



Wrangell, Alaska
June 12, 2024

WRANGELL SENTINEL

Volume 122, Number 24

Oldest Continuously Published Newspaper in Alaska

12 Pages \$1.50

Manager tells assembly it's time to reduce spending

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Sales tax revenues came in under projections for the first three months of the year, an indication of a weakening economy and a worrisome sign for the community, Borough Manager Mason Villarma said last week.

"We're at that point we're going to have to trim things down," he told the assembly at a budget work session Wednesday, June 5.

Mayor Patty Gilbert called the manager's draft spending plan "the leanest budget" she has seen.

In addition to proposing laying off two of the police department's seven-member force of certified officers, Villarma's draft budget would affect the Parks and Recreation Department.

"People are going to see a reduction in hours, a reduction in swims" as a result of reduced staff hours, Lucy

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PHOTO BY BRIAN WALLACE / SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

Celebration dancers

Kaysano Callahan was among the Kaachxan.áak'w dance group who performed at Celebration on Friday, June 7, in Juneau. Kaysano is the son of Kevin and Pale Callahan, a Naanya.aayi clan leader in Wrangell. Turn to Page 6 for the story about the Wrangell dancers at the statewide celebration of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian dance and culture.

Paddle to Celebration provides a source of deeper connection

By BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

"Good morning Paddle to Celebration 2024! It's time to get up!" Jim Zeller's booming voice echoed through the forest. It was 4:30 a.m. and rain pattered the roof of my tent on Read Island. I could hear people in nearby tents begin to stir, along with the faint snoring of those that hadn't been roused by Zeller.

We were a couple days into our seven-day canoe journey from Wrangell to Juneau, where we would arrive for Celebration, the biennial gathering of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian people.

The paddle began in the early 2000s as a way to celebrate and strengthen the traditional mode of travel and aspect of Alaska Native culture. Over the past two decades, more and more canoes



PHOTO BY BECCA CLARK / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Paddlers from Anchorage made their way past cruise ships docked in downtown Juneau before their landing on June 4 in advance of the start of Celebration.

and communities joined the journey. On June 4, 11 canoes landed in downtown Juneau and 11 landed at Auke Bay — the largest number of canoes participating in the unofficial kickoff to Celebration yet.

Close to 70 people departed from Wrangell on May 29 in a total of six canoes — three cedar dugout canoes from Kasaan and three fiberglass canoes that included veterans, the One People Canoe Society and a canoe with Wrangell paddlers plus two from Petersburg. To ensure safety, three support vessels assisted the canoes.

On the morning of the third day, after camping out near Hobart Bay and after almost two straight days of rain and of feeling damp and chilled, the sun

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Layoffs would cut overnight hours at police department

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The draft budget before the borough assembly includes eliminating two positions from Wrangell's seven-member force of certified police officers.

The spending plan for the fiscal year that starts July 1, Borough Manager Mason Villarma said, is constrained by flat property tax revenues, a decline in sales tax receipts, a long list of deferred maintenance projects and declining reserve funds.

The layoffs, proposed for Sept. 30, would result in the department pulling back from 24-hour coverage, Villarma explained at a borough assembly budget work session June 5.

Over the past year, he said, the department has received only two calls between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., advising the assembly to "look at the call log in terms of tax dollars."

Villarma also tied the proposal for a smaller police force to the town's shrinking population. The 1990 federal census counted about 2,500 people in Wrangell, but that number has been steadily dropping, with the latest state estimate at 2,039 residents last year.

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Biologist will explain Alaska Natives' connection with prehistoric discovery

By MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

A University at Buffalo, New York, professor will talk about the genetic connection between human remains thousands of years old discovered in a cave near Wrangell and Alaska Natives in the area today.

The presentation, sponsored by the Wrangell Cooperative Association and the U.S. Forest Service, will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 13, at the Nolan Center. The event will be free to the public.

Evolutionary biologist Charlotte Lindqvist of the university's department of biological sciences is coming to Wrangell for the presentation. "I will talk about some of our DNA research of bones that have been discovered in caves in Southeast Alaska, including caves near Wrangell, particularly our findings from bones of a human and a dog found in the same

cave," she said in an email last week.

Lindqvist said she has been performing genetic analyses of bones found in caves in Southeast Alaska for more than a decade. According to a paper published last year in the journal *iScience*, of which she was the senior author with other collaborators (including WCA tribal administrator Esther Aaltséen Reese), recent genetic analysis of a bone fragment discovered about two decades earlier in Lawyer's Cave near Wrangell revealed that it was from a humerus (upper arm bone) of a 3,000-year-old young woman.

The cave is on the mainland, across Blake Channel from Wrangell Island.

"Based on new technologies that were not available when the bones were originally found about 20 years ago, we found a genetic

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Senior Center Menu

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

Thursday, June 13

Ham sandwich, salad, fruit with cottage cheese.
Closed for in-house dining. Bus not available.

Friday, June 14

Shelf-stable meal available.
Closed for in-house dining. Bus available.

Monday, June 17

Shelf-stable meal
delivered on Friday, June 14

Tuesday, June 18

Creole pork steaks, carrots,
honey orange salad, rice

Wednesday, June 19

Chef salad with egg, cheese and ham,
tomato soup, roll, fruit

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.



ALASKA AIRLINES CLUB 49 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

COMMUNITY POTLUCK 6 p.m. Fridays through August at the sheltered site on Nemo Point Road. All are welcome.

ROLL ON THE ROCK roller skating 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturdays at the TouchPoint Ministries rink on Bennett Street. Children 9 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Skaters must complete a registration form. \$5 per person.

MUSKEG MEADOWS Elks Father's Day 9-hole best-ball tournament Saturday, June 15. Play starts at 10 a.m., register by 9:30 a.m.

COMMUNITY MARKET 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 15, at the Nolan Center. \$10 a table for vendors. Register with jarnold@wrangell.com or awade@wrangell.com, or call 907-874-3770.

NOLAN CENTER THEATER "IF," rated PG, at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 14-15, and 4 p.m. Sunday, June 16. The animation comedy drama runs 1 hour and 44 minutes; tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under age 14. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

"THE INCREDIBLES" movie 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 18, at the Nolan Center. Free. Presented by Island of Faith Lutheran Church as part of its retro-movie program. The concession stand will be open.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM FOR KIDS at the Irene Ingle Public Library open to children entering kindergarten through ninth grade in the fall. Register at the library by June 29. The reading program runs 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.

CAMP LORRAINE, a Christian summer camp for kids between the ages of 8 to 16, is planned for June 16-23. The camp is located on Vank Island. The cost is \$199. Applications available at www.alaskacamps.org.

PATS LAKE FAMILY FISHING DAY, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and WCA Earth Branch, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 22. Free outdoor fun for the family, including fishing, games and crafts. Lunch and prizes courtesy of Stikine Sportsmen Association. Some fishing gear and personal flotation jackets may be available for use onsite.

TOUCH A TRUCK 1 to 2 p.m. with horns welcome, and 2 to 3 p.m. with no horns, Sunday, June 23, at the parking lot by Volunteer Park. Join the fun and come check out all the big rigs! All ages welcome. Sponsored by Parks and Recreation.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL backpacks now available for tribal youth; applications accepted through July 7. Tlingit and Haida provides backpacks in partnership with Southeast Alaska village tribes. Children must be Alaska Native and/or American Indian, between the age of preschool to grade 12, and live in the Tlingit and Haida service area. Apply online: www.tinyurl.com/TH24B2SApp. For more information, call 907-463-7158.

FOURTH of JULY PIE SALE hosted by Beta Sigma Phi is seeking donations of homemade pies for their Fourth of July pie booth. Funds raised will go to their charitable activities. For more information, contact Alice Rooney at 907-305-0007.

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

- **SWIM LESSONS** Monday-Friday starting June 17. Multiple two-week sessions with variable times available. Contact Parks and Rec for more details. Ages 5-12. \$40 fee. Registration required.
- **FOREST EXPLORERS** 10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays through Aug. 6 with Clarie Froehlich of the U.S. Forest Service. For ages 7-13; ages 6 and under must be accompanied by a guardian 14 or older. Meet at Volunteer Park. \$50 fee. Registration required.
- **'NESSE' for ADULTS** 5:30 to 7 p.m. Friday, June 14. No registration required. \$5 per person. For ages 18 and up.

Ferry Schedule

Northbound

Sunday, June 16

Kennicott, 7:45 p.m.

Sunday, June 23

Kennicott, 2:15 p.m.

Sunday, June 30

Kennicott, 6:45 p.m.

Sunday, July 7

Kennicott, 3 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, June 19

Kennicott, 4:45 a.m.

Wednesday, June 26

Kennicott, 5 a.m.

Wednesday, July 3

Kennicott, 4 a.m.

Wednesday, July 10

Kennicott, 4 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
June 12	05:14	13.5	06:35	13.0	11:42	1.5
June 13	06:11	12.4	07:28	13.1	00:09	5.7	12:29	2.4
June 14	07:21	11.6	08:20	13.5	01:14	5.4	01:20	3.2
June 15	08:36	11.3	09:09	14.1	02:21	4.7	02:14	3.8
June 16	09:44	11.5	09:55	14.7	03:26	3.7	03:09	4.3
June 17	10:43	12.0	10:37	15.3	04:23	2.5	04:04	4.5
June 18	11:36	12.5	11:19	15.8	05:12	1.3	04:56	4.6

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

June 12, 1924

About three months ago, the attention of the town council was called to the fact that transient peddlers and house-to-house canvassers, who pay no taxes nor contribute in any other tangible way to the growth and welfare of the town, are getting away with good Wrangell dollars that ought to remain in Wrangell. The mayor appointed a committee to draft an ordinance that would require itinerant peddlers to pay well for the privilege of calling on the citizens of Wrangell. The ordinance calls for a license fee of \$300 a week or fraction thereof for the privilege of canvassing in the town. The ordinance also deals with

traveling shows, circuses, convert troupes, itinerant perpetrators of games of chance, clairvoyants and all other mediums.

June 10, 1949

The Common Council of the Town of Wrangell met at City Hall last night with Mayor George Gunderson presiding. Fireworks were a topic for much discussion, especially after the serious violations of the fireworks ordinance in Wrangell last year. The city clerk was instructed to have the ordinance printed and Chief of Police C. P. MacCreary to see that it is rigidly enforced. The council heard a complete report on sewer construction and

learned what needed work will be next. After a lengthy discussion the council voted to buy more clay sewer pipe for further work. A discussion was held on the feasibility of having shrimp canneries dump their shells off the bluff out Zimovia Highway, but no action was taken as it was felt a dump that far out of town was impractical.

June 14, 1974

Property owners may face a six-mill increase in the tax levy - the first increase since 1969 - if a proposed city budget for fiscal 1974-75 is approved. The proposed \$1,578,992 operating budget is an increase of \$251,137 over the past year. Wrangell operates on a fiscal

year from July 1 through June 30. The city manager said his proposed budget is based on a six-mill increase in the tax levy, but that it might be possible to reduce the increase by about 3.5 mills. In order to reduce the levy, the city council and voters would have to approve a special general obligation bond issue for \$40,000. The money would be earmarked to pay part of the library construction cost, thus freeing for the general operating budget some federal revenue-sharing funds that were designated for the library.

June 10, 1999

The circus came to Wrangell this week with ponies, peanuts, donkeys and dogs, and almost

everyone young of heart rushed to see it. The Starr Brothers Family Circus, sponsored locally by the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce, had a troupe of 30 and entertained a full crowd for the Tuesday evening performances. Set up on the end of the track field, colorful flags flapped in the wind high above the circus tent, and piles of hay and several RVs and campers marked the temporary homes of the performers. Although there were no elephants, tigers or bears (not even outside), no one missed them. The traditional-style circus offered everything most circus fans could imagine even before the acts began.

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WEEKLY FARE SALES



FREIGHT FOR LESS

Pessimism shows up in survey of Wrangell businesses

By **LARRY PERSILY**
Sentinel writer

Wrangell is among the more pessimistic towns in this year's annual business survey conducted of Southeast communities. About half of the 35 Wrangell business leaders who responded to the survey had a negative view of the town's economic outlook, and almost one-third expected they would need to cut jobs this year.

None of that surprises Kate Thomas, the borough's economic development director.

"Our downtown district is not doing as well as it has in the past," she said in an interview Thursday, June 6. Residents are spending more money online and less locally, she said. The loss of several thousand potential cruise ship visitors this summer due to cancellations and a cruise line bankruptcy is adding to the gloomier business attitude.

"We have experienced some financial heartburn," Thomas said.

She has been talking with business owners, and "Wrangell definitely has a more pessimistic outlook."

The borough's Economic Development Board reviewed the survey results at its June 6 meeting.

The April survey of 440 business owners and managers throughout Southeast, conducted annually for the Southeast Conference, found the most optimism in

the popular cruise ship destinations of Ketchikan, Skagway and Hoonah.

Almost half of the Hoonah businesses that responded to the survey conducted by Juneau-based Rain Coast Data said they expect to add employees over the next 12 months.

Huna Totem Corp., the Native corporation for the community of about 900 people, 20 years ago developed a cruise ship destination at Icy Strait Point, near a restored century-old salmon cannery, about a mile north of the state ferry terminal. The first ship docked in 2004; several hundred thousand cruise passengers a year visit Hoonah, with a zipline, hiking trails, retail shops and other attractions at Icy Strait Point.

The loss of cruise ship passengers — and their spending — in Wrangell this summer will hit borough finances, too. Sales tax revenues go toward the schools and borough services. "There's certainly some concern for us," Borough Manager Mason Villarma said at an assembly work session June 5 on the budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1.

"Wrangell has not fully adopted or endorsed a cruise identity," Thomas said.

Community surveys have indicated a strong preference to avoid attracting an overwhelming number of large ships and visitor traffic, with residents preferring to maintain a working waterfront

rather than a tourist-dominated waterfront district.

But with possibly 25,000 cruise ship passengers this summer, Wrangell is far below the million-plus of Juneau, Ketchikan and Skagway, the half-million-plus of Sitka — even far less than the estimated 95,000 of Haines, which has about the same population as Wrangell.

Whether its visitors or new businesses, Wrangell needs to attract more outside money to town, Thomas explained. "It is important for us to be welcoming and warm to outside businesses."

Investment from out of town can generate sales tax revenues, create jobs and put more children into the schools, she said.

New money, as it is called, also can help with community fundraising efforts, Thomas said. "Businesses (in town) aren't doing that well," with less ability to donate to community fundraising efforts. "We're saturated," she said.

The borough is stepping up its efforts to attract interest in the former 6-Mile mill property, which the municipality purchased in 2022 for \$2.5 million. Thomas said it is a prime business opportunity waiting for an investor.

"Historically, Wrangell has relied on the state and federal governments" for grants, she said, emphasizing that the

town needs to attract private investment to generate more economic activity.

Among the hurdles, however, is a dwindling supply of working-age residents as Wrangell grows older — the average age in town is 12 years older than the statewide average — and an inadequate supply of housing. Wrangell is not alone in Southeast with either problem.

Half of the people who responded to the Southeast Conference survey said recruiting and retaining new workers is critically important. "This is most strongly expressed by Juneau, Wrangell, Petersburg and Ketchikan businesses leaders, where three-fifths of respondents say the need to attract young professionals over the next five years is critical," the Rain Coast Data report said.

Just as many said housing is among their biggest problems. "Southeast business leaders continue to identify housing as the top obstacle to economic development ... with 61% of business leaders saying it is critically important to focus on housing over the next five years."

Wrangell's Economic Development Department said it plans to set up a series of focus group discussions to hear from businesses, intended to gain "a deeper understanding of the specific needs, challenges and opportunities ... for developing effective strategies to support and accelerate business and industry growth."

Schools readvertise counselor job after remote applicant withdraws

By **MARK C. ROBINSON**
Sentinel reporter

The school district is readvertising for a full-time, in-person counselor to serve Wrangell's 260 students starting in August.

Amid pushback from faculty and at least one board member at last month's school board meeting, the previously selected out-of-town applicant withdrew her bid to work as a remote K-12 counselor for the coming school year.

The district administration last month proposed a contract for remote services with Lindsay Pinkelman, who runs Find a Way Consulting, based in Delta Junction, 95 miles southeast of Fairbanks.

Though the board had scheduled a public hearing on the contract for its June 3 meeting, the hearing was canceled when the applicant decided to withdraw.

Schools Superintendent Bill Burr confirmed on June 5 that Pinkelman was aware of the concerns raised at the previous meeting, which led to her decision to withdraw. "Local support is an important factor," he said. "She needs to have a good relationship with the school and the staff. It was going to

make it very difficult if the classroom support was not there."

Meanwhile, the counselor job remains open, and Burr said there was already a new applicant as of June 3 while another had expressed interest. "It's still posted, so we will look at other candidates."

Julie Williams resigned as counselor at the end of the spring term after two years in the job.

Teachers Mikki Angerman, Heather Howe, Laura Davies and her husband Winston Davies all spoke at the May 20 school board meeting to express their concerns and objections to remote counseling services, citing various reasons, including the need for in-person counseling, lack of involvement from faculty and staff in the hiring process, as well as concern that the duties normally performed by an in-person counselor that would fall to other staff members.

School board member and clinical psychologist John DeRuyter, who had stated previously that he could not support virtual counseling, said after the June 3 board meeting: "In order to have effective counseling, you have to connect, and you can't do that through video."

Police layoffs

Continued from page 1

"We've lost 600 people," Assembly Member David Powell said. "You've got to scale down your departments."

He added, "This is a hard time for our city."

Reducing payroll by two full-time officers would save almost \$160,000 for the nine months of the fiscal year if the layoffs occur Sept. 30, one quarter into the fiscal year. With the reduction, the department's budget for the year would total just under \$1.1 million, of which almost 80% is personnel costs.

"This is probably the hardest part of the budget for me," Villarma told the assembly.

Assembly members can propose amendments to the

budget, which will come before the body for discussion and adoption at the June 25 meeting. No one asked any significant questions about the layoffs at the June 5 work session.

The police department budget is the largest single expenditure in the proposed spending plan for the next fiscal year. With the cut in personnel, it's about 15% of the borough's overall general fund operating budget of \$7.167 million.

The borough has hired a new police chief to replace Tom Radke, who retired in April, and the manager said he plans to discuss with the new chief the timing of the reduction and which two officers would be laid off.

Gene Meek, the finalist for the police chief job, was in town for a community open house on Friday, June 7. Villarma later announced he had hired Meek for the job.

Regardless of the staffing level for officers, the dispatch service will continue to operate 24 hours a day, ensuring that any emergency calls are answered and, if needed, an officer called out to respond, Villarma explained in an interview the day after the assembly meeting.

ROYALTY MENU

	<i>Alisha for Queen</i>	<i>Kayla for Queen</i>
June 13 Thursday	L: Marilyn's famous shrimp salad, roll and more shrimp	L: Sloppy Joes
June 14 Friday	L: Sammy's famous chicken little and apple pies	L: Daily Menu Late night menu
June 15 Saturday	10:30 a.m. Belgian waffles with toppings L: 'The Happy Couple' Mac and cheeseburger	B: Cap'n Crunch french toast Late night menu
June 16 Sunday	11 a.m. Cinnamon Rolls	B: Biscuits and gravy D: Tri tip and fried shrimp
June 17 Monday	L: Kids day, noodles with red or white sauce	Daily Menu D: Lasagna take and bake
June 18 Tuesday	To be determined	L: Loaded nachos
June 19 Wednesday	L: John Taylor's ribs with rice	No booth activity

Daily lunch menu available unless otherwise noted.

Menu is subject to change.

B = Brunch 10 am to 1 pm
L = Lunch 11 am to 2 pm
D = Dinner 5 to 7 pm
Late night = 10 p.m. to midnight.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Presidential election campaign painfully long

BY LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

There is nothing longer in America than a presidential election campaign. And that is not a good thing.

A long vacation is enjoyable. Long summers are a treat. Reuniting with long-lost friends is special. But long campaigns are becoming indescribably painful. Just think of an Excedrin headache that lasts all year for more than 240 million eligible voters. It could be like the supply-chain shortages of the pandemic, with people clearing out store shelves and grabbing for the last bottle of headache medicine.

Still not convinced how miserable the long campaign will be? Think of getting a shot and then the nurse leaves the room with the needle stuck in your arm, and all you can watch on the TV in the exam room is a nonstop loop of campaign ads.

It's not like those ads say anything useful. Facts take a back seat to emotional pleas, often misleading, crafted to push the hot buttons and avoid honest discussion of real issues.

It's easier to wrap your fork around slippery long spaghetti than it is to wrap your head around the constant political accusations, gamesmanship and misleading social media posts of a long campaign. At least the spaghetti, as messy as it is, doesn't make you ill. And you can wash the sauce out of your shirt; politics don't clean up that easy.

The 2024 presidential race started so long ago that it's now into its second baseball season and will be into another football season before voters go to the polls. If you're a sports fan, you know that is a long time. And if you don't like sports, you probably wish that campaigns and the football season were shorter.

Maybe that's the answer to long campaigns:

Treat them like sports.

Major League Baseball team owners realized the games were dragging on far too long. You could clean your garage, wash the windows, weed the biggest lawn in town and tutor your kid in medieval literature and the baseball game still wouldn't be over.

Baseball was losing fans who were losing patience, which meant the teams were losing revenue. So the owners last year instituted new rules to speed up games, including a clock on pitchers and batters to move quicker. It worked; the games are shorter. Now fans are able to stay awake to see who won.

Just think how much shorter presidential campaigns would be if candidates, for example, could not change their position on issues after the first day? Or if they were limited to three appeals per campaign of allegedly unfair news media coverage? Or limited in how many relief players they could substitute in at campaign events, which allows them to play every position on the field at the same time, dragging out the game?

Maybe some rules to cut down on time-wasting denials? Such as setting up a system for candidates to ask for an instant replay review when they — or their opponent — claim they were misquoted, misunderstood or mistaken. Just like football, if a candidate wins a replay, they are not charged a timeout. But if they lose on review, they would need to stop all campaigning for 24 hours.

The courts might not let stand an actual time limit on political campaigns, not wanting to infringe on anyone's rights to free speech. But a campaign pitch clock would be a lot like a pitcher's clock in a baseball game, and no one has said that is unconstitutional.

EDITORIAL

Our old town needs new money

Wrangell has a lot of positives.

It's a caring community that can pull together a potluck and fill the tables to overflow. Residents support each other in times of loss without needing to be asked. People truly believe in helping their neighbors, regardless of their neighbors' politics.

Fundraisers are a way of life in Wrangell — and a necessity. School sports teams, youth groups, student activities, nonprofit organizations and others are always in need of money, frequently asking businesses to donate goods, services or cash to worthy causes.

And what is more frequent in Wrangell than a fundraising raffle. If the town were to designate an official flower, it could be the colorful raffle ticket. They grow like wildflowers and can be beautiful when you pick a winner.

The town may live for salmon fishing and sunny days, but it survives on fundraising.

However, even in such a caring town, there is a limit to how much money people and businesses can give to community groups, how many raffle tickets they can buy, how many goods and services they can donate for auctions.

And yet it seems the fundraising need is growing. A new group, the Wrangell Athletic Club, is working to raise about \$30,000 a year to cover the costs of sending student athletes to state tournaments. The school district cannot afford to pay for travel and is looking to the community to raise the money.

Even the chamber of commerce has stepped up its fundraising to put on the Fourth of July celebration, asking businesses, families and individuals to sponsor events. The chamber years ago could raise enough from selling raffle tickets and pull-tabs to cover expenses, but those days are past. It needs more community donations.

And the borough assembly is discussing whether to continue its annual contributions to the senior center, chamber and radio station. The municipal budget is tight, sales tax revenues have taken a downturn, the list of maintenance work on old facilities is long and costly, and the schools need more money. What the borough doesn't cover will put more pressure on fundraisers.

Community groups and elected officials should ask if Wrangell is maxing out on what it can raise.

The town needs more new money, not just more donations from a shrinking and older population. New money would mean new customers for businesses, more dollars circulating around town.

Making that happen will not be easy. Residents will need to accept, even encourage, more cruise ships. The borough and private businesses will need to invest in the necessities and amenities to attract tourists, to create new jobs and to bring in new residents to fill the jobs. Just as it did with buying the 6-Mile mill property and selling the former hospital property at a discounted price, the borough will need to take risks and look for a long payback.

Wrangell doesn't really have a choice. The option is to rely on state and federal grants — and raffle tickets.

- Wrangell Sentinel

GUEST OPINION

Wrangell should move barge ramp to make room for tourism

BY FRANK H. MURKOWSKI

We have a great opportunity before us. Let's change our visitors' first impression of Wrangell.

Currently, the view is of old containers piled high. Not only do they block the visitors' view of the downtown area, but the vans are surrounded with muddy water, which is very unattractive. I don't believe the current container location fits in with the welcome intended by the community, evident by the children selling garnets and other trinkets on the pier.

The borough has been successful in acquiring the former 6-Mile mill site. This location has been proposed for some time as a terminal for an industrial park. The borough should be moving ahead with a transition plan, working with the barge line operators to mutually seek a solution and a move.

The first step, of course, is establishing the new barge terminal. It could be developed either by the transfer company or the borough. The borough could cover the development costs with a loan program where user fees would repay the loan over time.

Our economy is faced with a harsh reality. No longer do we have a timber industry, and commercial fishing is subject to escapement closures and we're seeing seafood processors cut back their operations amid low prices. Mining, while potentially attractive, is fraught with bureaucratic and environmental roadblocks because most of our Southeast land mass is under federal jurisdiction.

Our current, limited payroll in Wrangell includes the ship repair yard, our new hospital, state and local government and the Trident Seafoods plant.

Other areas in Southeast that are expanding to accommodate tourists include docks in Sitka, Klawock and Hoonah, and to the westward area Whittier. So where does our community fit in?

We are attractive to the smaller ships. I would suggest we consider an alteration of the current downtown dock, with a ramp to the southern end toward the museum down to a floating dock extending to the museum area. This would provide a convenient accommodation for smaller cruise ships and Stikine River jet boats.

We have seen similar examples in other Alaska ports as well as in Seattle. Tourism must be recognized as the only identifiable area of growth and expansion and should be enthusiastically accepted by the community.

The reason is a practical

Oldest continuously published paper in Alaska



ESTABLISHED NOVEMBER 20, 1902
Published weekly by: Good Journalism LLC
PO Box 798, Wrangell, AK 99929
Phone: 907-874-2301

POSTMASTER: send address changes to Wrangell Sentinel, P.O. Box 798, Wrangell, AK 99929

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Wrangell Sentinel (USPS 626-480) is published weekly except the third week of July and the week after Christmas by Wrangell Sentinel, 205 Front St., Wrangell, AK 99929. Periodicals postage paid at Wrangell, AK.
Phone: 907-874-2301; Email: wrgsent@gmail.com; Website www.wrangellsentinel.com. ©Copyright 2022.

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Wrangell \$50
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First Class..... \$110
Online-only subscription.....\$40

Draft budget overview

Continued from page 1

Robinson, Parks and Recreation director, told the assembly. "We're just going to have to bite the bullet. ... We're definitely going to see a reduction in services."

The reduced staff availability also would result in "less overall facility hours" at the community center, she said.

The Parks and Recreation budget is heavily subsidized by the borough general fund, and Villarma has proposed cutting that appropriation for the fiscal year that starts July 1. This year's subsidy is estimated at \$640,000, with \$555,000 in the manager's draft budget for the next fiscal year.

The borough contribution covers about three-quarters of the Parks and Recreation budget. User fees cover about 10%.

The four employees at Parks and Recreation manage and maintain the community center, swimming pool, several parks and other programs.

The Nolan Center is the other municipally operated facility largely dependent on the borough to cover much of its spending. The proposed budget would provide almost \$250,000 in borough funding for the Nolan Center and museum next year, just over half of the facility's operating budget.

About one-third of the money to run the building and its programs comes from admission fees to the museum, rentals of the building for special events, museum gift shop sales and concession sales at movies.

In addition to tight revenues, the borough is trying to manage a large and costly backlog of deferred maintenance projects, Villarma said. "We need to take care of what we have."

The borough has to start paying off debt on the millions of dollars it borrowed to build a new water treatment plant, and it could need to borrow more money to replace the roof and siding on the water- and rot-damaged Public Safety Building.

Repairing or replacing everything that is needed at the building could cost as much as \$15 million, but the borough plans to start with just the roof and siding to reduce the cost.

The draft budget also includes about \$1.5 million in borough funds in total for new underground utilities and a new road surface on McKinnon Street, to supplement a federal grant for a new roof at the middle school, expand the cemetery and replace the underground fuel tank at the Public Safety Building.

Even with a pared-down projects list, the borough needs to draw about \$1 million out of its reserves, Villarma told the assembly.

"We just didn't do the maintenance" that was needed over the years, he said, which merely postponed paying the bills.

The school district also is drawing down its reserves to balance its budget, with Villarma commenting that pulling out of savings is not sustainable for either the borough or the schools.

The assembly can consider amendments to the budget before it votes on the spending plan at its June 25 meeting.

Sales tax and property tax revenues provide about 70% of the general fund operating budget, with service fees, grants, earnings on the borough's savings and state payments for the jail covering the rest.

Sales tax receipts were down for the first three months of this year "in a pretty significant way," Villarma said. The draft budget projects that sales tax revenues for the next fiscal year will be \$175,000 less than this year.

Borough staff plans to look through the numbers to determine where the drop in sales is occurring.

One area of concern among Front Street businesses, the manager said, is the erosion of cruise ship passengers this summer due to canceled sailings and the bankruptcy of one operator that shut down.

Instead of as many as 30,000 cruise visitors, the latest schedule from the Economic Development Department shows a maximum of 25,000 passengers this summer.

"There's certainly some concern" about how the lower number will cut into sales taxes, Villarma said.

There was a lot of talk at the June 5 assembly work session about going after more state and federal grants for projects and programs, lessening the burden on borough funds. However, the mayor said, "we can't operate a city on grants" which are uncertain and fluctuate.

Assembly may stop donations to radio, chamber, senior center

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

In addition to focusing on big-dollar issues, assembly members at last week's budget work session discussed a collective \$50,000 question: Whether the borough should contribute money to KSTK radio, the chamber of commerce and the senior center.

The issue of improving playgrounds also came up toward the end of the meeting.

Unlike recent years when the borough assembly appropriated cash for the radio station, chamber and senior center, the draft budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1 does not include any such direct payments.

Borough Manager Mason Villarma's proposal is to provide free utilities to the three nonprofits, rather than cash. "That'll be our contribution," he told the assembly.

The borough contribution to the senior center last year was \$13,000; funding for the chamber has been around \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year; and KSTK requested \$12,500 in the new budget.

With a tight municipal budget, weakening sales tax revenues and a sizable list of maintenance and replacement projects in need of funding, Villarma said he recommends donating free utilities instead of money to the nonprofits.

"I don't feel we should allocate property tax and sales tax money" to community programs that taxpayers could contribute to on their own, if they want, he said.

The decision is up to the assembly, which will take up the budget and consider any amendments at its June 25 meeting.

Separate from any contribution, the borough pays KSTK \$7,120 a year to broadcast assembly meetings, Borough Clerk Kim Lane pointed out.

Assembly Member David Powell said he agreed with Villarma's recommendations. "I can't see giving to nonprofits," Powell said, asking why the borough would donate to some and not others.

"I understand what KSTK does for us," providing community service announcements, particularly in emergencies, he said, and he acknowledges that the chamber works to boost spending in town, which adds to sales tax revenues. But he still opposes the borough writing checks to the nonprofits.

The borough's role in the senior center is that it owns the building and is responsible for maintain-

ing the structure. Catholic Community Service operates the lunches, transit bus and other programs at the center, and pays the staff.

Powell was among the more vocal assembly members in expressing his concerns about contributing public funds to nonprofits amid a weak economy, a continued population loss and limited borough finances.

The chamber, too, is trying to manage with a tight budget, and is looking to solicit more sponsorships to put on Fourth of July events since it cannot afford to do it with its own fundraising.

Assembly Member Jim DeBord advocated for more funding to improve the community's rundown playgrounds. There is no money in the draft budget specifically for playground work.

Deteriorating playgrounds has been a long-standing issue in the community.

Rather than rely on tax dollars, Powell suggested: "They can get grants for parks." He also suggested that park advocates talk with the Wrangell Cooperative Association to determine if tribal grants are available.

DeBord spoke about how playgrounds are an indication of a community's effort to attract new, younger residents, particularly families.

Wrangell is losing population, and school enrollment has not recovered to pre-pandemic numbers. While senior citizens are exempt from borough sales tax, and under state law are exempt from much of the property tax on their home, the community should pay attention to what younger families need too, DeBord said.

Assembly members briefly discussed some ideas to increase revenues, such as eliminating one of the two tax-free days for goods and services bought in town.

A borough analysis in April determined that each tax-free day costs the municipal treasury \$60,000 to \$70,000 in lost sales tax revenue.

Changing or eliminating the tax-free days would require an ordinance and is not part of the budget.

Members also discussed the option of raising the cap at which sales tax shuts off on individual purchases. Currently, the tax stops at a \$3,000 purchase. Powell said making more of each purchase subject to tax would drive away shoppers.

Changing the cap would require putting the question before voters in an election, the borough clerk pointed out.

Granddaughter wins Fourth of July art contest

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

A Talkeetna high school student who comes to Wrangell for the Fourth of July most every year to visit family is the winner of this year's chamber of commerce competition to design an official logo for the holiday celebration.

Kyla McChargue said her winning design, with boats and planes converging on Wrangell, is intended to show everyone coming to town for the Fourth.

"I just wanted to show that even if you don't live in Wrangell ... it's home," she said last week.

Kyla, 15, who will be a sophomore this fall at Susitna Valley Junior/Senior High School, is the daughter of Rob and Dena McChargue, of Talkeetna, and the granddaughter of Wrangell's Jonna and Curt Kautz. In addition, Wrangell's Kitty Angerman "is practically my aunt," Kyla said. Angerman, who is also an artist, "was my inspiration."

She was not expecting to win the design contest. "I prefer writing over art," Kyla explained, adding, "My little sister (Maggie) is a lot more artistic than I am."

In addition to showing planes



Kyla McChargue, 15, of Talkeetna, whose grandparents live in Wrangell, designed this year's logo for Wrangell's Fourth of July celebration.

and boats, her artwork includes the line: "Home where we belong!"

The Fourth is like a family reunion. "The Fourth of July is really special for our family," said Dena McChargue.

Her brother, Curty Kautz and his family, who live in Juneau, come to town so that he can compete in the boat races, and her sister, Tammie Kirschner and her family, also make the trip. "(We

all try to reunite annually in Wrangell for the Fourth."

Living in Wrangell as a teen, then Dena Kautz won the 2001 royalty contest for selling the most fundraising raffle tickets for the Fourth.

Kyla said she has made every Fourth, except for a couple of COVID years. The best part of coming to town is seeing family and friends, she said. "I really like the burgers."

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Canoe journey

Continued from page 1

emerged, its heat warming our faces.

The mood of the group lifted almost instantly as we ate breakfast, and as if on cue, a rainbow appeared. When we started to paddle, I took my rain jacket off for the first time in three days.

While we moved north, we constantly scanned the shore for deer, moose, bears and goats up the mountain slopes. Countless whales, seals, sea lions and porpoises were spotted along the way, each as exciting as the last.

The journey was a way to reconnect with the land, water and ancestors. As we cooked cubes of venison over the fire from a deer that had been shot earlier that morning, Yarrow Vaara, one of the organizers of the journey, explained how eating the meat helped form a deeper connection with the land. This deer had been nourished by the water and the land we found ourselves on.

Avery Herrman-Sakamoto of Petersburg spoke of the personal connections she formed on the journey. She spent a lot of time along the way remembering her dad, who passed away from cancer four years ago and whose ashes she wore on a necklace. The canoe journey was something her father would have loved, she said.

The journey also gave her the opportunity to connect with her heritage on her own. She shared that the journey was one of the first times that she was participating in cultural activities without other family members present.

She told me about her experience on the journey as we took in the views of Sumdum Glacier near Tracy Arm, the land

her clan is from. During a rare sunny moment, clouds drifted past the tall mountains and gave us glimpses of the glacier as we spoke. Icebergs floated nearby and the water itself was the clearest we had seen on the journey so far.

We spent two nights and an entire day at the campsite near Sumdum Glacier, which provided a rest day everyone needed. During the downtime, some paddlers ventured closer to the icebergs in a canoe, bringing a chunk of ice back to camp as a souvenir. Other canoers went out hunting in search of a seal. But most of us spent the day on the beach, chatting around the campfire and enjoying the occasional song.

Wrangell's Jerry Knapp said getting out of mainstream society on the journey helped him form deeper connections. On the journey, he met an aunt he didn't know, who was paddling in the veterans canoe. He shared that in addition to making connections with family, he is confident he has made lifelong friendships with fellow canoe pullers.

Knapp said that when he decided to come on the journey, he felt like he was looking for something else in life, but he wasn't sure what. Something like the canoe journey was the only type of place he felt like he could find it. At that moment, chatting around the campfire, Knapp said he felt a sense of calm.

Though many of us expected the journey to be about paddling, the paddling is almost the least memorable part — a testament that the journey is about so much more than the physical challenge.

We bonded as we traveled together. We spent time on the

support boats and at camp getting to know one another. We looked out for one another as we shared similar frustrations with the rain and even the desire to paddle more.

Valerie Massie, a paddler from Wrangell, said that the journey was made up of constant sharing, whether it was helping each other in and out of the canoes or making sure everyone was fed.

Massie added that she enjoyed watching paddlers grow and come into their own on the journey. Paddling gives each person a purpose, because each paddler is necessary in order to move forward, she explained, adding that she enjoyed "seeing people find their flame, their warmth, and not feel out in the cold."

Out here, everyone is "free to be their whole selves," she said. "There's a lot of expression here that isn't a possibility in town," Massie shared while watching people chat around the fire and take in the views of Sumdum Glacier.

We stuck together as we paddled, always keeping the other canoes in sight. At night, we set up camp together and got to know each other while singing, dancing and sharing stories around the campfire.

This journey felt particularly special, said Vaara, one of the founders of the One People Canoe Society, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting canoe culture in Southeast Alaska. The best part of this journey, she said, is everyone coming together from different communities in a way that hasn't happened on previous journeys.

As a canoe family, we were required to work together. "You can't get anywhere alone," said



PHOTO BY BECCA CLARK / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Jim Zeller, skipper of the Raven canoe out of Juneau, gives directions to his paddlers before making the final landing in Juneau on June 4.

Vaara about paddling. You have to work with one another, syncing up your paddle strokes, she said, providing an apt metaphor for life.

Working together toward the same goal allowed the journey to be healing in a multitude of ways.

As a sober experience, the journey provided an opportunity for paddlers to reflect on their own substance abuse. Some shared stories of past struggles, some celebrated their years of sobriety and others were just beginning their journey.

Some individuals shared their struggles with mental health, suicide and self-harm, adding that that this and previous canoe journeys gave them an opportunity to be part of something that was bigger than themselves.

The journey gave all of us an

opportunity to grow. As frustrations rose, tides changed and exhaustion set in, we all had to figure out how to continue moving forward.

The support boats were crucial to the journey. They provided a place to eat, to rest and an alternate mode of transportation. As a stomach bug plagued many of the paddlers, they also provided places to lie down and recover.

Between the weather, the tides, illness and varying energy levels and needs, we spent more time on the support boats than paddling the canoes.

From the canoes, the support boats and the campsites, we marveled at the beauty of Southeast Alaska. Though many of us reside in the region, sometimes it takes being out in the open to remember how special it is.

As we got closer to Juneau, excitement for Celebration grew. Some paddlers had been to the gathering many times, but others were looking forward to their first experience.

In the downtime on the journey, paddlers wove cedar headbands and showed each other their regalia, and practiced songs which seemed to grow louder the closer we got to Juneau.

After a rainy final night of camping, as paddlers packed up their tents and donned regalia for the final few miles into Juneau, the sun came out once again.

After a cold and damp week, the heat from the sun was uncomfortable as we waited patiently to come to shore. Hundreds of people greeted us with applause and excitement, a reminder of the feat we had accomplished. In a final effort, almost 30 of us paddlers and spectators lined the canoe and hoisted it onto our shoulders to carry it onto shore and uphill.

A few minutes after we had secured the canoes on land, as if on cue, the skies opened up and sideways rain poured down.

The Paddle to Celebration is truly about the journey, Zeller said. It's about being damp, frustrated and kind of miserable but still being able to smile anyway.

Wrangell dancers show their pride at Celebration

By BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

Centennial Hall in downtown Juneau filled with energy June 5 as Alaska Natives from all over the state paraded through, singing, dancing and wearing their regalia with pride.

This was the grand entrance for Celebration, the Alaska Native cultural festival held in Juneau every other year, put together by Sealaska Heritage Foundation.

Dakhká Khwáan Dancers (People of the Inland) from Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, led the Grand Entrance on the first day, lining the stage as they kept singing and drumming for nearly two hours while a steady stream of other dancers paraded across the stage.

Among the dance groups that participated in the Grand Entrance were two dance groups from Wrangell: Wrangell JOM Kaasitlaan (Old Willow Town) and Kaachxan.áak'w.

The festival continued with three full days of events that included dance performances from groups from all around the state, a Native artist market, storytelling events, a film festival, fashion show, food contest and more.

An estimated 1,600 attended this year's gathering, with 36 dance groups.

The two dance groups from Wrangell performed multiple times, in both Centennial Hall and Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall nearby, for 30 minutes at a time in front of hundreds of people. Their voices and drumming carried over the crowds as they performed, the pride visible on each of the dancer's faces as they represented their community.

Evelyn Holden was among the Wrangell JOM Kaasitlaan (Old Willow Town) dancers who performed at Celebration on Thursday, June 6, in Juneau. Evelyn is the daughter of Chuck and Cheryl Holden; descendent of Eva Blake (matrilineal Naanya.aayi clan).

The Wrangell JOM group told a story about a fishing camp through their performances, while Virginia Oliver narrated and helped direct the younger dancers.

Kaachxan.áak'w performed songs the group had chosen, with different members from the group approaching the microphone before each song to explain its significance.

Valerie Massie, who performed with both groups, said dancing this year at Celebration was one of the greatest honors of her life. "I felt proudest watching community members come back to themselves," she said. "I saw those who have kept these songs, traditions and culture alive in Wrangell relax a little, with the relief that they have helped to pass it on through



PHOTO BY BRIAN WALLACE / SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

generations."

"Celebration is a time to embrace and deepen our ties to our culture," Corey Marsden said, who performed this year for the first time since 2012 and plans on being part of every Celebration in the future. Marsden also participated in the canoe journey from Wrangell to Juneau, and said that to him, every day along the journey felt like a celebration.

During the final song of Celebration, scholar X'unei Lance Twitchell from the University of Alaska Southeast spoke to the crowd: "You're already the dream of your ancestors. Just do the thing that you have in your heart which is kindness and love for yourself and others."

Former Soldotna police chief hired to run Wrangell department

By MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

Dale Eugene "Gene" Meek has been hired as Wrangell's new police chief and will start the job on July 22.

He most recently served as police chief in Soldotna, on the Kenai Peninsula.

Borough Manager Mason Villarma, who met with Meek several times during his visit to town over the weekend, said he and Mayor Patty Gilbert had dinner with Meek and his wife, Mechel (pronounced "mee-shell"), on Saturday.

The day before, soon after his arrival on the afternoon flight on Friday, Meek met with members of the community at an open house. According to Kate Thomas, the borough's economic development director, approximately 20 residents stopped by to greet him at City Hall.

Although Meek hadn't heard about the potential budget-cutting layoffs of two positions from Wrangell's seven-member force of certified police officers, he indicated it was likely to be among



PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Gene Meek, finalist for the Wrangell police chief job, met with community members Friday, June 7, at City Hall. He was later hired for the job.

the various subjects of conversation with Villarma. "Obviously, having a balanced budget is important, but having public safety is equally as important."

He said his goals and objectives as police chief are dependent on discovering the needs of the community. "My plan of identifying that comes out of just

getting out with community engagements like this. I have a little survey questionnaire that I give out ... 'What does your police department do well?' Let people talk about it."

He said he recently came across a survey of the safest places to live in Alaska, in which Wrangell made it to No. 2, with Haines in the top spot. "I'd like it to see (Wrangell) No. 1," he said. "I don't like losing."

Meek has almost 30 years of experience in law enforcement, having worked in places as diverse as his home state of Kentucky, as well as Florida, New Mexico and Afghanistan, holding various positions from deputy sheriff to a special agent with the FBI on a violent crimes task force.

However, he began to yearn for a slower pace that harkened back to his small-town roots, to be able to devote more time in training the next generation of law enforcement, which led to his three-year stint as chief of police in Center, Colorado, starting in 2019, where Meek met and

married his wife, former reporter turned artist Mechel, who in turn was looking for something new. "(She said), 'I want an adventure. ... I want to move to Alaska.'"

That led them to Soldotna, where Meek served as police chief beginning in July 2022. But when Wrangell advertised for the same position, he and his wife both felt it was time for another move. "It's more like what we're trying to go back to," he said. "She really enjoys that lifestyle, just when the work's done, we go out into the woods

and have some fun. ... Go out and just enjoy nature."

Thomas said she happened to be in the office when Meek called to inquire about the position and was able to provide him with perspective on the differences between Wrangell and Soldotna, as she had previously lived on the Kenai Peninsula.

Meek resigned from his position at Soldotna last month.

Tom Radke retired as Wrangell's chief of police on April 5 after four years on the job.

Visitor dies after two boats collide in Wrangell Narrows

By PETERSBURG PILOT AND WRANGELL SENTINEL

After a six-hour search, divers recovered the body of a woman who died in a boat collision between a 20-foot Hewescraft aluminum skiff and a 58-foot commercial fishing vessel in the Wrangell Narrows near the mouth of Blind Slough on Wednesday morning, June 5.

An Alaska State Troopers spokesman on Friday identified the woman as Susan Paul, 73, of California.

A second individual, thrown from the skiff into the water, was rescued by a good Samaritan on the scene, according to a U.S. Coast Guard news release. The man was taken to the Petersburg hospital, suffering from hypothermia and minor injuries, according to Petersburg officials.

The name or hometown of the survivor was not released last week.

The accident occurred between the Petersburg-based commercial seiner Vis, passing southbound in the narrows, and a sportfishing skiff from one of the nearby fishing lodges, according to Petersburg Volunteer Fire Department communications officer Dave Berg. "The Hewescraft had two people on it, a man and a woman from out of state."

The first mayday call was received at 8:52 a.m. June 5, the

Coast Guard reported.

Berg relayed secondhand accounts of a man on the back deck of the skiff and a woman at the helm, the smaller vessel veering into the path of the seiner, a collision that threw the man from the back deck and overturned the vessel.

Mickey Knight was anchored nearby and witnessed the Samaritan vessel rushing toward the man in the water near the bow of the sinking skiff.

"Wrangell Search and Rescue arrived on the scene first with a floatplane carrying a diver," said Knight. "Then the Coast Guard showed up, and (state) troopers showed up with their skiff."

The Wrangell team included two EMTs equipped with advanced life-support equipment, Wrangell Volunteer Fire Department Capt. Jordan Bunes reported in a news release.

Petersburg Search and Rescue "spent the rest of the morning and the afternoon searching for the Hewescraft boat which sank and was apparently carried by the current to a different location," Berg said.

"A search commenced for the second person and that involved Coast Guard Air Station Sitka, Coast Guard Cutter Elderberry, Coast Guard Cutter Douglas Denman, Wrangell Search and Rescue, Petersburg Search and Rescue, Alaska State Troopers, and a couple of other good Samaritans," the Coast Guard said.

After failing to locate the vessel, the Wrangell team returned to town "to retrieve a thermal drone, recently acquired through community donations, and a water Search and Rescue dog," Bunes reported.

"Upon return, the thermal drone successfully completed a search of the area and detected a fuel plume rising from underneath the water, near the dive team's location. With coordination between the drone pilot and the dive team they narrowed their search area," he explained.

"The Search and Rescue dog alerted that there was a submerged body in the area of interest. With coordination between Wrangell and Petersburg divers, the missing victim was located and recovered," Bunes reported in his news release.

The skiff was located about 3 p.m., Berg said.

The Coast Guard has started an official investigation into the incident.



PHOTO BY MARGARET BAUMAN / THE CORDOVA TIMES

Copper River sockeyes fetch premium prices

The \$24.99-per-pound at Fred Meyer stores in Anchorage the first week of June was less than what Copper River sockeye were fetching this month in Seattle. The first-of-the-season Alaska sockeye were selling this past weekend for \$34.99 a pound at Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle, or \$99.99 for the whole fish (four-pounders). Whole Copper River kings were priced at \$649.90 at Pike Place, with king fillets at \$84.99 per pound. As of June 8, Prince William Sound fishermen had delivered almost 335,000 sockeye and 6,500 kings to processors, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

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U.S. Navy will apologize for deadly 1882 attack on Angoon

By MARK SABBATINI
Juneau Empire

An apology for the bombardment that destroyed Angoon in 1882 will be offered by the U.S. Navy, Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski said while appearing with a dance group from the Tlingit village at Celebration in Juneau on Friday.

The attack burned the village, leaving few structures intact, resulting in the death of at least six children and “countless” more due to its impact during the winter, according to the Sealaska Heritage Institute.

Historical narratives by Natives in Angoon and the Navy differ, but both agree the attack followed the death of a Native on a whaling ship that resulted in villagers demanding reparations and the whaling company reaching out to the Navy to intervene.

Murkowski, who in 2011 was adopted into the Deisheetaan clan of the Tlingit tribe with the name Aan shaawát’i (“Lady of the Land”), made the announcement about the apology while appearing with the Xudzidaa wáan Dancers on Friday evening at Centennial Hall as part of the Sealaska Heritage Institute-sponsored Celebration gathering of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian Natives.

Invoking the event’s “Together We Live in Balance” theme, the senator said, “Sometimes, when trying to find that balance, apologies need to be made. ... Some-



SCREENSHOT FROM VIDEO BY SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE

Sen. Lisa Murkowski announces during Celebration on Friday that the U.S. Navy will be apologizing to “the people of Angoon” for the 1882 bombardment that destroyed the Tlingit village.

times it is your government that needs to say those words of apology.”

“I share with you today the news that the Navy, our military, our country will be offering that apology to the people of Angoon for your loss, so that the stories that have been told of the anguish and the trauma for so many years, that you may begin to finally heal when those words of apology

and respect are finally afforded to you,” she said.

Details of how, when and what form an apology from the Navy to Angoon will take were not available Saturday from Murkowski’s office in Washington, D.C.

The bombardment “followed a pattern the American military had established not long after the U.S. took possession of Alaska from Russia in

1867,” according to a SitNews article published on the 125th anniversary of the attack. Fatal conflicts between the military and Tlingits in 1869 resulted in the bombardment of Wrangell and destruction of unoccupied villages near Kake.

Public reaction to the deadly Angoon bombardment was a factor in the passage of the First Organic Act of 1884, where the Department of Alaska was organized into the District of Alaska, putting it under civilian rather than military control.

The death aboard the whaling vessel occurred when bombs used for whaling accidentally exploded and killed an Alaska Native crew member from Angoon, according to historical accounts.

In response, the village of Angoon demanded 200 blan-

kets from the private company as payment for the death, along with “seizing the whaling-boats with their equipment and holding two of the white men prisoners until the amount should be paid,” explained a letter from the Navy ship Corwin’s commander, M.A. Healy.

But instead, the private company reached out to the Navy, which dispatched ships with marines to Angoon. According to the letters, the hostages were immediately released when the ships arrived but as “punishment” the U.S. Navy Captain E.C. Merriman “demanded twice the number of blankets demanded by the Indians, and threatened, in case of refusal, to destroy their canoes and villages.”

The village was unable to meet the demands, resulting in the Navy’s shelling that destroyed all but five houses and all but one of the village’s approximately 40 canoes.

Angoon residents celebrated the arrival of its first traditional dugout canoe last year to mark the 140th anniversary of the bombardment. Chenara Kookesh-Johnson, a Tlingit language teacher for Chatham School District and Goldbelt Heritage Foundation, said during the celebration a long-requested apology from the Navy would allow a full healing for residents and future generations.

“We are still here, we are still thriving given the traumatic events that we’ve been through — (we) want them to know that they do belong here, and this is their home and we’re going to do this even after an apology comes,” she said. “We can’t keep mourning, we can’t keep being sad, we have to take what life gives us and make the best of it — and I think that’s what we’re doing today.”

Washington state man charged in two 2023 drug overdose deaths in Skagway

By ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

A 32-year-old Washington state man was arrested last week on manslaughter charges linked to the overdose deaths last year of two Skagway residents.

Authorities say Jacob D. Cotton, 33, shipped fentanyl to one of the two men who died by overdose in Skagway in January 2023, according to a probable cause statement filed with the criminal charges on June 3. The other man overdosed the next day, the statement said.

Skagway police arrested Cotton at the Juneau airport on June 3.

According to the Skagway Police Department, Cotton provided fentanyl to Skagway residents Anthony Bowers, 28, who then gave it to James Cook, 44.

Cotton communicated by Facebook messenger with Bowers and shipped the pills via U.S. mail from Spokane to Skagway, the charging statement said.

The fatal overdoses marked the first known deaths in Skagway linked to fentanyl, according to reporting by KHNS public radio.

Skagway Police Chief Jerry Reddick said Cot-

ton lived in Skagway intermittently and moved away a few years before the overdose deaths.

Statewide, Alaska counted 342 fatal overdoses in 2023, with the highest year-to-year increase in the country. Fentanyl — a cheap, potent synthetic opioid that has in recent years replaced heroin as the state’s deadliest drug — accounted for about three-fourths of those deaths.

The two Skagway men who died after ingesting the pills were former coworkers of Cotton, according to the probable cause statement.

Cotton, in a message to Bowers, warned of the potency of the pills, the statement said. They talked about Bowers selling the pills to help pay for an engagement ring, it said.

Cotton is facing charges of felony manslaughter and second-degree misconduct involving a controlled substance. As of June 7, he was being held at Lemon Creek Correctional Center in Juneau on \$150,000 bail, according to documents filed in the case.

Haines public radio station KHNS contributed reporting for this story.

Genetic history

Continued from page 1

connection between the 3,000-year-old woman and the present-day Native peoples who live in the region today,” Lindqvist said.

“Very few prehistoric human remains have been discovered in Southeast Alaska, and our genetic findings provide a nice complement to the Tlingit oral stories about the origin of their ancestors and the human prehistory of Southeast Alaska,” she said.

According to the paper in the science journal, Forest Service archaeologists and Wrangell district staff worked closely with the WCA on the

archaeological work at Lawyer’s Cave, which resulted in the repatriation of the human remains recovered from the cave. The WCA named the ancient individual analyzed in this study Tatóok yík yées sháawat (“Young lady in cave”).

Lindqvist said she will also include in her presentation the results from genetic testing of a 10,000-year-old dog bone fragment from the same cave where Tatóok yík yées sháawat was discovered, “and also our general work and current knowledge of the natural pre-history of the region based on new analyses.”

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ALL BINOCULARS	20% OFF
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Fake pills that kill are on the rise. So are Alaska overdose deaths.

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fentanyl

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opioids.alaska.gov

EPA says state needs to update numbers for human fish consumption, water quality standards

BY JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is prodding the state of Alaska over its failure to update water pollution rules.

On Thursday, June 6, the EPA issued a formal determination that the state should update pollution limits that are based in part on the amount of fish consumed by individuals. Under federal law, those limits are supposed to be reviewed every three years, but Alaska has not updated its limits since 2003.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has been working since 2013 on an updated list of water quality standards, but despite telling the EPA last fall that a draft would be ready for inspection by the end of the year, nothing has been released.

"EPA has determined that new and revised water quality standards for Alaska are needed to protect the health of Alaska residents. EPA prefers that the state of Alaska address this determination by updating its water quality standards. If not, EPA is prepared to step in, and today we've taken the first step," said Caleb Shaffer, acting director of the water division for EPA Region 10, which covers Alaska.

Continued on page 10

State hit with class-action lawsuit over Medicaid delays

BY CLAIRE STREMPLE
Alaska Beacon

On a life-flight from Fairbanks to Anchorage, Sierra Ott's newborn son Liam would not stop bleeding from a routine needle prick.

Doctors in the Anchorage neonatal intensive care unit diagnosed him with a blood clotting disorder. Without medication, he is at risk of extreme joint pain and even bleeding out from what would not normally be serious injuries.

Ott said that without health insurance from her husband's military service, the pills would cost the family about \$8,000 a month.

At the urging of her case worker, Ott applied for Medicaid for her son's disability. Liam will have to take the medication for the rest of his life, and she wanted to make sure there would never be gaps in his coverage. In addition to bleeding, hemophilia can cause debilitating joint pain. Ott applied last October.

She is still waiting.

Her family is one of thousands caught in a backlog of Medicaid applications in Alaska. "I know that we're not the only family who has been waiting for answers that are just not coming," Ott said.

The Otts filed a class-action lawsuit against the state on Thursday, June 6, with the Northern Justice Project, a civil rights law firm that represents low- and middle-income Alaskans. It alleges the state has failed to provide timely access to Medicaid to eligible Alaskans who have a dire need for health care coverage.

The lawsuit is one of at least four pending against the Department of Health because the state

agency is not processing applications for federal benefits in a lawful amount of time.

James Davis Jr., a founding partner for the Northern Justice Project, said they took on the case because he is fed up with dysfunction in the state agency, which has wrestled with backlogs of crisis proportions since 2022.

"I've never in 20 years seen repeated systemic problems of such a broad scope," he said. "I mean, we're talking thousands of families waiting for food stamps and thousands of families waiting for Medicaid."

Davis plans to ask the court for "summary judgment," or to judge the case without a time-consuming trial. He said he hopes to get relief for families in a matter of months rather than waiting what could be more than a year for a trial.

He said his firm gets about a call a week from families with disabled children that have waited months for the state agency to give them a Medicaid determination. "That entire time they can't get their children medical coverage," he said.

In an article from Alaska Public Media that detailed the state's Medicaid backlog, Division of Public Assistance Director Deb Etheridge said eligible Alaskans can access care as long as they have submitted an application and that Medicaid will retroactively reimburse them.

Davis said he was infuriated by the state's response: "The fact of the matter is, most of us can't afford to pay out of pocket for our kids — most of us aren't rich."

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PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Safety looks good

Espen Schilling-Freeman (left), age 5, and Gretchen Powell, 8, painted their new headgear during the bike helmet giveaway June 4 at the community center. Devyn Johnson, recreation coordinator with Parks and Recreation, said there were more than enough helmets for the 87 kids who turned out for the event. Southeast Alaska Independent Living out of Juneau and Haines, a brain injury support group, donated the helmets and painting supplies. The Wrangell Police Department provided the hot dogs.

Million-dollars-a-month losses put Juneau hospital programs at risk

BY MARK SABBATINI
Juneau Empire

Juneau residents are expressing concerns about reducing or eliminating several programs that lose money at Bartlett Regional Hospital, including a 16-bed residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment facility that is projected to lose \$800,000 next year.

The hospital's financial condition is unhealthy, officials said at a public forum June 4, while it faces growing competition from the nonprofit SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium.

About 25 people in-person and 35 online attended the first of two public forums scheduled by hospital leaders to get feedback on proposed cuts to six non-core programs including Rainforest Recovery Center, crisis observation and stabilization services, outpatient psychiatric care and hospice.

The hospital board of directors is scheduled to make recommendations about the programs at its June 25 meeting.

Bartlett has been losing about \$1 million a month since the summer of 2020, hospital officials told Juneau assembly members.

Most of the money-saving options proposed by hospital officials during the past few weeks involve either reductions, finding additional funding from sources such as the City and Borough of Juneau, or having another entity take over money-losing programs.

But the numbers presented by Bartlett officials are stark, with the hospital at risk of running out of cash within three years. In addition to the six programs targeted for cuts or elimination that are losing money — and thus further putting core services at risk — the hospital is increasingly facing competition for services provided by SEARHC.

"SEARHC has, and I think uniquely in Alaska so far — decided to compete directly against the private providers that are out there, including Bartlett, but also dentists and other providers," said Max Mertz, chair of the hospital board's finance committee.

"And when your reimbursement rate is significantly higher than what other providers get, it creates a very uneven field," he said, referring to the

higher federal rate received by SEARHC for care it provides than what other health care operators receive.

"We are very much in danger of having a monopoly here and a lot of what we're dealing with here is because of that," Mertz said.

SEARHC, established in 1975 and one of the largest Native-run health organizations in the U.S., originally served only Natives at its Southeast Alaska facilities, but has expanded its patient base and operations over the years. It receives funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and grants as well as billing for services provided under Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance.

SEARHC several months ago opened a new, three-story facility in Juneau's Mendenhall Valley, providing urgent care, primary care, pediatrics, behavioral health, optometry and more.

A SEARHC spokesperson did not respond to questions from the Empire on June 5.

Bartlett is owned and operated by the City and Borough of Juneau, so the option of "subsidizing" programs such as those being considered for cuts largely rests on the willingness of city leaders to provide additional funds. Mayor Beth Weldon has suggested the question might be put to voters about funding or scaling back such programs.

Some people speaking at the June 4 meeting, including current and former medical staff at the hospital, said the priority for the board should be ensuring essential services are prioritized.

"Bartlett generally needs to look at doing surgical services, doing what they do and do it well," said Carlene Conway, who worked at Bartlett for 32 years including as its surgical services director. "Not try to branch out too many places."

But some attendees said it's also vital to consider what best serves the overall health needs of the community, including the programs picked up by Bartlett in recent years and now targeted for reductions.

Aaron Surma, executive director for the National Alliance on Mental Illness' Juneau office, cited crisis services the hospital started offering in December at its new Aurora Behavioral Health Center as a high-needs service without suitable local alternatives.

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907-874-2301

Police report

Monday, June 3
 Parental matter.
 Agency assist: Fire alarm.
 Motor vehicle accident.

Tuesday, June 4
 Dog at large.
 Agency assist: Hoonah Police Department.
 Citizen assist.
 Agency assist: Fire.

Wednesday, June 5
 Agency assist: Probation.
 Summons service.
 Assault.
 Traffic stop: No license plate.
 Motor vehicle accident.

Thursday, June 6
 Traffic stop: Citation issued for no proof of insurance.
 Search and rescue.
 Animal complaint.

Friday, June 7
 Trespass.
 Found property.
 Driving under the influence arrest, and misconduct involving a weapon.
 Agency assist: State Troopers.

Saturday, June 8
 Found property.
 Found dog.
 Traffic stop: Citation issued for speeding.

Sunday, June 9
 Agency assist: Search and Rescue.
 Agency assist: Nolan Center.
 Agency assist: Probation.
 Citizen assist.
 Agency assist: U. S. Forest Service.
 There were three ambulance requests.

EPA fish consumption

Continued from page 9

Fish consumption is a key factor in settling water-pollution limits for almost 100 different individual pollutants, including mercury and the insecticide DDT, under the simple principle that polluted water leads to polluted fish, and eating polluted fish can make someone sick.

Alaska currently bases its water pollution guidelines on the notion that residents eat an average of 6.5 grams of fish per day, less than a quarter-ounce — an amount that can fit on a cracker.

That figure was set in 1992 by the EPA as a general estimate for Americans nationwide. Alaska set its 2003 limits on that figure “and has not revised those ... since,” the EPA said.

Meanwhile, the EPA, Alaska Native tribes and environmental groups have all said they believe the state should use a much higher estimate for how much fish Alaskans eat. That would result in tougher clean-water standards.

The Wrangell Cooperative Association and the Southeast Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Commission this spring announced a year-long project to survey Wrangell residents to determine the quantity and types of seafood they consume.

The goal is to provide real data in the push for the state to update its outdated fish consumption rate. In March, Guy Archibald, SEITC executive director, said there have been efforts to get Alaska to change its fish consumption rate for 30 years.

In 2015, the Southeast Alaska Conservation Coalition asked for DEC to work from an estimate of 175 grams per day for Alaskans that rely on subsistence harvests, or a little over six ounces of fish per day.

“The state of Alaska is responsible for deciding how much pollution is safe in the water,” said Maggie Rabb, SEACC’s executive director. “And that is tied into how much seafood we eat. And when they purposely and knowingly underestimate how much seafood we eat, that means that their determination of what is a safe level of pollution isn’t using sound science or data. And that’s a problem for us.”

Even the state itself has said the fish-consumption levels are far too low.

In 2019, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game published a study finding that urban Alaskans consume an average of 8.9 grams per day, and in rural Alaska, the figure is much higher — an average of

almost 195 grams per day in Western Alaska.

That finding means Alaskans could be exposed to significantly more water pollution than the residents of other states.

Compounding the issue is the state’s decision to set the acceptable rate of pollution-caused cancer at 1 in 100,000. Other states have taken a tougher limit of 1 per 1,000,000 or 1 in 10,000,000.

Gene McCabe, director of DEC’s Water Division, said the EPA’s determination didn’t tell his agency something new.

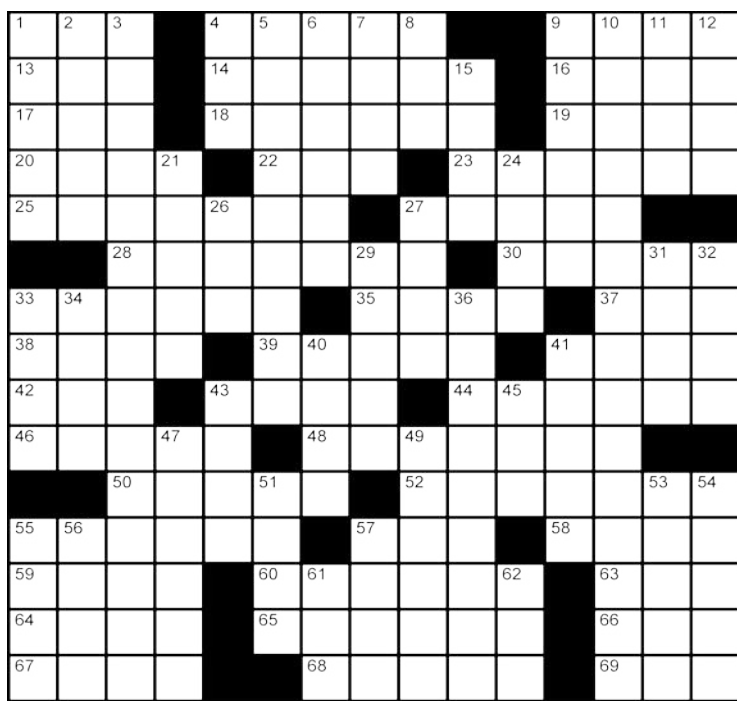
“I think it’s their way of saying, ‘we are formally stating that you do need to take action.’ We have known that for several years and been working on the project. It is a momentous undertaking, and the staff have really been working hard on this,” he said.

He said it’s reasonable to think that the state’s new limits will be ready in the next six to 12 months, but he declined to say whether the DEC’s limits will be based on a higher estimate of fish consumption.

The Alaska Beacon is an independent, donor-funded news organization. Alaskabeacon.com. The Wrangell Sentinel contributed reporting for this story.

Crossword

Answers on page 12



CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Concert appearance
- 4 Dirty
- 9 Cooking meas.
- 13 100 square meters
- 14 Contradiction
- 16 Chief Hawaiian island
- 17 Short for the least
- 18 Tennis great --- Gonzales
- 19 Tax
- 20 Applications
- 22 Tap’s partner
- 23 Hoop dunk
- 25 Added for free
- 27 About this size
- 28 Surrounded by
- 30 Subject of spectacular bankruptcy case
- 33 Very similar to
- 35 Flashy
- 37 Tokyo Yoko
- 38 The Pobble had none
- 39 Engender
- 41 One of four
- 42 “You’ve Got Mail” company
- 43 “The hour --- hand”: St Matthew’s Gospel
- 44 Dangerous feats
- 46 G W T W’s --- Butler
- 48 Green, blotchy frog type
- 50 Toque wearers
- 52 To do with plants
- 55 A machine’s productive hours
- 57 Honorific title in India
- 58 --- of the above
- 59 Happy feline rumble
- 60 Letters, these days
- 63 Of a thing
- 64 Surrounded by
- 65 I’m sorry --- you waiting
- 66 “The sloebblack, slow, black, crowblack, fishingboat-bobbing ---” (Dylan Thomas)
- 67 Egg holders
- 68 Peter Pan’s pal
- 69 Blunder

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Complete range
- 2 Whiskey choice
- 3 Thomas Edison was once a director of it
- 4 National economic indicator
- 5 State of preparedness
- 6 Baseball segment
- 7 Clickers or squeakers
- 8 Expression of derision
- 9 Add as a bonus
- 10 Hi-fi is not supposed to suffer from it
- 11 Card dispenser
- 12 Golfing short shot
- 15 Gray wolf
- 21 18-wheelers
- 24 Sleeping
- 26 Stir-fryer
- 27 Pack
- 29 Election list
- 31 That show’s going to be --- 9 pm
- 32 Silently indicates assent
- 33 State emblem on Old Glory
- 34 Expression of amazement
- 36 Pristine
- 40 Chums
- 41 Holy book of Islam
- 43 Agenda topic
- 45 Make lace
- 47 Musical intervals
- 49 “1984” antagonist
- 51 Bases
- 53 Bury
- 54 Hotelier --- Ritz
- 55 Poisonous Javanese tree
- 56 Catamountain
- 57 Japanese rice wine
- 61 Cut
- 62 Intelligence officer

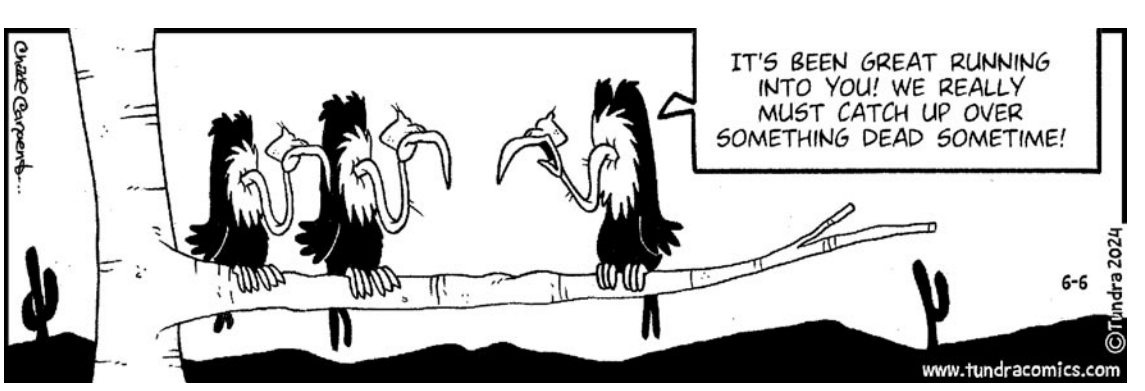
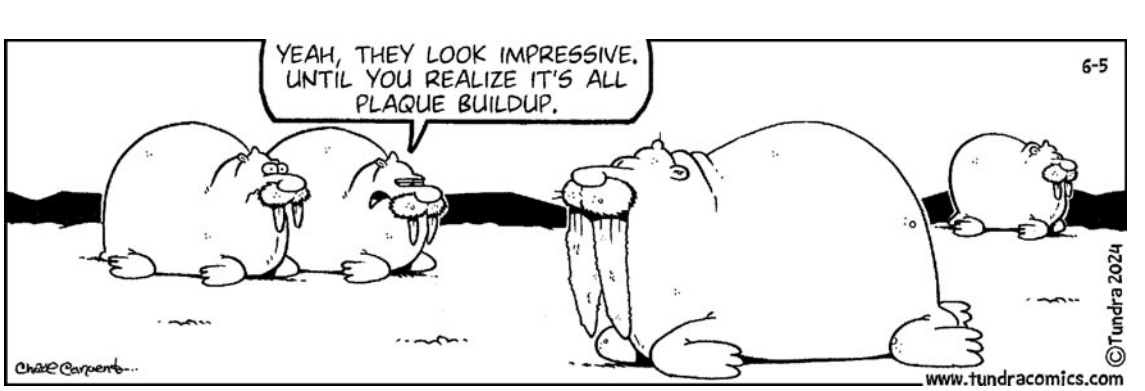
Ritter’s River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



State sues Ketchikan stores for selling fake Alaska jewelry

By **JAMES BROOKS**
Alaska Beacon

The state last month sued the owners of three Ketchikan jewelry stores, alleging a broad scheme to defraud Alaskans and tourists by selling fake made-in-Alaska jewelry.

The stores, which include Soni Inc. and Colors Fine Jewelers, initially continued operations despite the state's request for a court order closing

them, reported radio station KRBD in Ketchikan.

As of Thursday, June 6, Soni was still open; no one answered the phone at Colors Fine Jewelers.

The case is one of several consumer-protection lawsuits filed by the Alaska Department of Law in recent months, and more may be coming under the state's draft operating budget.

The budget, which covers

the 12 months beginning July 1, is awaiting Gov. Mike Dunleavy's signature. It contains a line-item increase of almost \$600,000 for three new workers in the department's consumer protection section.

The Alaska Legislature approved the additions, which include a new prosecutor, investigator and paralegal, all based in Anchorage.

Dunleavy has the ability to reduce or eliminate budgetary line items, but he requested the additions, making a veto unlikely.

"We expect that with these staffing increases you will continue to see more consumer protection actions from

the attorney general in the coming years," said Sam Curtis, an information officer with the Department of Law.

The additions were especially notable because lawmakers preserved the new positions even while cutting elsewhere in the Department of Law.

Curtis said the consumer protection unit "typically files high-impact cases that involve numerous transactions, witnesses, and victims, and that require extensive investigation."

In last month's filing, prosecutors said they conducted an undercover investigation and impounded a variety of

jewelry for testing.

Those tests found salespeople were misrepresenting the value of the jewelry and its origin, state attorneys said, alleging violations of the state's unfair trade practices act.

Curtis said the department has been filing a growing number of consumer-protection cases overall in recent years, something the agency attributes "primarily to an increase in staffing in late 2018, when the consumer protection unit was able to hire a full-time investigator for the first time in many years."

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CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE INVITING BIDS 5th and 6th AVENUES ROAD CONSTRUCTION

Notice is hereby given that the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, will receive sealed bids for the construction of the **5th AND 6th AVENUES ROAD CONSTRUCTION** project. Work consists of all activities necessary to construct the new roadways shown in the contract documents. The work includes mobilization, construction surveying, clearing and grubbing, placement of base course and surface course, storm, ditch and other improvements. The Owner's Estimate for all work is approximately \$200,000.

Sealed bids will be received by the City and Borough of Wrangell, Post Office Box 531, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, or located at the Borough Clerk's Office, 205 Brueger Street, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, until 2 p.m. prevailing time on June 18, 2024, and publicly opened and read at that time.

The Contract Documents are available in electronic format only and can be downloaded from the City and Borough of Wrangell website (www.wrangell.com) under the Bids and RFPs section. Downloading Contract Documents from the City and Borough of Wrangell's website requires registration with the Borough Clerk in order to be placed on the Plan Holders List and to ensure receipt of subsequent Addenda. Failure to register may adversely affect your proposal. It is the Offeror's responsibility to ensure that they have received all Addenda affecting this Solicitation. To be registered, contact the Borough Clerk at 907-874-2381 or at clerk@wrangell.com

The owner reserves the right to reject any or all Bids, to waive any informality in a Bid, or to make award as it best serves the interests of the owner.

Mason Villarma, Borough Manager
City and Borough of Wrangell

Publish June 5 and 12, 2024

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE INVITING BIDS SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION LOADING DOCK

Notice is hereby given that the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, will receive sealed bids for the construction of the **SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION LOADING DOCK** project. The work consists of all activities as shown in the contract documents. The work includes mobilization, construction surveying, clearing and site demolition, earthwork, concrete, utilities, overhead door installation, and other improvements. The Owner's Estimate for all work is approximately \$285,000.

Sealed bids will be received by the City and Borough of Wrangell, Post Office Box 531, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, or located at the Borough Clerk's Office, 205 Brueger Street, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, until 2 p.m. prevailing time on June 27, 2024, and publicly opened and read at that time.

The Contract Documents are available in electronic format and can be downloaded from the City and Borough of Wrangell website (www.wrangell.com) under the Bids and RFPs section. Downloading Contract Documents from the City and Borough of Wrangell's website requires registration with the Borough Clerk in order to be placed on the Plan Holders List and to ensure receipt of subsequent Addenda. Failure to register may adversely affect your proposal. It is the Offeror's responsibility to ensure that they have received all Addenda affecting this Solicitation. To be registered, contact the Borough Clerk at 907-874-2381 or at clerk@wrangell.com

The owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in a bid, or to make award as it best serves the interests of the owner.

Mason Villarma, Borough Manager
City and Borough of Wrangell

Publish June 5, 12 and 19, 2024

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE

1967 pistol, left-hand gun with case. Browning semi-automatic. Medalist XXX18917. Never fired. \$1,000. 253-854-7523.

FOR SALE

Southeast hand troll permit. \$7,500. 253-854-7523.

FOR SALE

2008 Honda motorcycle XR650L. Excellent condition. Dual sport. Very low mileage. Large custom fuel tank. Custom exhaust. \$4,500. Call 907-874-3676.

**Raincountry Contractors
Septic tank pump
service available
until October 30, 2024
907-650-7028**

HELP WANTED

Tongass FCU is looking for someone to join our team as a Member Service Representative in our Wrangell branch. If you want to make an impact, learn and grow, apply online at tongassfcu.com or stop by the branch!

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

FREE

Recycled newspapers. Stop by the Sentinel to pick up.

FREE ADS

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

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CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE OF JOB OPENING FINANCE DEPARTMENT Borough Controller

The City and Borough of Wrangell is recruiting a Borough Controller to join the Borough's Finance Department. Applications will be accepted beginning Thursday, May 16, 2024, through Friday, June 19, 2024. If there are no applicants hired for the Borough Controller position during this time frame, the Borough will consider the position open until filled.

The Controller is a senior management position that is responsible for exercising direction and control over Borough accounting and financial reporting functions. This includes implementing and monitoring internal controls over financial reporting and compliance and working with the Finance Director to disseminate accurate and timely financial information to users. The Borough Controller will also perform a full range of complex management, accounting, technical, administrative, supervisory and financial duties and provide overall planning, coordination and accountability for large complex projects. Additionally, the Borough Controller will work with the Finance Director to integrate accounting operations, systems and controls that prevent, detect and/or correct the underlying accounting for business transactions.

The position typically requires a bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business administration or a closely related field and eight years of experience in accounting systems and operations, treasury, financial reporting or audits, including three years in a leadership capacity. Experience in governmental accounting is preferred. An active CPA or CMA certificate and/or a master's degree in business administration may substitute for some experience.

This is a full-time, salary grade position with full benefits, paid at Grade 30 ranging from \$6,873.92 to \$8,683.18 per month. The full job description and employment application can be found online at www.wrangell.com/jobs. This position will require a successful pre-employment background check and drug screening.

To be considered, submit a cover letter, résumé, and completed employment application via email to rmarshall@wrangell.com, or in person to City Hall, 205 Brueger St., Wrangell, AK 99929.

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

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

Publish May 22, 29, June 5 and 12, 2024

Antisemitic pamphlets anonymously distributed around Craig

By ANNA LAFFREY
Ketchikan Daily News

People in Craig on June 4 found antisemitic pamphlets packaged with dry beans inside of clear plastic bags distributed in yards and driveways across town.

Bob Claus, who lives in Craig, said he found four antisemitic flyers while he was out for a walk along Third Street and Beach Road in west Craig.

Claus said the flyers were packaged inside plastic bags that contained "different versions of what looks like professionally produced flyers about different subjects ... they'd been thrown in several driveways."

"One is about Jewish control of the hedge fund industry, one is about feminism, one is about pornography, all of which are tied with the tropes that you see very often about the Jewish community," Claus said. "They are disturbing to everybody that I've talked to that's run across them."

Claus said he spoke with one neighbor who discovered and picked up a dozen bags that contained similar flyers while she was walking her dog the same morning. He said another acquaintance found about three or four more pamphlets on the east side of Craig.

The pamphlets are all marked with the logo of a website that provides free downloads of about 20 different antisemitic flyer designs, along with instructions for how to print and package the designs for distribution in residential areas.

In January 2022, plastic bags containing pamphlets marked with the same website logo were spread across multiple major U.S. cities, according to a press release by the Anti-Defamation League Mountain States Region at the time of the incident.

The organization said the "flyers appear to be from a loose network of individuals that engages in antisemitic stunts to harass Jews."

"Individuals associated with this network include a range of antisemites and white supremacists who are motivated and united by their hatred of Jews," said the 2022 statement. "The most zealous individuals are in Colorado, California, Florida and New York. They work alone, in small cliques and occasionally travel across the country to work together in larger teams."

During a June 4 phone call with the Ketchikan Daily News, Craig Police Chief RJ Ely confirmed that the antisemitic flyers "showed up all over town"

on June 4. Ely said the police department received reports that a person or multiple people in a late-model pickup truck distributed the flyers overnight.

"It happened probably sometime between 11 o'clock at night and probably four o'clock this morning," he said.

"They're these little Ziploc baggies with some anti-Jewish verbiage and a bunch of like, baking beans."

Ely said he has not seen this type of pamphlet distribution in his 19 years with the Craig Police Department.

Claus said he has not found

flyers like these in Craig before, but the flyers remind him of an antisemitic incident about 25 years ago. "The mailboxes in Craig were spammed with neo-Nazi literature," he said. He recalled that literature was associated with a fundamentalist church.

Getting ready for a fresh coat

A worker used a pressure washer to strip old paint from the exterior walls of the post office on Thursday, June 6, in preparation to repaint the building. Randy Backman, of Wrangell Painting, said the project will take his crew all month.



PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

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PUZZLE SOLUTION

Happy Birthday AMERICA!

The Sentinel is offering a firecracker of a deal with 20% off all ads that mention the 4th of July in the June 26 edition. Ad deadline is 10 a.m. Friday, June 21.

Call, email or stop by to see Amber at the Sentinel to place your ad. 907-874-2301 wrgsent@gmail.com



WRANGELL SENTINEL

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Produce & Meat
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