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### Rob Rurka is Rustic in Seldovia and Loving It!

by Tamara Blodgett



A long way from his home state of Arizona, Rob Rurka has made a niche for himself in our small seaside community. Rob was born and lived in Connecticut through sixth grade. The family of five then made the move to Arizona. The eldest of three, with a sister and a brother, life has been an adventure from the beginning. Rob got his first taste of the outdoors when he and his brother would “roam the woods” near their residence in Connecticut. The family also took time to explore the area with camping and hiking. After moving to Arizona, Rob was inspired to take Jazz Band in high school where he learned how to play guitar and drums. Mainly self-taught after that stint, Rob became part of a country band where he sang as a lead vocalist and performed bass player. He also worked as a medic while he served our country in the Army for five years. Having acquired life skills and more in those jobs, Rob was ready for a progressive evolution in his life.

Building log homes and living in rural areas captured Rob’s interest, echoing the memories of his childhood. He branched

Since his move to Seldovia, he has found employment for a series of jobs and feels more “refreshed.” Conversely, working additional hours in those jobs feels less draining than the *singular* job in Homer. Rob can be found teaching music lessons at the Boys & Girls Club all day Saturday and some during the workweek. He teaches Kenpo Karate (Chinese) Monday through Friday from five to six PM. He also works as a substitute teacher four to six times per month and works two, part time days at the Seldovia Fuel & Lube store in town. His Karate work is considered to be “satellite” work from the Homer Kenpo Karate School affiliate. Rob has received his blue belt, which is at the advanced intermediate level. With sixteen students ages seven through mid-fifties, he has appreciated the help of Unit Director Laurel Hilts who advocates Karate as a great physical workout. Just when you were thinking there could not be one more anecdotal pursuit for Rob, his “artsy” side doesn’t stop at music, having received an Associates Degree in Graphic Arts!

out, beginning the construction of his dream log home in Flagstaff . When local building codes constrained his vision too much, he felt that it was time for him to move somewhere that was in better agreement with his vision for his life. This led him to Alaska about a decade ago. First arriving in Anchorage , it wasn't too long before the Kenai Peninsula caught his attention. He moved southward, first living in Kasilof, then finally moving to Homer two years ago. There he found a steady job as a phlebotomist for South Peninsula Hospital , mainly working at the Homer Medical Clinic. A phlebotomist is one who draws blood for examination or donation. Although the work was steady, Rob dreamed of living a non-traditional lifestyle, one in which the job he did was within several fields of interest. Having bought property 'out-the-road' when he first arrived in Alaska , Rob made the plunge to move to Seldovia.

Now that he has settled into his new lifestyle, he feels like it was a change for the best. His cabin is situated amongst a heavily treed five-acre plat, with old growth and second mature growth trees. He built the cabin himself and has thus far not had to cut one tree down for firewood (he figures he goes through about four to five cord per year). The serenity and peace that this affords is more valuable to Rob than money. He collects rainwater from a gutter routed into a collection barrel, with an old-fashioned outhouse which is just his speed (cleaning bathrooms is overrated after all!).

Rob is close to his family, with an eighteen-year-old son named Matthew who has taken the time to visit and has another planned visit on the horizon. Rob's parents, married forty-five years and going strong, have been here twice already and will come again. Following in the family tradition, Matthew is currently working full time for a log home building outfit in Arizona where Rob's parents still reside. Having moved from Payson, Arizona (elevation seven thousand feet) Rob was not unaccustomed to cold weather. However, there is a lot more excitement with Seldovia weather! Instead of 'clear and sunny', Rob has a 'wait and see' surprise each day, which he prefers. Rob's co-worker(s) at the B&G Club describes Rob as "great with the kids," and an 'Ebay-aholic,' something that millions are "guilty" of! With packages coming and instrument shopping (where's that perfect guitar anyway?) Rob uses his time very efficiently. Now happy with his myriad of positions, Rob's come full circle, living the dream and working where he plays, a versatile addition to diverse Seldovia.

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