

Town hall meeting held on community policing

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

With recent national attention on the topics of racial bias and police brutality, the community of Wrangell met via web conference last Monday evening for a town hall meeting to discuss policing practices in their hometown. The meeting provided an opportunity for residents to ask questions of Chief Tom Radke and to share their opinions on the Wrangell Police Department. Those who spoke in the meeting, by and large, expressed support for the police and their current practices.

"We had a handful of people express an interest in the police and the city taking a look at ourselves, in context with those more disturbing issues and events that were taking place in the Lower 48," Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga said. "Initially we had scheduled a work session to have a discussion with the assembly, but it became apparent, and as the chief has indicated he really wants this interaction between the community and the department, and so we decided it would be a far better venue for us to hold this community town hall meeting rather than just have it in a work session."

Radke opened the meeting by introducing himself and his department. He came to Wrangell in January of this year, as reported in a Jan. 16 article in the Sentinel. Radke said he comes from the Minneapolis and St. Paul area in Minnesota. He has about 25 years of experience with the police department in St. Paul, he said, in a wide variety of departments.

The rest of the officers of the WPD consist of Lt. Bruce Smith, who Radke said has been here



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Blue Lives Matter march

A group of approximately 50 people joined last Sunday afternoon to walk in support of the Wrangell Police Department. The group walked, or rode motorcycles, from City Dock up to the Public Safety Building. Many people carried signs in support of the WPD, and police in general. As this march took place in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, many participants in the march also wore face coverings, and everyone was encouraged to socially distance. Pictured here (left to right) are Wrangell residents Shaylynn, Charlie, and Tyla Nelson, leading the parade.

for about 24 years; as well as Damon Roher, with two and a half years of experience; Connor Philips, who has almost two years of experience, and Nick

Pearson who also has almost two years of experience plus six more years policing in the Lower 48. Smith also served as interim chief of police before

Radke was hired, following the retirement of Doug McCloskey.

"So I have kind of a younger department, that we have here," Radke said. "A lot of ex-

perience with the younger guys, and I have Bruce that's been a great help to me with the department, and the community, getting started."

The Wrangell Police Department does have a policy regarding use of force, Radke said. Wrangell officers shall only use the amount of force that is "reasonably necessary to effectively bring an incident under control while protecting the lives of the officer and others." There are numerous state and local regulations regarding what constitutes the proper use of force in a given scenario, he said. These policies can vary by community and by state. Some departments consider removing a gun from a holster as a use of force incident, he said, while others do not.

Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga said that, in Alaska, all use of force incidents have to be reported to the state. Radke said they file reports monthly to the state, and added that there is a national database as well.

Radke also explained some of the training and protocols in place for being an Alaskan police officer. Becoming a policeman in Alaska requires 1,000 hours of training, he said. That training covers everything from domestic violence, to implicit bias training, to use of force training, shooting, operating vehicles, and other topics important for being a police officer. Radke said that he wants to bring in ongoing training, as well, to go beyond the initial 1,000 hours. He would like there to be ongoing training on the topics of bias, use of force, and mental health.

"One of the things that struck me as a little different in Alaska is there are no continu-

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Plans announced for limited 4th of July celebration

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

While Wrangell is well known for its Fourth of July celebration, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered the community's plans for Independence Day. While many popular and traditional events will not take place this year, such as the boat races or royalty contest, the public can still look forward to a fireworks show and parade.

"Chamber leadership has weighed input from business membership and members of the community along with State and Local public officials," a community notice from the Chamber reads. "Overwhelmingly amongst all groups, the safety and wellbeing of our community has been the number one priority."

Fireworks will take place tomorrow, July 3, at the baseball fields. There were no fireworks to celebrate the Fourth of July last year, as the community and much of Southeast Alaska was undergoing a drought. There has also been some controversy around the location of the fireworks. Traditionally, Wrangell has launched fireworks at City Dock. However, the dock no longer meets safety guidelines to permit fireworks, as many buildings are close by. The baseball fields at Volunteer Park, however, are far enough away from the rest of town to be safe.

Fireworks will begin around 11 p.m., according to the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce. The public is encouraged to come out to watch the show, but everybody is asked to socially distance to

avoid any spread of COVID-19.

Following the fireworks, on the Fourth of July itself, a parade will go through town. This year, the parade route has been extended to go past Long Term Care, at the Wrangell Medical Center, so they can still enjoy the parade without risking contact with anyone with COVID-19. The parade will begin along Bennett Street. Floats will be lined up near the senior apartments, while everyone else in their vehicles will line up by the covered area at Volunteer Park. The parade will go down Bennett Street, Church Street, down and around the Campbell Street loop, down Front Street, and conclude at the Nolan Center. Everybody participating in the parade will be in vehicles this year, to make sure participants are socially distanced. Partici-

pants are also asked to not throw any candy or objects to viewers this year. Judging for the parade contest, for best float, vehicle, and other categories will begin at 10:30 a.m. The parade will begin at 11 a.m.

The chamber of commerce is still selling raffle tickets this year, as well. Proceeds from the raffle tickets will go towards funding the 2021 Independence Day celebration. Stephanie Cook, with the chamber, said that tickets are available until noon on July 3. Cook said that tickets are available at the chamber office, or from any chamber board member. Winners will be announced shortly after the parade on July 4. First prize for the raffle contest will be 15 percent of ticket sales, while second and third place will receive 10 and 5 percent, respectively.

Latest cruise numbers at less than 2,000 capacity

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The latest cruise ship schedule, provided by Economic Development Director Carol

Rushmore on June 23, shows that Wrangell can expect a total of less than 2,000 cruise ship visitors this season. This is a major decrease from estimates of

24,000 visitors this year, as well as roughly 20,000 visitors last season. The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically hurt the cruise industry across Southeast Alaska, including local businesses that rely on tourists to operate.

"The only ships still on the schedule are the Alaska Dream Cruises, Uncruise, and American Cruise Line," Rushmore wrote in an email. "The City has not seen any COVID-19 mitigation plans from Alaska Dream or Uncruise. ACL just contacted the City about the potential for calling on Wrangell 4 times in August. They are asking all Southeast communities who may be interested in hosting their ship to determine what ports may be open. Once they have shared their updated COVID-19 Plan, provided an-

swers to questions on the plan and potential call dates the Assembly will consider their request."

The latest schedule, dated June 18, has the *Wilderness Discoverer* scheduled to dock July 29. This year's cruise season will run until the end of September, with a current estimate of 29 cruise stops in Wrangell. All of these stops combined will have a maximum capacity of 1,827.

A 2019 report by Rain Coast Data, on the Wrangell visitor industry, states that the visitor industry makes up roughly nine percent of all private sector jobs in Wrangell, and accounts for about \$2.9 million in earnings. Mid-size and small cruise ships made up the majority of all summer tourism to Wrangell between 2010 and 2020, according to the report.

With significantly fewer ships planning to dock in Wrangell this year many tourism companies in Wrangell are altering their plans. Muddy Water Adventures, for example, announced a suspension of operations for the 2020 season on Facebook on June 23. In an April 30 article in the Wrangell Sentinel, Alan Cummings of All In Charters and Grand View B&B estimated that 60 to 70 percent of their expected customers this year have cancelled in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Becky Rooney, of Rooney's Roost Bed and Breakfast, said in the same article that she is expecting a quiet season, as well. Other businesses, such as restaurants, have altered their normal operations in response to the pandemic and state guidelines, as well.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

The Sentinel extends its best wishes to the persons listed on the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce Community Scholarship Birthday Calendar.

Thursday, July 2: Charlie Kirschner, Jaci Maddox. *Anniversary:* Jeff & Dawn Angerman, Curt & Jonna Kautz, Andre & Caity Shafer. **Friday, July 3:** Colin Anderson, Lacey Churchill, Christian Kaer. *Anniversary:* Roy & Nancy Guthrie, Roland & Donna Larsen. **Saturday, July 4:** Gail Rilatos, Bill Massin, Alexandra Bennett, Madelyn Davies, Ryan Edgley. *Anniversary:* Floyd & Sue Ramsey. **Sunday, July 5:** Mathew Moore, Tyman Comstock. **Monday, July 6:** Cheney Chrisman, Cameron Rilatos, Richard Sumner, Laura Helgeson, Shane Bennett, Jennifer Miller. *Anniversary:* Miles & Waka Brown, Daniel & Tammie Kirschner. **Tuesday, July 7:** "Zoey", Dawn Angerman, Devyn Young, Dutch Mongeon. *Anniversary:* Kyle & Amber Hommel. **Wednesday, July 8:** Matt Jurak, Kyle Angerman, Matthew Speers, Brett Abrahamson, Andrew Werner, Barb Taylor. *Anniversary:* Robert & Lori Baremore. **Thursday, July 9:** Carlene Nore, Joseph Hammock. *Anniversary:* Ryan & Heather Howe.

If you would like to add a birthday or anniversary at no charge please call the Sentinel at 874-2301.

Senior Center Meals Menu Delivery Only

Friday, July 4

Closed for 4th of July Holiday

Monday, July 6

Hotcha Baked Beef, Steam Carrots, Fruit Slaw

Tuesday, July 7

Chinese Fruited Pork, Zucchini, Orange Salad, Rice

Wednesday, July 8

BBQ Chicken, Vegetables, Potatoe Salad & Biscuit

Thursday, July 9

Baked White Fish, Peas, Pear Raisin Salad, Sweet Potatoes.

Please call Wrangell Senior Center at 874-2066 by 10 a.m. for delivery.

Senior van also available to transport seniors to medical appointments reasonable errands like collecting mail, getting prescriptions at pharmacies or other essential need items.

FERRY

Northbound

Sunday, July 5

Matanuska, 8:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 12

Matanuska, 2:15 p.m.

Sunday, July 19

Matanuska, 7:15 p.m.

Sunday, July 26

Matanuska, 1:15 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, July 8

Matanuska, 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, July 15

Matanuska, 3:15 a.m.

Wednesday, July 22

Matanuska, 8:00 a.m.

Wednesday, July 29

Matanuska, 5:15 a.m.

Call 874-2021 for information or call 874-3711 or Toll Free 800-642-0066 for recorded information.



TIDES July 2- July 9

High Tides

Low Tides

	AM		PM		AM		PM	
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
July 02	11:45	14.3	11:36	18.3	05:21	-1.3	05:15	2.9
July 03	12:40	14.9	06:15	-2.4	06:10	2.9
July 04	00:26	18.6	01:31	15.3	07:02	-3.0	06:59	2.9
July 05	01:13	18.5	02:18	15.4	07:46	-3.1	07:44	3.0
July 06	01:58	18.1	03:02	15.4	08:28	-2.8	08:28	3.2
July 07	02:41	17.5	03:44	15.1	09:08	-2.1	09:10	3.6
July 08	03:22	16.6	04:24	14.7	09:46	-1.2	09:53	4.0
July 09	04:03	15.5	05:04	14.3	10:24	-0.3	10:37	4.3

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

Jury duty for July. You will be receiving notices in the mail in the next few weeks. Court number: (907) 874-2311.

Anyone doing business at the Wrangell Court are required to wear a mask unless under 2 years of age or exempted for medical reasons. This is effective until further notice. All hearings are being conducted telephonically until further notice. Contact the court for the call-in number at (907) 874-2311

Continuing Events

Online AA Meetings: North Star Group Meeting. Link to online meeting: www.zoom.us/j/722855768. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 7:45 p.m., Dial-in Number (phone only): (346) 248-7799 / Meeting ID: 722-855-76, Meeting Contact: Eric H: (907) 720 3407.

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

July 1, 1920

That Wrangell is to have a crab canning plant is an assured fact, according to A. H. Range of Portland who was here last week working on the proposition. Mr. Range recently patented a machine for extracting crabmeat from the shells by means of compressed air. One of these machines will do the work of 15 hand pickers. This invention puts the crab canning business on an entirely new basis. After Mr. Range outlined his proposition, C. M. Coulter, the local fish buyer, was asked if he thought there was a plentiful supply in this locality. Mr. Coulter replied, "I fished crabs in these local waters for more than two years, and I consider Wrangell the center of crab supply in Southeastern Alaska."

June 29, 1945

A group of about six representatives of the Smaller War Plants Corporation are due in Wrangell Tuesday to investigate the post-war possibilities of this area for development. The Smaller War Plants Corporation is an organization with its purpose to supply loans to individuals or companies to established businesses and industries in Alaska. Accompanied by Governor Ernest Gruening, the party will arrive in Wrangell by plane Tuesday morning and will spend the entire day here looking over sites and conferring with local businessmen and others interested in pro-

moting small businesses. They will be the guests of the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce and a delegation from the Petersburg Chamber has been invited to attend also, to represent that end of the Narrows.


July 2, 1970

U.S. Forest Service crews were on the island this week surveying routes for two new roads, one to extend Zimovia Highway about 15 miles to Thoms Lake and the second to cross the island about five miles from Pats Lake to the back channel. District Ranger Normal Schoonover said the Pats Lake-back channel link was being planned last week. Work on the Zimovia Highway extension was to begin this week. It is anti-

ciated the roads would be built by logging concerns through timber-purchase agreements.


June 29, 1995

Wrangell Running Track was turned into a rocket range June 23 by summer Space Camp students. Kindergarteners through eighth graders shot off a variety of rockets that they had put together as well as flying colorful kites. The kids took altitude readings as the rockets raced upwards, although many lost signs of the rockets in the clouds. "I liked making the rockets and watching them blow up," said Dwight Yancey. "Mine didn't have a very nice flight." The students had spent the past week at Space Camp putting together and decorating the rockets for their Friday flights.



Wrangell Weather

Date	High	Low
June 22	58	50
June 23	57	48
June 24	59	48
June 25	52	48
June 26	54	51
June 27	61	50
June 28	69	46
June 29	57	48



Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Daylight
Jul 02	4:07a	9:36p	17:29h
Jul 03	4:08a	9:35p	17:27h
Jul 04	4:09a	9:35p	17:26h
Jul 05	4:10a	9:34p	17:24h
Jul 06	4:11a	9:33p	17:22h
Jul 07	4:12a	9:32p	17:20h
Jul 08	4:14a	9:32p	17:18h
Jul 09	4:15a	9:31p	17:16h

Questions remain around former Wrangell police officer

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

In early June, the Wrangell Sentinel received several emails regarding one of the city's police officers, Paul Jay Huerta. One of these emails linked to a news article and video, alleging that Huerta left his previous job in California for harassing a suspect. Recently, city officials informed the paper that Huerta was no longer employed by the Wrangell Police Department. However, the city has not provided information as to why he resigned.

A July 9, 2018 article by the Desert Sun shares a controversial video that may involve Huerta. In this video, a Desert Hot Springs police officer, who resembles Huerta, can be seen

in a confrontation with a battery suspect. The suspect is sitting on the hood of a car, while the officer stands over him and repeatedly tells him "you haven't seen harassment yet" and to "stop mad-dogging me." The suspect then calls the officer a "retard," which led to the officer handcuffing the suspect. The Desert Sun reported that this video triggered an internal investigation within the Desert Hot Springs Police Department. They also reported that the officer was no longer employed with that department. A July 12, 2018 article by NBC Palm Springs reported that Dale Mondary, then police chief for Desert Hot Springs, said that there was no racial bias that could be attributed to actions



Paul Jay Huerta

seen in the video. Mondary also said, in the article, that nothing illegal occurred in the video, as it was a lawful arrest based on probable cause.

The Sentinel has reached out to the Desert Hot Springs Police Department to confirm that the officer in the video is Huerta, and to determine if he resigned or was dismissed. However, the department has not responded to the paper's public records request as of this time, which asked for a resume for Huerta, or any letters of resignation or dismissal. The Sentinel did find a September 2017 post on the Desert Hot Springs Police Department Facebook page welcoming Huerta to the force.

Christopher Damien, reporter with the Desert Sun, was able to obtain further information on behalf of the Sentinel. He shared a June 30 email from Commander Corinn Pickett, with the Desert Hot Springs Police Department, confirming the identity of the police officer.

"The person in that video is former Desert Hot Springs Police Officer, Paul Huerta," the email reads. "He was released from probationary employment in July of 2018."

Pickett also identified the cop in the video as Huerta in an email directly to the Sentinel, shortly after the Sentinel received the forwarded email from Damien.

The Sentinel found a court filing in which Huerta was named as a defendant, Joshua Felix v. City of Desert Hot Springs et al, regarding a civil rights suit. The case was filed on Jan. 20, 2019, according to PacerMonitor, and was terminated on March 11, 2019.

Attorney Eduardo Madrid represented Felix in the case. He also confirmed, in an email to the Sentinel, that his client and Huerta were the people seen in the video. The lawsuit, he explained, was for a violation of federal and state civil rights, false arrest, negligent hiring, and intentional infliction of emotional distress, among other items. The case was settled out of court, he said.

"As I recall, my client and his brother entered a local store in a strip mall," Madrid wrote in his email. "While in the store, my client and his brother were assaulted and battered by some unknown customer and his girlfriend. My client's brother called the police. When the police arrived, the officer erroneously assumed that my client and his brother were the perps and not the victims. The encounter ensued as depicted in the video. You will note that when he was handcuffed, the officer accused my client and

his brother of assaulting the 3rd party. Once inside the store, the store clerk informed the officers that my client and his brother were the victims. My client was released at the scene after being handcuffed and told to sit on a curb."

Huerta came to Wrangell in June of 2019. In an interview with the Sentinel, he said that he joined the Marine Corps in 1995, and became a police officer after a 20-year career. Huerta said he first spent about five months with the Indio Police Department. He then moved to the Desert Hot Springs Police Department. He said he worked for that department for over a year. However, if he was released from employment in July of 2018, his timeline of employment would only be around 10 or 11 months. In the interview with the Sentinel, Huerta said he came to the Wrangell Police Department because he wanted to work in a place where he could talk to people and get to know their names while on the job.

The Sentinel also received an email regarding a police officer by the name of Paul Huerta, who was employed with the Chicago Police Department and they have received several complaints between 1995 and 2017. However, this is not the same Paul Huerta. Public Information Officer Sally Brown, with the Chicago PD, said that their Paul Huerta is still an active officer in Chicago.

"He was appointed to the Department on 05 September 1995 and is still active and has been with the department for 24 years," she wrote.

Wrangell Police Chief Tom Radke explained that a Wrangell Police Officer goes through both an internal and external background check before being hired. He said that a Wrangell officer will review the potential hire's background and any state licensing they claim. The potential hire also has to fill out information with the Alaska Police Standards Council, through the Department of Public Safety, he said. When Huerta was hired, Radke said, he disclosed everything and nothing came up in his background check. He went into a little more detail about how background checks work in a town hall meeting on June 29.

"Traditionally the department itself has done the backgrounds," he said. "The applicant sends back in a bunch of paperwork, they verify that applicant. If that applicant is then selected they verify it through the Alaska Police Standards Council, and it goes from there. The last one that Bruce [Smith] did, he called the other departments, asked for any internal affairs complaints, and you go down a whole checklist that I don't quite honestly have in front of me right now, but there is background that is checked all the way back to your previous employers."

Bob Griffiths, executive director with the Alaska Police Standards Council, said in a June 22 email to the Sentinel

that Huerta was still listed as an active officer with the WPD. However, he added that the department has 30 days to report Huerta's separation to the APSC. At this time, he added that Huerta had not met all of the requirements to be certified by the APSC as a police officer in Alaska.

"All information related to his eligibility or information about prior misconduct should be reported to Wrangell PD for their investigation and referral to APSC," Griffiths wrote. "The Wrangell Police Department is/was responsible for his pre-hire background investigation. Hiring information received by APSC does not include a resume ... His APSC file is confidential and cannot be released. Of course, any formal action taken by the council is public."

Wendy Menze, also with the APSC, explained the requirements Alaskan police officers are expected to complete to be certified by their group. There are four main requirements, she wrote in an email. The officer in question must be a full time paid officer with an Alaskan police department. They must meet the standards of AAC 85.010(a) and (b), which are the basic standards for police officers. They must have worked 12 consecutive months on a probationary basis with their department. Lastly, she wrote that they must successfully complete a council-certified basic police officer academy and undergo field training required by APSC and the police department.

"Mr. Huerta did complete (1), (2), and (3) from above," Menze wrote. "He did not complete (4), successfully complete a council certified police officer academy or the field training. You can read the APSC Guidebook for further information about the requirements for officer employment and certification."

Radke also said that he could not comment on Huerta's performance before coming to Wrangell, only that he had received no signed complaints regarding him from people in town. He also said the Sentinel would need to speak to city administration regarding Huerta's leaving the police department.

"My understanding was everyone was aware of it," Radke said about the 2018 video, reiterating that Huerta disclosed everything for his background check before being hired.

Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga confirmed that Huerta resigned from the Wrangell police two weeks ago, but said she could not remember the exact day. She also said that as this was a personnel matter, it was considered confidential and she could not release any letter of resignation to the media or discuss reasons behind his leaving. She suggested that the Sentinel get in contact with Huerta for permission to release such information.

As of press time, the paper has been unable to contact Huerta.

Police report

June 22

Civil issue

Civil issue: Child Custody

Trespass

Agency assist: AST

June 23

Subpoena service

Agency assist: AST

Civil matter

June 24

Nothing to report.

June 25

Agency Assist: Public Works

June 26

Suspicious activity

Agency assist: Harbor Dept.

Found property

June 27

Arrested Joseph Volpi, 20, on Warrant

Arrested Jessica Gaube, 28, on Warrant

Agency assist: Public Works


June 28

Agency assist: Wrangell Medical Center

Agency assist: Hoonah Police Department

Agency assist: Hoonah Police Department

There were three ambulance calls, 11 airport assist calls and two dog complaint calls during this reporting period.

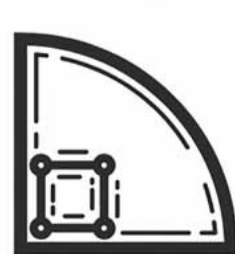



Wrangell, AK

July 3rd 2020 Firework Show

@Dusk

- ★ Fireworks will be shot from the Baseball field at dusk (Around 11pm)
- *A warning shot will go off 10 minutes prior*
- ★ Please find a great spot to gather or park with your household and enjoy the show!
- ★ Please remain AT LEAST a 6 foot distance from others, please be respectful of other community members & everyone's safety.

Huge thank you to the Fire Department for making this happen for the community

Dan's Dispatch

By Representative
Dan Ortiz

Happy Fourth of July! This year, we are celebrating 244 years as an independent nation. In 1776, our representatives from all 13 colonies declared our independence from the British monarch. The vote for freedom actually happened on July 2nd, and in the following two days, Congress, led by Thomas Jefferson, focused on writing and finalizing the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration was signed on July 4th, now known as our Independence Day. Thus began the 'Great American Experiment' to pursue "a more perfect

union." This Independence Day, I encourage you to celebrate your freedom by finding your role in creating a More Perfect Union. The mission of a More Perfect Union is to have a system that treats all men and women as being created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights. How can you be a part



Dan Ortiz

of the process? One way is to vote! As your representative, I consider voting to be a fundamental right of democracy. This year's voting may look different because of COVID-19 restrictions. Last week, Lieutenant Governor Meyer announced that the Division of Elections will be sending absentee ballots to all registered vot-

ers over 65. Voting from home will be safer than going to a crowded voting place on Election Day. Anyone can vote by absentee, and you can request a ballot from the Alaska Division of Elections' Website: <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/>. As you enjoy the Fourth, remember that COVID-19 will not pause for our holiday; please continue to wear a mask in public and keep social circles small. Celebrations can still include small backyard barbecues, hikes with family, and watching fireworks. Have a safe and enjoyable Independence Day!

Obituaries:

Floyd Steven Ramsey, 61



Floyd Steven Ramsey

Floyd Steven Ramsey, 61, died on May 25, 2020. He was born to Dudley and

Esther Ramsey in Albuquerque, New Mexico on November 15, 1959. He was raised in Palm Springs, California and Newport Beach. He loved being a Cub Scout and worked in the food service industry and trained as a teenager to be a foreign auto mechanic by four German immigrants. His father was a chef at the Riviera which was a hotspot for the "Rat Pack," Peter Loftus, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Jr. His mother worked as a waitress at the Los Consuelas, an authentic Mexican

restaurant in downtown Palm Springs. He was adopted into the Raven Dog Salmon Clan by John Martin in Juneau, Alaska. His Tlingit name is Kudée Tlaa, a name that means "Very Old Nest that is Deteriorating rapidly," but in Tlingit that is a good thing. His hobbies included racing boats, smoking salmon, extreme

skiing and sharing his fine Mexican cuisine. He is survived by Susan G. Stevens, his ex-wife and companion of 17 years, and her sons Gary and Mark; siblings - Raymond Savedra, Allen Ramsey, Sandra Ramsey, Phillip Ramsey; numerous nieces and nephews: Brandon and Darren Ramsey of Cathedral City, California; grandnephews: Kaydon Ramsey

Youngblood of Palm Springs, and Christopher Raven Feller of Juneau. On the 4th of July, there will be a celebration of life BBQ potluck at the home of Sue Stevens. There will be a Baha'i Memorial as soon as gatherings are allowed due to COVID-19 restrictions, and family can travel from out of state.

George Albert Casey, 76

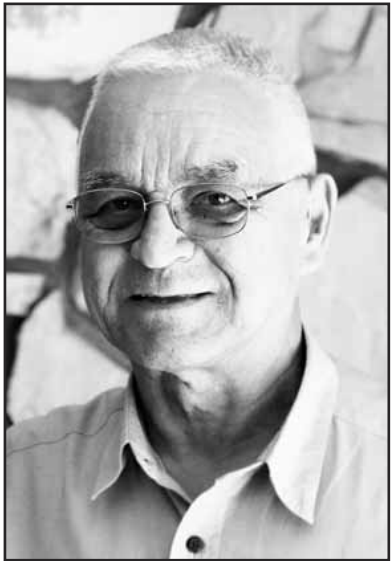
George Albert Casey, 76, died on June 17, 2020 in Modesto, California. He was born on March 20, 1944 to Tatiana Sofia Ermeloff in Wrangell, Alaska.

He met and married the woman of his dreams, Kristin (Peterson), in 1969. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Modesto where George worked various heavy equipment jobs and as a volunteer firefighter before being hired on at Modesto Fire Department in 1973 where he proudly served for 27 years.

George was adept at keeping it light in the hardest of times and always found a way to smile. He was beloved and cherished by family and friends, and had that special intangible charisma that children and pets gravitate towards with great excitement. Family was the key to his happiness. He was at his happiest when going on Jeep drives, vacations, and cruises with his wife and best friend, Kristin. He also loved spending time with his two sons, and more recently, his two grandsons, whether it was fishing, camping, BBQing, or DIY tasks.

He is survived by his wife Kristin, sons Sean (Tanya) and Ryan (Jeeni), grandsons Sheamus and Bowen, and many other family members and friends.

The family will be holding a private celebration of life. They ask that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Salvation Army.



George Albert Casey

New exhibit on Women's Suffrage opens at the Nolan Center July 1 - August 7



The traveling exhibit "Alaska's Suffrage Star" opens at the Nolan Center on **July 1 at 1 p.m.**

The exhibit shares the history of women's suffrage in Alaska, explaining how local and national activism helped Alaska women citizens achieve the vote in 1913.

That year, the first bill ever passed by the Alaska Territorial Legislature granted voting rights to women citizens. Only in 1924 did all Alaska Native women become eligible voters, because it was only then that the federal government granted US citizenship to Native Americans.

The exhibit features reproductions of historic photographs, illustrations, and political cartoons. It highlights Alaska women voting rights activists from the 1910s and 1920s, including:

- Nellie Cashman, entrepreneur, miner, and the first woman to vote in a territorial election in Alaska;
- Cornelia Hatcher, temperance leader who led the successful effort to enact Prohibition in Alaska;
- Lena Morrow Lewis, socialist organizer and the first Alaska woman to run for federal office in 1916; and
- Tillie Paul, Tlingit educator and tribal historian who was arrested for assisting a Tlingit man to vote.

The Alaska State Museum produced the exhibit to commemorate the centennial of the 19th Amendment, which in 1920 extended the right to vote to American women throughout the country.

The traveling exhibit has been enhanced by the Wrangell Museum collection. The exhibit is a walk through time highlighting women, industry and politics. Explore the beginnings of important women's organizations in Wrangell such as the Alaska Native Sisterhood and Wrangell Women's Civic Club. Visit items utilized by Wrangell ladies over 100 years ago, like our 1910's treadle sewing machine and a beautiful Edwardian era mourning dress.

During the exhibit there will be special screening matinees (movies, documentaries, recorded lectures) **every Thursday afternoon at 3pm**. The first matinee: Thursday, July 2nd at 3pm - "Iron Jawed Angels."

The exhibit is scheduled to appear at museums or libraries in Haines, Anchorage, Wrangell, Nome, Wasilla, Homer, and Cordova. The League of Women Voters Alaska, the League of Women Voters Anchorage, the Fairbanks Branch of the American Association of University Women, and the Friends of the Alaska State Library, Archives, and Museum sponsored the exhibit.

Oldest continuously published paper in Alaska



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Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

What is the purpose of the weekly police report? It seems to be a totally useless part of the paper. When we lived in Petersburg the police report was an interesting source of info and sometimes amusement. I save many of the best morsels like Ernie Haugen driving too slow, Lars Christensen driving a vehicle without a steering wheel, someone leaving Q tips outside her apt door, 2 youths racing in wheelchairs, cat has a can stuck over its head, 911 call accidentally dialed by a dog. And many more. No more reason to even read the police report here.

Anny Newport

Is there a point to the police report?

Reprinted from Petersburg Pilot in 1995

By LORI THOMSON

We at the Pilot and Sentinel admit to including the occasional pink-tutu sighting or pooch-on-the-loose as some comic relief in the police report. But the real intent of the weekly police and court reports is not to fill empty space. Nor is it so that the Petersburg Pilot gets

mentioned in Dave Barry's national humor column, as it was several weeks ago. Instead, the police and court reports are intended to briefly summarize legal matters and illegal activity in town.

We have an established list of criteria as to whether an item makes the leap from the police blotter and court

reporter's notes to the newspaper. City staff goes through the police blotter before we see it and blacks out items they deem confidential due to laws or ongoing investigations. We have done our best to give equal treatment to every case we have known about.

Police and court reports are

Obituary: Robert Marsh Nilsen, 87

Robert Marsh Nilsen, 87, died on June 19, 2020.

His voyage began on October 21, 1932 on Lummi Island in Washington State. Bob was the third oldest of ten children born to Mathias (Matt) and Thelma Nilsen. Bob had six sisters and three brothers.

Bob married the love of his life, Carroll on December 15, 1955 and they fished together some forty years, raising their five children



Robert Marsh Nilsen

on numerous boats. It was not unusual to see the Nilsen kids climbing over boats and roaming the docks during fishing season and to this day the tradition is still alive. One would be hard pressed to not find one or more of the Bob Nilsen Clan on the docks.

Bob began his lifelong fishing career as a reef net fisherman off the shores of Lummi Island with his father and brothers. After the passing of his father, he began fishing in Southeast Alaska. In June of 1962 He arrived in Petersburg with his younger brother, Peter Nilsen as his deckhand on the F/V Lillian D.

The Nilsens were a logging and fishing family so Bob took to it naturally. Bob's fishing acumen and raw instincts catapulted him forward to be a groundbreaker in the fishing industry. In 1972 Bob moved his fishing operations (family) to Petersburg raising his sons Mike, Ole, and Yancey to follow in his footsteps and begin their own voyages. Bob has two daughters Anita and Marsha who grew up and crewed on the boats as well.


He was a Korean War veteran and always proud of the fact that he arrived in Korea on the final day of the conflict. According to Bob, "They heard he was coming so they just gave up."

He was proud of his work on the Petersburg City Council. He was a lifelong member of the Elks Lodge and a member of the Moose Lodge. He especially enjoyed many years meeting for coffee with the boys.

Above all he loved moments he shared with family. He loved his grandchildren and great grandchildren and was adored by each and every member of his family. Bob valued his many friends, some of whom became like family.

Bob is survived by his wife Carroll; their five children; 13 grandchildren; and five great grandchildren.


Honorary Pallbearers are: Albi Hofstad, Ed Birchell, Pat McGrath and Tim Perov.



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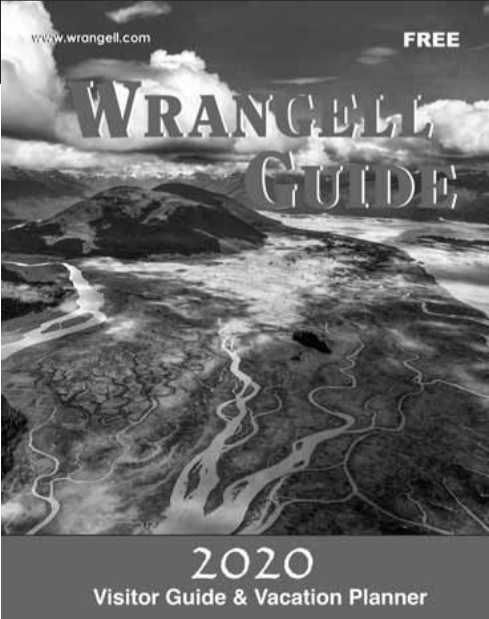
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intended to require some level of accountability for two very public departments in town, as well as for citizens. While police officers do far more than is listed in the police report, these reports should give some indication of the volume of crime and number of arrests in the community. Hopefully these reports contributed to debate this year that centered around local drug activity and the need for an additional police officer.

We hope readers are able to glean other information from these reports as well, such as the need to be cautious because of increased thefts or bears in the neighborhood.

People have repeatedly asked why we include divorces or domestic violence in the newspaper. We know that many people in town are aware of the details of a marital breakup long before it hits the paper. But a major feature of divorce is the division of property. When a divorce is legally approved, it is a matter of financial concern to those who have monetary ties to the couple involved, particularly loans or debts.

Domestic violence should be treated like any other violent activity. Why have people never questioned the

Pilot or Sentinel about printing an assault charge when someone beats someone else up in a bar? But they do question us when we print a domestic violence item about people who have been beating their spouses up in their home for months. We would only be protecting the abusers if we gave this kind of preferential treatment, and we are joining in the denial that prevents them from getting the kind of help they need.

It's true that the U.S. Constitution, state and federal law give each citizen access to much of what's printed in the newspaper. But the newspaper is intended to be a compendium of recent events so citizens may easily and quickly know what's happening in their community.

Should we stop covering city or borough assembly meetings, major trials and smaller court matters because we all have access to that under current law? Unfortunately, most people would not go seek out the legal records for the correct information, but would instead let the rumor mill crank up to a hellish speed that might make the cold, dry prose of the police report seem refreshing.

SMART Start meeting continues workshopping for next semester

By **CALEB VIERKANT**
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell School District held another SMART Start meeting last Wednesday, June 24, to continue discussing ways the district can safely reopen and operate during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Education has come out with recommendations to determine what constitutes different risk levels for operation in Wrangell, according to the meeting's notes, so the group of school board members, district faculty and staff, and parents mostly concentrated their discussion around the possible realities of school life in a pandemic.

SMART Start is a framework for Alaska school districts to base their reopening plans off of. The framework allows for schools to consider what operations could look like during the pandemic, at low, medium, and high risk levels. The Department of Education's recommendations are to consider "low risk" operations to be as close as possible to life before COVID-19, while keeping with all current health mandates. "Medium risk" needs to be determined by the district's local committee, according to the meeting notes. A "high risk" situation would lead to the school district going back to distance learning for their students, and shutting the school buildings.

For operations within the school buildings, there was discussion about how social distancing could work. Several participants in this meeting met at the Evergreen Elementary gym, while social distancing. With their seats six feet apart, according to the meeting notes, there was room for 24 desks in the gym. Classrooms are much smaller than the gym, so it was pointed out in the meeting that social distancing while at full capacity would be a challenge.

Community member Penny Allen said that ventilation, along with social distancing, is an important part of avoiding COVID-19. She suggested that the schools not allow face-to-face seating, and also seating particularly vulnerable students near windows or air vents while in

class. Maintenance Director Josh Blatchley also pointed out that the schools' ventilation systems have the option to either pull fresh air in from outside, or to recirculate air already in the building. Students wearing masks while in school was also considered during the meeting.

How many students to let into a classroom on a given day was also discussed. Teacher Laura Davies said that it would be a struggle for teachers to divide their time between in-person classrooms and socially distanced students at the same time. Community Member Clarissa Young said she felt that having a staggered schedule this next school year, such as half-days for students, would put an undue burden on custodial staff. Instead of students sharing half-days, he proposed that an "A-B" schedule might be more efficient.

Kristy Woodbury, community member, said that the Ketchikan School District was planning to operate at 50 percent capacity during their "low risk" operations. She wanted to know if the

Wrangell School District had considered their capacity limits to maintain social distancing. According to the meeting notes, Superintendent Debbe Lancaster said that question would have to be determined by school administration.

On the topic of distance learning online, Lancaster said that the district needed to consider what would happen if a staff member became ill. If staff became too reduced due to sickness, teachers may have to cover content areas they are unfamiliar with for other classes. Whatever plan they drafted, it would have to have protections for both students and staff, she said.

Donna Massin, with the school district, expressed concern that the temperature the district would consider a "fever" might be too high at 100.4 degrees. Earlier this year, according to the meeting notes, she caught the flu but only had a fever of 99 degrees. If the district holds a higher threshold, they may miss students. According to the meeting notes, Lancaster said that the district is planning to track staff

and student temperatures just for this outcome, as some people run higher temperatures and others run lower temperatures. Teacher Mikki Angerman said that back in pre-COVID operations, the school would call parents to pick up their child if they had a temperature of 99 degrees anyway, so nothing should change in that regard.

Transportation was another consideration discussed in this meeting. Student transportation is going to depend on both enrollment numbers next semester, and the number of students that live two or more miles away from school. When the district negotiated the transportation contract, she said, they were anticipating offering the same level of services as they had in the past. At a minimum, she said they will offer transportation services at state-required levels. It will depend on students' needs this next school year, she said.

Penny Allen suggested that the district ask parents to drive their kids to school instead of take the bus, when possible. Teacher Ryan Howe agreed with

this idea, and suggested that the district offer some kind of reimbursement plan for parents.

Other suggestions discussed in this meeting included sending out a poll to see how many parents are considering homeschooling this year, whether or not families were more interested in distance learning, in-school learning, or a mix of both, and options for parents who needed to work during the school day and could not keep their kids at home alone, among other items.

Lancaster said that school administrators will return from their breaks in the near future, according to the meeting notes, and they will work together to draft a full plan for reopening. This draft will be presented in a town hall meeting in mid-July, she said, before it will be finalized and submitted to the state. Afterwards, the school board will get to consider adoption of the SMART Start plan in their August meeting.

Lancaster asked that people with comments or suggestions email smartstart@wpsd.us.

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2020 4TH OF JULY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, July 3

COMMUNITY MARKET- THE NOLAN CENTER 10a-1p

PEN'MENI & FRIED BREAD, DISC GOLF OPEN -
BRING YOUR OWN DISCS, MUSKEG MEADOWS 10a-8p

PULL TABS RAFFLE TICKETS - THE ELKS 11a-2p, 2p-4p, 5p-9p

FIREWORKS SHOW- BASEBALL FIELD AT DUSK 11p



Saturday, July 4

GOLF TOURNAMENT - MUSKEG MEADOWS, Registration - 9a, Tournament - 10a, Lunch - 11:30a - 2p

PULL TABS RAFFLE TICKETS - THE ELKS 11a-2p, 2p-4p, 4p-6p, 6p-8p

PULLED PORK & SALAD LUNCH - THE ELKS 11a-3p

PARADE 10:30a- Judging, 11a - Start, (See Separate ad for route)

Sunday, July 5

WRANGELL REAL ESTATE GOLF TOURNAMENT - MUSKEG MEADOWS,

Registration - 9a, Tournament - 10a, Burgers - 11:30a - 1:30p

This 4th of July Schedule is brought to you by the following sponsors

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Wrangell Sentinel



Tech department in good hands, says Matt Gore

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

Matt Gore has been with the Wrangell School District since 2011, and has been the technology director since 2015. In his time as technology director, Gore said he has worked to give the school district faster and

more reliable internet access, to put better technology in students' hands, and help the district use all the tools they had available.

It is time for him to move on, however. Gore has left his Wrangell position to take a new job with the Southeast Island



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Katelyn Church, the new technology director for the Wrangell school district, and former tech director Matt Gore.

School District, on Prince of Wales Island. While he is leaving, Gore said he is leaving Wrangell in good hands with the new tech director, Katelyn Church.

Church moved to Wrangell from Texas, she said, to pursue a new adventure. Much of her experience with technology and education comes from working in school districts and community colleges across the state.

Coming to Wrangell was an exciting opportunity to get out of Texas and try something new, she said.

"I've been in educational technology in Texas now for, combined, probably eight years, the last three and a half [years] in Wilson," Church said.

Church has been hired on a 12-month contract starting in July, she said. She said that she is excited to work in Wrangell,

and that Gore has done an excellent job as technology director. Her immediate plans for the future, as new tech director, are simply to help out the school district as much as possible in the areas of education technology.

"Really just continuing to help lead the district to be successful with the kids," Church said, regarding future plans for the technology department.

Gore said he was excited to leave Wrangell in good hands. There were several accomplishments with the district he was proud of, he said. For example, he worked to get the district's internet speed up from 20mb/s to 150mb/s. Students will be expecting new iPads to replace their Chromebooks in the near future, as well. Future projects for the district, he mentioned, include replacing all of the wireless infrastructure. Another accomplishment Gore said he was proud of was helping keep the schools running through the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This last year, before COVID, we did not have a single teacher use Google Meet," Gore said. "During COVID we had over 5,000 Google Meets."

Gore's new job will be based out of Thorne Bay, working at six different schools across Prince of Wales. It is an exciting new opportunity, he said, and while he is sorry to leave Wrangell, he is eager to begin this new adventure.

"For me this is kind of a new adventure," Gore said. "I'm going to sail away from Wrangell. I live on a sailboat, as you know ... I'm kind of excited for the opportunity and challenge to work with six different remote schools."

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July 4th: Parade will start at 11am - Judging at 10:30am

- Start: Floats will park along side the sidewalk by senior apartments
- Everyone else (Vehicles, ATV/Motorcycles, Scooters/Bikes) will line up down by the covered area. Must stay in or on your vehicle/atv/bike at all time, keeping a 6 foot distance from others

NO throwing candy/objects and NO walkers

Top Cash Prize for each Category (Float, Vehicle, ATV/Motorcycle, Scooter/Bike) + Top Kids Prize

Viewers: PLEASE remain at least 6 feet from non-household members and practice social distance guidelines. Please be mindful of other community members/visitors and respect their safety and yours!

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Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH Fisheries columnist

Alaska salmon: Bristol Bay opens with Pebble Mine decision pending

The biggest red salmon run in the world is building at Bristol Bay.

Up to 50 million fish could surge into its eight river systems in coming weeks, on par with past seasons. When it's all done, the fishery will provide nearly half the global supply of wild sockeye salmon.

But this summer is different. Not only due to the restrictions and fears and economic chaos caused by Covid-19. At the height of the fishery, fishermen will learn if a massive gold and copper mine that's been hanging over their heads for two decades gets a greenlight from the federal government.

In mid-July, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will unveil its federal "record of decision" on the permit application by Northern Dynasty of Vancouver, Canada to build the Pebble Mine at the sprawling mosaic of headwaters that provide the spawning and rearing grounds for the region's salmon.

Three decisions are possible for the mine: issue a permit, issue a permit with conditions, or deny the application.

"As Bristol Bay's fishermen head out to the fishing grounds for the next six weeks, we are counting on Congress to protect the 14,500 workers directly employed by the commercial salmon fishery," said Andy Wink, director of the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association. "Pebble Mine is a threat to Alaskan jobs, America's food security, and a salmon resource unparalleled anywhere on the planet."

"The EPA's own science shows that this project poses an unacceptable risk to our country's greatest remaining wild salmon runs," said Katherine Carscallen, director of Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay. "We look to Alaska's senators for their leadership and implore the EPA to use its authority under the Clean Water Act to veto Pebble's permit."

Such calls for help will likely go unheard.

Alaska's two Republican Senators and lone Congressman have staunchly stood behind the Pebble project's right to go through a rigorous and fair permitting process and have been tightlipped about their opinions in the meantime.

Now that the process is pretty much a wrap, will they finally tell Alaskans if they are "for or agin it?"

"Congressman Young remains committed to seeing the process fully completed, but without a finished report, there is nothing that can be commented on," responded press secretary Zack Brown.

"The federal permitting process is ongoing, and until there is a decision document to review there is nothing on which to provide comment," said Mike Anderson, Communications Director for Senator Dan Sullivan.

Senator Murkowski's office did not respond but she would likely express "concern."

Every survey and poll ever done has shown that a huge majority of Alaskans from all regions oppose the Pebble Mine. But equivocating with constituents is the way of today's politicians.

Former Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) in 2008 stated emphatically and often: "I'm not opposed to mining, but Pebble is the wrong mine in the wrong place." Love him or not, you always knew Uncle Ted's stance on anything you asked him in his 40 year tenure in the U.S. Senate.

Alaska's current reps in Congress might not dare come clean about Pebble, but investors are wiping their hands of the project.

Global investment banking firm Morgan Stanley, once the fourth largest institutional shareholder in Northern Dynasty, on March 31 dumped 99.14% in its shareholdings in the project, reported the National Resources Defense Council and CNN Money.

"While the reasons for Morgan Stanley's recent sell-off are unknown, the global investment company is known as a strong proponent of the principle that environmental and social responsibility are essential to long-term investment success," the NRDC said.

That sell-off is just the latest of Pebble put-downs on a global scale.

In 2011, Mitsubishi Corporation sold out. In 2013, Anglo American abandoned its partnership, walking away from a nearly \$600 million investment. In 2014, Rio Tinto donated its shares to two Alaskan nonprofits: Alaska Community Foundation and the Bristol Bay Native Corporation Education Foundation.

In 2018, First Quantum Minerals walked away after five months from a \$37.5 million investment and option for a 50 percent partnership. Also in 2018, BlackRock zeroed out its shareholdings.

New York investment firm Kerrisdale Capital Management called Northern Dynasty's plans "worthless," "a value-destroying boondoggle," "doomed," "politically-impaired" and "commercially futile."

"The cash-strapped 100 percent owner's desperate hope — its "business plan" — is that the issuance of a permit by the Army Corps will attract new investment, a new partner, or a buy-out," the NRDC said.

Despite its claims of a "smaller footprint" for Pebble, Northern Dynasty states on its website that its "principal asset, owned through its wholly owned Alaska-based U.S. subsidiary, Pebble Limited Partnership ("PLP"), is a 100% interest in a contiguous block of 2,402 mineral claims in southwest

Alaska, including the Pebble deposit."

Every landslide begins with a single Pebble...

Building a mine like Pebble (or Donlin) can be compared to building a new Alaska city.

The "Pebble deposit" lies within a 417-square-mile claim block and will include an open pit, a 550 foot high tailings dam to hold roughly 30 billion cubic feet of mining wastes forever, overburden stockpiles, quarry sites, water management ponds, milling and processing facilities, a 188-mile natural gas pipeline from the Kenai Peninsula to the site, a power plant, water treatment plants, camp

and storage facilities, and an 83-mile road along Lake Iliamna to haul the gold and copper to Diamond Point in Cook Inlet for shipment. (Based on a new "northern route" plan that Pebble opted for a few weeks ago.)

The EPA said in a May 28 letter, "the discharges of dredged or fill material...may well contribute to the permanent loss of 2,292 acres of wetlands and other waters is anticipated, including 105.4 miles of streams, along with secondary impacts to 1,647 acres of wetlands and other waters, including 80.3 miles of streams, associated with fugitive dust deposition,

dewatering, and fragmentation of aquatic habitats."

The tools of the mining trade - hundreds of huge, diesel-fueled bulldozers, blasters, crushers, trucks and other heavy equipment - kick up a lot of dust.

The Army Corps says Pebble will generate nearly 16,000 tons of "fugitive dust" during mining and transports. When it's blowing in the wind, the dust will carry copper and other particles to thousands of acres of wetlands and streams.

"Increases in copper concentrations of just 2-20 parts per billion, equivalent to two drops

Continued on page 9



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**City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
PUBLIC NOTICE
Vacancy on the Borough Assembly**

The City and Borough of Wrangell is accepting *letters of interest* from citizens who wish to serve on the Borough Assembly.

The unexpired term of this appointment is until October 2020

Any eligible person may apply. Letters of interest should be submitted to:

Mayor Stephen Prysunka
PO Box 531
Wrangell, AK 99929

or you can email your *letter of interest* to the Borough Clerk at: clerk@wrangell.com on or before **July 22, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.**

Information on the powers and duties of the Borough Assembly are contained in Wrangell Municipal Code, Chapter 3.04. A copy of the code chapter can be obtained at the Borough Clerk's Office or viewed at the City's website at www.wrangell.com

Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska

Publish: July 2 and July 16, 2020

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**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF WRANGELL**

In the Matter of the Estate of:)
)
Annette Mable Younce,)
Deceased.) Case No: 1WR-18-00001PR

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Joe Wayne Younce has been appointed the personal representative for the above entitled estate. Pursuant to Alaska Statute, Title 13.16.450 all creditors are hereby notified to present their claims within four (4) months after the first date of publication of this notice or be forever barred. Said claims must be submitted to Joe Wayne Younce, P.O. Box 2035 Wrangell, Alaska 99929.

Dated: 06/01/2020

Joe Wayne Younce
Personal Representative

Published: June 18, 25 and July 2, 2020

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**Notice of Absentee Voting
2020 Primary Election
Monday, August 3 through
Monday, August 17, 2020**



Absentee In-Person voting for the August 18, 2020 Primary Election begins August 3rd. Ballots for all districts will be available in each of the Division of Elections regional elections offices and other locations throughout the state.

If you would like to vote by mail, you must submit an absentee ballot application to the Division of Elections by August 8, 2020.

For a list of absentee voting locations, or to obtain an absentee ballot application, visit the division's Early and Absentee voting web site at AKVoteEarly.alaska.gov

The State of Alaska, Division of Elections, complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you are a person with a disability who may need special assistance and/or accommodation to vote, please contact your local Division of Elections office to make necessary arrangements. STATEWIDE TTD: 1-888-622-3020

Published: July 2, 2020

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
JOB BULLETIN:
Accounting Clerk Finance Department**

The City and Borough of Wrangell is recruiting for an Accounting Clerk to join the Borough's Finance Department. Applications will be accepted beginning June 24, 2020 through July 7, 2020.

The Accounting Clerk assists and supports all functions of the Finance Department, with primary duties being the completion of clerical and routine technical accounting functions in the Accounts Payable function. The following duties provide a summary of the main duties and responsibilities.

- Logs and matches invoices to the proper accounts and/or purchase orders
- Prepares checks and other methods of payment for remittance and mailing
- Establishes and maintains filing systems for appropriate records retention
- Maintains accurate vendor/customer records in the central accounting software system
- Provides customer service to the public with professional and courteous communication

Three years of relevant work experience in a professional business, office or administrative setting is required. Education or experience in accounting, budgeting, or position closely aligned with the duties, responsibilities and skills of the position is strongly preferred.

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

Joyce Mason
Finance Director
Lisa Von Bargen
Wrangell Borough Manager

Published July 2, 2020

CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL

Pursuant to the City & Borough of Wrangell Code, Sec. 3.04.808, notice is hereby given that the regular assembly meetings of the assembly shall be held on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month and shall begin at 6:00 p.m. As per Emergency Resolution No. 03-20-1520, Borough Assembly Meetings shall be held by teleconference/videoconference until October 17, 2020 unless terminated before that date. If any such Tuesday shall fall on a legal holiday as defined by the laws of the State of Alaska, the meetings scheduled for that day shall be held at the same hour on the next succeeding day which is not a holiday. Separate notice for the regular assembly meetings shall not be required. There will be no regular meetings the second Tuesday in July and August and fourth Tuesday in December.

If a work session is scheduled preceding the regular assembly meeting, publication shall be made on the website and posted at city hall and the post office that the regular assembly meeting shall begin at 7:00 p.m.

Kim Lane, Borough Clerk
City of Wrangell, Alaska

Published: July 2, 2020



**Puzzle
answers
from June 25
Edition**

7	3	9	2	4	5	8	1	6
6	8	4	7	3	1	2	5	9
1	2	5	9	6	8	4	3	7
4	7	6	3	8	2	5	9	1
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3	5	2	1	9	6	7	4	8
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Attorneys disagree on local Open Meetings Act question

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

As Wrangell residents may remember, the borough assembly held a vote early in June to appoint Ryan Howe to fill an empty assembly seat.

There was some question about this vote and whether or not it violated the Open Meetings Act, as assembly members chose their candidate via text message. Borough Manager Lisa Von Bargen said in a June 18 article for the Wrangell Sentinel that the assembly does not believe anything incorrect occurred, and that she ran the idea by the city's attorneys before moving forward with the vote. However, Juneau lawyer Joe Geldhof believes that this vote was, indeed, a violation of the Open Meetings Act. This opinion is not shared by borough attorney Joe Levesque, who defends the assembly's actions.

Geldhof said that, in his opinion, holding a vote to appoint an assembly member via text message was very inconsistent with the Open Meetings Act. The Open Meetings Act is a piece of state legislation that dictates how official business,



Several community members came together in the parking lot of the Wrangell Medical Center last Saturday to say hello to Long Term Care residents and caretakers. With the COVID-19 pandemic, residents of Long Term Care have not been able to have visitors. To remind the residents and workers that Wrangell still cares about them, people turned out to say hello from the parking lot.



Long Term Care visit

PHOTOS BY
CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Kiera Natt taking part in last weekend's socially-distanced visit to Long Term Care. She is seen here holding a sign thanking Long Term Care's workers.

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such as an assembly meeting, must be conducted in a transparent manner. An important part of the Open Meetings Act is a requirement that votes be made public.

"I generally know what's going on [in Wrangell] and I'm certainly familiar with the Open Meetings Act," Geldhof said.

There is a prescribed process for taking a meeting out of the public eye, Geldhof said. A borough assembly or city council, for example, must open their meetings publicly, where anybody can listen in or otherwise be involved. They can enter into an executive session, closed to the public, to discuss things like personnel matters, upcoming litigation, something directly involving a city employee, or other items of a sensitive nature. However, Geldhof said that if these items require a vote, the executive session has to be closed, and the public meeting reopened. The Open Meetings Act reads that votes must be taken in a manner that "... the public may know the vote of each person entitled to vote." Discussion about the merits of each candidate can be held in a closed session, but a vote must be done in the public eye.

Geldhof said that there was a simple fix the assembly could make to this matter of an alleged secret vote. All they

have to do, he said, is hold a vote in a future meeting to ratify their previous decision to appoint Howe. As long as this vote is done out in the open, Geldhof said that the matter should be fixed. Otherwise, he said that it would be up to a member of the public to take the matter to court if they felt strongly enough about the matter.

Borough Clerk Kim Lane said, in an interview on the evening of June 30, that there was some misunderstanding on what occurred when Howe was appointed. The assembly did not elect Howe to the position through the text message vote. That vote was simply to nominate him for consideration. The motion to appoint him was made publicly, in the open.

"They didn't appoint him by text," Lane said. "What they did was they made a nomination choice by text."

Lane also shared a memorandum from borough attorney Levesque, defending the city's actions, dated June 23. Levesque writes in this memorandum that the accusation of holding a secret vote in violation of the Open Meetings Act is untrue. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, he wrote, the assembly has been holding their meetings via web conference. This has led to the assembly

Continued on page 12

Town hall

Continued from page 1

ing education requirements," Radke said. "We went through the training records and we're kind of coming up with a plan to continue the continuing ed aspect of your careers, because we can all remember when you came on and started your career versus wherever you are today. Obviously your careers have changed, dynamics and career challenges have changed, and we need to change with that."

Radke said he also has several ideas to better integrate the police officers with the Wrangell community. Some ideas he discussed included "Coffee With A Cop" meetings, volunteering at the schools and at community events, and creating a joint mission statement between the police and the public, among other ideas. He also mentioned forming a community police committee to act as a sort of intermediary between the WPD and the public. COVID-19 has thrown a lot of these ideas out the window temporarily, he said, but he hopes they can be implemented once the pandemic passes. The police are part of the community, he said, and it is important for officers to get out of the daily grind of policing.

"I think you've got a very young, inexperienced department that's looking to learn and be an active member of the community," Radke said. "I think that says a lot about the community, about the people that you've hired."

Many people who spoke in the meeting expressed their support for the police department. Assembly Member Julie Decker said she really liked the ideas surrounding better integrating the police and the public. Residents Don and DJ McConachie also expressed their support for the Wrangell Police Department. Jenni Jackson, another resident, said that Wrangell should not divide itself over the topic of the police.

A common theme amongst several speakers in the town hall meeting was a rejection of the idea that the WPD was a

racist institution, a more common accusation made against police departments, generally, in recent months.

"There are no civil rights lawsuits to point to, there's not been experiences by anyone that I know of or racism by the Wrangell PD," Dale Parkinson said. "The argument I have heard is that since there is racism in Wrangell, that it follows there is institutional racism in the police department. That is totally ridiculous."

"I just wanted to say I don't see racism as an issue in Wrangell," Mike Lockabey said. "I've lived here, I've raised my family here for 40 years, 38 years. I don't see it. I think it's something we all have to be on guard of, especially in the hysteria of late, across the nation. I'm not saying it doesn't exist in other places, but I don't see it here. I've never really seen it. I see all backgrounds interacting together all the time."

Many members of the public agreed that they would like to see a closer relationship between the public and the police department. Several people had ideas of their own on how to improve policing in town, as well. Jackson said that she was more worried about Wrangell's drug problem than any racism. Resident Lupe Rogers proposed the WPD look into purchasing body cameras. That would be a good response to any allegations of racial bias, she said, as it would show the realities of any incident. Valerie Massie voiced her support for several ideas for community integration previously mentioned by Radke, such as "Coffee With a Cop," and shared some other ideas like implicit bias testing.

"As a resident, registered voter, employee, and human being in Wrangell, I am asking that WPD's anti-discrimination policies, training, and use of force policies are shared with the public," she said. "We are all capable of and carry biases that we learn over time, whether we know it or not. This does not make us bad people, but if we deny having them and don't try

Open Meetings

Continued from page 11

conducting its business differently than normal. One such way, he said, was by letting assembly members make nominations for an appointment to the assembly via text message, and not vocally. This decision was made to "level the playing field," Levesque writes, so that all assembly members could make simultaneous nominations and to streamline the nomination process. In short, as Lane said, the actual appointment of Howe was done publicly, but the nomination to consider him was done in a ballot vote by text. As such, there was no violation of the Open Meetings Act, and therefore nothing to correct.

"While there is no Alaska Supreme Court cases interpreting 'secret voting' in Alaska. A [sic] 1994 Alaska Attorney General Opinion states that voting by ballot is not in conflict with OMA," the memorandum reads. "The CBW Assembly, forced to meet by video conference, chose to use a ballot form for nominating a new Assembly member. Such a nomination was not intended to be the actual vote, it was a mechanism to use a more efficient method of nominating the new Assembly Member. It was not an attempt to circumvent OMA and the actual vote that took place in open session by individual roll call vote allowed the public to view how each Assembly member voted."

to fix them, they can become something worse. It's [Implicit bias testing] a free test, and it could be anyone who wanted it, not just officers ... The third idea I have is the 21-day racial equity challenge. This is a tool to grow our individual or community empathy. Like the implicit bias testing, it could be done as a group of officers and whoever else wanted to join. It lasts 21 days, like it says, and each day the activities take a few minutes to an hour."

Members of the public also took the opportunity to ask questions. Resident Eli Michael asked when members of the WPD received any diversity training. Radke answered that such training takes place in the police academy. The department does not currently have a policy for ongoing diversity training, but he said that it is a component of ongoing education they are looking into. He encouraged Michael, and others, to contact him to share ideas and thoughts on the subject.

Von Barga asked a question from resident Tyla Nelson, who did not attend the meeting personally. She wanted to know if the department had any protections in place for police officers who faced false allegations. Radke said that he encourages internal affairs complaints about his officers. He knows Wrangell police are doing

things right, but he likes to verify that. If a false accusation is made against an officer, he said that it is something that should be forwarded on to the district attorney for charging. Accountability is a two-way street, he said.

Radke also responded to questions regarding how the police department handles background checks, and whether or not they feel a need for increased transparency between the police and the public. The department handles background checks themselves, he said, but information gets verified by the Alaska Police Standards Council. When performing background checks on new hires, he said as an example, they will ask for items like internal affairs complaints among a checklist of other items.

On the topic of transparency, Radke said that in his opinion the Wrangell Police Department is very open, but that there is always room for improvement.

"I think we're doing good with it, we can always improve on it," he said. "That's one reason when I talked to the city manager, the community police committee I think might be that intermediate step to open that up, and let's see where that evolves, and let's see the citizen participation we get from there."

Vivian Faith Prescott had a question on the topic of qualified immunity, and whether or not the Wrangell Police Department was protected by it. This was asked through Von Barga. Radke confirmed that was indeed the case, and explained what qualified immunity is a judicial document that protects government officials from being personally liable for Constitutional violations. As an example, when a police officer uses force against a suspect, within proper standards, that officer is protected from liability.

Prescott also asked, through Von Barga, what the WPD was doing to address domestic violence. Radke said that they are looking into creating a shelter or safe home locally, in Wrangell. His department does not have a direct program to address domestic violence cases, he said, but they have been making several domestic violence arrests over the past six months. Radke also said that training to respond to domestic violence cases is part of ongoing training that he would like to implement in the future.

Lastly, Prescott wanted to know if Wrangell police officers received any education on Tlingit culture. This is not the case, Radke said, but it is something he would be happy to look into.

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