

Two Rivers Strong™ – Arson Survivor’s Relief Fund Disbursement

Two Rivers Strong issues \$17,681.77 in grants to Two Rivers, Alaska residents, businesses, and community organizations that were burned down during a serial arson attack on the community in 2021.



Fairbanks, Alaska Sep 16, 2022 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Two Rivers Strong™ – Arson Survivor’s Relief Fund Disbursement – Press Release

On September 9th, 2022, at the Pleasant Valley Community Association Community Building Two Rivers Strong™ met with members of the Two Rivers, Alaska community and survivors of the 2021 Two Rivers Serial Arson Fires at 6:30 PM. Adrian Peterson with KTVF was there to capture the evening’s event.

The evening opened with a little history of Two Rivers Strong™:

In August of 2021 Mac Lebeau printed some t-shirts to sell to help raise money for ALL the victims of the serial arson fires at a fundraising horse show a friend put together with the Alaska State Quarter Horse

Association. Unfortunately, the t-shirts didn't arrive from Phoenix, Arizona in time, so Mac talked with Barbie Howard the owner of the Two Rivers Outpost Café at 24-mile Chena Hots Springs Road to place the t-shirts for sale in the café. Not knowing any better Mac thought the funds raised could go to PVCA and they could disburse the funds. Once Mac learned that wasn't possible as PVCA was already managing separate funds for the Reward Fund. Mac reached out to Maisie Thomas with the Fairbanks Daily Newsminer looking for information about the series of arsons. He wanted to know who the victims were and the dates of each fire. Naturally, Maisie had suspicions of why these questions were being asked and by whom. Those suspicions lead to an interview and having an article take the front page of the local newspaper, The Daily Newsminer on August 26th, 2021. On this day Mac Lebeau sold \$1,000 in t-shirts through his screen-printing company's website www.spotteddogprint.com. Upon finding out the PVCA couldn't accept the fund being generated by this newspaper article Mac got an Alaska State Business License, and an IRS EIN number to open a bank account in the name of Two Rivers Strong™, knowing that the funds he raised had to be kept separate from his personal money. He also filed for a Trademark with the USPTO. Mac filed for a Trademark because he wanted to ensure that nobody else could use the name Two Rivers Strong™ to raise money because he was worried that the money raised might not go to ALL the victims of the serial arson fires. Then in the Spring of 2022 Two Rivers Strong™ registered with the State of Alaska as a Non-Profit Entity and applied with the IRS for a 501(c)(3) determination which was granted making Two Rivers Strong™ a Federally recognized Public Non-Profit Charitable Organization.

Becoming a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Charitable Organization was important because now that allows Two Rivers Strong™ to be eligible for many Corporate Charitable Donation Programs as well as partner with other charitable organizations. Since receiving the 501(c)(3) determination from the IRS Two Rivers Strong™ has partnered with Fred Meyers Community Rewards, Amazon Smile, and Raise Right. These partnerships enable members of the community to contribute to Two Rivers Strong™ by simply registering their accounts with the Merchants and linking Two Rivers Strong™ to them and then shopping the merchants just like they always have without any additional money out of their pockets. These merchants simply give a small percentage of eligible purchases back to Two Rivers Strong™.

On August 27th, 2022, the one-year anniversary of the arrest of the arsonist Two Rivers Strong™ had a Fall Fashion Show hosted at The Spur, in which they donated the venue and the rental fee for additional staging and lighting. The Fashion Show was produced in partnership with Teresa Quakenbush and Company Models. There were fashion showcases by Sportsman's Warehouse, The Outpost Harley-Davidson, and Jade Boutique. There were also silent auction items attendees could bid on that were donated by many local Fairbanks and Two Rivers businesses. In addition, Two Rivers Strong™ partnered with the Sons of American Legion Squadron #57 to utilize their Alaska State Gaming License for a 50/50 raffle and will be doing a raffle for a Smith & Wesson M&P .9mm pistol that was donated. The event was attended by nearly 100 people and raised just over \$8,000 benefiting the Two Rivers Strong™ Arson Relief Fund.

On September 9th, 2022, Mac Lebeau, President, and Jori Clawson, Secretary, of Two Rivers Strong™ presented a check for \$17,681.77 payable to Two Rivers Arson Survivors (5 Two Rivers Families, 2 Community Associations, and 1 Two Rivers Business). The Two Rivers Strong™ Board of Directors voted to use a point system to determine how the funds would be split. It was important to them that the funds were distributed fairly and, in a manner, to have the most impact for those affected by the Arsonist. They wanted to make sure everyone including the property owners and those who were

renting at the time of the fires received something while encouraging them to stay in Two Rivers and rebuild. One resident who received a grant donated it back to Two Rivers Strong™ -- General Operating Fund.

Rest assured these fund-raising efforts will not stop here. This is the first distribution of grant money and will not be the last. Two Rivers Strong™ is already working to plan additional fundraising events to help the Survivors even more. As more information on the arson investigations becomes public, they may look to expand their grant eligibility criteria. If you feel you were affected by the 2021 Two Rivers Arsonist, please email us at help@tworiversstrong.org. Moving beyond this tragedy Two Rivers Strong™ will be working with other community organizations to see how they can further enrich and develop the community of Two Rivers, Alaska.

Two Rivers Strong™ would like to thank their volunteers, partners, and sponsors over the past year: Sons of the American Legion Squadron #57, Home Source, Market Basket, Auto Trim Design, Holiday Parks, The Spur, Spotted Dog Prints, Teresa Quakenbush and Company Models, Two Rivers Outpost Café, RNDC, KTVF, KFAR, without them this would not have been possible today.

On behalf of all of us here at Two Rivers Strong™, be safe, have fun, and keep rebuilding our community
Two Rivers Strong™.

Important Links:

www.tworiversstrong.org | [AmazonSmile](https://www.amazon.com/AmazonSmile) | fredmeyer.com/account/communityrewards

Social Media

Facebook: @TwoRiversStrong | Instagram: @TwoRiversStrong | Twitter: @TwoRiversStrong

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