

Mary Lou

FoSLAM board member Mary Lou Gerbi is a fair-weather pilot, warm-water scuba diver, sunny-day gardener, and long-distance mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. She migrated to Juneau leaving an almost 30-year career as a California high school and community college teacher to help her husband fulfill his dream of living on a small lake in Alaska with his airplane parked next to the house he built.

In Juneau, she worked three years as a Juneau Empire columnist and special editions editor, taught English and supervised teachers in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program at UAS, was editor of The Alaskan Southeaster magazine, and editor/proofreader for several books including Gardening in Southeast Alaska. She presented a number of teacher and Yup'ik aide workshops in western Alaska—two-day workshops in nine villages in three weeks—grueling but rewarding journeys into Alaska's "outback." When Disney cruise ships ventured to Juneau, she volunteered one summer to be a Mary Joyce "character" at the historic Taku Lodge and presented a Fireside chat and state museum talk about the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame honoree best known for her 1935-36, 1000-mile, 3-month-long sled dog trek from Taku Lodge to Fairbanks across uncharted territories. Her photo is from 2022. Mary Lou is now white-haired post COVID but has the same smile.

She has served on the FoSLAM board for the last nine years, met artists, made lasting friends, attended events, made food for First Fridays and urges other to join the board and have as much fun and fulfillment as she did.