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A killer whale hat is among the items returned by the University of Washington museum to the Naanya.aayí clan.

New museum display highlights clan items returned to Wrangell

BY BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

The Nolan Center is unveiling a new display this weekend featuring repatriated clan items that were returned to Wrangell last fall.

Objects in the display include xóots shákee.át, a bear headdress; tsax l'axhk'eit, a marmot mask; kéet shakee.át s'áaxhw, a killer whale hat (a replica); and gunakadeit s'eikdaakeit, a sea monster tobacco pipe.

The items were returned to Wrangell from the Thomas Burke Memorial Museum at the University of Washington.

Though most historical details of the objects are unknown, it is estimated that most of the items came from Wrangell in the 1930s or 1940s, said Jeanie Arnold, Nolan Center director.

Staff at the Nolan Center worked closely with the Wrangell Cooperative Association to ensure that the items are presented accurately.

Over the past few years, more than two dozen at.óow, or Tlingít clan property items, have been

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Legislature approves budget with money for Wrangell work

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Several of Wrangell's requests are included in the state capital budget of public works projects that the Legislature approved last week, sending the spending plan to the governor for signature into law or veto.

Unless the governor uses his veto powers to eliminate or reduce the appropriations, Wrangell would receive \$5 million toward

stabilization work at the earthen dams that hold back the community's water reservoirs; \$200,000 to start planning what's being called an "escape route" for Zimovia Highway residents to drive across the island to reach the Spur Road on the other side; and almost \$9,300 for the borough's emergency operations efforts.

The budget also includes enough state funding to reach down the Alaska Department of

Education's Major Maintenance Grant Program list to provide \$6.5 million for Wrangell to make repairs to its school buildings.

The House passed the bill on a 39-1 vote on May 8; the Senate concurred on a 17-2 vote on May 10.

The 12-mile-long emergency access route across state and federal lands would connect the old logging road at Pats Creek on the west side of Wrangell Island to the Spur

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PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Wrangell's class of 2024, from left: Lily Younce, Mia Wiederspohn, Mindy Meissner, Sean McDonald, Nate Rooney, Spencer Petticrew, Cody Eastaugh, Keegan Hanson, Kayla Meissner and Alisha Armstrong

High school graduation Friday evening

BY MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

Wrangell High School will hold its graduation ceremony at 7 p.m. Friday, May 17, in the high school gym.

Principal Jackie Hanson will welcome the 10 seniors and teacher Jack Carney will serve as the commencement speaker.

This year's valedictorian and salutatorian had not been announced as of the Sentinel's printing deadline on Monday.

Each senior has tickets for 10 friends or family for seats on the gym floor, with overflow space in the bleachers. The ceremony can also be viewed online at <https://www.youtube.com/@WPSDusStreaming>.

The school district's annual academic and scholarship award ceremony will be held at 1:15 p.m. Wednesday, May 15, in the high school gym.

The final two weeks of school for the graduating students have been filled with finishing senior projects, making sure other work is complete and taking time out for a sanctioned skip day on May 6 that included various activities, including a ride on a fire truck and a boat trip up the Stikine River.

Hanson reported that this year's senior prank was played on April 26. Students brought trucks, some with boats in tow, that took up much of the school parking lot with several signs that said, "Uh-oh," and "Have Fun Parking." The final sign included the signatures of the graduating seniors titled, "The Class of 2024."

Chamber lacks royalty candidates for Fourth fundraising

BY BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

Next year's Fourth of July celebration, Wrangell's most popular holiday, may be in jeopardy - the May 1 deadline to turn in paperwork yielded zero royalty candidates.

It takes a village to put on the fireworks and countless other festivities for the Fourth every year. To offset costs, high school students or recent graduates run as royalty contestants - selling tens of thousands of \$1 raffle tickets and running food booths downtown to raise money for the chamber of commerce, which

organizes the celebration's events.

Royalty candidates get to keep a portion of their sales as a reward for their hard work and cash prizes go to the lucky winning ticket holders.

Tommy Wells, chamber of commerce executive director, said he's hoping candidates will turn in late paperwork. A couple people picked up the required packets from the chamber office, he said, and are perhaps just taking their time filling them out.

But royalty season is fast approaching. Typically, candidates begin selling food

and raffle tickets on Memorial Day.

With sales closing July 3, they only have about a month to raise tens of thousands of dollars. Raising enough money requires a lot of advance work, planning, lining up sponsors and arranging a crew and volunteers.

The 2016 royalty contest yielded a record amount of sales by two candidates, totaling \$126,408. But since then, sales have been in decline, with only one candidate running the past few years. Ticket sales totaled \$53,704 in 2023 and \$56,260 in 2022.

Contestants must be at least 14 years old, and they need an adult to sign on as the person in charge, plus a food manager and a finance director, Wells explained. All of the managers must be at least 21 years old.

The chamber has confronted tight finances in recent years amid a downward trend in ticket sales and rising costs. The nonprofit organization reported before last year's Fourth that its expenses had exceeded revenues the past six years, draining the chamber's reserves.

The borough assembly last year authorized an additional

\$25,000 to help the chamber cover its Fourth of July expenses as the organization worked to cut spending and bring in additional sponsors to help cover the costs of many of the events.

The assembly appropriated \$22,000 to \$27,000 per year to help pay the chamber's general operating budget in fiscal years 2021, 2022 and 2023, but did not include any direct contribution to the chamber for the budget year that ends June 30.

The borough has not released its draft budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1.

Senior Center Menu

Open for in-person dining. Must be fully vaccinated.

Thursday, May 16

Chicken noodle soup, mixed vegetables, cabbage, pear and raisin salad

Friday, May 17

Hamburger, potato salad, orange slices

Monday, May 20

Shelf-stable meal delivered on Friday, May 17

Tuesday, May 21

Beef stew with vegetables, spicy fruit salad, roll

Wednesday, May 22

Chinese pork and rice, green beans, Waldorf salad

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, May 19

Kennicott, 8:45 p.m.

Sunday, May 26

Kennicott, 4:15 p.m.

Sunday, June 2

Kennicott, 8:15 p.m.

Sunday, June 9

Kennicott, 4:45 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, May 22

Kennicott, 6:15 a.m.

Wednesday, May 29

Kennicott, 5:15 a.m.

Wednesday, June 5

Kennicott, 5:45 a.m.

Wednesday, June 12

Kennicott, 5 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	
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
May 15	06:57	12.2	08:33	12.5	00:45	6.5	01:26	2.7
May 16	08:21	11.8	09:28	13.2	02:11	6.2	02:31	3.2
May 17	09:33	12.1	10:13	14.1	03:29	5.2	03:31	3.3
May 18	10:31	12.6	10:52	15.0	04:28	3.8	04:22	3.2
May 19	11:21	13.2	11:28	15.7	05:13	2.3	05:05	3.1
May 20	12:06	13.8	05:52	1.0	05:44	3.1
May 21	00:02	16.3	12:48	14.1	06:26	-0.1	06:20	3.2



ALASKA AIRLINES CLUB 49 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

SCHOOL BOARD public hearing to collect input on student performance will be held at 6 p.m. Monday, May 20, with the regular board meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Evergreen Elementary School Room 101. The agenda will be available online four days before the meeting at the school district website.

ROLL ON THE ROCK roller skating 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Fridays at the TouchPoint Ministries rink on Bennett Street. Children 9 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Skaters must complete a registration form.

NOLAN CENTER THEATER no movie this weekend.

MUSKEG MEADOWS will hold the Wrangell IGA nine-hole best-ball golf tournament Saturday and Sunday, May 18-19. Tournament play starts at 10 a.m.; register by 9:30 a.m.

SMALL BUSINESS and COMMERCIAL FISHING LOANS information available 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 21, 9 a.m. to noon and 2 to 4 p.m., Wednesday, May 22, at City Hall, hosted by the state Division of Investments. Information on small business loans, microloans, small business economic development programs, the state's rural development initiative, mariculture, commercial charter fisheries, commercial fishing loans, fishery permit purchases, vessel purchases and upgrades, gear purchase and upgrades, engine fuel efficiency upgrades, seafood product quality, quota share purchases and tax obligations. No appointment needed. Call for information: 1-800-478-5626 or 907-465-2510.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM FOR KIDS at the Irene Ingle Public Library now open for registration. Open to children entering kindergarten through ninth grade in the fall. Register at the library. The reading program runs May 28 through Aug. 3. More than 100 prize drawings and a pool/pizza party for everyone who completes the program. Call 907-874-3535 for more information.

COMMUNITY POTLUCK the evening of Tuesday, May 28, at the Nolan Center (time still to be determined). The potluck is to celebrate the arrival of the canoes - the "Paddle to Celebration" journey will kick off in Wrangell and then head to Juneau. For more information, contact Danika at 907-470-440 or Christie Jamieson at 907-305-0117.

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

- **OPEN GYM VOLLEYBALL** 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Mondays, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Fridays at the community center gym. Wear sporty clothes and gym shoes. For ages 14 and up. Drop-in rates apply.
- **TOT SWIM** 11 a.m. to noon weekdays. For guardians and children 5 years old and under. Toys and "pool noodles" available.
- **KICKBOXING**, 5:30 to 7 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays at the community center multipurpose room with Victoria Carney. Drop-in fee \$5; \$3 senior discount; or use a facility punch card.

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

May 15, 1924

The opening of navigation on the Stikine River this week was marked by heavy shipments of mining equipment and supplies, and a passenger list which included a number of well-known mining men. The increasing interest shown in the Dease Lake region and other sections beyond Telegraph Creek in British Columbia is an unmistakable forecast of considerable mining activity in the Cassiar the coming season. The Hazel B No. 3 and Hazel B No. 4 - the first two boats to go up the Stikine this season -- left here Monday afternoon with a capacity cargo and full passenger lists. One boat was

pushing a scow on which were 11 head of horses for the Hudson's Bay Co.

May 20, 1949

Wrangell voters went heavily in favor of a municipal sales tax, approving it in a 216-24 tally on Monday. It was the first town in the territory to levy the tax under the new territorial law which allows towns of Alaska to levy a municipal sales tax not to exceed 2% for schools, sewer systems and limited municipal improvements. The new law, by the way, was introduced in the past territorial legislature by Wrangell's representative in the House, Mrs. Doris M. Barnes. The tax will become

effective on June 1. Out of 340 registered voters in Wrangell, 240 cast ballots in last Monday's special election. A few towns in Alaska, such as Craig and Sitka, already have a sales tax, but their tax was imposed by popular consent, not under territorial law.

May 17, 1974

Soaring costs caught up with Wrangell with a whoosh as the city council on Tuesday: Approved a boost of one percentage point, from 4% to 5%, in the city sales tax rate; OK'd a 44.5% increase in electrical rates; and reviewed a record fiscal budget with a general fund approaching \$1 million and based on a 20-mill

property tax rate, up from the 18 mills that has held steady since 1969. The sales tax boost is expected to raise an additional \$60,000 a year for the city treasury, City Manager Herb McNabb said. The increase in mileage will bring in another \$22,000.

May 13, 1999

City employees who are sick, tired or just want to take a vacation now have three options to consider just how and how long they may do so in the future. After lengthy discussion at the city council meeting Tuesday evening, the council deferred approval of the second reading of the ordinance concerning personal vacations

and sick leave. Although the council had recently made some changes to the sick leave and annual leave ordinances, Mayor Bill Privett and other council members said they felt that they were not sure that they had received enough information concerning the ordinances prior to their decision. Three new options were presented in the council packet Tuesday, including lists of the advantages and disadvantages to the city and to its employees. After discussing these options, the council decided to wait until their next meeting to vote on the second reading so the members and the city employees would have more time to study the different proposals.

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FREIGHT FOR LESS

New wildlife trooper happy for return to small-town living

By MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

Alisha Seward is Wrangell's new state wildlife trooper — her fifth move in nine years.

Wrangell is one of the smaller posts among the 37 locations staffed by the Alaska wildlife troopers division and she is the only officer in town, with no corresponding state trooper.

"Right now, my goal is just to learn my patrol area, which is big and vast," she said. "I just spent the last couple days out on a boat patrol with Chadd (Yoder), who was just here, learning my area and all that encompasses it."

Coming from a brief posting in Juneau, she took over from Wildlife Trooper Chadd Yoder, who transferred to Ketchikan several months ago.

Seward began her career in Soldotna, then moved to Homer and Kodiak, where she met and married her husband, Wesley, and had her two young sons, Kaden and Ryder, ages 3 and 2, respectively, as well as gaining another family member, their 4-year-old German shepherd Kimber.

Because Seward felt that her duties in Kodiak kept her away too much from her family, they tried a short stint in Juneau. "Did not like it," she said, adding that they decided to return to a smaller community. "Wrangell opened up, we jumped on it, and we have just been in love with it since we've been here." They arrived in late March.

Her husband especially enjoys returning to a small town. "He's from Kodiak, so him getting back to a small community was very big for him, so he has just been enjoying it and thriving here."

A former fishing guide, Seward's husband now devotes his time taking care of the kids and starting a new business that focuses on one of his passions: role-playing and trading card games like Dungeons and Dragons, Pokémon, Yu-Gi-Oh and Magic: The Gathering. "Right now, we're doing it at the bottom of our house," she said. "It's been doing well. It's called AK Hobby R.A.W.K.S."

Kaden and Ryder share their parents' love of the outdoors and have been adaptable to the



PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Alisha Seward is the new state wildlife trooper assigned to Wrangell.

various changes. "Since they've been born, this is their third move," mom said. "Anywhere we go, for them it's a new adventure."

Born and raised in Washington state, Seward had wanted to go into law enforcement since she was in high school. She expressed her interest with the school resource officer, who encouraged her to take part in a ride-along, an arrangement

for a civilian to spend a shift in the passenger seat with a local police officer on patrol. "It was the best," she said. "Every day was different. Every call was different."

However, when she prepared for college, her mother urged her to focus her studies on something outside police work, so she chose something completely different. "I studied exercise physiology and I got a

minor in culinary arts," she said.

Before she graduated though, she kept recalling her ride-along experience and finally decided that a career in law enforcement was what she needed to pursue. "Not only do I want to help people and be there for them, but sitting behind a desk for me, it's not something I could do on a daily basis. It would probably drive me up a wall, doing the same thing, day in and day out."

Upon choosing her career path, Seward discovered that her college roommate had a great-aunt who worked in the Alaska State Troopers' recruiting department. "I was like, 'Well, I'm not tied anywhere, let's go on an adventure and have some fun,'" she said.

She was drawn to work as a wildlife trooper by her love of the outdoors. "Outside is where all the beauty's at," she said. "I get to contact good people just out there having some fun and see what they're catching."

Seward said one of the challenges is that while criminal laws and statutes are evenly applied throughout the state regardless of location, hunting and fishing laws vary from region to region. It can be difficult to keep track of all the regional boundaries and what laws and regulations apply to those specific areas. "Hunting, fishing, sport fishing, personal use, subsistence, it all is a little bit different in the certain places that you go."

"When I was in Kodiak, for example," she said. "There, with big game hunting, you can shoot from your boat. It just can't be obviously moving ... Here in Southeast? Oh, that's like a big no-no. ... So, just small little nuances like that makes it tricky."

Now settled into her new post, Seward wants the residents to feel free to approach her, regardless of her uniform. "My thing is, first and foremost, I'm a mom and a wife ... and I'm a trooper second."

New harbor security cameras focus on fighting crime

By BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

Wrangell now has a total of 56 security cameras up and running across all its harbors and the Marine Service Center.

The cameras run 24 hours a day and pick up clear footage in all lighting situations, said Harbormaster Steve Miller, even capturing images well in complete darkness.

The harbormaster and staff have access to the camera footage, which is stored for 30 days. Rather than monitoring the videos, harbor staff will go back to access

the feeds if information is needed. But the cameras are equipped with motion sensors that highlight moments in the video feed where movement is detected, making it more efficient to find information.

If needed, boat owners can request footage from the harbormaster.

Already the cameras have come in useful a couple of times, Miller reported at the May 8 port commission meeting. They helped to clearly identify an individual who was under the influence and fell asleep on a dock in

April, and in another incident the cameras helped to identify vehicles involved in an accident and the events leading up to it.

Installation of the cameras was prompted by an increase in thefts at Wrangell harbors in recent years. The project was funded by U.S. Department of Homeland Security grants.

The borough paid about half-a-million dollars to Chatham Electric out of Juneau for the security cameras, wiring and installation. Chatham finished the work last month.

AML™

Wrangell Voyage Schedule Change

A reminder for all AML customers: starting in May, barge service to Wrangell will begin departing Seattle on Wednesday (rather than Friday). Cargo availability in Wrangell will be the following Monday.

Please visit www.shipaml.com for our current sailing schedules. If you have any questions, please email amlcsc@lynden.com or call 907-874-3314.

Thank you for your continued support!



FROM THE PUBLISHER

Imitation is not flattering, it's embarrassing

BY LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

The Republican-controlled Alaska House of Representatives last Saturday did their best impersonation ever of the U.S. House, spending all day on legislation that will never make it into law.

It was the same kind of political circus that the nation has endured the past couple of years after a skinny margin of Republicans took control of the U.S. House, beholden to a small group who spend more time on social media than doing their schoolwork. Too bad teachers cannot take away their phones.

Rather than focus on bipartisan legislation that could help the public, the U.S. House majority has put on a big show under the big top of the Capitol dome in hopes of selling a lot of tickets for the next election.

There's no dome on Alaska's Capitol, but the circus put on a show anyway Saturday.

With real issues piling up, waiting for the time and attention of members, and while multiple committee meetings were canceled, the state House spent double-digit hours on the floor, debating legislation that would ban transgender girls from participating on girls sports teams in Alaska. Opponents flooded the House with time-consuming amendments, all destined to fail but intended to show the pointlessness of the day.

Regardless of how you feel about the issue, there are several reasons why Saturday's House session was unproductive — a waste of time at the wrong time.

The state Senate has absolutely, positively made clear that it has no interest whatsoever in considering the legislation. The Senate majority sees it as needlessly divisive at a time when there are more important issues to resolve for the public. Which means that even after the House approved the transgender-ban bill on Sunday, it will die in the Senate.

Sure, passing the bill was an opportunity for the House majority to make a statement, to

take a stand against transgender girls in sports, to show their constituents that the conservative social agenda is alive — even if not well — in state government.

But that statement did nothing to help ease the chronic housing shortage that is holding back the Alaska economy or improve schools or reduce the deaths from fentanyl. It was all for show, just like a circus.

And while the House trans-ban performance was underway, nothing else got done. All the bills that need attention languished, such as raising the minimum age for e-cigarettes and vape products, trying to get more nurses in the state, adding mental health to K-12 health curriculum, responding to a looming natural gas shortage in the state's population centers and many other real-life issues that have nothing to do with gender.

Besides, the state already bans transgender girls from high school girls sports. The Alaska Board of Education did that by regulation last year. The House bill would expand the ban to start in kindergarten and extend through the university level. It would be better if the bill's supporters devoted their efforts to improving educational opportunities rather than picking winners and losers in sports.

What makes this even more frustrating is that the Legislature faces a constitutional adjournment deadline at midnight Wednesday, May 15. Whatever doesn't get done by then has to start over next year. The House burned up time it does not have.

The Legislature could extend itself into a special session to finish the homework it failed to complete on time, but that would require a two-thirds majority vote in both the House and Senate — not very likely.

What is likely is that the House set up transgender girls in sports as an election issue for the fall. I hope voters consider that when choosing the best candidates to govern the state.

EDITORIAL

It's for our own good

It may be hard for some to accept but, long term, it will be good for the community if commercial tour operators follow state law and register for the required permit to take people to the Petroglyph Beach State Historic Site.

That includes collecting \$6 per person from customers and sending the money to the state Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

The fee was on the books long before the beach was designated a state historic site in 2000, bringing it under the permit requirements. It's just that no one realized it — not the borough or the businesses that took people to the observation deck, or the state parks agency which sort of lost track of its only site in Wrangell.

Then someone complained last summer about tourists coming ashore at the beach and possibly damaging the tidelands, and the state realized it had missed enforcing the permit requirement the past two decades. News coverage last September alerted the community to the fact that the state wasn't going to worry about 2023 permits, but operators needed to sign up for 2024.

The state parks division sent notices this past winter to every tour operator it could find online, advising them of the permit and fee requirement. As of last week, just one operator had registered for its permit.

Regardless of any grumpiness over the permit fee and adding \$6 to the cost of a tour, everyone needs to understand that getting a count of the number of visitors would increase the chances of getting state money for improvements at the property.

Although Wrangell wishes otherwise, state law does not allow the fees collected for Petroglyph Beach to be dedicated for work at the property. Spending state money is up to the Legislature and governor in the annual budget process. The fees will go into the kitty, same as park fees collected across the state.

But without any numbers to show how many people visit Petroglyph Beach each year, it's pretty hard for the parks division and area legislators to argue for state spending on the site. There are more needs than money statewide, and a visitor count would help the Wrangell visitor attraction win funding.

"Right now, we have a park that gets no documented use or visitation, making it hard to justify funding approval," explained the superintendent for state parks in Southeast. "It's only going to help if the local businesses come on board."

That's good advice. There is nothing wrong with charging visitors a fee. Seeing and understanding history is a bargain at a few dollars.

— Wrangell Sentinel

Capital budget

Continued from page 1

Road on the island's east side. The borough has estimated it would cost \$5 million to add about half a mile of new road, improve the existing rough roadway, upgrade drainage along the right of way and possibly strengthen a couple of short bridges.

The borough stepped up its lobbying efforts for the East Channel Emergency Access Route after the Nov. 20 landslide at 11.2-Mile Zimovia Highway killed six people and stranded residents until the highway could be reopened.

Planning and design for the project is estimated at \$500,000. The state money will allow planning work to begin; the borough will need to find other sources to fully fund the planning work. Actual construction could be several years away.

A more immediate community project included in the state capital budget is replacing roofs, heating and ventilation systems and controls, windows, siding, insulation and other parts of the town's decades-old school buildings.

The Legislature appropriated \$62.7 million for major maintenance school projects statewide, reaching down to fund the top 26 projects on a list that includes almost 100 requests. Wrangell is ranked No. 16.

If signed by Gov. Mike Dunleavy, Wrangell would receive \$6.5 million to combine with \$3.5 million voters approved in 2022 to pay for \$10 million in repairs to all three schools.

The governor's office declined last week to indicate what he might do with the school funding. The past three years, Dunleavy has used his veto

powers to eliminate or significantly reduce legislative appropriations for school repairs.

In total, the \$4 billion capital budget funds dozens of infrastructure and maintenance projects across Alaska. Most of the funding comes from the federal government. Just over \$550 million comes from the state treasury.

Education is a big-ticket item in the budget. In addition to the maintenance funding, almost \$30 million is allocated for a separate fund to help maintain schools in rural Alaska; \$22 million is slated to build a replacement school in Toksook Bay in Southwest Alaska; and there is \$28 million for maintenance work at University of Alaska campuses (about 2% of the university system's deferred maintenance backlog).

Other items in the spending plan include \$15 million to help

fund a nursing facility at the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium in Anchorage; \$7.5 million to help the commercial fishing industry by buying seafood from oversupplied processors for distribution through food banks; and \$7.5 million to replace the antiquated online application system for the Permanent Fund dividend.

With legislators hearing repeatedly of a dire need for hous-

ing across the state, over \$30 million was approved for new housing and residential energy-efficiency projects. The Alaska Housing Finance Corp. would be given the job of building more housing in rural Alaska for professionals, such as teachers and public safety workers.

The Anchorage Daily News contributed reporting for this story.

Policy for Letters to the Editor

- Letters should be typed or clearly written and no longer than 400 words.
- All letters must be signed by the writer and include a phone number and any affiliation with a group which pertains to the letter.

The Sentinel reserves the right to edit any submissions.

The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon for Wednesday publication.

Letters are run on a space-available basis.

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Biggest cruise ship of the season to arrive Thursday

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The town's population could double for a day. Holland America Line's Nieuw Amsterdam, with accommodations for just over 2,100 passengers plus a crew of more than 900, is scheduled to tie up at Wrangell at 8 a.m. Thursday, May 16, staying until 7 p.m.

It will be the ship's only visit to Wrangell this summer.

It will be the largest ship to bring travelers to town, just beating out Cunard's Queen Elizabeth, which is scheduled to visit twice — July 18 and 29 — and can carry up to 2,081 passengers.

The Queen Elizabeth is actually a little longer, at 965 feet, stretching out a win over the Nieuw Amsterdam's 936 feet. Both are close to the maximum length the City Dock can handle.

The two ships have more than twice the passenger capacity of any other vessel on the Wrangell cruise ship calendar.

The Nieuw Amsterdam is on a 14-day roundtrip cruise from Vancouver, British Columbia. Wrangell will be the next to the last stop on the southbound leg.

The town's cruise visitor season started May 9 with the arrival of the 62-passenger Sea Lion. According to the Wrangell Convention and Visitor Bureau cruise calendar, as many as 25,000 travelers could arrive in town through the last ship on Sept. 24, if all of the berths are full.

This is the first year that Holland America, one of the biggest players in the Alaska cruise trade, has included Wrangell on its advertised itineraries. One of its ships, the Nordam, added a late-scheduled stop here near the end of the 2022 season.

The company added a visit to Wrangell this summer to provide its passengers "a diverse itinerary ... (and) experience new locations," a Holland America official said last year.

Both the Nieuw Amsterdam and Cunard's Queen Elizabeth were built in Italian shipyards, and both entered service in 2010.

"There are many facts and features that make Wrangell unique," Cunard describes in its advertising. "Not least because over the years this town has been ruled by four different nations — the Indigenous Tlingit people, Russia, England and the U.S. Evidence of Tlingit culture can be seen all over Wrangell, from the traditional tribal Shakes Community House to the many totem poles scattered

throughout the town."

The advertising also includes a note, particularly for foreign travelers: "Wrangell, like the rest of Alaska, uses US dollars."

The Queen Elizabeth's stops in town will come during back-to-back 11-day roundtrip cruises out of Vancouver.

The chamber of commerce is organizing a one-day public market at the downtown pavilion for the Nieuw Amsterdam's arrival. Businesses and individuals can rent a table or a booth to sell foods or crafts, most anything they have to offer, said Tommy Wells, the chamber's executive director.

Space is limited to three booths and 10 tables under the covered area, and advance registration is required. Call the chamber at 907-874-3901.

The mayor, borough manager and economic development director plan to meet the Nieuw Amsterdam at the dock. "We plan to be up front and center on most days when big ships are in," said Kate Thomas, the borough's economic development director.

The borough wants to see how the town handles the heavier visitor flow of the larger ships as it strives to promote Wrangell as a tourist destination while also ensuring the community is not overrun.



PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Shoreside education

Emily Klosterman with the U.S. Forest Service showed grade schoolers a sea urchin she collected from the nearby waters during Sea Day, a morning field trip on Friday, May 10, to Shoemaker Bay Park. Evergreen Elementary School partnered with the Forest Service on Sea Day to teach students about their coastal environment.

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Visitor count could help make the case to get state money for Petroglyph Beach

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

As of last week, just one Wrangell business had obtained the required state permit to provide commercial tours at Petroglyph Beach State Historic Site.

The largest cruise ship of the summer is scheduled to tie up in town on Thursday, May 16, bringing as many as 2,000 visitors to Wrangell. The ancient stone carvings at the beach are among the community's most popular visitor attractions.

"We're hoping we can work with everyone to get them into compliance," Preston Kroes, the Southeast Alaska superintendent for state parks, said May 10.

The parks division believes there are as many as half-a-dozen Wrangell businesses that provide guided tours of the beach site, about a mile north of the City Dock where cruise ships tie up.

State law sets out fines for operating commercial tours in a state park without a permit. In addition to obtaining a permit, operators are required to pay a fee of \$6 per guided visitor.

The law has required the permit and fee since Petroglyph Beach was designated a state historic site in 2000, but the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation had not realized it was missing collections at the Wrangell site until last year. The division waived the requirement until this summer to give businesses time to get their permits and build the \$6 fee into their rates, passing on the cost to customers.

Kroes explained that having a visitor count at Petroglyph Beach would help the division in any request for legislative funding for maintenance or improvements at the site.

"We will stand a better chance at getting future funding to help make improvements. Right now, we have a park that gets no documented use or visitation, making it hard to justify funding approval," he said. "It's only going to help if the local businesses come on board."

The division collects about \$5 million a year in fees statewide from commercial operations, cabin rentals, campsites and parking fees. The money goes toward projects across the state, subject to annual legislative spending decisions.

The parks division sent notices last winter to all Wrangell tour operators it could find online, reminding them of the requirement to get a license and collect the fee.

The one-time application fee is \$100 and the annual license fee is \$350, in addition to the \$6 fee per customer.

"It's unfair if some abide and others don't," Kroes said.

In addition to the one Wrangell business that had registered as of a week ago, Lindblad Expeditions National Geographic, which operates the 62-passenger Sea Lion and Sea Bird cruise vessels, has gotten its state permit for Petroglyph Beach tours. The ships are scheduled to make a combined 17 visits to Wrangell this summer.

The borough and state have a management agreement dating back to 1988, which says the borough will handle trash pickup and light maintenance at the six-acre site, with the state taking on major improvements.

The borough is talking with the state about a new agreement, Kate Thomas, Wrangell's economic development director, said May 9. "We need a plan," she said, for "immediate and targeted improvements" at the site, such as repairs or rebuilding of the viewing platform and parking.

"These folks deserve improvements to this site," Thomas said of commercial tour operators required to pay a fee, adding that a new work plan with the state would "go a long way" to increasing compliance with the permit requirement.

Permits are available on the state Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation website at dnr.alaska.gov/parks/permit/. For more information, email parkpermitting@alaska.gov.



A smoking pipe with a sea monster design is one of the repatriated clan items going on display at the Nolan Center.

Nolan Center display

Continued from page 1

repatriated to Wrangell clans, but many more are still in museums across the nation.

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, a federal law established in the 1990s, helps facilitate the return of items to their original clans.

The at.6ow or clan items do not belong to any one person, but rather are objects of significant, symbolic value that are collectively owned by the whole clan. These objects are meant to be held in trust for future generations.

But during the gold rush and population boom of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, increased trade and conflict

between Alaska Natives and new settlers resulted in the removal of many of these objects. Under Tlingit law, all trades and transactions are fundamentally invalid.

The items are on loan to Nolan Center from the Naanyaa.aayí clan and will likely be displayed all summer.

Arnold said it took about a month and a half to plan the display, which included collaboration with WCA and ordering display materials and signs.

The Nolan Center will host an open house on Saturday, May 18, during the community market from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. for the public to view the new displays.

Stikine River closed again this year to subsistence king salmon fishing

BY SENTINEL STAFF

The Stikine River is closed to subsistence fishing for king salmon May 15 through June 20 to help preserve weak returns of the highly prized fish. It's the eighth year in a row for the federal closure.

"The preseason forecast for the Stikine River is 12,900 large chinook salmon (greater than 28 inches in total length), which is below the escapement (spawning) goal range of 14,000 to 28,000," the U.S. Forest Service reported in its closure announcement May 8.

The closure was ordered under the authority delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board.

In addition to federal efforts to protect Stikine River kings, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has taken similar actions to reduce the sport and commercial harvest of Stikine River kings with area closures and restrictions again this summer.

The Stikine king run is among several in Southeast that have missed their escapement goals in most of the previous 10 years, ac-

ording to Fish and Game.

"The preseason outlook is for continued poor production of Southeast Alaska chinook salmon stocks, including stocks (Chilkat, King Salmon, Stikine, Unuk and Chickamin Rivers and Andrew Creek, a Stikine tributary)" of particular concern, the Department of Fish and Game said in its preseason forecast.

The federal closure only affects subsistence fishing for kings in the river, not the sockeye subsistence fishery set to open June 21, according to the Forest Service announcement.



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Close Up trip provided students 'living classroom' in DC and New York City

By MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

High schoolers crammed a lot of sightseeing, education and history into this year's Close Up trip to the nation's capital and to its largest city.

The students were able to view many of the great landmarks and monuments, including the Lincoln Memorial, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial and White House in Washington, D.C., and the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Statue of Liberty on Ellis Island in New York City.

Instructors held classes at each location.

"The whole 10 days we're gone, it's like a living classroom," adviser and chaperone Sarah Merritt said of the April 19-29 trip.

"It was incredible," freshman Andrei Bardin-Siekawitch said. "Definitely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Made some friends. I loved it."

"I thought the trip was amazing," said sophomore Clara Edens via text. "100% would recommend."

Merritt, who runs the Legislative Information Office in Wrangell, has been teaching the Close Up class since 2007, meeting once a week with the students during the school year before she takes them on the annual trip. While Washington is the primary focus, she added New York in 2008, and the students have since always chosen it as a part of their itinerary.

Having gone on the trip as a high school junior, Merritt wanted to be able to provide the experience for others. She enjoys sharing her enthusiasm for history, government and civics. "It's my passion. I love it."

The program has been available in Wrangell through the Close Up Foundation since the 1970s. The nonprofit organization was established in 1971, the same year the 26th Amendment gave 18-year-olds the right to vote. For over 50 years, more than one million students and educators across the country have been involved in the program. Its purpose is to educate young Americans on their political system, providing them with a nonpartisan curriculum and a deeper understanding of civics and history.

Merritt said the program

teaches healthy debate and how to co-exist with people who have differing opinions.

The students also interacted with other students, including from Alaska, Arizona, North Dakota, Michigan, Montana, Ohio and Wyoming. When not touring popular sites, the students participated in workshops that featured a mock Congress or focused on current issues like the environment, homelessness and immigration. "They're learning the whole time," Merritt said.

Bardin-Siekawitch enjoyed the Capitol tour, sophomore Kalee Herman liked the interaction with other students and Edens appreciated the Smithsonian museums, particularly the Museum of Natural History.

"We got to see dinosaur skeletons and ... the Hope Diamond and ... a garnet from upriver and go through a butterfly pavilion," Edens added. "It was awesome."

During their few days in New York, all three agreed that their favorite experience was going to the Broadway musical "The Great Gatsby" on the second night of its initial run. Herman said she intends to check out the F. Scott Fitzgerald novel that inspired the production.

Herman appreciated the different aspects of both cities. "D.C. was cool because there were all these monuments," she said. "But New York was kind of like being in a movie because of all the people."

Bardin-Siekawitch appreciated that Washington had more green space. "New York is nice to visit, but you really can't stay there for too long," he said, citing the crowds and air quality.

Merritt lamented that this year's trip was her smallest group to date. "Last year I took four," she said. "The year before COVID it was five students."

She added that preparation for the trip has become more challenging for participants. "It's a lot of money to raise, and I think that's kind of daunting," she said. "And the kids are so busy. They can be involved in every activity. Fundraising all the time and practicing with their sports, it can be exhausting."

However, Merritt said she already has five students lined up for next year, and two of the



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SARAH MERRITT

High school students (from left) Clara Edens, Kalee Herman and Andrei Bardin-Siekawitch stop in front of the Court of Neptune Fountain at the Library of Congress on April 24, as part of their Close Up trip to Washington, D.C., and New York City.

students who went this year asked if they could do it again in the future. "I said, 'Absolutely.'"

Bardin-Siekawitch said he would advise students to give themselves at least a year to fundraise. "And get comfortable shoes," he added.

Each student had to raise

\$2,543 for the trip, which includes five-and-a-half days in Washington and two-and-a-half days in New York. After years of experience in supervising groups, Merritt has found it best to give youth time to decompress on the return trip, giving them a half-day in Seattle to spend time shopping and

browsing at the Southcenter Mall.

Herman was very glad she went and would recommend it to others. "The fundraising is definitely worth it."

Bardin-Siekawitch agreed. "Absolutely do it," he said. "You'll never get this kind of opportunity again."

First cruise ship calls on Klawock; community promotes destination

By THE KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS
AND WRANGELL SENTINEL

The 649-foot Seabourn Odyssey dropped anchor just off Klawock on May 6, marking a new era of cruise ship tourism on Prince of Wales Island.

About 3,700 people could visit Klawock and Craig this summer by way of three different cruise ships making a total of six stops.

The Seabourn Cruise Lines ship was the first to ever visit the Port of Klawock and brought about 300 passengers to Prince of Wales near the end of a 43-day, one-way voyage from Hong Kong to Vancouver, British Columbia, that included stops in Korea and Japan, as well as Alaska stops in Dutch Harbor, Kodiak, Homer, Glacier Bay and Sitka, according to the company.

The Seabourn Odyssey, which can accommodate up to 450 passengers, is scheduled for a second visit to Klawock later this summer and eight stops in Wrangell, with the first set for Sunday, May 19.

Wrangell, however, lost two other ships to Klawock this summer. The 746-passenger Seven Seas Explorer dropped a visit to Wrangell in May, and the 670-passenger Regatta canceled two Wrangell stops in order to go to Klawock.

Cruise industry leaders and government representatives in Klawock welcomed crew members and passengers from the Odyssey on May 6 and commemorated the opening of the Port of Klawock with speeches, a ribbon cutting, student presentations and a performance by the Heenya Kwáan dancers, according to the Prince of Wales Chamber of Commerce.

The Klawock Island Dock Co. long operated a log sorting yard and timber dock at the waterfront property.

Cruise ship passengers visited Klawock and

Craig by bus during the day.

Klawock Heenya Corp., the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act village corporation for Klawock, is developing the destination with NADena, the joint-venture Native tourism development company founded between Huna Totem Corp., the ANCSA village corporation for Hoonah, and Doyon, the ANCSA regional corporation for Interior Alaska.

The three corporations are paving the way for the cruise industry to add Klawock to their itineraries by creating a partnership called Klawock Island Ventures. The development in Klawock is modeled on Huna Totem's Icy Strait Point, which opened in 2004 as a small float dock and can now accommodate two huge ships at a time.

An email from the Prince of Wales Chamber of Commerce this month stated that Klawock Island Ventures' plan for the six cruise ship visits in 2024 "includes operating five buses, with two for tour transportation and three shuttle buses running every 20 minutes" into Klawock and Craig, including stops at an artisans market and the Craig Tribal Association's Smoke & Gift Shop.

"Our tour offerings include a highlight tour of Klawock's carving shed, totem park and riverside, a hatchery kayak tour, a marine mammal exploration and a culinary tour showcasing local delicacies by the river," the chamber said.

Klawock Island Ventures has "already brought on board security personnel from Thorne Bay, greeters from Port Saint Nicholas, storytellers from Klawock, adventure tour operators from rural areas and bus narrators from Hydaburg — all enthusiastic about representing our community and welcoming visitors," according to the chamber email.



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INTRODUCING THE *Class of* 2024



PHOTO COURTESY SHANLEE MEISSNER

The senior class headed upriver on their "skip day" May 6, enjoying food, a campfire and sports. From left: Mia Wiederspohn, Cody Eastaugh, Sean McDonald, Keegan Hanson, Nate Rooney, Lily Younce, Alisha Armstrong, homeschooler McKinley Gillen, Mindy Meissner and Kayla Meissner. Senior Spencer Petticrew was not available for the river trip.



PHOTO COURTESY SHANLEE MEISSNER

A day off from school on May 6 was a chance for seniors to work on their hairstyle. Front row, from left: Nate Rooney, Sean McDonald and Keegan Hanson; hairstylists, from left: Lily Younce, Mia Wiederspohn and Alisha Armstrong; back row observers, from left: Mindy Meissner and McKinley Gillen.

The seniors graduating this week are Alisha Armstrong, Cody Eastaugh, Keegan Hanson, Sean McDonald, Kayla Meissner, Mindy Meissner, Spencer Petticrew, Nate Rooney, Mia Wiederspohn and Lily Younce.

Wrangell or move away? "I plan to move away." What are your reasons for staying or going? "I am interested in animal science and Wrangell is not really a place where I can do that, although I will definitely come back to visit."
Cody Eastaugh
What's your favorite
Continued on page 9

Congratulations Alisha!!!
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BEST WISHES Class of 2024

Continued from page 8
thing about going to school in Wrangell?
"Not having to show up all the time."
What's your advice for next year's seniors?
"Do the bare minimum."
What would you most like to change about the world?
"Anybody named Cody Eastaugh gets a new royal blue Corvette."
Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?
"I don't know yet; probably come back."
What are your reasons for staying or going?
"I don't know yet."

Keegan Hanson
What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?
"Sports."
What's your advice for next year's seniors?
"Have fun."
What would you most like to change about the world?
"Wrestling gets more attention."
Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?
"Move."
What are your reasons for staying or going?
"College."
Continued on page 10

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Best Wishes!**
From All In Charters
and Grand View

Continued from page 9

Sean McDonald

What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?

"T3 (Teaching Through Technology) and Upward Bound."

What's your advice for next year's seniors?

"Play baseball."

What would you most like to change about the world?

"Educate people and really communicate."

Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?

"Move away."

What are your reasons for staying or going?

"I'm going to college."

Kayla Meissner

What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?

"Sports and friends."

What's your advice for next year's seniors?

"Get your senior project done early."

What would you most like to change about the world?

"Clean all the trash around the world."

Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?

"I'm not sure."

What are your reasons for staying or going?

"I'm not sure."

Mindy Meissner

What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?

"Sports."

What's your advice for next year's seniors?

"Do all your work on time."

What would you most like to change about the world?

"Lowering prices on items such as gas and certain food items."

Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?

"Move."

What are your reasons for staying or going?

"See new things."

Spencer Petticrew

What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?

"The tight-knit community."

What's your advice for next year's seniors?

"Senioritis is inevitable."

What would you most like to change about the

world?

"Make everyone cool with each other."



Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?



"Move away."

What are your reasons for staying or going?

"I need McDonald's in my life."

Continued on page 11

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INTRODUCING THE *Class of* 2024

Continued from page 10

Nate Rooney

What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?

"The teachers."

What's your advice for next year's seniors?

"Don't wait till last minute to do your senior project."

Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?

"Stay."

What are your reasons for staying or going?

"I'm going to stay for

the summer and go up near Palmer for school and then come back."

Mia Wiederspohn

What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?

"Getting to see my teachers and joking with my classmates. Also, it's three miles from my house."

What's your advice for next year's seniors?

"Don't waste time to do your senior project and try

your best to enjoy every last minute."

What would you most like to change about the world?

"Cure cancer, solve world hunger, clean up the island of plastic, and anyone named Mia Wiederspohn gets a FATTY steak dinner every Friday night."

Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?

"I plan to come back to Wrangell eventually, but I would like to try living in other areas and exploring.

I hope that I travel the world."

What are your reasons for staying or going?

"In the future, I envision Wrangell as an ideal home to start a family of my own. However, at the moment, my heart belongs to Wrangell due to the unparalleled support I receive from my family and the community. I am a firm believer that there is a world full of experiences and knowledge beyond Wrangell, and I am equally enthusiastic about explor-

ing new destinations."

Lily Younce

What's your favorite thing about going to school in Wrangell?

"You get to graduate with the same students you went to kindergarten with – and sports for sure!"

What's your advice for next year's seniors?

"Make sure you apply to more than one college and apply for scholarships!"

What would you most like to change about the world?

"If I could change anything it would be gas prices."

Do you plan to stay in Wrangell or move away?

"I will be moving to Seattle."

What are your reasons for staying or going?

"I'm leaving to get used to the area I'll be going to college at (Seattle Pacific University; go Falcons!)."

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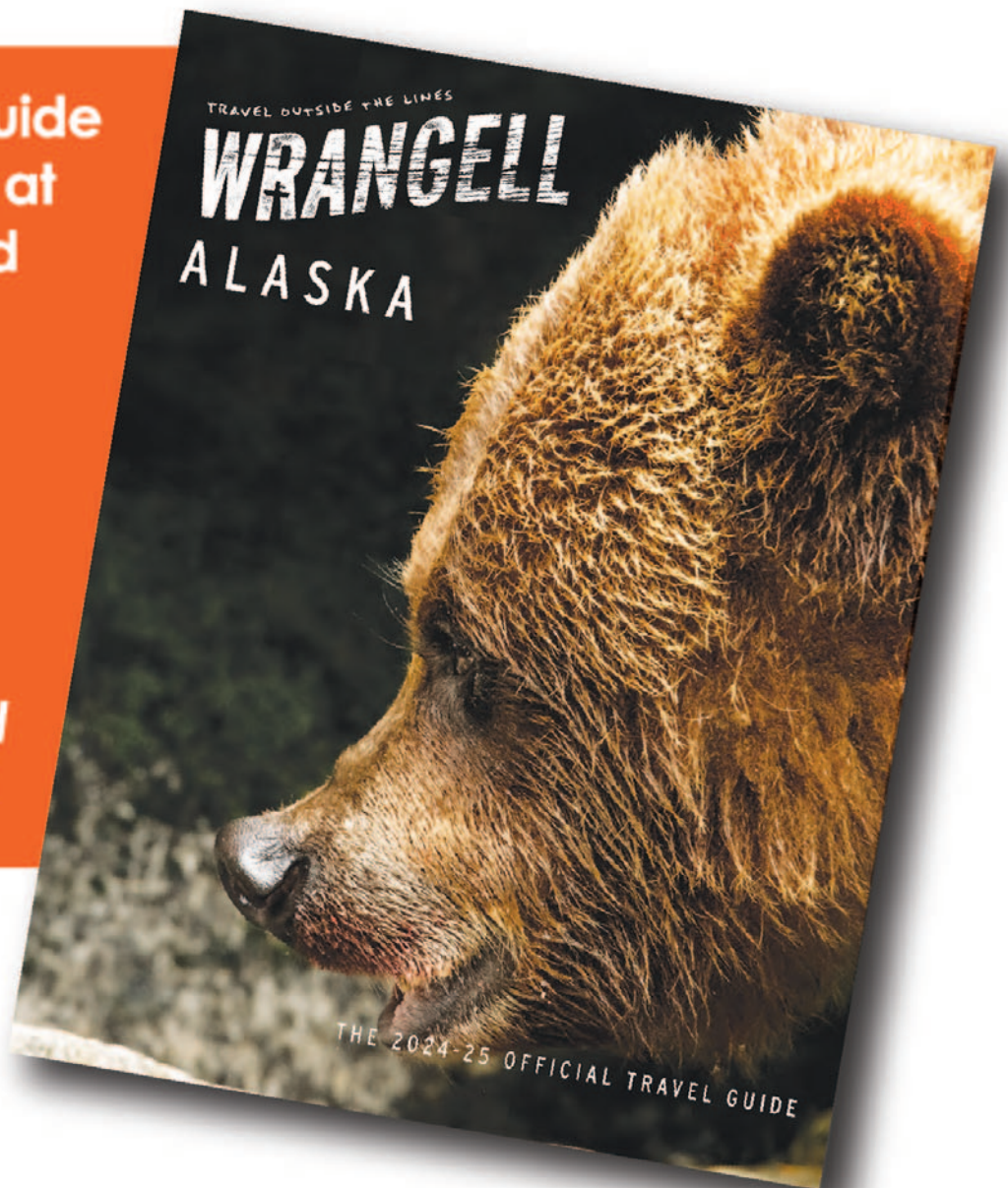


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WRANGELL SENTINEL

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High schoolers water quality research project wins third place

BY MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

A group of high school students who participated in an environmental research program won third place in Southeast competition for their work comparing the amount of microplastics in the water at Wrangell harbors.

The science fair, sponsored by the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), was held virtually on April 30. The students were presented with awards for their work, including third place overall.

The University of Alaska Southeast has been running the Rural Alaska Students in One-Health Research (RASOR) program for high school classes across the region since 2020 to highlight environmental issues that can affect human health.

Wrangell students this school year conducted research comparing the amount of microplastics in the water of two of Wrangell's harbors. Microplastics are pieces of plastic smaller than 5 millimeters in size (about one-fifth of an inch) and come from various sources, from clothing to personal care products that break down and wash into waterways.

High school science teacher Heather Howe said via email that students Alisha Armstrong, Della Churchill, Aubrey Wynne, Boomchain Loucks and Trevyn Gillen conducted the research. Water samples were collected using a plankton net tow for three minutes at Reliance Harbor and Heritage Harbor on Feb. 7

and 12. Their data was compared to findings that were presented last year by Mia Wiederspohn, Jacen Hay and Daniel Harrison.

Their hypothesis had been that the levels stay consistent. However, the comparison showed otherwise.

"We found in our research that the microplastics count was higher than we expected it to be," Armstrong said. They found that microplastics had increased in all locations, particularly at Reliance Harbor.

Howe said the students then created a scientific research poster and used it to present their findings at the virtual AISES Southeast regional fair. The students won the Environmental Science and Sustainability Award, representing "Haa Aani, Protecting and Honoring our Land," and received third place overall for their project.

Armstrong, who was more focused on her upcoming graduation, admitted to being a little surprised. "I wasn't expecting to win anything," she said. "I thought it was pretty cool to be a part of that."

Howe said that the program serves as a great steppingstone for students who are looking for introductory coursework in science at the college level, as RASOR's instructors, Ellen Chenoweth and Willa Johnson, work with the students every step of the way.

"It has been amazing to see Wrangell students progress throughout the years of the RASOR program," she added. "The opportunity to be exposed to this level of scientific



PHOTO PROVIDED BY HEATHER HOWE

Alisha Armstrong, left, and Della Churchill examine samples taken during research into the count of microplastics at Reliance and Heritage harbors. The five-student Wrangell team took third place at a virtual Southeast science fair.

research in high school is incredible and something I wish I would have had as a student."

The top three research teams from the fair will present their data at the AISES national conference in San Antonio, Texas, Oct. 3-5.

"Only two students are allowed to present a research poster at the national conference," Howe said. "With Alisha graduating, the remaining four students may choose to create another poster for their research or just send two delegates."

Ketchikan Borough loses \$625,000 to fake vendor account

BY SCOTT BOWLEN
Ketchikan Daily News

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough is working to recover a \$625,125 electronic payment that was sent to a fake vendor account on May 3, according to Borough Manager Ruben Duran.

The case is under investigation by the FBI, and a claim has been filed with the borough's insurer, Duran said. The borough has made arrangements to pay the real vendor with a check via certified mail.

Duran provided an update to the borough assembly on May 6, followed by an interview with the Ketchikan Daily News on May 8.

The borough had intended to pay the contractor on the Dudley Field turf project on May 3 when it initiated an electronic funds transfer to the business. But that afternoon, Wells Fargo notified the borough that the bank had been made aware of a suspicious bank account that had received multiple transfer payments "under different vendor names," Duran told the assembly.

"Wells Fargo identified that the borough had transferred those funds into this account."

On May 6, the borough contacted the actual business that did the work at the field and verified that it had not received the borough payment.

Duran said Wells Fargo reported the contractor had been the victim of a cyberattack in which a "bad actor" had accessed email accounts and forwarded emails with amended payment instructions, routing numbers and bank accounts to divert payments.

A system assessment by the borough's Information Technology Department found "no evidence of a breach in the borough system."

The borough's finance director filed a fraud

case with the FBI and a report with Alaska State Troopers, in addition to notifying the carrier of the cyber insurance that the borough has in case of this type of incident.

"At this time, it's a criminal investigation, so I'm being careful about what is released out while they do that investigation," Duran said May 6. "We do not know if the money can be reversed. Wells Fargo is dealing with this, as well as our insurance. They're hunting that down. But we're not the only victim in this scheme. Apparently other communities, other organizations were hit."

Duran said borough staff have reviewed the borough's internal controls and have initiated extra training. "We're going to be looking at some rewriting of our own controls to address this," he said. "We thought they were pretty tight. And clearly, they found a way through."

He said the documents appeared to be legitimate. "It's very sophisticated."

Duran said the borough obtained cyber insurance after some other Alaska cities were attacked in recent years.

In 2020, the City of Ketchikan's Port and Harbors Department lost \$19,500 in an email phishing scam. In that case, the fake emails used phrases, phone numbers, names, titles and logos from emails that had previously been exchanged between the department and an infrastructure firm.

In 2018, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough declared a disaster after a malware attack locked down its computer systems, affecting a wide array of borough functions and services.

"We all train for this, we all think we have all of the procedures in place. And then the bad actors that do this are always finding a way through it," Duran said.

New online dictionary helps teach three Native languages

BY BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

There's a new way to learn Native languages: Sealaska Heritage Institute has created an online searchable dictionary with accompanying audio.

The online dictionary allows users to search words and phrases in English or Lingít (Tlingit language), Xaad Kíl (Haida language) and Shm'alg'yack (Tsimshian language).

The audio recordings allow users to listen to heritage language speakers pronouncing words and phrases.

SHI launched an app for the Tlingit language in 2016, and more recently launched apps for Tsimshian and Haida. But the apps only allowed users to browse words and phrases.

This new online dictionary is the first software that allows users to search words and phrases and the first that includes all three languages in one place, according to Sealaska Heritage's May 8 announcement.

The Tlingit section includes over 50 categories of words, the Haida section has nearly 40 categories and the Tsimshian section has 30. Categories include fish, food, geography, plants and clothing.

The online dictionary and apps are available for free on SHI's website through sealaskaheritage.org (for direct access, go to <https://bit.ly/4btlaO4>). The dictionary will continue to be updated with words and audio recordings.

SHI began as a nonprofit in 1980 to preserve and enhance Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian cultures in Southeast Alaska. In the 1990s it began to make language revitalization a priority, sponsoring teaching activities and university classes and developing resources like videos, apps, podcasts and games.

"We have produced materials to revitalize our languages and apps that allow people to browse categories and hear audio. Now we have a database that offers all of that and includes a search function," SHI President Rosita Worl said in a prepared statement. "It's a game changer."

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State calls off pilot plan to give tribal police officers more authority

By AMY BUSHATZ

Anchorage Daily News

A plan to grant special law enforcement powers to Chickaloon tribal police officers has been put on indefinite hold because state public safety officials feared it could lead to altercations between tribal officers and nontribal members, officials said May 6.

The pilot plan, which was to be in place by mid-June, would have allowed Chickaloon police officers to enforce certain state laws and arrest members of the general public in a roughly 68-square-mile area near Sutton, northeast of Anchorage. It was designed to augment state trooper presence in the area.

Officials said they halted the plan after receiving “hundreds of comments” from across the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

It was the content of some of those comments, however, and not the sheer volume of feedback that led him to halt the effort, Alaska Public Safety

Commissioner James Cockrell said in an interview May 6.

“I was surprised and disappointed at the tone that some of the folks projected either via voice or email,” Cockrell said. “What I didn’t want to see was something escalate, and I could foresee that coming.”

Donna Anthony, a former Palmer Police Department investigator who serves as justice director for the Chickaloon Tribal Police Department, said that based on those comments, she now fears for the safety of her officers.

“I don’t want them to assault my officers,” she said.

Cockrell did not offer specific examples of the kind of comments that prompted his decision.

Chris Spitzer, who chairs the Sutton Community Council, said he knows of people in the community who don’t recognize the tribe’s authority,

which could lead them to get into an altercation with tribal police. Sutton has about 1,300 residents.

“I think that kind of situation could happen — I don’t know if it would, but I think it could,” he said.

Cockrell said he will reconsider the agreement only if he sees “major changes” in the relationship between Sutton and the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, where a history of strained relations around issues including tribal sovereignty and oversight of tribal police officers has harmed public trust, he said.

Cockrell said he was previously aware of that history but saw Sutton as a good place to test such an agreement because of its close proximity to the trooper post in Palmer, about 15 miles away.

The proposed agreement would have granted individ-

ual Chickaloon tribal officers special state policing authority to arrest anyone — including nontribal members — witnessed committing a misdemeanor crime, such as property theft or domestic violence. Officers would also be able to enforce laws against sex trafficking and illegal drugs, officials said, but not conduct traffic stops or vehicle pursuits.

Under current rules, Chickaloon tribal police are empowered to enforce tribal laws among Alaska Native and American Indian people only. The state’s decision to halt work on the special commission for tribal officers does not affect the “inherent criminal justice authority” held by Chickaloon police, tribal officials said in a statement.

Anthony requested the special commission from the state so the tribal police department

could help protect Native citizens from violent crimes committed by anyone in the area covered by the proposal, she said.

The tribe is still moving forward with other federally funded efforts to expand Chickaloon’s policing authority, she said.

Chickaloon is one of two villages accepted last year for a Justice Department program under the Violence Against Women Act that will expand tribal policing authority over the general public for specific violent misdemeanor crimes committed against Alaska Natives or American Indian. First, the tribe must meet a sweeping set of due process requirements.

Dot Lake, off the Alaska Highway about 50 miles northwest of Tok, was also accepted, officials said. Approval under that program could take years.

Legislators bolster Alaska Native languages council

By CLAIRE STREMPLE
Alaska Beacon

Lawmakers have added four Alaska Native languages to the state’s official language tally and renamed the council that advocates for their survival and revitalization.

Members of the Senate approved their version of House Bill 26 with a unanimous vote on May 6. State representatives concurred with the changes on May

10, which means it goes to Gov. Mike Dunleavy next. The House passed the original bill, sponsored by Juneau Rep. Andi Story, last year with a 37-1 vote. Wasilla Republican Rep. David Eastman was the lone no vote.

In addition to adding official languages, the bill contains other changes to the council. Its name was changed to the Council for Alaska Native Languages from the Alaska Native Languages

Preservation and Advisory Council, with a goal of doing more than just preserving the 23 languages.

The number of members on the council will increase from five to seven. And the council will now reside in the Department of Education rather than the Department of Commerce, signaling the importance of education to its work.

Golovin Sen. Donny Olson

said the changes reflect the council’s mission, which is to increase the usage of Alaska Native languages.

“These minor changes will have a major impact on the Council for Alaska Native Languages and will help carry languages from our past into the future for generations to come,” he said.

X’unei Lance Twitchell, the council’s chair, spoke in support of the bill in a Senate Finance committee meeting in January, where he called Alaska Native Languages the state’s “oldest living resource.”

Twitchell reminded the committee that Alaska Native languages are no longer spoken as a result of assimilation policy and the state’s history of boarding schools.

He said the state had not yet shown that the languages are a priority despite their worth. “Every single Alaska Native language is sacred and irreplaceable. It contains concepts that cannot be translated, it contains things that cannot be replaced, and that give a sense of fulfillment and wholeness and health to Alaska Natives and to non-natives in Alaska.”

The council’s biennial report was published this year. It calls for lawmakers to implement systemic reforms to support the languages, many of which are in danger of dormancy.

House Bill 26 adds Cup’ig, Middle Tanana, Lower Tanana and Wetal to the list, joining English, Inupiaq, Siberian Yupik, Central Alaskan Yup’ik, Alutiiq, Unangax, Dena’ina, Deg Xinag, Holikachuk, Koyukon, Upper Kuskokwim, Gwich’in, Upper Tanana, Tanacross, Han, Ahtna, Eyak, Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian as official state languages. Middle Tanana and Lower Tanana were previously listed as one language.

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Suzanne “Suzie” Byford (Michal)

Suzie Byford passed away on April 16, 2024, at Wrangell Hospice. She had just had her 80th birthday and was born in Anacortes, Washington, on April 4, 1944, to Barbara and Donn Michal. Suzie attended Anacortes schools and was from the class of 1963.

Suzie had a flair for cooking and worked at restaurants in Anacortes. She also worked as a cook at Western Washington University in Bellingham.

She would drive up to Bellingham every day in her little old white Volkswagen Bug. During winter she drove through sleet, hail, snow, torrential rain and strong winds and none of that kept her from going to work. Sometimes she would have a mishap and would trudge through the nastiness to get to a phone and call for help. She was determined and well known for her spunk.

Her mom and dad introduced Suzie to her future husband, Ted Byford, and they were married on Nov. 19, 1970, in Anacortes. In 1972, Ted moved his bride to Wrangell. She immediately fell in love with the beauty of Wrangell and vowed to never move back down South. Suzie lived in Wrangell for 52 years.

Ted and Suzie built their first home together from the logs Ted salvaged from the water and beaches of Wrangell. They had two sons: Chris and Tony. Suzie loved her boys with all her heart and soul. She was totally devoted to them.

Suzie loved to go out clam digging. She could shuck a clam like nobody’s business, leaving those people who couldn’t shuck a clam in awe and wonder of her perfect technique. She could shell a whole crab in a matter of minutes. Once or twice a week she would clear off the dinner table with a flourish, slap down newspaper and serve her family a heap of crab or shrimp.

Suzie was a wonder in the kitchen and always pre-



Suzanne “Suzie” Byford (Michal)

pared fantastic home cooked meals. She worked as a cook at Wrangell Hospital and Long-Term Care for 27 years. She loved cooking for the residents and would often make them special meals instead of serving quote, “That institutional crap from cans.”

Suzie was kind and thoughtful. She had a finely tuned knack for remembering birthdays and special occasions. She always sent her beloved elderly aunts a bouquet of beautiful flowers on their birthdays and holidays. When her uncle turned 100 years old she flew to Anacortes and brought him his favorite delicacy, halibut cheeks. Her sweet thoughtfulness had no boundaries and she was a treasure to our family.

Suzie always supported her family in their times of need. She would advise them to keep their chin up and help any way she could. She was tiny in stature but was strong and sassy. Heaven has received a special angel that will be terribly missed by her family and friends on earth.

Suzie was preceded in death by her husband Ted Byford, brother Patrick Michal, her very special niece Cristie Dunaway, and her parents Donn and Barbara Michal.

She is survived by her sons Chris Royster of Winlock, Washington, and Chris Byford, of Wrangell, and Tony Byford, of Juneau; grandchildren Tristan Byford, Alyssa Nichole Rei, Kenneth Alexander and Peighton Bangs; and three great-grandchildren; sisters Sandra O’Brien of Petaluma, California, Laurie (Carl) Pratt, of Coupeville, Washington; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Suzie’s life will be posted at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please donate to your favorite cause.

Sincere thanks to the wonderful nurses at Wrangell Hospice and the care team at Bartlett Hospital in Juneau who took such great care of our loving Suzie.

Police report

Monday, May 6
Agency assist: Fire Department.

Tuesday, May 7
Harassment.

Wednesday, May 8
Civil matter.
Dog complaint.
Citizen assist.

Thursday, May 9
Civil matter.
Agency assist: Fire Department.
Civil paper service.
Agency assist: U.S. Forest Service.
Agency assist: Ambulance.

Friday, May 10
Agency assist: Pretrial.
Agency assist: U.S. Forest Service.
Dog at large.

Saturday, May 11
Unattended death.
Report of suspicion of driving under the influence.
Found property.

Sunday, May 12
Theft.
There were three agency assists for the Hoonah Police Department.

Legislature approves task force to tackle commercial fishing woes

By SEAN MAGUIRE
Anchorage Daily News

The Alaska Legislature has approved creating a task force to make policy recommendations to help the beleaguered commercial fishing industry.

The Senate unanimously approved the resolution on Sunday, May 12, to establish the task force. There was only one no vote in the House, from Wasilla Rep. David Eastman.

The task force is modeled off another legislative task force created more than 20 years ago to help the salmon industry. At the time, salmon fishermen were struggling with the pain of low prices and competition with farmed salmon.

Alaska's commercial fishing sector has recently struggled with low prices, a global market swamped with low-cost Russian seafood, and the closure of several seafood processing plants. Salmon returns have crashed in critical fisheries across Alaska.

The United Fishermen of Alaska estimates that the state's economy lost over \$2 billion in 2023 as a result of the commercial fishing sec-

tor's struggles.

"The depth of the crisis truly is unprecedented," said Juneau Sen. Jesse Kiehl on the Senate floor in April.

The new joint industry task force would be comprised of eight members appointed by the Senate president and House speaker.

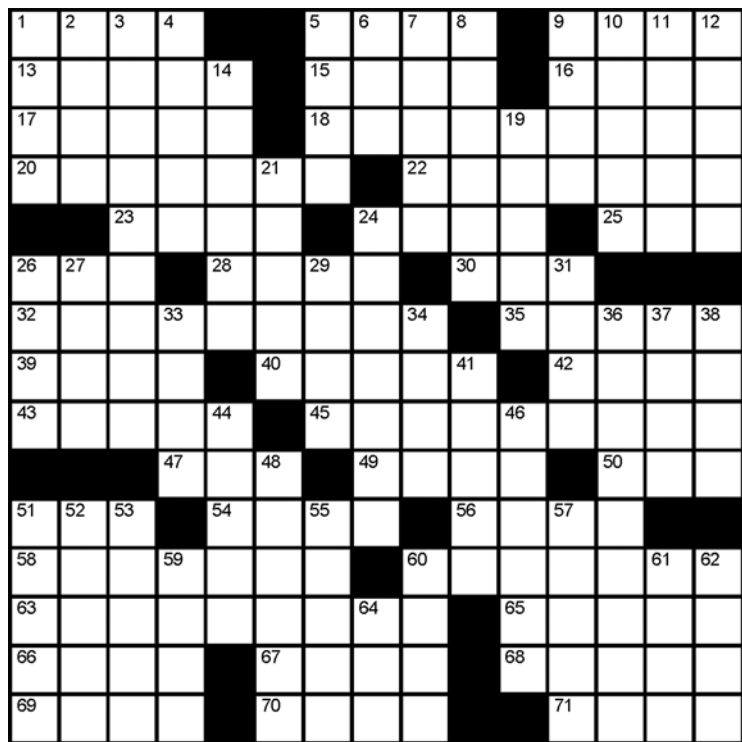
The task force is set to make policy recommendations on how the state could help the commercial fishing sector and communities across Alaska. Those recommendations are due in January, at the start of the next legislative session.

The commercial fishing industry employs over 48,000 Alaska workers and is the largest private employer in the state. Fishing is the largest source of revenue for 11 Alaska communities.

"We want our fisheries healthy. We want our processors strong and our fishermen solvent. We want a viable economy along our coast," said Sitka Sen. Bert Stedman in support of the task force in April.

Crossword

Answers on page 16



CLUES ACROSS

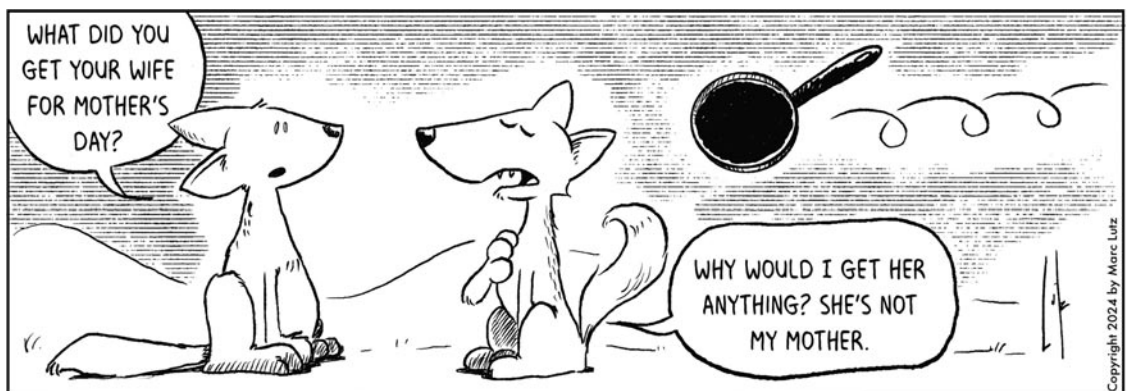
- 1 Maker whose cars go up and down
- 5 Unfortunately
- 9 Old Indian coin
- 13 Individualist
- 15 --- Marlene
- 16 Turns
- 17 Weighty
- 18 Thought transference
- 20 San ---, California
- 22 Correction
- 23 4th largest Great Lake
- 24 With regard to
- 25 Place
- 26 Contains Jets and Texans
- 28 Composure
- 30 Small cell
- 32 Paces
- 35 Common subjects in life classes
- 39 Zits
- 40 Delhi wraps?
- 42 S M S
- 43 Additional clause
- 45 Financial holdings
- 47 Doze
- 49 Calf meat
- 50 Tennis player's org.
- 51 Drop in value
- 54 Small pool lining slab
- 56 Burrow
- 58 Unworldliness
- 60 Storm
- 63 Truce
- 65 Ace golfer --- Els
- 66 Amount
- 67 "Born Free" lioness
- 68 Lucifer
- 69 Was completely certain
- 70 Raised platform
- 71 Thanksgiving dish

CLUES DOWN

- 1 "Quantum of Solace" actress --- Kurylenko
- 2 Ripped
- 3 Very soon
- 4 Cut
- 5 Either a male or a female voice
- 6 Recline
- 7 Filmmaker Woody ---
- 8 Jagged mountain range
- 9 Turkish rulers
- 10 Asleep
- 11 Long narrow jacket with a high collar
- 12 So far
- 14 Ancient artifacts
- 19 Song of praise
- 21 E.g. venison, beef, pork etc.
- 24 Better
- 26 A long way off
- 27 An ellipse has two
- 29 Spring
- 31 Not manual (Abbr.)
- 33 Person between 12 and 20
- 34 Father
- 36 Dominican-American fashion designer Oscar ---
- 37 Way out
- 38 Cease
- 41 Not fresh
- 44 Assesses
- 46 Online attacks
- 48 Pockmarked
- 51 Nibble
- 52 Moses' brother
- 53 Easy putt
- 55 Bizet's priestess in "The Pearl Fishers"
- 57 Start of a divine appeal
- 59 Perspective
- 60 E.g. Oolong, Darjeeling
- 61 Now Thailand
- 62 Sawbucks
- 64 Long-running Ted Danson show

Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



State launches new campaign to reduce fentanyl deaths

By YERETH ROSEN
Alaska Beacon

With Alaska's drug overdose deaths surging, state leaders on May 6 kicked off a new campaign to raise awareness about the dangers of the drug that caused most of them: fentanyl.

The new campaign, called "One Pill Can Kill," is national and spearheaded by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and other federal agencies. But it has special meaning in Alaska, which last year had a record-high total of overdose deaths.

Preliminary numbers show that 342 Alaskans died from overdoses in 2023, a 40% increase over 2022 totals, according to the state Department of Health. Of the total, 264 — about three-

quarters — were from fentanyl, up from 151 fentanyl deaths in 2022, according to the department's preliminary numbers.

"This is the largest in Alaska's history, and it marks a really devastating moment in history," Heidi Hedberg, commissioner of the state Department of Health, said at the news conference.

Beyond the statistics are personal tragedies.

Sandy Snodgrass, a mother who lost her son in 2021 to a fentanyl overdose, recounted some of the details. "He was only 22 years old and my only child," she said. "He died within shouting distance of help in a wooded area a short distance from a Wells Fargo drive-through and McDonald's drive-through on De-

barr Road in Anchorage. The devastation of his fentanyl poisoning death has impacted his family, friends and community in ways that I cannot fully describe here today."

Karen Malcolm-Smith, who lost her son to an opioid overdose in 2017, described how such tragedies reverberate through families and communities.

"For people like Sandy and I, we will never experience a college graduation, attend a wedding, have grandchildren," she said. Parents and family members cope with intense grief, depression and other mental health problems that are manifested in problems like divorce, physical health problems, "and unfortunately, we also see suicides,"

Malcolm-Smith said.

She established the David Dylan Foundation in her son's honor to encourage others to seek help for their addiction problems.

Hedberg said public education, including the One Pill Can Kill awareness campaign, is only one part of a multipronged state effort to stop fentanyl deaths.

While the Department of Public Safety works to intercept drugs so that the supply does not reach the public and the Department of Law pursues legal approaches to the problem, the Department of Health's anti-opioid work focuses on harm reduction and treatment as well as on education, Hedberg said.

Last year, she said, the depart-

ment distributed 46,000 anti-overdose naloxone kits and 89,000 fentanyl test strips.

Now the department is preparing to distribute \$3.3 million in grants for local, regional and statewide programs for harm reduction and treatment.

The money comes from one of the national settlements with opioid manufacturers and distributors, a \$26 billion settlement struck in 2021. Alaska is expected to get \$58.5 million over 18 years from it, Hedberg said.

Another part of the state effort is increasing penalties for distributors of fentanyl and other deadly substances.

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HELP WANTED

Wrangell Cooperative Association Transportation (WCAT) is seeking two

road/trail maintenance laborers. Complete job descriptions and applications are available outside the Wrangell Cooperative Association office at 1002 Zimovia Highway. Positions are open until filled. Contact Lizzy Romane at 907-874-3077 with any questions.

HELP WANTED

Johnson's Building Supply is accepting applications for the

following positions:

- 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.

HELP WANTED

Wrangell Public Schools is accepting applications for the following positions for the 2024-2025 school year:

- Art Festival Adviser
- Baseball Assistant Coach
- Cross Country Running Assistant Coach
- Middle School Boys Basketball Assistant Coach
- Elementary Student Council Adviser
- Middle School Student Council Adviser
- Freshmen Class Adviser
- Sophomore Class Adviser
- Middle/High School Yearbook Adviser

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's policy to not discriminate based on age, race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

HELP WANTED

Part-time work as an interviewer for a seafood consumption survey to be conducted in Wrangell. Paid training. Contact Guy Archibald at (907) 209-2720.

HOUSING WANTED

Moving to Wrangell on May 18 and looking to rent a small 1- or 2-bedroom home or apartment that will allow three poodles. Call 907-758-2122.

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CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE OF JOB OPENING WRANGELL POLICE DEPARTMENT Correctional Officer/Dispatch

The City and Borough of Wrangell is accepting applications of employment for the position of **Correctional Officer/Dispatch** through May 22, 2024, at 5 p.m. This is a permanent position with all City and Borough benefits.

The Dispatcher/Corrections Officer receives emergency and routine calls and assists with all aspects of Corrections. The position performs telephone investigation, preparation of call information, operation of computer terminals, operation of telephone equipment, and includes considerable contact with the general public and public service agencies. The position also assists with booking, processing and surveillance of inmates.

This is a full-time, hourly position with full benefits, paid at Grade 14. Employment is based on a successful background check and pre-employment drug screening, including additional prerequisites outlined in the job description.

Applications and job descriptions may be obtained and returned to Rob Marshall at City Hall, 205 Brueger Street (P.O. Box 531), Wrangell, AK 99929 or via email at rmarshall@wrangell.com.

The City and Borough of Wrangell is an equal opportunity employer.

Mason Villarma, Borough Manager
City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska

Publish May 8 and 15, 2024

Flaggers needed for 2-3 weeks this summer \$36.00/hr plus possible overtime

Must be 18 with a valid driver's license

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CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE OF JOB OPENING PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT Maintenance Specialist I, II or III

The Wrangell Public Works Department will accept applications for the position of Maintenance Specialist I, II or III (DOE) through May 29, 2024, at 5 p.m. This is a permanent position with all City and Borough benefits. This position is part of the collective bargaining agreement.

The Maintenance Specialist is a multi-stage career path in which the worker performs construction, maintenance, repair and alteration of streets, sidewalks, drainage, sewer and water utilities; operates all Public Works heavy equipment in performance of Public Works projects and other City department projects; works independently or cooperatively with others under the daily direction and supervision of the Public Works Foreman.

This is a full-time, hourly position with full benefits, paid between Grades 14 to 20. Employment is based on a successful background check and pre-employment drug screening.

Applications and job descriptions may be obtained and returned to Rob Marshall at City Hall, 205 Brueger Street (P.O. Box 531), Wrangell, AK 99929, or via email at rmarshall@wrangell.com.

The City and Borough of Wrangell is an equal opportunity employer.

Mason Villarma, Borough Manager
City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska

Publish May 15 and 22, 2024

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE OF JOB OPENING PARKS and RECREATION DEPARTMENT Parks Maintenance Temporary Worker

The City and Borough of Wrangell will accept applications from which to hire Temporary Laborers for the Parks and Recreation Department. Employees will be selected from applications in the pool at the time employees are needed throughout the year. You must have a valid Alaska Driver's License, or a valid out-of-state Driver's License with the ability to obtain an Alaska license within six months.

This position will require someone to perform a variety of unskilled and semi-skilled work in landscaping, mowing, weed eating, grounds maintenance, repairing, installing and construction of parks, playgrounds, ball fields, cemeteries and park facilities. Must be able to lift and carry 50 pounds. Successful applicant must be able to work in all weather conditions and weekends.

Applications and job descriptions may be obtained and returned to City Hall, 205 Brueger St. (P.O. Box 531), Wrangell, AK 99929, or via email to rmarshall@wrangell.com. Pay for this position starts at \$18.00 per hour DOE.

The City and Borough of Wrangell is an equal opportunity employer.

Mason Villarma, Borough Manager
City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska

Publish May 8 and 15, 2024

Historian addresses elephant in the room

By BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

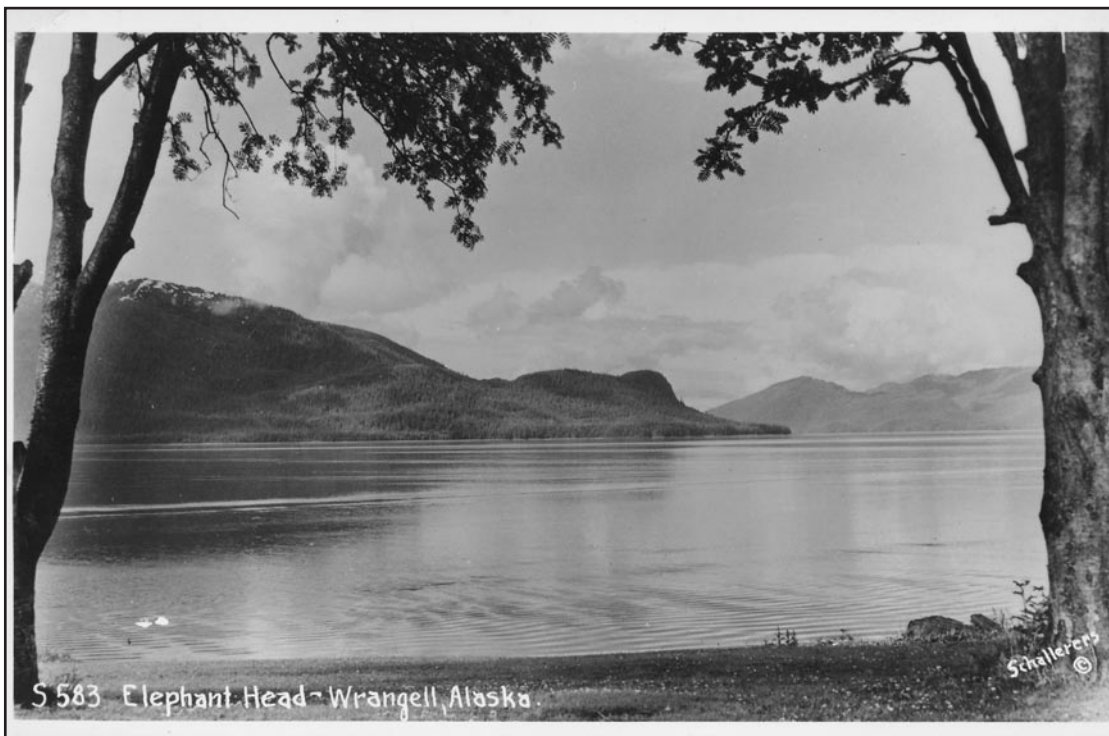
Ronan Rooney picked the Nose for his latest history lesson.

The podcaster recently wrote a blog post about one of the island's most photographed landmarks: Elephant's Nose.

It's at the northern tip of Woronkofski Island, 4.5 miles west of Wrangell across Zimovia Strait. Rooney's blog digs into the history behind the Nose and how it got its popular name.

Fannie Kellog Young, wife of the Rev. S. Hall Young, gave the Nose its name. The couple moved to Wrangell in 1878 and lived just in front of where the post office is today. Fannie Young had a direct view of the Nose from her house and noted that it resembled an elephant — the name stuck.

Rooney said he chose to write a short-form blog post about this subject because he wanted it to be available to a wider audience — people can read it in just a few minutes. He admitted that some of his podcasts require a couple



Ronan Rooney purchased a postcard from the 1940s or 1950s, showing Elephant's Nose. His latest history blog tells the tale of the naming of the nose.

hours of commitment to listen to.

Typically, his podcasts focus more on events in Wrangell's history that might take place over various locations. The history of

Elephant's Nose is different, Rooney said, because it's place-based history.

The Nose is timeless, he said. It's a feature unique to Wrangell that will always look the same and is part of

everyone's experience who has ever visited the island.

Rooney has spent a lot of time looking at historical photos of Wrangell, and he "always looks for the Nose in the background" to help

identify the location.

"It's been the site of timber and mining operations. The water around Elephant's Nose is popular for fishing, as well," he says in his storytelling. "In 1955, it's where Doris Iversen reportedly caught a 74-pound king salmon during the salmon derby."

He put a post up on Facebook asking community members to share their photos of Elephant's Nose. "Everyone had a moment in time where they chose to take out their cameras and snap a photo of the Nose," Rooney said, adding that he loved seeing all the different angles and ways people chose to capture it. Some photos had boats, some had snow, tide pools or the sunset.

Sharing history online through podcasts and blogs makes his work feel more collaborative than it might if it were in book form, Rooney said. He enjoys the feedback, information and photos that people share in response to his work. It makes social media feel like a tool that builds community and lifts people up, he said.

Rooney started his history podcasts four years ago, and since then has produced more than a dozen episodes. The former Wrangell resident lives in Oregon.

He is hoping to write more blog posts that center around places in Wrangell. Ideas he has for future stories include the mural at the post office, the harbor breakwater constructed 100 years ago in 1924, the locations John Muir visited and the current location of the airport, which used to be the site of an Alaska Packers Association cannery.

Legislature rejects governor's nominees to school board, fisheries commission

By JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

The Alaska Legislature voted May 7 to remove Bob Griffin from the state school board amid bipartisan unhappiness over his perceived political actions as a board member.

The vote came amid the Legislature's annual vote on gubernatorial nominees. Legislators approved 78 of the 81 people subject to legislative confirmation during a joint session of the state House and Senate.

They rejected Griffin for a second term on the board. Legislators also rejected Anchorage radio host Mike Porcaro as a new appointee to the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission.

Griffin, appointed to the school board in 2019, was reappointed by Gov. Mike Dunleavy to a second five-year term, but Anchorage Sen. Löki Tobin, co-chair of the Senate Education Committee, spoke against his nomination during the joint session of House and Senate members.

Tobin accused Griffin of violating the Executive Branch Ethics Act by appearing at a charter school board meeting in his official capacity without permission. During his legislative confirmation hearing, Griffin said he had been

advocating at the charter school meeting for the use of public funds at private schools, something banned by the Alaska Constitution.

Dunleavy's administration is arguing in a court case that the practice complies with the constitution.

Tobin said the Alaska Reads Act, a law proposed in part by Dunleavy, requires an annual convention of state educators to discuss the law's implementation. Griffin is supposed to be in charge of that meeting, Tobin said, and it hasn't happened.

Tobin and several other legislators criticized Griffin's decision to lobby legislators into sustaining Dunleavy's veto earlier this year of a multipart education measure that included a permanent increase to the state's K-12 public school funding formula.

Big Lake Rep. Kevin McCabe said legislators should keep Griffin on the board in order to ensure a "balanced board" that includes "opposing views," and Wasilla Rep. David Eastman suggested that votes against Griffin were "efforts to retaliate against Mr. Griffin" in part because he was successful with his lobbying on the governor's side.

Griffin needed 31 of the Legislature's 60

members to approve his renomination to the state school board, but he got only 21 votes, all from Republican lawmakers.

A vote on a second school board member, Barbara Tyndall of Fairbanks, was close but ultimately successful, with 34 votes in favor and 26 against. Some legislators suggested that Tyndall's education experience, which is limited to religious schools, wasn't enough for a seat on the school board.

The vote on Porcaro, a radio host who once delivered red pens to the state Capitol as part of a publicity stunt supporting Dunleavy budget vetoes, changed during the course of the joint legislative session.

Lawmakers initially voted 31-29 to support his nomination to a state commission that oversees commercial fisheries limited entry permits, but a few members changed their votes on a revote later in the day and his confirmation failed on a 30-30 vote.

Kodiak Rep. Louise Stutes and other lawmakers criticized Porcaro's lack of commercial fishing experience as a reason to vote against his confirmation.

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