



Cool Conservative Place to Congregate: Ammo-Can Coffee Social Club in Soldotna!

Description

Coffee from an Ammo-Can?!



Discounts are given for patrons who carry at
Ammo-Can Coffee, LLC

What began for **Jason Floyd** as a midlife professional crisis in 2015 has become a Kenai Peninsula

institution for rational Alaskans who have had enough of “woke” political nonsense invading every aspect of our lives.[1] Along the way Floyd’s private enterprise endeavors have also clearly impacted Alaska military veterans of the region who are more than just coffee shop patrons.

You see, Alaska has a high proportion of veterans who choose to return to Alaska after service. But those veterans—as well as many active-duty members—are at a higher risk of suicide than anywhere else in the country. It is a crisis which Sen. **Dan Sullivan**, R-AK commented on in mid-April when he said: *It is a tragedy that the scourge of suicide disproportionately harms Alaska’s military service members and their families. Alaska is home to thousands of military service members and more veterans per capita than any other state. But along with that proud distinction, our state also has horrifically high rates of military suicide. As a Marine, I have seen firsthand what happens when service members suffering from a mental health crisis do not receive help. Even when a service member musters the courage to seek help, it can take 60 days to actually see a professional—and, as we’re seeing, these brave Americans rarely have 60 days.*[2]

NATIONAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION ANNUAL REPORT | SEPTEMBER 2021

Figure 3: Age- and Sex-Adjusted Suicide Rates, Veterans and Non-Veteran U.S. Adults, 2001–2019

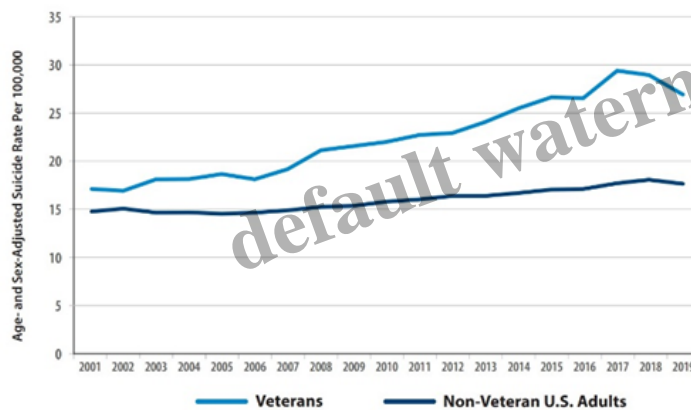


Figure 4 demonstrates the Veteran-specific age- and sex-adjusted suicide trend rate from 2001 to 2019. The age- and sex-adjusted suicide rate decreased 7.2% in 2019 compared to 2018, decreasing from 29.0 Veteran suicides per 100,000 in 2018 to 26.9 Veteran suicides per 100,000 in 2019.

- If you or a loved one is experiencing thoughts of self-harm or suicide, you can confidentially seek assistance via the Military/Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255, via text at 838255 or chat at <http://VeteransCrisisLine.net>.

In attempting to address this crisis, both Alaska US Senators, Sullivan and **Lisa Murkowski** together with Rep. **Jackie Spier**, D-Calif signed a letter to Army Secretary **Christine Wormuth** declaring: *We are failing our service members because of historically high suicide rates.*[3]



More than 5,000 American flags were planted on a grassy area of the National Mall, e
veteran or a service member who died by suicide through early October 2018, an ave
per day. Ryan Conklin straightens some flags at the site. Conklin is an Iraq and Afghan
veteran who lost several comrades and a close friend to suicide. (Michael S. Williamso
Post via Getty Images)

For information related to opioid addiction:

<https://www.bicyclehealth.com/blog/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd-addiction>

<https://www.bicyclehealth.com/blog/veterans-opioid-use-disorder>

Benefits of Coffee



Ammo-Can Coffee website: <https://www.ammocancoffee.ninja>

Ammo-Can Coffee, LLC owner, Floyd was already well aware of the Nine Unique Benefits of Coffee: 1) Boosts energy levels, 2) Likely linked to lower risk of type 2 diabetes, 3) Could support brain health, 4) May promote weight management, 5) Linked to a lower risk of depression, 6) Could protect against liver conditions, 7) Supports Heart Health, 8) Could increase longevity, and 9) May enhance athletic performance. As a trained counselor he worked to promote mental health but chose to start a coffee shop in an area saturated with coffee vendors for a variety of very personal reasons.[5]



*I never would have opened a coffee shop had I not been faced with a crisis, Floyd explained. I worked as a professional licensed social worker for a number of years. And my last professional position was working for the **University of Alaska** system. In 2015—when the state budget crisis really started to get real—I was notified that my contract as a 4H agent for the **Cooperative Extension Service** would not be renewed. That was my dream job but I suddenly found myself in need of a new career.*

It was time for a change anyway: *I was tired of working for woke agencies that rewarded politically progressive employees and diminished anybody who disagreed or had conservative views. When faced with the reality that I wasn't going to have that job in about 45 days, I told my wife: "You know, the happiest I've ever been in work was when I was in college, working part time at a coffee shop." I was able to meet new people and have in-depth conversations and develop relationships and really get to know my community on a whole different level than any other position I've had before or since. So, I said to her, "Why don't we open a coffee shop?"*

So that's kind of an extension of your social work training?

*It really is, responded Floyd. It's not that different. A coffee shop is a sort of a hipster expression of the old time Public House, or tavern. People come in looking for connection, for a place to sit down and read a newspaper, forget about the day, or take a deep breath before they launch into the next project or whatever. They come here to meet with their lawyers, to meet with their pastors, to meet with their Realtors, to talk to people about their business ideas. Many businesses have been spawned out of conversations here at **Ammo-Can Coffee**.*

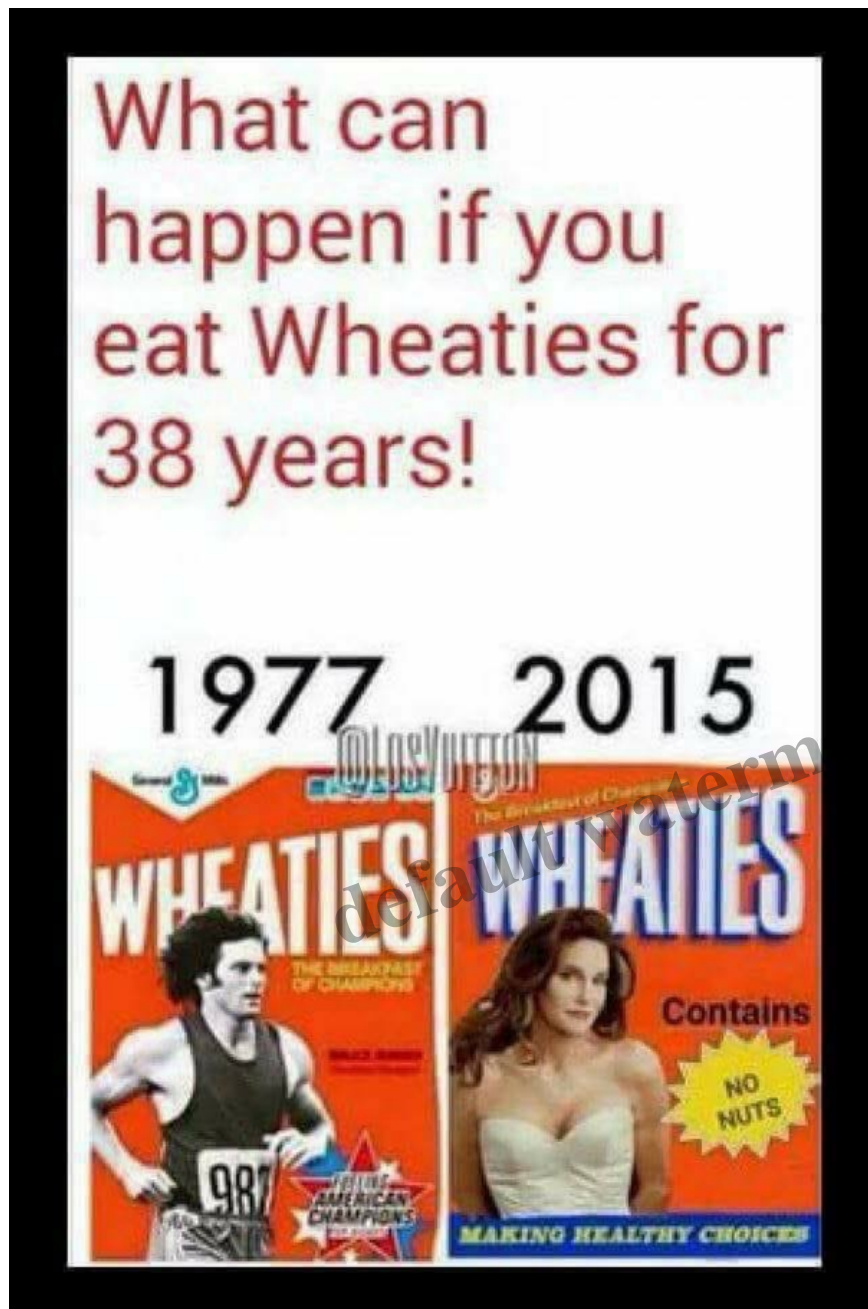
I listen to people, and I ask questions and I'm truly interested in them.

Does it help or hurt to be an openly conservative-traditional-values business?

*Well, I took a good look at the coffee business here on the Peninsula before I launched **Ammo-Can Coffee**. Last time I checked there were 27 coffee vendors. From that I determined our niche, continued Floyd. You've got the drive ups—which are apolitical. They could care less your social/political persuasion as long as you're buying their coffee; they do it as cheaply and efficiently as possible. They get the smallest building, employ as low-priced workers as possible, and try to find the best location for the highest traffic. They just **sling coffee** as fast as they can out that window—which actually is a good business model!*

But sit-down places require a larger investment and a lot more time, continued Floyd. Typically, they have narrower margins and are liberal and progressive—they're proud of that, you know. It's consumer identity politics—social marketing.

*Let me explain, said Floyd: **Bruce Jenner** was maybe the first one to really do this, for **Wheaties breakfast cereal**. Your Wheaties box had Bruce Jenner on it, right? Bruce eats his Wheaties. Well, if Wheaties made Bruce what he is today, I don't want any.*



Basketball legend **Michael Jordan** is another good example for his endorsement of **Nike Shoes**. Nike's motto is: **Just do it!** continued Floyd. Every kid that wanted to be **Michael Jordan** bought **Air Jordan** shoes. And because they wanted to identify a certain lifestyle or aspiration to a product, they vicariously might be connected to by consuming that product.



Let me back up here for the sake of perspective, said Floyd: *Our first brick and mortar location was in the **Peninsula Center Mall**. It was a tiny little 150 square foot booth with a couple of tables in front, and all the military recruiting offices were in that mall. So, we developed a good relationship with the recruiters; we told them to send any new recruit down to our shop with a business card from the recruiter and we would hook them up for a free drink. They appreciated that and this Navy recruiter, **Ben Clark** told me about having been assigned to a joint forward operations base in the Middle East. He explained that folks he served with there had at one time actually sent **Starbucks** a \$1,000 check and letter asking **Starbucks** to send them some of the coffee because they were tired of drinking the Army's brand called **Green Beans**. **Starbucks** returned that check to the base commander and declared: **We don't support the illegal actions! Think about that: Starbucks doesn't support the US government in this field of operations; these soldiers didn't have any control over international politics or defense policy or anything; they were just doing what they were ordered to do as patriotic Americans.***

Starbucks decided to make it into a political position, adds Floyd.

Floyd continued: *This was when I realized OUR coffee business has an opportunity here. This national company basically alienated 50% of the market! This was also around the time that **Donald Trump** became president. **So, we doubled down on our patriotic theme and we have developed quite a following since.***

How do you stand among your competition on the Kenai Peninsula?

Progressives have been taking more and more territory down here, replied Floyd. *The **Chamber of Commerce** is controlled by the progressives, of course. We're located in Soldotna, which is the seat of government for the Borough. So, we have a lot of government employees and union types here. This is a more liberal space than some of the outlying areas like Nikiski and Sterling and Kasilof, but we're holding our own. When we started there were two big corporate **Kaliadi Brothers** and two **Starbucks** in Soldotna. Now there is one more **Starbucks** and one of the **Kaladi Brothers** has shut down. We remain strong.*



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More than Slinging Coffee

About a year and a half ago Floyd took a look at **Ammo-Can** customer demographics, described in the

company point-of-sale system, in the face of government intervention with Covid-19. He discovered there had been some 7,000 customers since starting in 2015 and redesigned his business model to require anyone wanting to do business with **Ammo-Can** to become a member of a newly formed private club. Since signage says **Ammo-Can** is a **WIFI café and event venue**, free membership gives access to the coffee house and events and activities sponsored or endorsed. Paid membership brings additional benefits.

This writer was amused myself when I recently went to *Ammo-Can Coffee, LLC* with friends and was asked whether I agree to certain conditions of membership before signing in, providing phone number and email address before purchase.

Specifically, the statement says:

Membership is free to anyone who supports the club mission and makes the following three Empyrean* Acknowledgements:

- 1. All freedom, liberty and one's right to self-determination flow from God and shall not be infringed by any man.**
- 2. Personal Sacrifice on behalf of the innocent, vulnerable and helpless is the highest form of love a person can demonstrate.**
- 3. Where one voice may be easily silenced, many voices raised together in righteous solidarity must prevail.**

**Empyrean can be traced back to the Greek word for "fiery," empyros, which was formed from the prefix em- ("in," "within," or "inside") and -pyros, from pyr, the Greek word for "fire." When empyrean entered the English language—via the Late Latin empyreus or empyrius—in the 15th century, it specifically referred to things related to the empyrean, the highest heaven or outermost heavenly sphere of ancient and medieval cosmology, which was often thought to contain or be composed of the element of fire. In the works of Christian writers—such as Dante's *Divine Comedy* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*—this outermost heavenly sphere was associated with the Christian paradise. Empyrean is now also used more broadly in the senses of "celestial" and "sublime."*

*Becoming a buying club like **Costco** or **Alaska Club** has provided a lot of potential benefits for our members, replied Floyd. It's interesting, because we used to get all kinds of weird, vile sort of creatures that would walk through the doors and say all kinds of things that were really un-American and unpatriotic and antagonistic. They did this all under the auspices of how tolerant they were, of course. Most of them were, you know, public employees, teachers, union types. They would get upset because*

*I have a paper cutout of **Donald Trump** in my shop, and I have a sign that says “guns are welcome on premises, please keep our weapons holstered unless need arises, in such case, judicious marksmanship is appreciated.”*

Development of the club model was a response to government overreach into our business—how do we protect ourselves from the health department walking in and shutting us down if somebody’s not wearing a mask or hasn’t taken a vaccine? continued Floyd. I was asking myself: “How do we build a defensible position?” And, I realized pretty quickly that we had stumbled onto something that was probably pretty special.

***I considered the guarantees of the constitution:** A private club meant that we were no longer a public facility. We have also started a **Conservative Hour of Power and Enlightenment** podcast—and you have been on it, DONN!^[6]. Thus, we are regularly broadcasting our protest against government tyranny. This is our constitutionally protected **Perpetual Political Protest in Progress**. So, now if they want to come and shut us down we say: “You’re silencing our political speech.” We are overtly engaged in peaceful protests—it’s published in broadcasts from our clubhouse. We’re not out on the street angry and screaming and burning things down and flipping cars over, doing the **Antifa-BLM** thing, but we are protesting, nonetheless. The next thing that we recognized was that we were already working with the Christian Community and underwriting a lot of ministry things where members were coming in and using our facility for church and youth group meetings, as well as **Alaska Right-to-Life**,^[7] **40 Days For Life**,^[8] and **Liberty Action Group**^[9] meetings.*

*We are engaged in political conversations and protests for which we have constitutional support and protection, said Floyd. We are actively engaged in an ecumenical Christian ministry, which is the freedom of religion, freedom of speech. And we also have our club membership, which is the freedom of association. So, if somebody tries to come in and shut us down because they don’t like what we’re saying—or what we’re doing—we may still end up in court, but we’re gonna be in a much stronger position under the law. And, in the meantime, all of these activities are building community by educating people. We want to equip and support people; this is the foundation for building a healthy, vibrant sort of **activist conservative community** that’s not just going to stand by and watch all of our freedoms steadily eroded away from us. We’re going to increase our support for our cherished veterans and build on traditional values together in solidarity as true Alaskans have always done.*



A recent Republican political gathering at **Ammo-Can Coffee**.

Floyd concluded our interview with a complement: *I like your writing style, DONN. I like the research you do and the links that you provide. And you know, the length of your articles also forces the reader to think a little bit deeper about what they're reading. I learn something from every story—you don't just produce puff pieces with sound bites.*

This story is about another example of Alaskans waking from our Oil Rush delirium. When you are in Soldotna be sure and stop by Ammo-Can Coffee and mention you read this story.

Watch for future collaboration between Ammo-Can Coffee, LLC and DONN LISTON COMPANY!

References:

[1]What is Woke? Fox News, Michael Ruiz, December 7, 2021.

What is woke?

Aside from being the past participle of wake, for decades, it meant conscious and aware – but the slang word has come to represent an embrace of progressive activism, as well.

<https://www.foxnews.com/us/what-does-woke-mean>

[2] Press Release: SULLIVAN, SPEIER, MURKOWSKI CALL ON ARMY SECRETARY TO ADDRESS HIGH ALASKA SERVICEMEMBER SUICIDE RATE, April 13, 2022

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[3]National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, 2021

<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/data-sheets/2021/2021-National-Veteran-Suicide-Prevention-Annual-Report-FINAL-9-8-21.pdf>

[4]More Veterans Die By Suicide Than In Combat. But it's Preventable

<https://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2021/09/28/veterans-suicide-prevention-afghanistan-anna-richardson-sarah-roxburgh>

[5]9 Unique Benefits of Drinking Coffee

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[6]Conservative Hour of Power featuring guest DONN LISTON, April 17, 2022

<https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-5v5gb-120064d?fbclid=IwAR3AVSZvSnPfOdz8fW5F1nH8NYIQBv62y18yHvRiH6lpNF3jBrPTyKixUiM>

[7]Alaska Right to Life

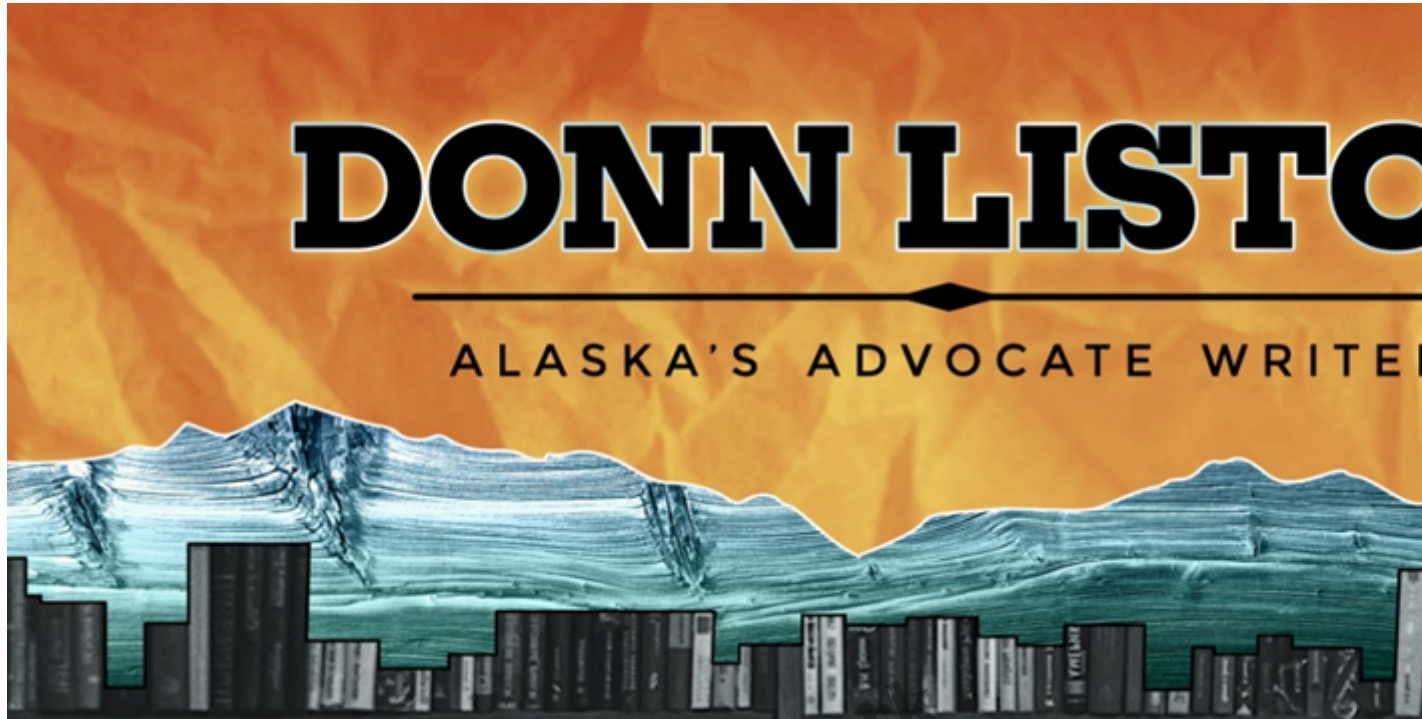
<https://alaskarighttolife.org/>

[8]40 Days for Life|

<https://www.40daysforlife.com>

[9] Liberty Action Group forms, Peninsula Clarion, June 14, 2021

<https://www.peninsulaclarion.com/news/a-groundswell-conserative-coalition-seeks-to-expand-influence-on-school-policy/>



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