted down with science equipment, hoisting up tents, and rousing her students at 1 AM to witness a variety of creatures at low tide. Carla credits the high school principal, Roger Schmidt, who was a commercial fisherman, for encouraging her to take classes in marine science and secure a grant for science equipment. Carla and a fellow teacher would take students to the principal's fishing site, once getting stuck in the mud trying to drive stakes into the mud to illustrate tidal height and crests. She obviously made an impression. Her students stay in touch, and more than one has credited her with influencing their careers in science, medicine, or engineering.

Following the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, Carla contacted the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and asked to volunteer to clean up oil on the beaches. Instead, she was hired along with commercial fishing techs to pick up and map globs of oil that made their way into Cook Inlet, using GPS and marking the locations on maps with red dots. What they discovered was that oil globs came up the middle of the Inlet and flushed out in a similar fashion, rarely hitting the beaches. Carla sees her stewardship, classes and understanding of environmental degradation as bringing value to Cook Inlet RCAC's board and an opportunity to stay directly involved in keeping Kachemak Bay and Cook Inlet protected from future spills. Among her priorities is advocating for stronger oil spill prevention measures, such as escort and docking assist tugs, to ensure safer oil tanker transport, loading and offloading throughout the treacherous waters and coastlines, from Prince William Sound to Kodiak Island and beyond.

In 1997, when Carla retired from teaching she saw the opportunity to move to Homer. Among Carla's special places to visit is Jakolof Bay, where she and Wayne built a cabin with logs they acquired with a snow machine trade, and also a guest cottage where they invite friends in need of peace and quiet. Carla says while she loves to travel, she prefers having a job to do when she gets to her destination. She likes to get her hands dirty, conducting science camps, participating in the yearly coast walk, cleaning up beaches, or boating and kayaking.

Carla considers herself a scenic artist and illustrator. She was shy as a child, and art was a way to get outdoors and express her love of nature. Currently, Carla is at work painting a 150-foot mural for the new Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center. Carla continues to work intermittently, including working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the Shorebird Festival, which she has done since 1998. According to Carla, her motto is to always aim high and shoot for the sun. You'll get more accomplished by setting seemingly impossible goals.



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