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Wrangell florist invited to help deck the White House halls for Christmas

BY SAM PAUSMAN

Sentinel senior reporter

For Artha DeRuyter, flowers have always been a passion. She's owned flower shops in Fairbanks and now Wrangell. Sometimes she operates seasonally — other times, year-round. At one point, she even ran a shop out of her boat in the Wrangell harbor. But now, the lifelong passion is taking her to the White House

Last month, DeRuyter was invited to help decorate the White House for the Christmas season. She will join a team of roughly 300 other volunteers from around the country to — quite literally — deck the halls of democracy in the Christmas spirit.

DeRuyter applied for the position back in August, but didn't think much of it. This was the second time she had applied after not getting accepted when she applied 20 years ago. When she received an email this time with a tentative invitation (pending a background check, of course), DeRuyter was caught off guard.

"It really shocked me," she said. "I kind of had forgotten about it and then I got this email. I almost deleted it!"

Unsurprisingly, the florist has since passed the background check.

She will leave for Washington, D.C., on Nov. 27 and will begin work shortly afterward. The decorating is an all-day affair, starting at 7 a.m. and wrapping up at 5 p.m. from Nov. 29 through Dec. 1. She's not sure yet if she's going to be working on site at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. or if she will be stationed in a nearby warehouse

doing prep work.

Either way, the Dec. 2 reception for all the decorators ensures that DeRuyter will have a chance to step inside the White House regardless of where she is stationed. She also noted that the White House will serve the decorators breakfasts and lunches every day they are working.

"I'm totally psyched!" she said.

But DeRuyter isn't going to come back to Wrangell as soon as the volunteerism wraps up. On Dec. 3, she and her husband John will attend the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree lighting ceremony.

There, on the West Lawn of the Capitol, the DeRuyters, alongside 1% of Wrangell's population — students, some parents, borough officials and Forest Service personnel — will watch as the tree harvested from Zarembo Island last month will light up the nation's capital.

Before she heads back to Alaska though, DeRuyter wants to take in all that Washington has to offer.

"I'm born and raised in Fairbanks," she said. "So, a lot of the history I learned about the United States felt really far away." She's only been to Washington once before, and said the city's historic factor was one of the things she enjoyed the most.

This time, though, DeRuyter relishes that she can also enjoy Washington's holiday cheer.

"I'm just excited to see the Christmas decorations," she said.

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PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Wrangell's Artha DeRuyter is one of the 300 volunteers from around the country who will go to Washington, D.C., later this month to help decorate the White House for the Christmas season.

SEARHC provides sign-up help for Affordable Care Act coverage

BY LARRY PERSILY

Sentinel writer

The deadline is approaching to sign up for federally subsidized health insurance in 2025 through the Affordable Care Act, now in its 15th year.

SEARHC — just as it has done for the past decade — is offering free assistance for Southeast Alaska residents who need help navigating the online marketplace to choose the best coverage for themselves and family members.

And even though tribal members receive free health care services at SEARHC through Indian Health Service funding, they can benefit from the additional coverage provided by an insurance policy, explained Susan Briles, manager at SEARHC's patient health benefits program.

A private insurance policy can cover services not provided under the Indian Health Service,

she said. "Additional coverage expands options and services available to you," her office explains on its website. "Our team can help find the right coverage fit for you."

SEARHC will even pay the monthly insurance premium for eligible tribal members, providing them with expanded protection against health care expenses at no cost. The Tribally Sponsored Health Insurance Program already serves several hundred Southeast Alaska residents with free insurance to supplement their Indian Health Service coverage, Briles said.

Briles, and her staff of six, can help people do the math, look at the options at healthcare.gov and determine the best policy to meet their needs.

Hillary Russom, from SEARHC's patient benefits office in Sitka, will be in Wrangell Nov. 19-22 for in-person help sessions.

Briles expects the appointment calendar that week will fill up fast. She said anyone who wants to get on Russom's schedule should call the Wrangell Medical Center at 907-874-7000 to request an appointment.

Help also is available over the phone from the patient benefits

office at 855-966-8684.

Federal subsidies for private insurance policies under the 2010 Affordable Care Act are based on age, income and how many people are in the household. The subsidies are available only for people without access to health insurance through their em-

ployer, and who are not covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

As of 2022-2023, more than 400 Wrangell households were on Medicaid, meeting the low-income qualifications for the federally and state-funded free health care coverage.

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Bynum far ahead for state House seat; undecided on joining bipartisan coalition

BY LARRY PERSILY

Sentinel writer

The apparent winner of last week's election to represent Wrangell, Ketchikan and Metlakatla in the state House, Republican Jeremy Bynum, said he has not yet decided whether he will join the bipartisan coalition of Democrats, independents and Republicans that is likely to govern the House next year.

Though a few House races around the state were still too close to call last week and may not

be decided until final vote tallies on Nov. 20, the coalition, which was announced on Nov. 6, expects at least 22 members of the 40 House districts.

The majority gets to name the House speaker and committee chairs and set the agenda for the chamber.

The coalition, comprised mostly of Democrats, said its principles include not raising oil taxes, not overspending from the Alaska Permanent Fund,

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High schoolers cast mock ballots, share outlook on Wrangell, U.S. and more

BY SAM PAUSMAN

Sentinel senior reporter

In the run-up to Election Day, high school teacher Jack Carney took a hands-on approach to teaching his U.S. government students about the issues at stake. The class is predominantly made up of seniors.

Over the past few weeks, Carney's students researched, studied and formed opinions on the ballot measures and candidates in the Nov. 5 election. Though

just one of the nine students was eligible to vote in the actual election, eight of the nine students participated in the mock election. (One student was absent.)

The results were relatively in line with the actual outcomes. In Carney's classroom, former president Donald Trump defeated Vice President Kamala Harris to win the White House; Nick Begich and incumbent U.S. Rep. Mary Pelota split the classroom vote for Congress with four apiece; and Jeremy

Bynum won the Alaska House District 1 seat, defeating Agnes Moran and Grant EchoHawk.

As for the ballot measures, the students voted in favor of requiring paid sick leave and increasing Alaska's minimum wage. The students voted to a four-four deadlock on the measure to repeal Alaska's ranked-choice voting and eliminate the state's open primaries.

On Nov. 5, the Sentinel visited the class and spoke with all nine students

about the classroom exercise. We polled students on their views as future voters as well as their general optimism about the country's next four years.

Just one student considered themselves an informed voter before studying the issues in class. After learning about the issues and candidates, all nine considered themselves informed. The sole student old enough to vote said he planned on voting after school that day.

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Senior Center Menu

Open for in-person dining.

Thursday, Nov. 14

Chicken cacciatore, sweet peas, honey orange salad, buttered noodles

Friday, Nov. 15

Halibut olympia, Brussels sprouts, Texas coleslaw, roll, fruit

Monday, Nov. 18

No meal service on Mondays

Tuesday, Nov. 19

A.1. meatloaf, steamed greens, perfection salad, mashed potatoes and gravy, fruit

Wednesday, Nov. 20

Chicken a la king, broccoli, fresh fruit with creamy sauce, rice

Call the senior center at 907-874-2066 24 hours in advance to reserve a seat at lunch or to request delivery.

The senior van is available to take seniors to medical appointments, errands such as collecting mail, getting prescriptions or other essential items.

Ferry Schedule

Northbound

Sunday, Nov. 17

Kennicott, 10 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 24

Kennicott, 4:45 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 15

Columbia, 10:45 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 22

Columbia, 4:45 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, Nov. 20

Kennicott, 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 27

Kennicott, 3:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 18

Columbia, 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 25

Columbia, 7:30 a.m.

Listings are scheduled departure times. Call the terminal at 907-874-2021 for information or 907-874-3711 for recorded information.

Tides

High Tides

Low Tides

	AM		PM		AM		PM		Ft
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	
Nov. 13	10:22	18.2	11:02	16.1	03:59	0.9	04:44	-1.7	
Nov. 14	11:04	19.2	11:52	16.6	04:47	0.8	05:30	-3.3	
Nov. 15	11:46	19.8	05:31	0.9	06:14	-4.3	
Nov. 16	00:41	16.6	12:28	19.8	06:14	1.4	06:58	-4.4	
Nov. 17	01:28	16.2	01:10	19.3	06:56	2.0	07:41	-3.9	
Nov. 18	02:16	15.5	01:53	18.3	07:38	2.9	08:27	-2.8	
Nov. 19	03:04	14.5	02:38	17.0	08:23	4.0	09:14	-1.4	

The Way We Were In the Sentinel 100, 75, 50 and 25 years ago.

Nov. 13, 1924

A special meeting of the PTA was called last Thursday evening at the grade school building for the purpose of considering the various phases of building a school gym, and also for the ratification or rejection by the association on measures already proposed by the executive board. The meeting was very well attended and a thorough discussion of the gym plan and the financial side of the plan was entered into. Very little opposition developed and the enthusiasm on the part of the supporters of the gym was unbounded. The president of the PTA was granted the privilege of appointing a committee of five

men to act as a central committee for the community in connection with building the gym.

Nov. 11, 1949

Over \$8,800 in city sales tax money has been collected so far for the first quarter, City Clerk Robert Wickman reports this week. Practically all the returns are in as of this week. Collection of the sales tax started in July and these are the first returns. Merchants must turn in the sales tax money and returns within one month after the end of each quarter. It is generally agreed that the \$8,800 for the July-August-September quarter is much more than can be expected during the winter months. It is

pointed out that it was during this quarter that the heavy fish run was on and spending was heavy. Some predict that the year's total collections will amount to about \$22,000. Sales tax funds are earmarked for health and education and cannot be used for any other purpose.

Nov. 13, 1974

Chuck Oliver is new to Alaska this year, but he already knows full well the biggest problems of logging the Tongass National Forest: parts supply and weather. A \$100,000 tractor has been down for weeks because a single bearing was lost in transit and another cannot be found. Literally hundreds of

thousands of dollars worth of equipment languished on a barge for days waiting for the wind to calm down so it could be unloaded. Before coming to Wrangell this spring, Oliver logged in the Eugene area in Oregon for 20 years, selling at one time or another to virtually every major lumber company in Oregon. Oliver said he expects to continue logging through the winter and finish up operations next fall. Weather and parts supply permitting, of course.

Nov. 11, 1999

The Wrangell Lady Wolves volleyball team swept through the Region V volleyball tournament last weekend in

Petersburg, going undefeated in three straight matches. The tournament opened Thursday night with Wrangell facing Mount Edgecumbe. The key to Wrangell's success in winning the tournament was their commitment to playing as a team and to not give up in the face of adversity. The Lady Wolves' defense was excellent, with many great digs by Letitia Churchill, Celeste Montoy, Sarah Schmidt and Dani Gross. Setters Nicole Jamieson and Valerie Strasburger did a superb job consistently putting the ball up for hitters to spike. Valerie Strasburger and Sarah Schmidt were outstanding servers with an average of over 90%.



ALASKA AIRLINES CLUB 49 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

FALL STORYTIME for children 10 to 11 a.m. Fridays at the Irene Ingle Public Library. Stories, crafts and snacks.

COMMUNITY POTLUCK 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 15, at the Nolan Center. Native American and Alaska Native heritage potluck to honor the Native community. Bring your favorite dish and your regalia. Hosted by the Nolan Center, Wrangell Cooperative Association and Wrangell JOM.

SCHOOL BOARD will meet at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 18, in Evergreen Elementary School Room 101. A work session will precede the meeting at 6 p.m. for budget training. Community members can email comments to kpowell@wpsd.us, or can sign up under guests to be heard at the meeting by emailing the same address before 3:30 p.m. Nov. 18.

"THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN" at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 19, at the Nolan Center. The 1960 western action adventure drama movie is free; presented by Island of Faith Lutheran Church as part of its retro-movie program. The concession stand will be open.

LANDSLIDE REMEMBRANCE at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 20, at the Nolan Center. Community potluck. Hosted by WCA to remember the deadly landslide that hit Wrangell a year ago.

DOVE TREE CEREMONY 2 p.m. Nov. 26 in the Nolan Center lobby. The ceremony is to remember deceased loved ones, and is open to all. The Dove Tree will remain up through the new year. Anyone may add doves to the tree. Sponsored by Hospice of Wrangell. For more information, call Alice Rooney 907-305-0007.

CHRISTMAS TREE LANE is coming to town, and decorated trees will be accepted noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 30, and 4 to 7 p.m., Monday, Dec. 2, at the Nolan Center. Each entry goes up for a silent auction to support Hospice of Wrangell. Be creative and beautify the Nolan Center lobby. Bidding opens Dec. 5 and closes 1 p.m. Dec. 19. For more information, email rooney@aptalaska.net.

ELKS HOOP SHOOT free-throw contest for ages 8 to 13 will be Saturday, Nov. 30, at the community center gym: 10 a.m. for ages 8 to 9; 11 a.m. for ages 10 to 11; noon for ages 12 to 13. For more information, call Jeff Jabusch 907-305-0086.

ADVENTURERS CLUB 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturdays, Nov. 23 and Dec. 14. at the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Come learn about the Bible, pick up valuable skills and earn badges. Register and learn more at <https://bit.ly/3TBw0fI>. \$10 fee covers the school year.

COMMUNITY MARKET from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Nolan Center. Check out the locally grown and handcrafted item.

CHILDREN'S CLASS 2:30 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays at the elementary school music room for kindergarten to fifth grade. The focus of the program is for spiritual growth to learn to apply virtues through stories, devotions, music, games and art. All are welcome. No charge. For more information call Kay Larson, 907-209-9117.

AA MEETINGS: North Star Group meets from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays, St. Philip's Episcopal Church.

WRANGELL PARKS and RECREATION is offering multiple activities to get your body moving. For more information on any of the activities visit www.wrangellrec.com or call 907-874-2444.

- **WATER AEROBICS** noon to 1 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the swimming pool with volunteers Alice Rooney and Melody Hazel. Day rates apply.
- **PICKLEBALL** 6 to 8 p.m. Mondays and Saturdays, noon to 2 p.m. Wednesdays at the community center gym.
- **FUNCTIONAL FITNESS and TECHNIQUE** 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the court in the pool building with Devyn Johnson. A guided workout. Learn how to use the gym equipment. For ages 18 years old and up. Daily entry fee, pass or punch card.

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WEEKLY FARE SALES



FREIGHT FOR LESS



PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Chili makes everyone smile

Ryleigh Crowley smiles with her plate of chili samplers at the Saturday, Nov. 9, chili cook-off sponsored by The Salvation Army at the Nolan Center, while mom Issabella Crowley looks on. Bo Ritchie's moose chili, the Razzle Dazzle, won the popular vote among people who attended the fundraising event for The Salvation Army food pantry. The judges ranked Franki Gablehouse's Pops Chili first overall and gave second and third place awards to Alisha Mora (Thanksgiving Y'all Chili) and Ed Caum (Texas Chili).

DeRuyter

Continued from page 1

She also noted that her husband is thrilled to check out the National Air and Space Museum.

Christmas decorations in the White House are run through the Office of the First Lady of the United States. Every year, the First Lady se-

lects a theme and decorators are tasked with transforming that theme into physical decorations.

Last year, Beth Kingston was invited to help decorate the White House. Kingston is an interior decorator who frequently appears on the Home Shopping Network. She de-

scribed the opportunity as a "once in a lifetime experience."

According to Kingston, the 2023 process was quite the ordeal.

"The volunteers and designers used approximately 14,975 feet of ribbon," she wrote online, "over 350 candles, 33,892 ornaments, and over 22,100 bells in creating the décor theme! 142,425 holiday lights decorate the trees, garlands, wreaths and displays."

Affordable Care Act

Continued from page 1

For those who qualify for Affordable Care Act subsidies for private insurance policies, "the lower your income the higher your subsidy ... therefore, the cost of your insurance goes down," Briles said.

"You could have someone get a Bronze Plan for as low as \$2 (a month) or a Gold Plan for \$140. Depending on what your health care needs are, we can help you pick the best plan for you," she said in an interview with the Sitka Sentinel.

The enrollment deadline is Dec. 15 for coverage to start Jan. 1. Sign-up after Dec. 15 means the coverage will not start until Feb. 1. The deadline to apply for coverage for 2025 is Jan. 15.

Currently, 15 plans are available through the two companies participating in the Alaska health insurance marketplace: Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska and Moda Health. "The pricing and subsidies look the same as last year," Briles said.

The Sitka Sentinel contributed to this report.

CITY MARKET INC

Help Wanted!

City Market is accepting applications for the following positions:



Cashiers
Floor Stocker/Merchandise
Dairy Merchandise
Meat Market Manager
Meat Cutter
General Warehouse
Deli Clerks

NOTE: Full and part time positions available. City Market will have detailed descriptions for each position available in the front office. Pay DOE.

907-874-3333

Fisherman faces possible six months in prison for trying to kill sperm whale

By JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

Federal prosecutors are recommending that an Alaska fisherman serve six months in prison, pay a \$25,000 fine and be banned from commercial fishing for a year after lying about fishing catches and trying to kill an endangered sperm whale.

Dugan Paul Daniels pleaded guilty to a federal misdemeanor earlier this year, and prosecutors released their sentencing recommendation on Nov. 5.

According to court documents, Daniels became infuriated in March 2020 when a whale began taking fish from his longline fishing gear and damaging equipment.

This kind of behavior has been seen for decades across Alaska's coast, but prosecutors say this is the first time in Alaska that a fisher has at-

tempted to kill a whale in retaliation, and it may be the first time nationally.

"Daniels' behavior evidences a total disrespect for whales and the laws that protect them," prosecutors wrote.

According to messages sent on his GPS unit, Daniels directed a crew member to shoot the whale, tried to ram it with his fishing boat, then tried to kill it by reeling in his fishing gear while the whale was trapped in it.

In one message, Daniels wrote that he "wish(ed) (he) had a cannon" to blow the whale out of the water.

Sperm whales have learned to pluck commercial fishermen's catch from their gear, costing fishermen a day's work and ruining gear.

After one of his message recipients warned Daniels that

killing a whale was a federal offense, he replied, "the feds are shut down and I don't care." That was a reference to the COVID-19 emergency closure of offices in March 2020, at the time of the messages.

Daniels, 54, tried to ram the whale with the fishing vessel Pacific Bounty in the Gulf of Alaska about 30 miles west of Yakobi Island, near Pelican in Southeast Alaska, according to court filings in the case.

Federal officials don't know whether Daniels successfully killed the whale. No dead sperm whales were seen in Southeast Alaska at the time of the incident. Regardless, prosecutors say, the incident qualifies as "taking" an endangered whale, in violation of the Endangered Species Act.

Prosecutors are asking that in addition to the fine and prison term, Daniels should be sentenced to community service and supervised release for three years. If he resumes commercial fishing after his one-year ban, prosecutors ask that he be subject to additional monitoring.

The sentence has been referred to a federal magistrate for consideration.

The Alaska Beacon is an independent, donor-funded news organization. Alaskabeacon.com.

Clean chimneys, dry wood are key to fire prevention

By SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

As temperatures drop below freezing, many folks in town will turn to their wood-burning stoves for some warm respite. And while there may be nothing cozier than a pair of wool socks and a wood stove on an icy evening, there is certainly nothing cozy about a chimney fire.

Chimney fires are common but are easily preventable by regular maintenance.

They are often caused by a buildup of creosote on the inside of chimney walls. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's fire safety guide, creosote is essentially the residue left over by the smoke as it rises out of the chimney.

Creosote is "highly combustible," according to FEMA, and can easily be recognized by its "crusty and flaky — tar-like, drippy and sticky — or shiny and hardened" appearance.

FEMA warns that "if it builds up in sufficient quantities, and the internal flue temperature is high enough, the result could be a chimney fire."

One way to prevent creosote buildup is to make sure you only burn seasoned wood (wood that has been stored long enough so that it can dry out). Creosote is partially made up of the wood's water content, so when you season your wood for longer, you remove one of the ingredients for creosote.

It is also more financially feasible to use seasoned wood. According to the Division of Air Quality at the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, families who burn seasoned wood will go through 30% less wood than those who don't. The state agency also pointed out that this is especially pertinent in Southeast, where frequent rain makes it more difficult to season wood.

According to the most recent data available from the U.S. Fire Administration, heating fires — which includes chimney fires — were the second-highest culprit for residential fires in 2022. Only cooking fires set more homes aflame.

The U.S. Fire Administration encourages households with a wood-burning stove to keep the following in mind: Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from your fireplace or woodstove; do not burn paper in your woodstove; put the fire out before you go to sleep or leave the house; inspect your chimney annually; store ashes in a metal container with a lid at least 10 feet from your home.

Johnson's Building Supply Help wanted!

Customer Service full-time position
Valid Alaska driver's license required.
Must be able to lift 50 lbs. Pay DOE.
Stop by Johnson's for an application.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

This could be Alaska’s last shot at bipartisan good

BY LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

The next two years may be Alaska’s last chance for productive, bipartisan legislative action.

The state House and Senate have both organized in bipartisan coalitions, with Democrats, Republicans and independents pledging to work together on the big issues facing Alaska.

Sadly, that across-the-political-aisle cooperation could end in two years.

Alaska’s switch to open primaries and ranked-choice voting for the 2022 and 2024 elections encouraged candidates, particularly Republican candidates, to appeal to moderate and nonpartisan voters instead of running the gauntlet of a closed, highly partisan primary election controlled by the party’s most strident factions.

Until open primaries, where the top four finishers advance to the general election regardless of which party, if any, they put next to their name, and ranked-choice voting, moderate Republicans feared for their political lives in the party’s closed primaries which restricted who could vote to pick the Republican candidates.

It became a verb: Moderates were “primaried” before they ever had a chance to appeal to a wider electorate.

Sadly, it looks like Alaska could be headed back to the dark days of killing off moderates in the primaries. A ballot measure in the Nov. 5 statewide election to repeal ranked-choice voting was ahead by more than 5,000 votes last week, though there were more than 45,000 ballots still to count before the final tally on Nov. 20.

If the ballot measure passes, the voting system will get tossed into the trash can. And with it, so goes the state’s best hope for lasting political compromise on good legislation.

Without the need to win over a wider breadth of voters, Republican candidates, and some Democ-

rats, will gravitate to extreme issues needed to win their primary election, particularly in legislative districts that are overwhelmingly favorable to one party. Win the primary in those districts, and a general election victory is assumed.

The risk of losing the benefits of open primaries and ranked-choice voting makes it all the more important for legislators in the next session to take action on the big issues they have identified: school funding, energy needs, protecting the Alaska Permanent Fund from overspending, bringing back a retirement plan for public employees and a list of other priorities that would suffer under a partisan-dominated Legislature.

One piece of advice: While winning legislative approval for any of the big issues is important, what is equally essential is assembling a veto-proof majority should Gov. Mike Dunleavy strike down the legislators’ good work.

It takes a two-thirds majority of the House and Senate — 40 votes out of 60 members — to override a veto of a non-budget bill, and a three-quarters majority — 45 members — to override a veto of a spending bill. Those are high thresholds and exceed the number of lawmakers likely to join the bipartisan coalitions in the House and Senate.

Which means lawmakers in both chambers will need to count twice as they work on important legislation: Can they count enough votes to win passage, and can they count high enough to override a possible veto?

Even if Dunleavy bails out for a federal job in the Trump administration and is replaced by Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom, legislators need to pay attention to their math as they work on school funding and other measures.

The next two years of legislative action may be the best chance to make the state better for Alaskans, particularly students. An opportunity like this may not come around again.

Bynum win

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“stable public education funding,” retirement reform and energy development. “Retirement reform” is a reference to efforts to bring back a traditional retirement plan for public employees, such as law enforcement personnel and public school teachers.

As of the most recent vote tally on Nov. 8, Bynum was far ahead in his race with 51.47% of the vote districtwide, to 24.58% for Agnes Moran and 23.68% for Grant EchoHawk. All three candidates are from Ketchikan.

Bynum did even better in Wrangell, receiving almost 65% of the vote as of Nov. 8.

A Wrangell resident has not held the legislative seat since Peggy Wilson a decade ago.

Bynum, who traveled to Anchorage last week to meet with his soon-to-be colleagues, said he is looking for common ground on issues before deciding whether to join the bipartisan coalition to govern the House.

“At this point I have not made any commitments,” he said Saturday. “I am doing my due diligence,” and looking for the House organization that will do the most

for his southern Southeast constituents.

After his post-election meetings in Anchorage, Bynum returned to Ketchikan on Nov. 8. He said he would get to work taking down campaign signs.

Majority caucus members receive better committee assignments than minority members. They also get more of a voice in deciding which issues lawmakers will focus on during the session and, if there is money available for spending, majority members usually receive more funding for local projects than their colleagues in the minority.

Republicans led the House the past session and could be in control again after the final votes are counted, though that would require reversing leads held by Democrats in a couple of close races in Anchorage. It would also require bringing back a couple of Republicans who quickly joined the bipartisan coalition last week.

The Alaska Division of Elections plans to count more ballots from the Nov. 5 election this week, with the final count on Nov. 20. More than 257,000 ballots had been counted as of Nov. 8, with

45,000 more early votes and absentee ballots still to tally.

The newly formed coalition is “very confident in the numbers we have,” said Anchorage Rep-elect Chuck Kopp, who would serve as majority leader. “We’re not sitting back. Our intent is to grow into a caucus of 26-27 (members),” said Kopp, a Republican. “The invitation is open to any member that can ascribe to the principles of organization that we released.”

Dillingham Rep. Bryce Edgmon, an independent and the speaker of the House from 2017-2020, will serve as speaker next session.

The coalition said it intends to stay away from controversial social issues. Kopp said that’s by design. “Alaska right now does not need us to devolve into a partisan fight that stalls the Legislature for weeks ... because we got hijacked into social issues that had nothing to do with the governance of the state.”

The Legislature will convene Jan. 21 in Juneau.

The Alaska Beacon contributed reporting for this story.

EDITORIAL

Wrangell takes starring role in nation’s capital holiday

It’s more than 2,700 miles from Wrangell to the nation’s capital — if you have a private jet. Or more than 3,600 miles if you plan to ride the state ferry and drive. Either way, Wrangell is far from Washington, D.C.

Except not really this year.

With a special Christmas tree, hundreds of handcrafted ornaments and a local hand at artful floral arrangements, Wrangell will make its presence known in the nation’s capital.

The official U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree, a tall spruce cut from Zarembo Island, is on the road and on its way to Washington, due to arrive later this month, in plenty of time for the official lighting ceremony on the West Lawn of the Capitol on Dec. 3.

And before the lights come on, workers will hang thousands of ornaments made by Alaskans, including many crafted in Wrangell.

The high school students who helped devise the watering system to keep the tree alive during its long journey plan to attend the lighting ceremony, along with U.S. Forest Service and borough officials.

And joining the Wrangell contingent in town for the festivities will be Artha DeRuyter, the town’s florist who will put her talent to work helping to decorate the White House for the holidays. DeRuyter was selected as a member of the volunteer crew that will turn the president’s home into a showcase of flora and colors for the holiday season.

While 20 or so Wrangell residents will be in Washington for the tree lighting and to help with flowers at the White House, the other 2,000 residents can be proud of the community’s contribution.

- Wrangell Sentinel

Mock election

Continued from page 1

Though eight members of the class were under 18, all nine students believed that “my vote matters.”

Assuming voter eligibility for the following questions, eight of the nine students said they would be “excited to vote” this year. Eight of the nine also said they are motivated by national issues rather than local issues. Eight students said they vote similarly to their parents. One student said they do not.

Of the issues on the ballot, five students said they were most excited to vote in the presidential election. One student said they were most excited to vote in the state House race. Another said Ballot Measure 1 (sick leave and minimum wage) was the most exciting for them.

Though the poll took place ahead of the day’s elections results, the Sentinel gauged student optimism over the next four years regardless of the outcomes in state and national races.

Two of the nine students said they were generally optimistic about Wrangell’s

next four years. One student said they were optimistic about Alaska. Six of the nine students said they were optimistic about the United States over the next four years. Zero students felt optimistic about the world as a whole.

“The world is a bit tense right now,” senior Ander Edens said. He noted that the current international climate resembles the international climate in the years leading up to World War I.

Edens, 17, volunteered to speak about what politically motivates him as a young person. He was the only student in the class who said he prioritized local issues over national issues. The senior was also just one of two students who felt optimistic about Wrangell’s next four years.

He said the economy was the most important issue to him, and that he felt that Begich was better suited to Wrangell’s needs than Peltola, citing lower taxes and greater support for small businesses.

Upon graduation, all nine students plan to leave not just Wrangell, but Alaska too.

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State education board moves toward cellphone policy for schools

BY CLAIRE STREMPLE
Alaska Beacon
AND LARRY PERSILY
Wrangell Sentinel

Alaska has joined a growing number of states that are considering cellphone restrictions in schools.

The Alaska Board of Education has directed the state's education department to create a policy to limit the use of cellphones in schools during class hours.

Currently, there is no statewide cell-

phone policy in Alaska, and any restrictions must be set at the district or school level. Several already do that, including Wrangell middle and high schools.

"The Stikine Middle School is cellphone, earbud free," said Greg Clark, who serves as principal at the middle and high schools.

"Any student's cellphone seen on the middle school premises during school hours will be confiscated by teachers and/or staff for the remainder of the day,"

Clark said.

"The first time a student's phone is confiscated, he/she may pick it up from the office at the end of the day. Students may pick up their phone after a second confiscation only after a parent has been notified of the infraction. Parents will need to come to school to retrieve any phone confiscated more than twice."

It's a different policy at the high school, where students are permitted to use phones and earbuds in the hallways dur-

ing passing periods, in the commons (before school and after school and at lunch) and at each teacher's discretion, said Clark.

"The general rule is no phones in class," he said. An example of an exception would be allowing students to use their phones to take pictures in a science class, he said.

More districts around the state are starting to move toward cellphone restric-

Continued on page 6

Bipartisan coalition will lead state Senate again next session

BY JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

A majority of Alaska state senators want to address education, elections, energy and the public employee retirement system when they convene in January.

Late Nov. 6, the day after the

election, leading senators confirmed that the chamber will continue to be led by a large coalition of Republicans and Democrats.

Members of the new bipartisan coalition were vague about its precise makeup, saying negotiations are still ongoing. After one member of last session's coalition lost reelection and another decided against running for another term, the group will be slightly smaller than the 17-member supermajority that has led the 20-member Senate for the past two years.

Kodiak Sen. Gary Stevens has been president of the Senate for the past two years and will serve another two years. He said Nov. 7 that the Senate majority will likely finalize its priorities at a retreat in late December or early January, "but it's probably going to be similar to last time: the issue of forward-funding education, the issue of retirement, and how do we address those without putting us into tremendous debt?" said Stevens, a Republican.

Anchorage Sen. Bill Wielechowski, a Democrat and a member of the coalition, wants to see lawmakers take up an elections bill. "There's just a recognition that we have a number of things that need to be fixed," he said, mentioning signature verification on absentee ballots, witness signatures on those ballots,

and adding the ability for voters to "cure," or fix, errors that would otherwise disqualify their votes.

"I think making it easier for people to vote — it's not a Democratic or Republican issue," he said.

Anchorage Sen. Cathy Giessel said energy issues "will be a huge topic," with hearings on the impending natural gas shortage for the state's population center in Southcentral Alaska.

"Not just Cook Inlet natural

gas, but what alternative fuels are available? How do we get them online sooner? Will the new national administration help us in getting other energy sources online faster?"

The Senate majority coalition will include at least 13 of the Senate's 20 members.

According to a written statement, Giessel will continue as majority leader and Wielechowski will continue as chair of the Rules Committee, which determines which bills make it to

the floor for a vote.

Sitka Sen. Bert Stedman, who represents Wrangell in the Senate, will serve as co-chair of the Senate Finance Committee, taking charge of the capital budget (public works, highways and community projects), a change from past years when he managed the state operating budget.

The Alaska Beacon is an independent, donor-funded news organization. Alaskabeacon.com.

Remembrance set for first anniversary of deadly landslide

SENTINEL STAFF

The Wrangell Cooperative Association is working with the borough to put together a commemoration and remembrance event for 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 20, at the Nolan Center, marking the one-year anniversary of the deadly landslide that hit the community.

More details about the remembrance and potluck will be announced this week.

The slide started about 1,500 feet up the hillside the evening of Nov. 20, 2023, and flowed down the steep slope, destroying two homes at about 11.2-Mile Zimovia Highway and killing six people: Otto Florschutz, and Tim and Beth Heller and their children Kara, Mara and Derek.

Begich ahead of Peltola; Alaska headed toward repeal of ranked-choice voting

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Republican Nick Begich will have to wait until the final vote count on Nov. 20 but he looks likely to defeat incumbent Democratic Rep. Mary Peltola in the race for Alaska's lone seat in the U.S. House.

As of the latest tally on Nov. 8, Begich has 125,222 votes, or 49.45%, to Peltola's 115,089, 45.45%, with the two fringe candidates collecting 12,372 votes.

It takes 50% plus one to win the election.

The Alaska Division of Elections last week reported there were more than 45,000 mail-in absentee and in-person early-voting ballots still to count, with an updated tally coming this week and then the final numbers on Nov. 20.

If neither Begich nor Peltola exceeds 50% after all the ballots are counted, Alaska's ranked-choice voting system would determine the winner. Voters who cast their ballots for the last-place finisher in the race will have their votes recounted for their second choice and, if needed, it would work the same for anyone who voted for the third-place finisher, eventually pitting Begich and Peltola in a one-on-one race to decide the winner.

In Wrangell, Begich easily outpolled Peltola on election night, 383-233.

Wrangell also voted heavily in favor of former president Republican Donald Trump in his winning race against Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris, 451-200.

Statewide, Trump outpolled Harris 141,883 to 103,357.

Voter turnout in Wrangell was the highest in many years, far exceeding recent presidential elections, with 343 residents casting early ballots in the two weeks before the Nov. 5 election and

701 voting on election day.

In addition to voting for president, the U.S. House and state legislative seats, Alaskans voted on two ballot propositions. The measure to repeal ranked-choice voting and go back to political party primaries and winner-take-all general elections was ahead as of Nov. 8, 125,610 to 121,473.

However, the final count of absentee and early ballots could change the outcome if supporters of ranked-choice voting can make up the deficit of more than 4,100 votes.

If the lead holds, Alaskans would return to the traditional pick-one voting system — no more ranked choice — with political parties setting the rules for primary elections starting with the 2026 elections.

Wrangell voted 399-252 to repeal ranked-choice voting.

Alaskans approved the other ballot measure Nov. 5, which will boost the state's minimum wage and require employers to pay sick leave. The preliminary tally was 138,009 to 105,740.

Wrangell voted for the measure by a narrow margin, 337-310, though it failed to win a majority of votes in a couple of precincts that Wrangell shares in House District 1. Voters in the two precincts out North Tongass Highway in Ketchikan voted against the higher minimum wage, 565-512.

The ballot measure will increase the minimum wage to \$13 per hour in 2025, \$14 per hour in 2026, and \$15 an hour in 2027, raising it in stages from the current \$11.73 an hour. Increases after that would depend on inflation.

The measure also requires that most Alaska workers receive at least 40 hours of paid leave per year. Under the initiative, sick leave would start to accrue on July 1, 2025, at the rate of one hour of paid leave for every 30 hours on the job.

Memorial Service for Suzanne Byford

Noon to 4 pm, Tuesday, Nov. 19
at the Nolan Center

Bring your favorite dish
and stories to share

Suzanne passed away April 16



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Georgia real estate developer loses election bid

BY SENTINEL STAFF

Wayne Johnson, the Georgia real estate developer who made a run earlier this year at buying the former Wrangell hospital property to build half-million-dollar condominiums, lost his bid for a U.S. House seat in his home state.

Johnson, who pulled out of a deal with the borough in June, lost in the Nov. 5 election to 16-term U.S. Rep. Sanford Bishop. As of Nov. 8, Johnson had

136,399 votes to 175,773 for Bishop.

Johnson was endorsed by former president Donald Trump. It was the Republican's second try at Congress. He failed to get past the Republican primary for the seat in 2022.

Sanford has held the seat since first winning election in 1982. Georgia's District 2 includes Macon and extends to the southwest part of the state.

Johnson withdrew his offer to

buy the hospital property in Wrangell in late June when he objected to a Sentinel headline that said the developer wanted six adjacent borough-owned lots for free, which was a change from his previous discussions with borough officials to pay the appraised value for the property.

The developer said the lots wouldn't be "free," since he planned to pay the demolition and clearing costs of the hospital property.

Cell phones in schools

Continued from page 5

David Booth, principal of Palmer High School, implemented a ban as a pilot program this year. He described the results as transformative.

"Cellphones distract kids," he said. "There's no way around it."

After just about a month of the ban, Booth said teachers reported that students are more engaged and turn in their classroom assignments more often. They talk to each other in the cafeteria and in the halls. And the need for discipline has dropped precipitously. Last year administrators and teachers dealt with cyberbullying three to four times a week, Booth said, but he has had only two incidents in five weeks.

He said those results point to progress on two major issues: educational outcomes and mental health.

"Those devices are engineered to be addictive, 100%. So, that's why we're doing it. We're not trying to take anybody's freedom away. We're not trying to not allow parents to get a hold of their kids," he said.

At Palmer, students are required to keep their phones in a locked pouch during school hours. If a teacher or administrator sees a phone, they confiscate it. The student's parents must pick it up at the end of the day. Booth said he suspects the immediate parent involvement may be as much a deterrent as the pouch. Previously, he said, parents were only required to be in-

involved at the third phone confiscation.

In Anchorage, Wendler Middle School and South High School implemented phone bans last year and have kept them in place this year.

They, like Booth, have noticed a drop in cyberbullying and an increase in classroom engagement.

Wendler Middle School Principal Marcus Wilson said parents have "loved" the ban on phones, which he said is in line with the school's focus on mental health for students.

"Overwhelmingly, the parents were in support of it and thanked us, because they said it really takes the fight out of their hands," he said.

The students at Wendler are required to put their cellphones and devices in their lockers by 9:30 a.m. and may not retrieve them until school lets out, he said.

While Wilson said the school is waiting to see what their data says about academic outcomes and mental health changes, he has anecdotal evidence that the ban has benefits for students.

"I could tell our students feel better being here at school," he said.

Anchorage's South High School has had varying restrictions, but this year is its most restrictive outright ban on cellphones yet. Students leave their phones with their teachers at the beginning of class and may only use them at passing periods and at lunch. Last year, students were allowed to use them for coursework in classrooms — as a scientific calculator, for example.

Principal Luke Almon said there's no data for this year yet, but initial results from the partial

ban last year have been positive.

"Even with the partial ban, what I would call the objective measures of school climate went up," he said.

Staff at the school said the quality of student-to-teacher relationships improved significantly. Almon said he thinks removing the distraction of cellphones and focusing on in-person communication is what improved those relationships.

"Generally speaking, every academic growth measure on math and English grew ... so we just have to wait for a second year of data," he said. "But I will say, just from the anecdotal side of things, that we have a much easier time getting subs to work in our building because they don't have to fight cellphones."

Almon said he's had to strike a tough balance as a high school principal: He wants to honor the autonomy and decision-making skills of the young adults in his school, but he also wants to remove the distractions that get in the way of learning and community-building.

He said his advice to schools or districts looking at bans is to bring parents and the public into the conversation.

"I think most people at this point have come to realize that if you're going to learn efficiently, you need to be able to focus on one thing at a time and spend concentrated time on it," he said.

At least five states already have cellphone restriction policies that are recommended by their education departments, like the one the Alaska state board will develop: Alabama, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Washington and West Virginia.

Lawmakers in a dozen states have introduced legislation that

would implement phone bans or restrictions. Eight states, including California, Florida, Indiana and Louisiana have implemented them.

Nationally, more than 70% percent of high school teachers say cellphone distraction is a major problem in the classroom and nearly 70% of adults say they would support a ban on middle and high school students using cellphones during class, according to recent findings from the Pew Research Center.

Recent studies have borne out the effects that Alaska's teachers have begun to observe in their phone-free classrooms. A 2021 study on college students found that "students whose smartphones were physically removed during class had higher levels of course comprehension, lower levels of anxiety, and higher levels of mindfulness than the control group."

Gov. Mike Dunleavy said he supports the state education board's resolution to develop an Alaska-wide policy. Education Commissioner Deena Bishop also indicated she would like to see the state take the lead on cellphone restrictions.

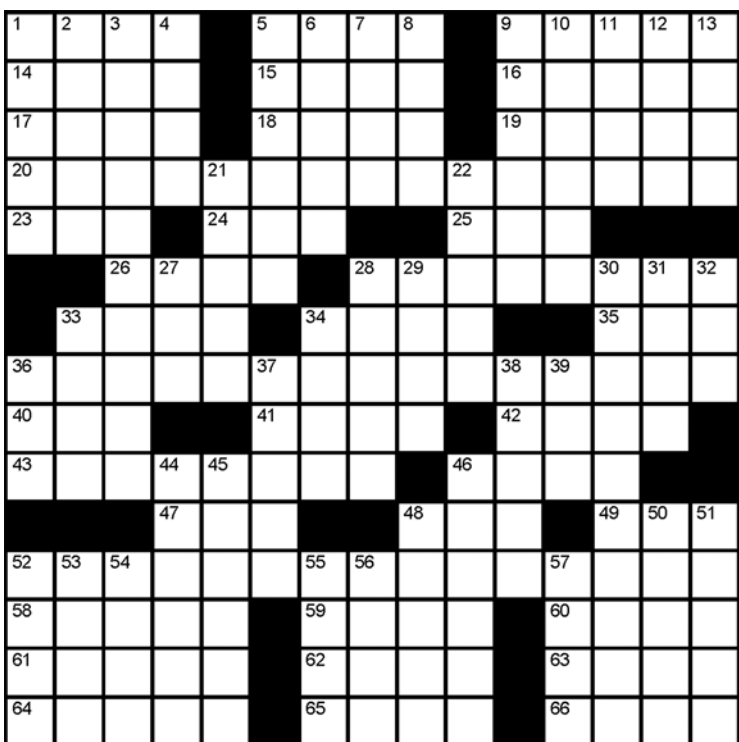
Wrangell Schools Superintendent Bill Burr has a different view.

"I do not believe that cellphone or other digital tools can have a statewide policy, as Alaska is a very different and diverse state. Especially in rural areas, access to digital tools and applications (more and more cloud-based) is essential to modern education."

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Crossword

Answers on page 8



CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Wander
- 5 White or Blue African river
- 9 Ahura ---, Zoroastrian
- Supreme Being
- 14 "... Marching --- war ..." (Sabine Baring-Gould)
- 15 Downright dastardly
- 16 Sherlock seeks them
- 17 Supercelebrity
- 18 Immeasurably long periods
- 19 Heavenly supporter
- 20 Causes house moves in California?
- 23 "... Venus sets --- Mercury can rise" (Pope)
- 24 Some
- 25 For each
- 26 Piece on earth?
- 28 Timber management
- 33 Lay
- 34 Wedding attendant
- 35 Weeding implement
- 36 Ironclad Mrs. Rice encrypted
- some FBI database entries
- 40 GWB, to GHWB
- 41 Quaintly ancient
- 42 Flag
- 43 Really?
- 46 "In your dreams!"
- 47 It never gets off the ground in Australia
- 48 Home to Jaguars but not Panthers
- 49 A decade
- 52 Sub rosa
- 58 Found in rings and bulbs
- 59 "Battle Hymn of the Republic" author
- 60 Pennsylvania resident famous in February
- 61 Fatty acid, for example
- 62 And the rest
- 63 Kansas movie barker
- 64 Corporate bigwigs
- 65 Century note
- 66 Double-click, perhaps

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Elevate
- 2 Half of "The Odd Couple"
- 3 Pet Antonio fusses about sometime
- 4 Nat King Cole's "--- Lisa"
- 5 "Well You ---" (Thelonus Monk)
- 6 Trade in the elephant variety is illegal
- 7 Short note
- 8 "Lohengrin" heroine
- 9 Big name in antivirus software
- 10 Tables with frontals
- 11 Bantu language
- 12 Distribute cards
- 13 Helper, for short
- 21 Model --- Campbell
- 22 Bender
- 27 "Solaris" author Stanislaw ---
- 28 Golfer who won three British Opens and three Masters
- 29 Giant people-eater
- 30 Place to find a bargain
- 31 Staffs
- 32 Triumphant cry
- 33 28 Down is one of them
- 34 Friends
- 36 "... : Miami" (CBS hit)
- 37 Still in dreamland
- 38 Superior herring?
- 39 "Halt! --- fire!"
- 44 Valiant
- 45 They're made in reparation
- 46 Far away from home
- 48 Up in arms
- 50 Cream of the crop
- 51 It can run while you walk
- 52 Flat-fish
- 53 Multi-user computer operating system
- 54 About to go off?
- 55 "... Call Me MISTER Tibbs!"
- 56 Jot
- 57 "He's --- no good"

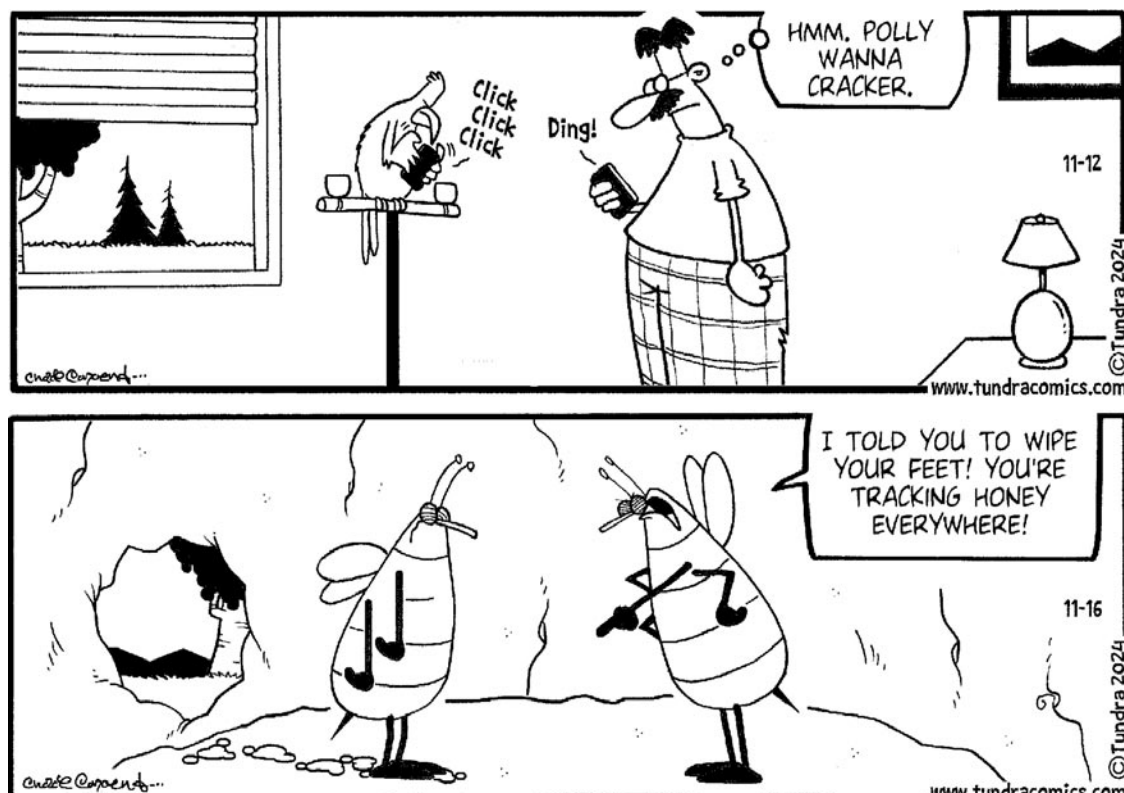
Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



Volleyball team scores No. 1 seed in Southeast with 6-1 Petersburg meet

BY SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

After a two-week hiatus, the girls high school volleyball team returned to the court, winning six of their seven matches in the second and final seeding tournament of the year. Their record was enough to secure the No. 1 seed for the upcoming Southeast championships held in Craig later this month.

The three-day tournament in Petersburg Nov. 7-9 is one of just two tournaments that determines the seeding for the Nov. 21-23 Southeast championships.

The Wolves got their Petersburg play off to a hot start on Nov. 7, brushing aside the hosts in two sets before doing the same against Craig later in the day.

The Petersburg matchup was initially closer than Wrangell head coach Brian Herman would have liked. The Wolves won the first set 25-22 before a less competitive 25-15 second set victory. Against Craig, it was a little more lopsided. Wrangell tripled — yes, tripled — the Panthers' score in the first set (25-8) before merely doubling their rivals score in the second (25-12).

On the tournament's second day, Nov. 8, Wrangell picked up right where they left off, beating Haines in two sets. The Glacier Bears put up a better fight than their predecessors, but it still wasn't pretty: The Wolves won both sets by a combined 21 points.

The Skagway Panthers were the next team to show up to the feast; they just didn't realize they were on the menu. Wrangell dismissed them 25-14 in the first set, before closing out a tight second set 26-24.

Wrangell's closest match of the day was their final one. Lining up against Hoonah, the Wolves had won their previous 10 sets, dating back to the Oct. 24 victory against Ketchikan, but all streaks must come to an end. Wrangell won a relatively close opening set 25-19 but dropped the second set by just two points.

Anyone who had witnessed the previous two sets probably expected a close (or even a close-ish) third. That was not the case. Wrangell walloped the Hoonah Braves 25-14, winning the match two sets to one.

Once again, Wrangell's Christina Johnson dominated the opponent from the end line. She boasted a team-high six aces and accounted for 14 of Wrangell's 36 offensive points against the Braves. Johnson's 100% serve percentage led the match.

Following the victory against Hoonah, the Wolves had two Nov. 9 matches to round out the tournament. They started off Saturday strong, skipping past Klawock in two sets. In the final matchup of the tournament, they faced Metlakatla. Wrangell dropped the first set 25-21 before the Chiefs completed the sweep with a 25-14 second-set blowout.

Herman said he was disappointed that the team couldn't finish the regular season undefeated but hopes the loss can take some pressure off the players' shoulders.

"I'd rather it happen now than at regional or state," he said.

At the Southeast championship tournament in Craig, the Wolves will play against Southeast rivals until they win or go home. The top two finishers in Southeast qualify for the Dec. 5-7 state tournament in Palmer.

Elementary schoolers run the court



PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Jude Johnson scrambles down the court for a layup ahead of Petersburg's Ruger Fittje at the fourth and fifth graders all-star game on Saturday, Nov. 9, at the community center gym. Referee Jeff Jabusch follows the action. Jude's team won the game, which was held before the community center dedication ceremony. The Parks and Recreation Department organized the dedication to recognize the more than 70 years the building has served Wrangell.

Police report

Monday, Nov. 4

Agency assist: Ambulance.

Tuesday, Nov. 5

Subpoena service.
Subpoena service.
Driving complaints.
Traffic hazard.

Wednesday, Nov. 6

Agency assist: State Office of Children's Services.

Thursday, Nov. 7

Agency assist: Hoonah Police Department.
Agency assist: Ambulance.
Agency assist: State Office of Children's Services.
Citizen assist.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for no headlights.

Friday, Nov. 8

Agency assist: Ambulance. Threats.

Traffic stop.

Welfare check.

Saturday, Nov. 9

Nothing to report.

Sunday, Nov. 10

Traffic stop: Verbal warning for failure to stop at stop sign. Road debris.
Traffic stop: Citation issued for speeding.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning.

CLASSIFIED

HELP WANTED

Wrangell Public Schools is accepting applications for:

Secondary School Secretary: This is a full-time, 10-month position with benefits working in the middle and high school. Salary placement is in Column C on the classified salary schedule. Responsibilities include performing office functions at a public school and serving as secretary to the school administration, students and staff. The successful applicant will begin as soon as possible.

For more information and a job description, please contact the District Office at 907-874-2347. Positions are open until filled. It is Wrangell Public School District policy to not discriminate based on age, race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

HELP WANTED

Johnson's Building Supply is accepting applications for the following position: Customer Service. Duties include counter sales, freight handling, customer deliveries, stocking and inventory. Full-time position; will require working Saturdays. Valid Alaska driver's license, must be able to lift 50 lbs., forklift experience a plus, starting pay is DOE. Stop by Johnson's for an application.

RETURN

The loan closet, operated by Hospice of Wrangell, has durable medical equipment available for those in need. If you have items you borrowed and are no longer using, contact

Don McConachie at 907 305-0063 to arrange their return.

FREE

Free 4-drawer metal filing cabinet in fair condition. 28" deep, 15" wide and 52" tall. Stop by the Sentinel to pick up.

FREE

Recycled newspapers. Stop by the Sentinel to pick up.

FREE ADS

Do you have something to sell? Having a garage sale? Looking to buy something? Classified ads for individuals and community groups are free in the Sentinel. Contact Amber at 907-874-2301 or email wrgsent@gmail.com.

LETTERS WANTED

Do you have an opinion that you would like to share? Send us a typed or clearly written letter up to 400 words with your phone number and we will get it published in the paper. Contact Amber at 907-874-2301 or email wrgsent@gmail.com.

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL PUBLIC NOTICE INDUSTRIAL PARK LOTS Borough-Owned Property for Sale

In conformance with WMC 16.12 and approved by Resolution No. 10-24-1885, the Borough is offering for sale, the Borough-Owned Property, listed below, on the Public Surplus Website: <https://www.publicsurplus.com/sms/wrangell,ak/list/current?orgid=933515>

Property Descriptions:

Property Description	Area (sq. ft.)	Starting Bid:
LOT 5a, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(25,491 sq. ft.)	\$51,000
LOT 7, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 8, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(21,435 sq. ft.)	\$50,900
LOT 9, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(25,849 sq. ft.)	\$51,700
LOT 10, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 11, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 12, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 13, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT	(16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400

The property shall be available for bidding on the Public Surplus Site for not less than 50 days, specifically from Oct. 25 through Dec. 13, 2024, ADT at 2 p.m.

Bidders' registration and fee required in advance of the online auction on the Public Surplus Website.

Visit the Borough Website at: <https://www.wrangell.com/community/public-surplus> for the terms and conditions and specifics of the auction/sale of the property.

Publish Oct. 30, Nov. 13 and Dec. 4, 2024

Wrangell Cooperative Association NOTICE OF JOB OPENING Receptionist

Wrangell Cooperative Association is seeking a Receptionist. Seeking experience of two years of increasingly responsible, varied, and highly skilled clerical work.

High school diploma or GED is required. Must have a valid drivers license and the ability to pass a pre-employment drug test.

Contact WCA at 907-874-4304 for an application or more information. Applications can be submitted in person at the Wrangell Cooperative Association office at 1002 Zimovia Highway or emailed to receptionisht.wca@gmail.com.

Closing date: Open until filled.

Publish Nov. 13 and 20, 2024

Subscribe to the Sentinel

907-874-2301

Wrestlers return home from Kayhi with 8 podium finishes

By **SAM PAUSMAN**
Sentinel senior reporter

The Wolves put on a show at the Bill Weiss Wrestling Invitational in Ketchikan. By the time the meet had wrapped up on Nov. 9, Wrangell walked away with two champions, three runners-up and three bronze medalists. The girls team finished fourth overall while the boys team finished fifth.

Palmer's Colony High School won the meet with 369.5 points.

Wrangell boasted the tournament's third-highest winning percentage, with Wolves winning 68 of their 106 matches. Additionally, the boys and girls teams combined with the fifth-highest number of pins across the tournament's three days.

Jackson Carney was the boys sole champion, beating Ketchikan's Gage Massin to claim the 140-pound title. Vanessa Barnes claimed gold for the girls, giving the senior much to look forward to ahead of the upcoming home meet and senior night on Friday, Nov. 15.

Hailey Cook, Della Churchill and Cody Barnes all finished second in their respective weight classes. Meanwhile, Bella Ritchie, Ian Nelson and Everett Meissner each finished third after a trio of "tough matches," according to head coach Jack Carney.

For the Wolves, there were a couple

highlights across the three-day tournament Nov. 7-9. Freshman Lennex Gurule secured his first career high school wrestling victory, beating Ketchikan's RJ Cadiente. Additionally, on the tournament's second day, Meissner secured a buzzer-beating takedown to win his match en route to his third-place finish.

"Everett was up against a kid that beat him last year," coach Carney said. "Someone who's older than him and placed in states, but Everett took him to overtime and was about to get a takedown on him. It was a huge match, and Everett came ready to go."

In the boys 125-pound bracket, Ben Houser beat teammate Kyan Stead to finish fifth, while Lucas Stearns and Michael Cook finished in sixth and seventh for the 130-pound weight class. Cooper Powers finished just off the podium in fourth place in the 135-pound bracket. In the girls 107-pound bracket, Amura Brevick finished in fifth place.

Next up, Wrangell will host its sole home meet of the year on Friday, Nov. 15. The competition will be preceded by a senior night, allowing the team's three seniors to receive recognition for their wrestling careers.

"They are hard workers," Carney said. "It will be nice to honor them and give them a chance to wrestle in front of their families."



PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Learning from a pro

NBA veteran Chucky Brown, who now coaches college basketball in North Carolina, presented a basketball clinic on Sunday, Nov. 10, for more than 30 young Wrangell athletes. The shootaround was designed to give the players practice ahead of the Monday, Nov. 11, three-on-three tournament. Brown was in town as part of Team Hollywood, a group of professional athletes who travel around Alaska. Their visit was sponsored by the Wrangell Cooperative Association.

Air travelers face May 2025 deadline for Real ID drivers license

By **SAM PAUSMAN**
Sentinel senior reporter

Almost 20 years after the legislation was signed into law, the Real ID deadline has a new final date: May 7, 2025.

Starting then, Alaskans who want to use their drivers license to travel on commercial airlines will be required to present a Real ID to TSA as their form of identification. For those without a Real ID, other federally issued identification like passports, military IDs or Bureau of Indian Affairs cards will suffice.

Wrangell residents without a Real ID — distinguishable by the star in the top-right corner — are in luck: Jayme Howell, the newly hired sole staffer for the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles office in Wrangell, plans to reopen the office by mid-December.

The Wrangell DMV has been closed since Aug. 23 when its only employee resigned.

Howell said identification cards traditionally take one to three weeks to be printed and

shipped, meaning that Wrangell residents will want to acquire their new cards sooner rather than later.

To do so, head down to the DMV (located in the Public Safety Building) with the following documentation: A U.S. passport or birth certificate and two documents showing proof of residency (like utility bills, but they must be from different months). If your name does not match previous documents, you must bring documents containing proof of name change, like a marriage certificate, an adoption document or a divorce decree.

The application also requires a Social Security number. If you know yours off the top of your head, that's great. Otherwise, it's a good idea to bring the card with you. (In 2021, the physical card was no longer required for the Real ID application in an effort to modernize the process.)

For further details outlining what documents you need to bring to get a new ID card,

Howell encourages everyone to visit dmv.alaska.gov.

She said to expect DMV hours to remain relatively unchanged once it reopens next month. Before the office shut down in August, it operated on a Tuesday through Thursday schedule, with doors open from 8:30 a.m. to noon and again from 1:30 to 5 p.m.

The operations will be limited through the end of January as Howell continues to get trained for the role. In the meantime, it will only handle cases pertaining to identification cards, titles and vehicle registration.

For anyone looking to take their drivers test before the

end of January, Howell said the DMV offices in Petersburg and Ketchikan are available to Wrangell residents.

Though the deadline for the Real ID is next year, the process began nearly 20 years ago.

In 2005, Congress passed the Real ID Act to standardize identification sources. This was in direct response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks where hijackers were able to obtain legal identification cards from DMVs in multiple states, utilizing loopholes to do so.

The first deadline for the card was 2008. There have been several extensions since then for various reasons, but

May 2025 could very well be the last.

The Department of Homeland Security believes the implementation of Real ID will "make our identity documents more consistent and secure."

Other than the emboldened blue and white star in the top right corner, the modern cards will nearly be identical to a standard-issue ID card the DMV supplies, Howell said. Standard ID cards, instead of the star, will print, "Federal limits apply" in the same location.

"Additionally, the validity period for all ID card types has been extended from five to eight years," Howell noted.

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