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Priscilla Botero - Long Time Seldovian

by Mary Glover



Priscilla Botero has been one of Seldovia's long time community members, and she doesn't plan on leaving any time soon. "I hate the city," Priscilla informed me. One of the last babies to be born in the Seldovia hospital in 1970, Priscilla has family roots in Seldovia that go back for many years.

For one, both of Priscilla's parents, Alfred and Helen Quijance are native Alaskans; her mother from the Kenai natives and her father from the Kodiak. Priscilla describes herself as a "mixture of Russian, Aleut, and some Filipino". Her family has long practiced many of the subsistence techniques native to their culture. Priscilla continues many of those practices today with her own family. The most important is their use of fish, mostly salmon, which they dry and use all winter long. Salmon eggs are also considered a delicacy. They collect seaweed, berries, bidarkis, clams, and an occasional octopus. Once a year, they hunt a seal and use everything they can from it – tanning the hide and using the fat to

Priscilla attended Susan B. English School for almost all of her school years. She can remember a time before the school was completed; where the cafeteria connects the pool and gymnasium to the rest of the school today there used to be small white trailers that held classes for the Kindergarten, first and second grades. But this is not the school Priscilla graduated from. For her senior year she attended East Anchorage high school for "something different". Following graduation she returned to Seldovia to work for the Seldovia Native Association as a receptionist. She met her first husband, married, and the couple spent a few years in Anchorage before returning to their hometown. "I don't like the city," Priscilla reminded me. She worked again as a receptionist, this time for the Seldovia Village Tribe. She has gradually worked her way up and has been an accountant for the company for about 9-10 years.

Six years ago, Priscilla met her current husband, Juan Botero. Jua

make oil.

Besides the native practices that keep her connected to Seldovia, Priscilla remembers growing up here and is still very close to many of the friends (and family) she played with when she was younger. The one thing that really sticks out about her childhood was that every kid would gather to play together outside all the time. They always found something to do and there were never any “cliques”. They would go on picnics, go fishing and swimming, sledding, and 3-wheel riding. Most of the older families here are related to Priscilla’s family in some way. Priscilla always liked the aspect of knowing everyone and feeling secure playing in town. She enjoys much of that same freedom with her own children today.

had moved to Anchorage from Colombia to live with his mother. A little while later, he wound up in Seldovia working for Fred Elvsaas. He and Priscilla now live out Jakolof Bay Road with Ariel (Priscilla’s 15 year old daughter from first marriage) and their 2 boys, David (4) and Benjamin (3). The whole family visited Juan’s relatives a few years ago in Colombia and stayed for a month. They had such a good time enjoying the people, the food and the warm weather that it was hard to come back. But Priscilla says she is always glad to be home in Seldovia and hopes to never have to leave.



Priscilla and Juan Botero



Priscilla and Children

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