

**Charles Wohlforth**  
Brief Biography and Curriculum Vitae  
10/17/16

**Wohlforth brief biography**

Charles Wohlforth is a life-long Alaska resident and prize-winning author of more than ten books. His work includes writing about science and the environment, politics and history, travel, and as-told-to biography. He writes a frequent column for Alaska Dispatch News, regularly hosts interview programs on Alaska Public Media radio stations, and has lectured all over the United States and overseas. He is father of four, living in Anchorage during the winter, where he is an avid cross-country skier, and in summer on a remote Kachemak Bay shore reachable only by boat.

Wohlforth graduated magna cum laude from Princeton University in 1986 before returning to Alaska to work six years as a newspaper reporter. He became a full-time freelance writer in 1993, publishing articles in *The New Republic*, *Outside*, *Discover* and other periodicals. He served two 3-year terms on the Anchorage Assembly, worked as a political consultant and speechwriter, and led various community groups, including and non-profit organization that brought hundreds of millions of dollars of new support to struggling rural Alaska schools.

**Books Published and Under Contract**

**Beyond Earth: Our Path to a New Home in the Planets** (By Charles Wohlforth and Amanda Hendrix; Pantheon, 2016). Popular market book co-written with a planetary scientist.

**From the Shores of Ship Creek: Stories of Anchorage's First 100 Years** (Todd Communications, 2015). Official history of Anchorage for the city's centennial.

**To Russia With Love: An Alaskan's Journey** (By Vic Fischer with Charles Wohlforth; University of Alaska Press, 2012). Assisted a founder of Alaska in writing his autobiography, a project supported primarily by grants from the University of Alaska.

**The Fate of Nature: Rediscovering Our Ability to Rescue the Earth** (Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, 2010). Humankind's capacity for restraint examined through the lenses of history, anthropology, science and personal stories.

**Alaska Day by Day** (Wiley, 2010). An illustrated travel guidebook on Alaska.

**Saving for the Future: My Life and the Alaska Permanent Fund** (By Dave Rose as told to Charles Wohlforth; Epicenter Press, 2008). Biography of an Alaskan pioneer politician and history of Alaska's enormous oil wealth savings account.

**The Whale and the Supercomputer: On the Northern Front of Climate Change** (North Point Press/Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004). Indigenous and scientific perceptions of Arctic climate change. Published in French as **La baleine et le supercalculateur** (Paulsen, 2008).

**Frommer's Alaska** (Wiley, 1996-2011). Fourteen editions of a leading travel guidebook

covering all of Alaska.

**Alaska For Dummies** (Wiley, 2003-2011). Five editions of travel guidebook covering Alaska.

**Frommer's Family Vacations in the National Parks** (Wiley, 1999-2004). Three editions of a guidebook covering travel, natural history and culture in 15 national parks and seashores.

**Crisis in the Commons: The Alaska Solution** (By Walter J. Hickel; Institute for Contemporary Studies, 2002). Assisted former Alaska governor and Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel in writing philosophical memoir.

**Spectacular Alaska** (Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, 1998; revised edition, Universe, 2012). Text for coffee table photography book.

### Work Included in Books or Anthologies

**Alaska at 50: Past, Present, and the Next Fifty Years of Statehood**, edited by Dr. G. W. Kimura (University of Alaska Press, 2009).

**The AMS Weather Book: The Ultimate Guide to America's Weather**, by Jack Williams (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

**The Last Polar Bear: Facing the Truth of a Warming World**, by Steven Kazlowski, et al. (Braided River/The Mountaineers Books, 2008).

**The Future of Nature: Writing on a Human Ecology from Orion Magazine**, selected and introduced by Barry Lopez (Milkweed Editions, 2007).

**Global Climate Change**, edited by Paul McCaffrey (H.W. Wilson, 2006).

**The Alaska Reader: Voices from the North**, edited by Anne Hanley and Carolyn Kremers (Fulcrum, 2005).

**National Geographic National Parks: Atlas and Travel Planner** (publication cancelled).

**Frommer's National Parks of the American West**, by Don and Barbara Laine (two editions; IDG Books, 1998, 2000).

**Frommer's USA**, edited by Bill Godwin (Simon & Schuster, 1998).

**Outside Magazine's Guide to Family Vacations**, by Frommer's (Simon & Schuster, 1997).

**Best Newspaper Writing 1990**, edited by Don Fry and Karen Brown (Poynter Institute, 1990).

**Season of Dead Water**, edited by Helen Frost (Breitenbush, 1990).

### Articles Published

**Alaska Airlines Magazine:** 3/1/96; 9/1/96; 2/1/97; 3/1/97; 2/1/00; 2/1/02; 2/1/04

**Alaska Dispatch / The Salmon Project:** 3/9/14

**Alaska Geographic:** 4/1/93; 7/1/94; 1/1/96; 1/1/99

**Alaska Magazine:** 6/1/91; 7/1/91; 11/1/91; 4/1/92; 1/1/93; 7/1/93; 11/1/94; 3/1/95; 8/1/95; 9/1/96; 9/1/97; 2/1/98; 7/1/00; 3/1/02; 4/1/03; 10/1/04; 11/1/07

**Alaska On The Move:** 5/15/97

**Anchorage Daily News, We Alaskans:** 8/5/90; 6/16/91; 10/13/91; 4/5/92; 6/20/93;  
 8/8/93; 5/22/94; 11/6/94; 1/22/95; 11/12/95; 8/18/96; 12/17/96; 1/26/97; 4/20/97; 5/4/97;  
 10/19/97; 1/16/00.  
**Anchorage Press:** 2/29/96; 5/13/99; 10/25/01; 11/8/01; 1/8/15  
**Capital Eye:** 7/1/96  
**CJR Columbia Journalism Review:** 11/1/93; 7/1/94  
**The Daily Princetonian:** 2/28/84; 4/6/84; 4/13/84; 11/9/84; 11/29/84; 12/7/84; 12/14/84;  
 2/28/85  
**Discover:** 3/1/10  
**Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Heartland:** 10/18/01; 4/11/04  
**Fame:** 8/1/89  
**First Alaskans:** 8/1/12  
**Forum:** Winter 14-15  
**Global Oneness Project:** 12/1/12  
**Los Angeles Times:** 5/4/10, 6/16/10, 4/20/11  
**Nassau Literary Review:** Spring '84  
**National Wildlife:** 6/1/90; 4/1/05  
**New York Times dotEarth:** 5/3/10  
**The New Republic:** 9/18/89; 11/12/90; 12/3/90  
**The New Republic online:** 8/29/08; 7/23/08  
**Northwest Airlines World Traveler:** 9/1/01  
**NPS Discovery Today:** 9/13/00  
**Onearth:** 3/1/04; 7/1/05; 3/1/2014  
**Onearth Online:** 10/1/09; 5/14/10; 2/28/14  
**Orion:** 3/1/04, 6/1/10  
**Orion Online:** 5/4/12  
**Outside:** 4/1/91; 3/1/92; 4/1/02  
**Outside Family Vacations:** Summer 2001; Summer 2002  
**Pacific Northwest:** 1/1/91; 5/1/91; 7/1/91  
**Panoscope:** 9/1/90  
**Scope** (with Peter Richerson): Winter 2011.  
**Seed online:** 5/10/10  
**Sunset:** 7/1/99

### Selected Lectures Given

#### College and University Audiences

**Alaska Pacific University,** Anchorage, Alaska, 2/6/2011, 12/2/10, 1/19/05.  
**Cambridge University,** Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge, England, 8/28/07  
**Dartmouth College,** Arctic Institute, Hanover, New Hampshire, 5/18/04  
**Oregon State University,** Corvallis, Oregon, 10/4/04  
**Princeton University,** Environmental Institute, Princeton, New Jersey, 5/14/04  
**San Francisco State University,** Pacific Rim Voices/The Kiriyaama Book Prize, San  
 Francisco, California, 11/3/05  
**University of Alaska Anchorage,** Anchorage, Alaska, numerous dates 2004-2012

**University of Alaska Fairbanks**, Keynote, Summer Book Festival, 8/25/10; Museum of the North, Fairbanks, Alaska, 4/15/04

**University of Alaska Kodiak Campus**, Kodiak, Alaska, 2/10/12

**University of Alaska, Rural Development Program**, Barrow, Alaska, 4/6/06

**University of California Los Angeles**, Hammer Museum, 9/8/10

**University of Washington** Program on Climate Change, Seattle, Washington, 10/6/04

**University of Washington** Program on the Environment, Seattle, Washington, 5/5/04

**Yale University**, Peabody Museum, New Haven, Connecticut, 9/28/04

### **Conference Audiences (non-specialist)**

**Alaska Forum on the Environment**, keynote, Anchorage, Alaska, 2/7/06

**Aspen Institute Forum on the Environment**, Aspen, Colorado, 3/28/09

**Etonnants Voyageurs**, festival international du livre et du film, Saint-Malo, France, 5/10-11/08

**Exploratorium/ECHO Consortium**, webcast, San Francisco, California 4/6/09

**Forum of Young CEOs**, Anchorage, Alaska, 5/21/06

**FREEZE Project, Alaska Design Forum**, Anchorage, Alaska, 1/24/09

**National Association of State Treasurers**, keynote, Anchorage, Alaska, 9/11/12

**National Park Service Beringia Conference**, Anchorage, Alaska, 10/21/04

**Northwest Public Power Association**, Anchorage, Alaska, 5/22/08

**USDA Soil Conservation Service**, American Indian and Asian Professionals Conference, Anchorage, Alaska 8/17/06

**USDA Forest Service/UAA**, climate change conference, Anchorage, Alaska, 5/6/11.

**World Wildlife Fund**, climate camp, Homer, Alaska, 10/30/06

### **Non-profit Organization Audiences**

**Alaska Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Association**, Girdwood, Alaska, 4/12/12

**Anchorage Downtown Rotary**, 8/31/10

**Center for Alaska Coastal Studies**, Homer, Alaska, 7/16/04

**Friends of the Homer Public Library**, 7/9/10

**Homer Downtown Rotary**, 6/17/09

**Inupiat Heritage Center**, Barrow, Alaska, 5/11/04

**New Bedford Whaling Museum**, New Bedford, Massachusetts, 9/23/04

**MOTE Aquarium**, Sarasota, Florida, 3/14/11

**Port Townsend Marine Science Center**, Port Townsend, Washington, 2/9/08

**Prince William Sound Science Center**, Cordova, Alaska 2/28/12

**Sitka Conservation Society**, Sitka, Alaska, 5/3/04

**St. Mary's Episcopal Church**, Anchorage, Alaska, 10/17/04

**Unitarian Fellowship**, Anchorage, Alaska, 4/17/11, 12/9/07

**World Affairs Council**, Anchorage, Alaska, 9/10/04

**World Affairs Council**, Juneau, Alaska, 12/21/04

### Professional and Scientific Organization Audiences

**Alaska Historical Society**, annual meeting, keynote (with Vic Fisher), Sitka, Alaska, 10/11/12; Anchorage, Alaska, 10/18/08  
**Alaska Marine Science Symposium**, Anchorage, Alaska, 1/24/06  
**American Meteorological Association**, Annual Meeting keynote, San Diego, California, 1/9/05.  
**Alaska Professional Communicators**, Anchorage, Alaska, 9/2/10  
**Arctic Research Consortium of the U.S.**, Annual Meeting keynote, Washington, D.C., 5/13/04  
**Association of Architecture Organizations**, Anchorage, Alaska 8/20/11  
**Hatfield Marine Science Center**, Newport, Oregon, 10/4/04  
**Kachemak Bay Research Reserve**, Homer, Alaska, 4/1/12  
**Mineral Management Service/BP**, Anchorage, Alaska, 6/11/04  
**Monterey Institute of International Studies**, International Environmental Policy Program, Monterey, California, 11/8/05  
**National Park Service**, interpreter training, Kenai Fjords National Park, 4/23/08  
**Pacific Rim Conference on Literature and Rhetoric**, University of Alaska Anchorage, keynote, 2/23/06  
**U.S. Forest Service**, Ketchikan, Alaska, 4/30/04  
**USDA Soil Conservation Service**, Anchorage, Alaska, 9/21/04

### Employment

**2015-present: Columnist**, *Alaska Dispatch News*. Wrote a newspaper column three times a week.

**2011-2015: Executive Director**, Citizens for the Educational Advancement of Alaska's Children. On a part-time contract basis, led a non-profit group of two dozen school districts and other members advocating for at-risk children and struggling schools in Alaska. Settled two constitutional lawsuits with the State of Alaska for more than \$150 million, providing new schools buildings and educational programs to rural communities.

**2009-present: Host of radio and television talk shows**, Alaska Public Media: Outdoor Explorer and Hometown Alaska radio shows, both first place Alaska Press Club winners in 2014; formerly, 1ON1 TV/radio/web interview show; also fill-in host, Talk of Alaska statewide call-in radio show.

**1989-present: Author and freelance writer**. See above.

**2003-2009: Consultant and speech writer**, Anchorage mayors Mark Begich and Matt Claman.

**1993-1999: Member, Anchorage Municipal Assembly**. Elected to two three-year terms to represent the downtown area of the city-borough government. Chair of the Budget Committee for five years, handling an operating budget of over \$200 million as well as capital and utility budgets. Chair of the ATU Committee, responsible for the successful sale of the city's \$295 million telephone company.

**1992-1997: Editor**, POL: A Journal of Policy and Politics. Founded and edited a monthly journal.

**1992-1993: Research Director**, Alaska Research Associates. Managed research projects, political campaigns and polling for a political consultancy firm.

**1988-1992: Reporter**, *Anchorage Daily News*. Lead field reporter on the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. Covered investigative projects, including one that led to the arrest of the subject.

**1986-1988: Reporter**, *Homer News*. General assignment reporter for a small town weekly.

**1982-1986: Student**, Princeton University. Majored in English with an emphasis in creative writing.

**1981-1982: Reporter and production assistant**, KSKA public radio.

## Awards

### 2015

**Alaska Press Club:** All radio and TV

- Best talk show: third place
- Best public affairs show: second place

### 2014

**Alaska Press Club:** All radio and TV

- Best talk show: first place
- Best public affairs show: first place

### 2013

**Alaska Historical Society:** Contributions to Alaska History Award, shared with Victor Fischer

### 2009

**University of Alaska Anchorage/Alaska Pacific University:** Selected as Book of the Year for campus-wide reading and study.

### 2005

**American Meteorological Society:** Louis J. Battan Author's Award for outstanding, newly published book on the atmospheric and related sciences.

### 2004

**Los Angeles Times Book Prize:** winner, science and technology.

**Overseas Press Club of America:** citation, best reporting in any medium on international environment issues (Whitman Bassow Award)

**Library Journal** "Best Books 2004": listed

**Alaska Library Association:** Outstanding Alaskana of the Year (best Alaska book for 2004)

**Kiryama Prize:** one of five finalists for a \$15,000 award for nonfiction on Pacific Rim cultures.

**2003**

**Anchorage School District:** Award for Excellence for leadership as chairman for two years of School Bonds YES! campaign, which won voter approval of \$264 million in bonds.

**2001**

**Alaska Press Club:** Best Reporting on Health or Science, Non-Daily

**1999**

**Anchorage Assembly:** Resolution 99-136 “Recognizing the Leadership of Assemblymember Charles P. Wohlforth in the Orderly and Successful Disposal of the Anchorage Telephone Utility”

**1997**

**Government Hill Community Council:** Citation “for exceeding even his usual high standards as a public servant in the matter of Municipal Ordinance 96-209,” March 3.

**1995**

**Alaska Press Club:** Best general news story, second place.

**1994**

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best coverage of the Arts, first place
- Best reporting on the environment, second place.

**1993**

**Alaska Press Club:** best columnist, third place.

**1992**

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best general reporting, first place
- Best general reporting, third place.
- Best breaking story, first place.
- Best reporting on business and economics, first place.

**1991**

**Society of Professional Journalists,** US Northwest Region, large dailies:

- Best business reporting, first place.
- Best reporting on criminal justice, honorable mention.

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best breaking story, first place.
- Best comprehensive coverage, first place.
- Best lifestyles or personality feature, third place.

**1990**

**C.B. Blethen Award:** for Distinguished Deadline Reporting, second place.

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best reporting on a political subject, first place.
- Best reporting on health, science, consumer and the environment, first place.
- Best long news feature, third place.

### 1989

**American Society of Newspaper Editors:** Award for Distinguished Deadline Writing, first runner-up.

**C.B. Blethen Award:** for Distinguished Deadline Reporting, first place.

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best reporting, non-daily, second place;
- Best comprehensive coverage, non-daily, third place.

### 1988

**Alaska Press Club:** Best breaking story, non-daily, first place.

### 1987

**Society of Professional Journalists, Farthest North Chapter:**

- Best spot news reporting, third place.
- Best series, third place.

### 1984

**Princeton University:** Special Award in Creative Writing by the Dean of the College.

## Memberships and Volunteerism

**School Bonds YES!,** chair of campaign in passage of \$171 million in bonds 2010-2014; also \$264 million in bonds 2002-2003.

**Anchorage Library Foundation,** member and committee chair 2007-2012.

**Municipal Light & Power,** member, board of directors, committee chair, 2009-2011.

**Chugach Optional School Executive Board,** officer 2000-2011, president 2005-2006.

**American Association for the Advancement of Science,** member 2002-2010.

**Steller Secondary Alternative, Strategic Planning Committee,** chair 2006-2009.

**American Society of Journalists and Authors,** member 1998-2002.

**Cook Inlet Historical Society,** board member 1999-2000.

**Hillcrest Children's Center Executive Committee,** officer 1995-2000.

**Anchorage Assembly,** member and committee chair 1993-1999.

**Government Hill Community Council,** president 1992.



### **Personal & educational background**

**Born:** New York City, 1963.

**Alaska resident:** 1966-present.

**Graduated:** Steller Secondary Alternative, 1981

**Graduated:** *magna cum laude* from Princeton University, B.A. degree in English, 1986.

### **Contact information**

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