



Alaska Pandemic Business Survivor!

Description

Kim's Asian Cuisine and Bistro in Eagle River,

First published in December of 2021.

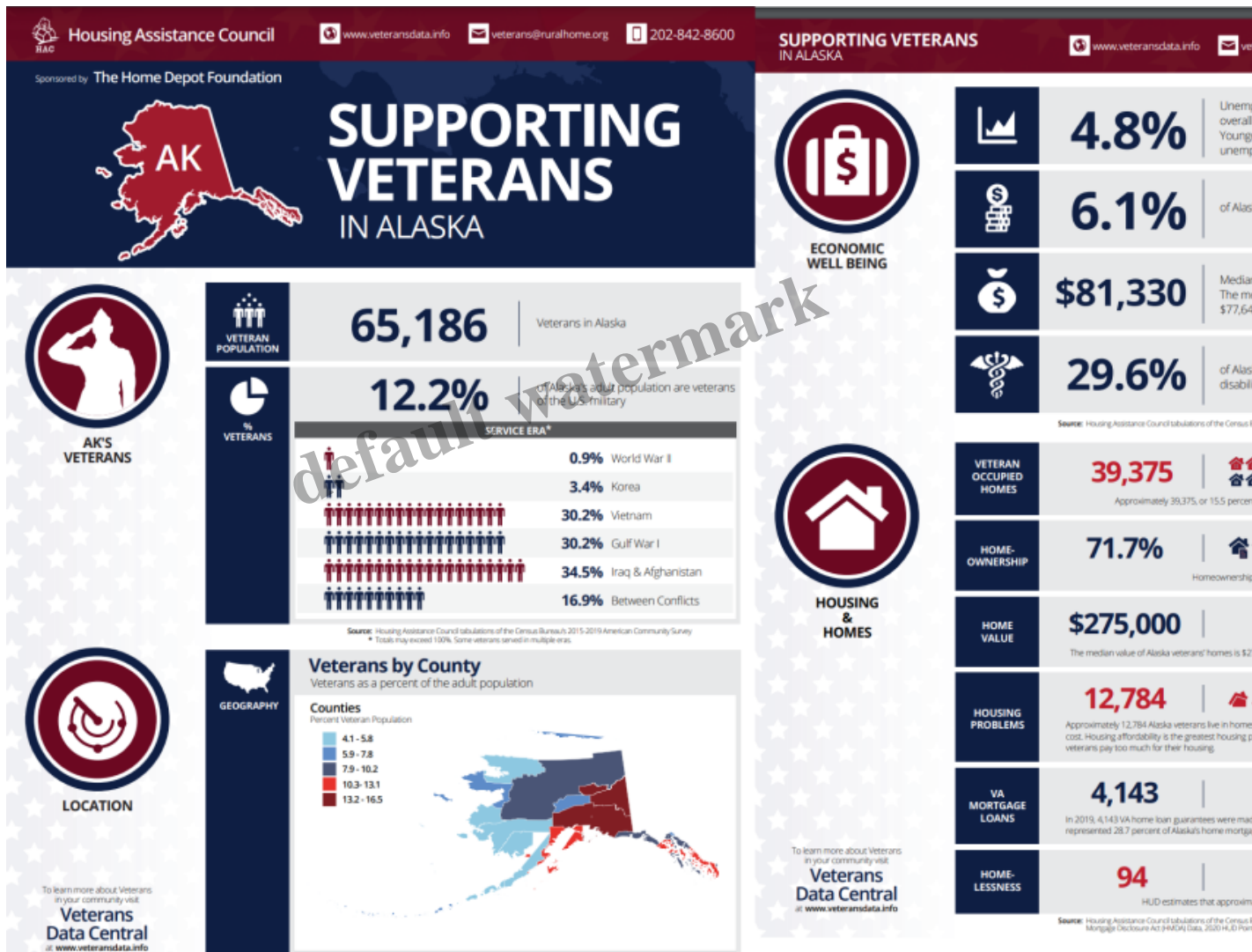
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We who have won God's great lottery to be Americans (4.25% of the world's population)—greater odds for Alaskans!—can only imagine what depravity and destitution occur from the ravages of war.

[1]US Population Clock

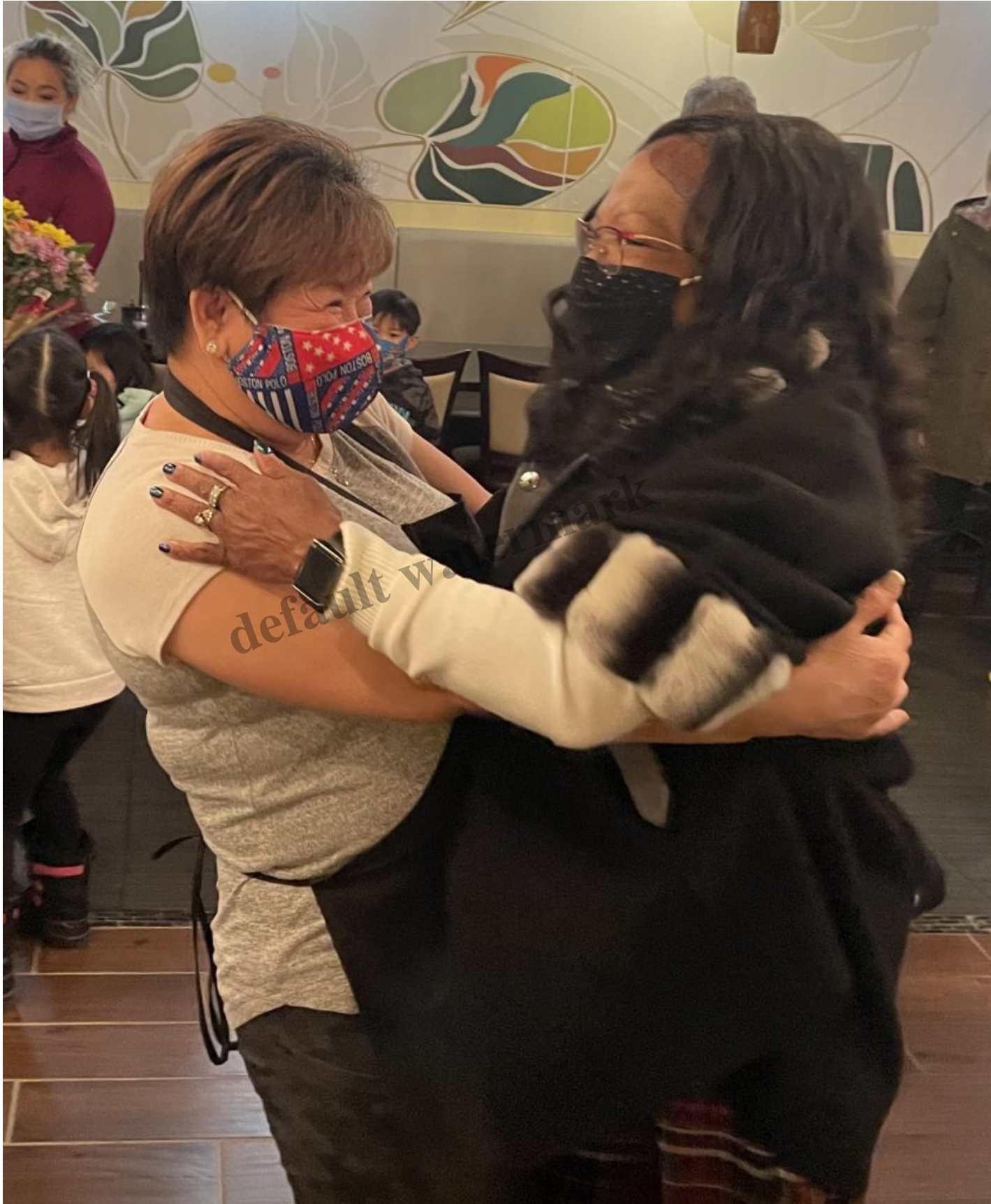
Being the state with the highest percentage of veterans, active and retired, we know survivors among us who experienced combat while in uniform, and know vigilance and strength are required for our safety, freedom, and way of life. Also among us are people who somehow—by the same grace of God—live here after having experienced war first-hand, as human collateral damage.



Many Alaska Veterans fought in Southeast Asia.

For Chi “Kim” Nguyen the experience with her husband as Vietnamese Boat Refugees has resulted in incredible endurance and drive for success in multiple American businesses, including *Nail Time & Spa* and *Kim’s Asian Cuisine and Bistro*, in Eagle River.

[2] *The Vietnamese Boat People*, Associated Press, June 23, 1979.



Kim Nguyen & Chugiak/Eagle River Rep. Sharon Jackson (R)

Friends since 2009, **Kim Nguyen** and **Rep. Sharon Jackson** embrace on the occasion of presentation of a Legislative Commendation to Kim's Cuisine Asian Bistro in March of 2020.



Having nine kids has also contributed to Nguyen's drive for success. All of her kids have learned to work when not in school. Now grandchildren are also involved in the family businesses.

Alaska is a challenging place for any small business. Our state has an economy inflated by cost of transporting goods and competition for workers who are spoiled by government salary and benefits negotiated by public sector unions. For Nguyen, the experience of escaping the Vietnam debacle has inspired her to take charge of circumstances and create a future for herself and her large family in business.

My husband and I left Vietnam in April 1980, explained Nguyen seated with eldest daughter Stephanie at a table in her restaurant. We were rescued and went to Singapore for the paperwork, and then to America August 14, 1980.

The experience is burned into her psyche.

We first came to Juneau where we had a sponsor there through **Catholic Social Services**, continued Nguyen. I attended **Juneau-Douglas High School** and remember walking from school near the boat harbor to a senior center up the mountain on 6th Street, above the **Alaska Capital** building, to work as a prep & cook's helper.

The young couple had their first child in Juneau in 1999 but transitioned to San Diego, California, where Mr. Nguyen took a job as a welder in the shipyards there. They started a small restaurant business but when she became sick with another childbirth, they struggled.

We liked the Asian Community in San Diego, said Nguyen. But we sold the business, and being pregnant with Stephanie I couldn't get a job, so I started an in-home sewing business. I contracted to cut and piece garments, doing alterations, while managing the baby.

That business grew and expanded making garments for companies like Nike and Adidas piecemeal.

Over time we had a factory producing a minimum of 5,000 garments per day, explained Nguyen. We had many machines, and cutting tables, and we provided jobs for many people. I would have to bid a year ahead for the contracts and each day I would leave home early in the morning, coming home late at night. My husband took care of the kids; we did that for 12 years.



Kim Nguyen and daughter, Stephanie.

We never saw our mother, chimed in oldest daughter, Stephanie. Seven Nguyen children were born over this time in San Diego.

Bill Clinton became president (of the United States) and all that work we were doing went to China, continued Nguyen. We lost the contract because what we could do for five dollars they did for 50 cents. We had work but it didn't pay anything, so we sold that company and moved to Anchorage when I was pregnant with my youngest child.

Nguyen found friends she knew by searching the Anchorage telephone book and called them for help. Good Alaskans helped them.



Nail Time & Spa is located at 12110 Business Blvd Ste 26

*I bought this Nail Salon in Eagle River in January 2008, after going with Stephanie to train and get experience for professional certification in Chicago, explained Nguyen. But some of my kids were going to **East Anchorage High School** and didn't want to drive to Eagle River after school to work. I opened another nail salon on Boniface Parkway—near the Pizza Hut—so the kids could work there. We don't allow any kids to stay home by themselves after they reach middle school. And, when I am busy working I don't want to worry about whether my kids are doing things that could harm them. We have a room with a computer specifically for doing school work at the business.*

Nail Time & Spa was originally a hair salon at a different location, with four chairs and three or four tables. Our business outgrew that location, explained Nguyen. We sold the Boniface business and moved it in 2015 to the larger space. She bought the Asian restaurant next door in 2019.

As a health benefit to customers of both businesses, Kangen water purification is used. The Kangen machine provides six levels of ph including medical grade water.

https://youtu.be/jZvkVZE_5H4

This writer watched a demonstration of the Kangen water purifier designed in Japan. Readers who are interested in the benefits of this system—that provides medical grade purified water—may find out more at either of the businesses described in this story.

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Kim's Cuisine & Asian Fusion Bistro

Guests enjoy delicious Vietnamese, Japanese, Chinese, and/or Thai cuisines from this friendly family owned restaurant.

Located at 12400 Old Glenn Hwy #7589, Eagle River, AK 99577

Order Online Now!

*We bought the restaurant in October 2019 and were shut down by the **Municipality of Anchorage** in March 2020, continued Nguyen. It caused me a lot of worry and stress. Several of my customers at the nail salon said they had to go to the school to get free food for her kids. I realized we had food we could not sell because of the lockdown.*

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MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

Office of the Mayor

Phone: (907) 343-7100



Mayor Ethan A. Berkowitz

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE PROCLAMATION OF ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY ORDER EO-01 IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

ISSUED BY THE MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE PURSUANT TO ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 3.80.060H.

I HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EMERGENCY REGULATIONS TO BE EFFECTIVE AS OF 5:00 P.M. ON MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020, TO PRESERVE LIFE IN AND ADJACENT TO THE MUNICIPALITY. THE FOLLOWING EMERGENCY REGULATIONS HAVE THE POWER OF LAW, SHALL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL 11:59 P.M. ON TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2020, AND SHALL SUPERSEDE ALL CONFLICTING LAWS DURING THE EXISTENCE OF THIS EMERGENCY.

1. All bars, breweries, restaurants, food and beverage kiosks, and other establishments serving food or beverages within the Municipality shall be closed to the public for dine-in service. All buffets and salad-bars shall be closed to self-service. This order does not forbid otherwise lawful drive-thru, take-out, or delivery services. A copy of this order or a sign conveying the closure information shall be conspicuously posted by the owner, operator, manager, or other person having control of an establishment subject to this order.
 - o This regulation does not apply to grocery stores (except as to self-service buffets and salad bars within), employee cafeterias within a business (except as to self-service buffets and salad bars within), pharmacies, or hospitals.
2. All entertainment facilities within the Municipality shall be closed to the public, including theaters, gyms, and bingo halls.
3. All large events and mass gatherings of fifty people or more within the Municipality are banned.
 - o This regulation does not apply to the day to day operations of organizations such as businesses, institutes of higher learning, or daycares that are not already subject to closure.

DATED this 16 day of March, 2020.

Handwritten signature of Ethan Berkowitz in blue ink.
Ethan Berkowitz, Mayor

This is the order to shut down Anchorage businesses. To learn about how another restaurant business with stores in Anchorage and the MatSu Valley dealt with the different approaches to addressing the Covid Pandemic in the two localities, go here: https://donnliston.net/2021/03/challenges-from-anchorage_20.html

We had a cook on salary! Declared Nguyen. So I let everyone know that anyone 12 years old and under could have free meals. We were busy with constant calls and I felt very good that we could help out in the crisis. But it was rough to have a new business and be faced with a health crisis shutdown.



I am so proud of my mother; sometimes I ask “how can you do so many risky things so well and hope it will turn out?”

Stephanie Nguyen

I have so much faith in God.

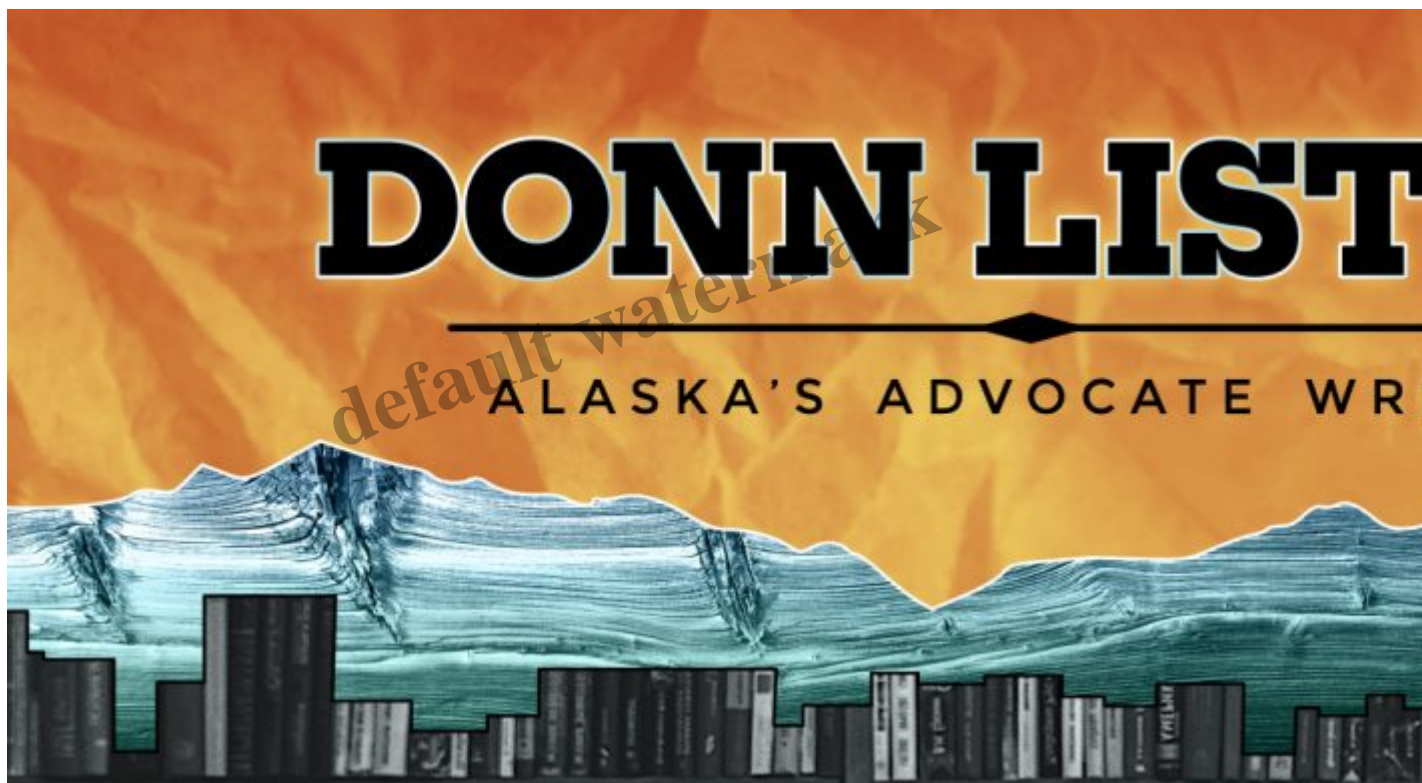
— **Chi Kim Nguyen**

References:

[1] *Associated Press*, June 23, 1979, *San Diego Union*, July 20, 1986. See generally Nghia M. Vo, *The Vietnamese Boat People* (2006), 1954 and 1975-1992, McFarland.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnamese_boat_people

[2] US Population <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/us-population/>



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Category

1. Eagle River/Chugiak Community
2. Los Anchorage
3. Pandemic

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December 8, 2021

Author

donn
