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State closes Southeast to king salmon sportfishing

By SENTINEL STAFF

The Southeast Alaska sport fishery is on track to exceed its king salmon allocation for the summer by 14,000 fish, prompting the state to close the region to sportfishing for kings. The closure went into effect at 12:01 a.m. Monday, Aug. 26.

"King salmon may not be retained or possessed, and any king salmon caught must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed," according to the Department of Fish and Game announcement late Friday, Aug. 23.

The king salmon sport fishery will reopen on Oct. 1 for the winter season.

"While the (state's) management plan is intended to avoid in-season changes to sportfishing regulations, the projected end-of-season harvest for the sport fishery is expected to exceed the combined sport and (commercial) troll allocation," the department reported.

The sport closure "is necessary to keep

Alaska fisheries from exceeding the 2024 Alaska all-gear catch limit as determined by the Pacific Salmon Treaty."

During a phone call with the Ketchikan Daily News on Friday, Fish and Game Commissioner Doug-Vincent Lang said that, as far as he's aware, this is the first year the department has ever ordered an in-season halt to all king salmon sportfishing in Southeast.

Last week's announcement was the second in as many weeks cutting back the king salmon catch in Southeast.

The department on Aug. 6 reported that heavy fishing on kings by sport fishermen — which includes charter boat customers — would take away fishing time from Southeast Alaska's commercial troll fleet this summer.

The state announced that trollers in August and September would lose out on the remainder of the summer troll fishery allocation for kings because sport fisher-

men across Southeast were on track to exceed their summer 2024 allocation by about 14,000 chinook.

The summer king commercial troll fishery started July 1, and permit holders across the region harvested about 83,000

kings during an initial eight-day retention period — about 16,000 more fish than the department's harvest target of 66,700 kings for the opener. The entire summer allocation for trollers of "treaty" salmon

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Library, Nolan Center, parks staff create a new after-school program

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Staff at three borough offices saw a need and got together to do something about it. Their answer is to provide after-school activities three days a week over the next three months.

"There's always been the need for after-school care in the community ... to fill that gap for parents and children," said Sarah Scambler, director of the Irene Ingle Public Library.

The activities will be free; no advance registration required. The program is open to children 7 through 13 years old, though younger children are welcome, but they must be accompanied by someone at least 14 years old.

The library, the Nolan Center, and Parks and Recreation Department collaborated this summer to provide scheduled activities for kids so that there was something for them to do most every weekday. "It was really successful," Scambler said. It worked so well this summer that staff decided to give it a try during the school year.

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PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

All smiles for first day of school

Kastle Powers (fourth grade) and Radley Powers (fifth grade) prepare to walk into Evergreen Elementary for the first day of school on Thursday, Aug. 22. They are among the 260 students who are expected to enroll in Wrangell schools this year. Notably, both elementary and secondary schools will have new principals for the 2024-2025 school year.

Ketchikan landslide kills 1, injures 3, damages 6 homes

By ZAZ HOLLANDER AND SEAN MAGUIRE
Anchorage Daily News

A landslide tore down a slope about a mile north of downtown Ketchikan, killing one person and injuring three on Sunday.

The landslide hit around 4 p.m., and a mandatory evacuation order remained in place Monday for homes on several streets in the slide area near the waterfront.

A dozen people stayed at an emergency shelter established at Ketchikan High School on Sunday night, emergency officials said. Others stayed with family or friends. Schools were closed Monday, which would have been the first day of classes for the 2024-25 school year.

As of Monday, the slide area was unstable, authorities said. A team of geologists was expected to evaluate the potential for additional ground movement before crews start the recovery process, including debris removal and repairing scores of downed power poles.

Officials warned shaken locals and thousands of cruise ship visitors to avoid the area.

At about 8 p.m. Sunday, Gov. Mike Dunleavy issued a disaster declaration.

An estimated half-dozen homes were damaged, some "very significant," said Ketchikan Gateway Borough Mayor Rodney Dial. He said the priority Monday was getting a team of four geologists to the site to evaluate the stability of the slope, given the potential for additional slides.

"We want to, as reasonably as possible, assure the safety of the folks that are going to go in and begin the recovery effort

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PHOTO COURTESY KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

A landslide swept through a residential neighborhood in Ketchikan, killing one person and damaging several homes Sunday afternoon.

New ridgetop weather station will provide data for scientists and community

By SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

The Alaska Department of Transportation installed a ridgetop weather station near 11-Mile earlier this month. The station will allow scientists and DOT officials to further monitor the area affected by the November 2023 landslides.

Standing 18 feet tall, the structure will report data such as air temperature, precipitation, wind speed and direction, and snow depth. Notably, it is the only snow depth monitor on the island other than the airport weather station, according to Pat Dryer, an avalanche and geohazard specialist for DOT.

Scientists are currently evaluating the initial data to make sure

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Senior Center Menu

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

Thursday, Aug. 29

Chicken adobo with rice, carrots, spicy fruit cup

Friday, Aug. 30

Moose meatloaf over mashed potatoes and gravy, mixed vegetables, apple cinnamon salad

Monday, Sept. 2

No meal service on Mondays.

Tuesday, Sept. 3

Sweet and sour spareribs with rice, green beans, fruit, romaine and radish salad

Wednesday, Sept. 4

Baked chicken with au gratin potatoes, broccoli, carrot and pineapple salad

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

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



ALASKA AIRLINES CLUB 49 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

SKATER TOTS 1 to 2:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at the TouchPoint Ministries rink on Bennett Street. For ages 0-10 years old. Scooters, flat boards, skates for novice beginning skaters. Separate play area, toys and tumbling mats for infants. Parents/guardians must stay to supervise. Free.

RUMMAGE SALE 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 30, and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 31, at the Presbyterian Church.

NOLAN CENTER THEATER "Deadpool and Wolverine" rated R, at 6 p.m. Friday, 6 p.m. Saturday and 4 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 30 - Sept. 1. The dark comedy adventure comedy runs 2 hours and 8 minutes; tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under age 12. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

PRE-K ART 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. every Monday starting Sept. 2 for ages 0-5 at The Salvation Army. Experience the arts each week with a special activity prepared by Capt. Belle. Call for more information at 907-874-3753.

BASKETBALL SKILLS CLINIC 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept 6; 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 7; 9 a.m. to noon Sunday, Sept. 8. Coach Mark Cascio will teach shooting with confidence, effectiveness on ball defense, quick and clever transition, essential actions to score. At the high school gym. For eighth through 12th graders. Walk-in registration, \$50. Scholarships available. Call Coach Good 707-779-9505 or Coach Allen 907-305-0910 with any questions. Sponsored by the AAU Sports team.

WRANGELL KIDS CLUB 2:30 to 5 p.m. Mondays at the community center for open gym, board games and coloring; 2:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesdays at the Irene Ingle Public Library for STEM activities and crafts; 2:30 to 5 p.m. Fridays at the Nolan Center for a movie in the theater. For ages 7 to 13 years old. Starts Sept. 9 and runs through Dec. 16. Free.

MUSKEG MEADOWS championship 18-hole, individual score golf tournament, Saturday, Sept. 7. Play starts at 10 a.m.; register by 9:30 a.m.

ADULT PROM 8 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 7, at Rayme's bar. No entry fee; must be at least 21 years old. Fundraiser for Wrangell Burial Assistance. Donations welcome. Thai food truck will serve from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.

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.

"SAVING MR. BANKS" 6 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 17, at the Nolan Center. The 2013 biography comedy drama movie is free; presented by Island of Faith Lutheran Church as part of its retro-movie program. The concession stand will be open.

SUICIDE INTERVENTION SKILLS TRAINING 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 26-27. Learn the skills to help save a life. Must attend both days. Limited space available. Free, but registration is required. Email khoyt@searhc.org to register. Sponsored by SEARHC.

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

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

- **KICKBOXING** 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at the community center multipurpose room with Victoria Carney. Drop-in fee \$5; \$3 for seniors; or use a facility punch card.
- **FUNCTIONAL FITNESS and TECHNIQUE** 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the court in the pool building with Devyn Johnson. A guided workout. Learn how to use the gym equipment. For ages 18 years old and up. Daily entry fee, pass or punch card.
- **ZUMBA**, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Mondays and Fridays at the community center gym with Nene Wilson. For ages 16 years old and up. Drop-in fee \$5; \$3 senior discount; or use a facility punch card.

Ferry Schedule

Northbound

Sunday, Sept. 1

Kennicott, 7:45 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 8

Kennicott, 2:15 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 15

Kennicott, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 22

Kennicott, 2:15 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, Sept. 4

Kennicott, 7:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 11

Kennicott, 7:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 18

Kennicott, 6:45 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 25

Kennicott, 8:15 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
Aug. 28	09:43	11.5	09:26	14.6	02:56	1.7	02:48	6.1
Aug. 29	10:55	12.4	10:36	15.1	04:23	1.2	04:24	5.8
Aug. 30	11:51	13.4	11:34	15.8	05:29	0.4	05:33	4.7
Aug. 31	12:35	14.4	06:16	-0.4	06:21	3.6
Sept. 1	00:23	16.4	01:13	15.2	06:53	-0.9	06:59	2.7
Sept. 2	01:04	16.7	01:46	15.8	07:25	-1.0	07:32	2.0
Sept. 3	01:41	16.7	02:15	16.0	07:52	-0.8	08:02	1.5

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

Aug. 28, 1924

A public meeting for fishermen was held Tuesday night to get an expression of their attitude toward the fisheries regulations as they apply in this immediate district. Carl Arola was selected as chairman of the meeting. After some discussion of the matter a resolution was passed opposing the present closed season on account of the inefficiency of the regulation in conserving salmon, as well as the unnecessary hardship that results from its enforcement. A committee was appointed to draft a resolution to be presented at the meeting of the Bureau of Fisheries Advisory Board at Juneau next month. A finance committee was

appointed to circulate a subscription list to raise funds to cover the expense of sending a delegate to Juneau.

Aug. 26, 1949

The stork was a busy bird Wednesday morning at Bishop Rowe Hospital when he swooped down to the doorstep with two babies within 18 minutes. The first, at 6:55 a.m., was a 7-pound, 10.5-ounce girl, consigned to Mr. and Mrs. Howard Benjamin. She was named Melody Jean. On the second trip the stork brought a son, Darrell Robert, to Mr. and Mrs. Warren Powers, who arrived at 7:13 a.m. The little boy weighed 9 pounds, 15 ounces. Both mothers are

progressing rapidly.

Aug. 23, 1974

More than a dozen logging operations in the Stikine area received word Monday evening from the Forest Service that they could return to normal hours of operation. Southeast logging operations had been on "Hoot Owl" shifts since Aug. 14 because of high fire danger. Ken Gilbertson, Forest Service resident management assistant in Wrangell, said Hoot Owl was put into effect last week following seven days of high fire danger ratings. The Forest Service had hand delivered letters to each of the logging operations informing them of

the decision. It required loggers to suspend all yarding and felling operations and the use of chainsaws between noon and 6 p.m. However, Hoot Owl does not prevent hauling logs or building and other activities not directly connected with falling and yarding, Gilbertson said. The Hoot Owl shift takes its name from the midnight to 9 a.m. shift worked by loggers in the states when the fire danger is high. The loggers there actually work with the owls hooting.

Aug. 26, 1999

A dream that began more than 100 years ago for residents of Wrangell was on its way to greater fulfillment when the groundbreaking ceremonies for

the James and Elsie Nolan Center took place Saturday morning, Aug. 21. The center, a museum complex that includes a civic center and visitors center, is made possible by a \$6 million matching grant (\$3 million for construction and \$3 million endowment for future operations and maintenance) from a charitable trust established by the late Alaska state Sen. James Nolan and his wife Elsie. "They loved the museum and made very specific provisions for it in their will," said Theresa Thibault, museum director. "It has already received a collection of paintings from the Nolan estate, including two by Sydney Lawrence and one by Eustace Ziegler."

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FREIGHT FOR LESS

Murkowski visit officially opens new Anan Bay cabin

By KSTK AND SENTINEL STAFF

It's not often the U.S. Forest Service gets to open up a new public-use cabin in Southeast, and they had a special visitor

to cut the ribbon: U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski.

Alaska's senior senator participated in the event Aug. 19 at the Anan Bay cabin.

After a tree fell in February

2023, crushing the cabin, the Forest Service decided it would use the need to replace the structure as an opportunity to give it some upgrades as well. The new red cedar cabin

boasts a large, covered deck in addition to more room to house larger groups for overnight visits.

Reservations can be made by visiting recreation.gov, but it may take another week or two for the website to update and start accepting reservations.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was a joint effort. Officials of the Forest Service, Wrangell Cooperative Association and National Forest Foundation (NFF) — the nonprofit partner of the Forest Service — attended the ceremony.

WCA tribal administrator Esther Aaltséen Reese sprinkled tobacco on the structure to pay respect to the land while tribal elder Virginia Oliver beat a drum.

Mary Mitsos, chief executive officer of the NFF, explained that the Anan Bay cabin is just the start of a widespread cabin-building endeavor in Alaska. According to Mitsos, the foundation would

like to build about 25 structures in the Chugach and Tongass national forests. That number includes new cabins as well as repairs and renovations for existing ones.

The effort is funded in part by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law of 2021 and the Great American Outdoors Act of 2020, with federal funding totaling \$14 million. The NFF is providing an additional \$3.7 million.

The Anan cabin contract went to Rainforest Construction, a Petersburg-based construction company, the same outfit that rebuilt the viewing deck at the wildlife observatory just up the trail in 2022. The contract for the Anan Bay cabin totaled \$525,380.

The Anan cabin is not the only new structure planned for the Wrangell area. Roughly 25 miles from downtown, the Forest Service and NFF plan to construct a cabin near the Long Lake Trailhead. The timeline for that project is 2025.



PHOTO BY COLETTE CZARNECKI / KSTK

Sen. Lisa Murkowski cut the ribbon at the new Anan Bay cabin on Aug. 19. Joining her were (from left) James King and Frank Sherman, of the U.S. Forest Service, and (to her right) Forest Service Wrangell District Ranger Tory Houser, WCA tribal administrator Esther Aaltséen Reese, Mayor Patty Gilbert and Virginia Oliver.

School board moves closer to buying \$423,000 electric bus

By SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

Cell phones won't be the only things that need charging before a school day. Soon, Wrangell is going to need to plug in its bus too.

The school board moved forward on Aug. 20 with plans to purchase an electric school bus. Most of the \$423,000 cost will come from a \$378,000 federal Environmental Protection Agency grant the school district received in 2023. The rest of the funding will likely come from the district's reserve fund.

Superintendent Bill Burr estimates the bus will arrive sometime in 2025.

The board is tentatively set to formally approve the bus purchase as soon as its next meeting.

The plan is for the district to own the bus and the pupil transportation contractor to operate the vehicle, Burr said.

After receiving three bids for the bus, the school board plans to buy the bus from Blue Bird Corp., a Georgia-based bus manufacturing company. While one bid came in slightly lower, Blue Bird offers several advantages over other competitors.

For starters, the district might be able to save money on any repairs. The manufacturer has committed to send a repairman to Wrangell free of charge for any non-battery issues. For battery repairs, the district would need to ship the bus to Seattle.

Electric school buses are built on top of a four-ton battery pack, according to schools maintenance director Kevin McCallister. Wrangell simply lacks equipment capable of lifting the bus off the battery for repairs.


The cutoff date for the EPA grant requires the bus to be constructed by this October, an untenable timeline according to Burr. However, he is confident that the EPA will be flexible and hopes to extend the cutoff date on a month-to-month basis, depending on Blue Bird's timeline.

The other issue the school district faces is finding a space to store the bus. To effectively and efficiently charge, the bus must be stored in a facility between 50 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit, according to McCallister. This will require construction of a bus barn or a specially built RV-style cover to house the bus. An advantage of the Blue Bird bus, though, is the price includes a diesel-fueled battery heater, so the storage facility would not need to be climate controlled.

The \$423,000 price tag also includes a Level 3 electric charger, valued at around \$16,000, according to McCallister.


While McCallister also considered a less powerful Level 2 charger, he realized the higher-powered unit would be more effective in the winter months.

"The issue isn't charging the bus overnight," he said. "It's making sure the bus gets enough charge between picking kids up in the morning and dropping them off in the afternoon."




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Quotes from Families:

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"I received a lot of support for the academic side of the curricula. I am happy that the support helped me to stay on-target for making sure my daughter was learning the concepts for her grade level. I was always able to reach out and get clarification. The reimbursement process was pretty simple, too."

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Don't take campaign slogans too seriously

BY LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

Candidates have long waged election campaigns on catchy slogans, snappy jingles, popular promises and misleading but memorable mottos.

It's getting worse. The music is better but the lyrics are lacking. Vagueness is in vogue.

The less specific candidates are with their actual plans to fulfill campaign promises, the less the opposition and analysts can pick apart the flaws.

Running for president or Congress? Promise more funding for child care, lower taxes, lower prices at the grocery store, stronger defense, defeating China for jobs and investment, protecting the U.S. border, more housing at affordable prices – and making every kid clean up their room.

Running for state office in Alaska? A big Permanent Fund dividend is easy to write into your campaign script. Forget about promising lower taxes, it's even better to pledge no taxes. Campaign for state control over resources; getting federal management out of our lives while cashing more federal checks every year; lower energy prices; fast snowplowing and even faster pothole repairs. And making every kid do their homework early.

Forget that state revenues are insufficient to cover it all, or that the federal budget is nearing a quarter-century of consecutive annual deficits.

Promise voters what they want to hear and don't sweat the details, especially the money. Candidates pledge more than the treasury can afford because they know a lot of it will never come true.

"I've been analyzing presidential platforms since the 2008 election, and with some exceptions it seems that in each election there's less detail

and less concern about paying for stuff," Marc Goldwein, senior vice president at the nonpartisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, was quoted in The Wall Street Journal last week.

"In 2016, Trump's Make America Great Again worked because it was vague," Nathan Gonzales, editor of the nonpartisan newsletter Inside Elections. "Voters could project whatever they wanted from it."

As we're down to the final 10 weeks of the presidential, congressional and state legislative races, I don't want to miss the opportunity to propose some new unfulfillable slogans, promises and campaign lines. No sense leaving it all to professional campaign consultants to make up this stuff. Besides, they have no sense of humor.

Looking back through history, many campaign one-liners have mentioned food: "Vote yourself a farm and horses" (1860, Abraham Lincoln); "Four more years of the full dinner pail" (1900, William McKinley); "A chicken in every pot" (1908, from Herbet Hoover supporters); "Not just peanuts" (1976, Jimmy Carter); and "Where's the beef" (1984, stolen by Walter Mondale's campaign from Wendy's).

Here are my half-baked, parboiled and underdone suggestions for candidates who want to stand out in the shopping cart of politics by appealing to hungry voters:

- "I'm no Ding Dong"
- "Tougher than an overcooked steak"
- "As durable as Pilot Bread"
- "I have no beef with vegetarians"
- "No skin in the game with skinless chicken"
- "Farmed salmon are full of manure"
- "Crabs are all that they're cracked up to be"
- "Don't let your vote give you heartburn"

"I think it's taken everybody by surprise," Braden said. "I don't know if anybody saw this coming because the King Salmon Management Plan calls for no closures unless there's conservation concerns, then this is more of a policy call I think on the department's part."

He said the closure is bad for the guided sport-fishing business. "Any kind of an in-season closure that changes people's expectations is problematic and difficult," Braden said. "You know, people are told one thing and then they get another, and that doesn't work really well in our industry."

Kids Club

Continued from page 1

Wrangell Kids Club will start Monday, Sept. 9, and carry through to Dec. 16. Activities will run from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Depending on the turnout and staffing, the club could continue after school resumes in January from the holiday break, Scambler said.

"With the staffing levels we have right now, it's doable," she said. "We're going to make it work." If turnout is strong and staff is stretched thin, they may reach out for volunteer help, she said.

Parks and Recreation will handle Mondays, with an open gym, board games and coloring materials at the community center.

The library will provide STEM activities and crafts on Wednesdays, with the Nolan Center showing free movies Friday afternoons.

The STEM activities (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) might include, for example, building things out of inflated balloons, Scambler said.

The free movies will all be G or PG rated, said Jeanie Arnold, Nolan Center director. They will be a mix of animated and other films, with maybe seasonal movies around

EDITORIAL

Even if it doesn't affect Wrangell, it's still a bad idea

The U.S. Postal Service expects to lose \$7 billion this year. That makes the USPS dependent on Congress, which is never a healthy dependency. Email and digital technology are forcing first class mail into the dead letter bin of history, slicing deeply into a key revenue source for the Postal Service.

It's more painful than the worst paper cut.

So it's no surprise that the federal agency continues to raise rates, though even at last month's increase to 73 cents, a stamp is still pretty affordable – it's lower than most developed countries. You can't even buy half a candy bar or half a bag of chips for the price of sending a birthday or get well card across the country.

And though the Postal Service needs to think of itself as a business and watch costs, the agency – and Congress – also needs to remember it is a public service.

Thinking of it that way, the latest proposal from the U.S. Postmaster General is particularly upsetting. Management is looking at slowing down the pickup of mail in rural areas to save money.

The plan eliminates the evening pickup of mail at post offices for transport to processing centers. Instead, the mail will sit and wait until the next morning. The Postal Service has been trying out the plan since last fall in limited areas and is considering going nationwide.

News reports say as many as 10,000 post offices nationwide could lose their evening pickups. That's about one third of the offices across the country.

The Postal Service filed its plans last week. Any change would have to go through the agency's governing board and then review by the Postal Regulatory Commission. In a dose of political wisdom, the Postal Service said it would not make any changes until after the November election, so as not to jeopardize mail-in voting.

"At the end of the day, I think some portion of the mail showing up 12 hours later, I think it's a price that had to be paid for letting this place be neglected," Postmaster General Louis DeJoy told The Washington Post. "We're trying to literally save the Postal Service."

The government would be saving money at the expense of rural areas.

Even if the change would not affect mail leaving Wrangell – that's governed by the Postal Service contract with an air carrier for delivery into and out of town – it could affect the timeliness of letters and packages coming to Wrangell from rural areas outside Alaska.

Earlier this month, the borough was ready to open bids for construction of a new floating dock at Meyers Chuck – but there were no bids to open. Part of the reason was that some bids were delayed in the mail and arrived at City Hall past the deadline. Certainly, the out-of-town contractors should have put their envelopes in the mail earlier.

As for the Postal Service and Congress, they should chuck aside anything that would add further to delays.

- Wrangell Sentinel

King salmon closure

Continued from page 1

is about 92,400.

Though trollers had about 9,000 kings left in their summer allocation, state regulations require that any overharvest by the sportfishing fleet gets charged against the troll allocation to keep the overall total with the treaty numbers. Thus, the lack of a second summer king opening for trollers.

"We're at the point where we're getting very close to our overall catch limit, and if we exceed that catch limit we've got to pay fish back next year," Vincent-Lang said. Under the treaty, Alaska must "pay back" any overharvest the next year.

Harvest of migratory treaty kings along the U.S. West Coast and Canada is delegated between the two countries by the Pacific Salmon Treaty. In Alaska, the harvest is allocated between gear groups – sport, trollers, gillnetters and seiners – under regulations set by the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Hatchery-reared kings are managed outside the treaty.

Trollers this year were allocated a total of 153,000 treaty kings between their winter, spring and summer seasons, while sport fishermen were allocated 38,250.

In 2023, the sport fleet exceeded its allocation by more than 15,000 kings, similar to this year. The state in 2023 implemented new restrictions on the troll harvest in years when the sport catch exceeds its share.

Forrest Braden, executive director of the Southeast Alaska Guides Organization, told the Ketchikan Daily News on Friday "there wasn't any forewarning" that the department would close down sport retention early, although "there was obviously an indicator that the sport fishery had exceeded its allocation."

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Retired teacher Tracey Martin brings organizational skills to chamber

BY SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

Tracey Martin wants to bring everyone together. After working in classrooms for three decades, she found her way back to her hometown three years ago. She retired from teaching this past spring and began her new role as executive director of the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce on Aug. 13.

After working with students for 30 years, Martin hopes to apply what she learned in classrooms to her new role working with small businesses.

"There is so much planning that goes into teaching," she said. "I want the chamber to be just as organized."

For example, there is a large three-ring binder that contains all the necessary information for planning the annual Fourth of July celebration. She picked it up to showcase how large it is and said, "I want one of these for every event we plan."

In addition to planning community events like the Fourth or the upcoming pumpkin patch ahead of Halloween, the chamber is also responsible for boosting Wrangell's small businesses.

For Martin, the way to do that is through a prosperous tourism economy.

"Tourism is going to be the lifeblood of Wrangell," she said. "Tourists come here and they love seeing a town that is filled with independent businesses. I want to keep it that way."

While Martin acknowledges the importance of the cruise ship economy, she believes there is an untapped tourism market in Wrangell: the independent traveler. She wants people to visit Wrangell not because their cruise ship is making port here, but because they are interested in what the town has to offer.

"Social media is a great way to get people to come here," she said. She hopes that by expanding Wrangell's social media footprint, there will be more interest in the island from folks who live far away.

But before she starts implementing new practices, Martin is approaching her first couple weeks on the job the way a teacher approaches the first weeks of school: She wants to figure out what her students need.

From her first job as an English teacher in the village of Nishiokoppe, in Hokkaido, Japan, to her final job teaching in the Wrangell school district, Martin looked to identify her students' strengths and find the best ways to utilize them.

The chamber's version of this, according to Martin, is a survey. This fall, Martin plans to send out a survey to all chamber members (businesses and individual supporters) to identify both helpful and hurtful policies.

"When I was a teacher, people who didn't actually

"There is so much planning that goes into teaching... I want the chamber to be just as organized."

— TRACEY MARTIN

spend any time in classrooms were often the ones making decisions about what happened in classrooms," she said. She hopes this ground-up understanding will not just allow her to make more informed decisions, but for the decision-making process itself to be more collective.

In addition to sending out the survey, she is also meeting with businesses individually.

From what she calls her "teacher brain" to her love of the three-ring binder, Martin is looking to take the chamber forward.

"We need to know where we're going," she said, adding that she is currently in the process of developing a five-year plan for the chamber. "We need to figure out how to grow the economy, and how to form partnerships not just with small businesses but with the borough and WCA, too."



PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Tracey Martin started work as the chamber of commerce executive director on Aug. 13 after 25 years of working in schools as a teacher and a counselor.

Borough receives no bids for Meyers Chuck dock

BY SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

When the borough went out to bid to replace the dilapidated Meyers Chuck dock, there were four or five interested parties. When bids closed on Aug. 13, however, the borough received not a single one.

After some delays in the project, the borough hoped to begin procurement for the dock's new floats late this year. Ideally, construction and installation of the new 200-foot dock would take place next summer. The two-part project was estimated to cost \$2.5 million, of which Wrangell would only have to pay

\$1.4 million thanks to a \$1.1 million state grant.

However, the lack of bids is likely not going to delay the project too much, according to Capital Projects Director Amber Al-Haddad.

One of the reasons the borough received no valid offers was due to mail delays, as bids arrived at City Hall after the deadline passed.

Mail delays were only partially responsible. To further understand why other interested contractors declined to bid on the project, PND Engineers, the design contractors for the dock, "reached out to those parties who had previously ex-

pressed interest in the project to learn of their reason for not bidding," Al-Haddad said.

She described the lack of bids as "very disappointing and very surprising," but continues to look forward to moving ahead with the project. The borough will rebid the project and Al-Haddad is going to request the assembly accept future bids via email in order to prevent the mail delay issue from occurring again.

Meyers Chuck became part of the Wrangell borough in 2008. The state turned over the dock to the borough in 2014.



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PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAVIS ECKHOFF / ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Department of Transportation installed a weather station at the 2,000-foot level on the mountain ridge above 11-Mile Zimovia Highway. Construction was completed during the first week of August. The unit is the second station installed in the area of last year's devastating landslide.

Ridgetop station

Continued from page 1

everything looks how it should. If the station is working well, the data will be made public by the end of August.

This new collection station is the state's most recent weather-monitoring installation in the wake of the November 2023 landslides, joining the first 11-Mile station that sits at 70 feet in elevation.

The new tower is one of the first ridgetop stations in Southeast and contains a myriad of modern monitoring methods. Atop the tower lies a small lidar (laser beam) sensor used to determine snow depth. The tower is completely solar powered and even has its own modem to transmit data through its omnidirectional cell antennae. The data logger is also stored on site within the tower.

While the station at 70 feet is reliant on Starlink and satellite communications, the new tower is completely self-sufficient.

The data will be compiled and available on a public website — <https://bit.ly/4cIG1y4> — similar to the data from the other 11-Mile station. Officials and scientific teams, like the landslide experts who visited Wrangell earlier this month, will be able to access the data and monitor the area for risks of slides.

Getting the equipment 2,000 feet up the mountain was no easy task, according to Dryer.

A helicopter transported the materials for the structure, which resembles a small cell

tower. According to Dryer, it took multiple trips to lower everything down from the helicopter onto the clearing below. The location was chosen in part because it would not require any additional clearing or working the land. All the department needed to do was to plant the tower, put the pieces together and anchor it down.

The station is rooted in a gravel foundation and secured by three stabilizing cables that will keep it upright during stormy weather. While there was some debate about whether the tower should have a gravel or a concrete foundation, the landscape and the restraints of helicopter transportation led the DOT to use gravel, Dryer said.

Once all the materials were dropped on top of the ridgetop, the team assembled the tower in just a couple of days.

"We want this tower to provide more data for scientists and for the National Weather Service," said Sam Dapceovich, spokesman for the department. "There is a lack of data in such a vast area. This is a step forward."

The main slide last Nov. 22 started at almost 1,500 feet in elevation, traveling about 3,750 feet to tidewater. A state report issued in February noted that the winds were stronger at higher elevation the night of the slide, but because there was no ridgetop data station on Wrangell Island, scientists had to rely on data that came from a wind gauge on Zarembo Island.

Bynum top vote-getter in state House primary to replace Rep. Ortiz

By KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS AND SENTINEL STAFF

Republican candidate Jeremy Bynum received just under half the votes in the Aug. 20 primary election for state House District 1, easily outpolling two independent candidates in a preview of the Nov. 5 general election.

The three candidates are competing to replace Rep. Dan Ortiz, who is retiring for health reasons after 10 years in the Legislature.

The district covers Ketchikan, Metlakatla and Wrangell, plus Coffman Cove on Prince of Wales Island.

All three candidates live in Ketchikan, whose larger population dominates the district. About 2,000 of the 2,527 votes cast in the primary came from Ketchikan and neighboring Saxman.

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

Turnout in the primary was light, at just under 17% of registered voters, though that number may rise slightly as the final absentee ballots are received and counted before the deadline on Friday, Aug. 30.

The turnout among Wrangell voters was just over 16%, with 314 ballots cast.

As of last week, totals from the Alaska Division of Elections showed Bynum with 1,253 votes (49.98%). Grant EchoHawk received 669 votes (26.69%) and Agnes Moran had 585 votes (23.33%).

Under Alaska's top-four primary system and ranked-choice voting, Bynum, EchoHawk and Moran all will appear on the Nov. 5 general election ballot, unless a candidate decides to withdraw from the race.

In the November election, voters will rank the candidates one through three. The candidate who gets more than 50% of first-choice votes will win, unless no one reaches that threshold in the first count, in which case the third-place finisher will be eliminated and the votes recounted between the top two candidates to determine the winner.

Wrangell voters turned out stronger for Bynum than the district as a whole. The community went for Bynum 58.7%, with 28% for EchoHawk and 13.2% for Moran.

Bynum told the Ketchikan Daily News that although he would have liked to see a higher voter turnout districtwide, the results were "better than what we had anticipated."

EchoHawk told the newspaper that for a "first run at the state seat," coming in second is "great."

Moran said she was "disappointed" with the primary election results. "We were expecting to hopefully take second, but we took third," she told the Ketchikan newspaper. "We'll have to think about that a little bit."

Moran ran unsuccessfully for the state House in 2014. Bynum ran against Ortiz and lost in 2022.

Bynum is a Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly member and Ketchikan Public Utilities electric manager; EchoHawk also is a member of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough assembly and a business loan specialist with the Tongass Federal Credit Union; Moran is executive director of Women in Safe Homes and a former Ketchikan borough assembly member.



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SENTINEL SPORTS

Run (through the) forest, run: Cross-country team gets good start at opener

By SAM PAUSMAN

Sentinel senior reporter

The cross-country season is officially underway.

The boys team finished second overall in the team score, with Boomchain Loucks taking first handily.

On the girls side of things, Kalee Herman was Wrangell's highest finisher, with Bella Ritchie crossing the finish line just behind her. The girls finished in 11th place at the race Saturday, Aug. 24, in Petersburg.

Wrangell raced against all Southeast schools in the 5K race. And though head coach Mason Villarma saw the meet as a "test effort," Wrangell runners gave their coach a lot to look forward to.

Despite a "difficult and slow" Petersburg course, as described by Villarma, Loucks managed a PR finish in the season's opening race. He finished with a time of 17:03.94, beating Sitka's second-place runner by over 20 seconds.

According to Villarma, Loucks initially intended on letting someone else set the race pace, but "he soon realized he was the fittest in the field and led the rest of the

race."

Jackson Carney and Jackson Powers both finished just outside the top 10, helping propel Wrangell to a second-place finish with 66 points. First-place Sitka eked out the victory by just a five-point margin, finishing with 61 points.

Villarma is proud of the boys results.

"I think they'll be one of the best teams in the state across all divisions," he said. "I know these boys will put in the work. I can see another state title on the horizon."

The Wrangell boys have won the state title in their division the past two years.

While the girls team did not have the high place finishes of the boys runners, Villarama knows this year will be a steppingstone for the years ahead.

Two runners, Kourtney Barners and Kailyn McCutcheon, had never raced a 5K until Saturday, and their coach saw the race as a way to get some experience.

"The womens team is building for long-term successes that will likely be realized in the 2025 season," Villarma said.

For both teams, though, he



PHOTO BY AIDEN LUHR / PETERSBURG PILOT

Freshman Lucas Stearns was among the Wrangell Wolves who competed in the first cross-country meet of the season, held Saturday in Petersburg.

is impressed — not just with the runners' performances on the course, but with their attitudes.

"I'm encouraged by the ef-

forts at the start of this season, it is certainly the best group of student athletes we have had. They are strong-willed, respectful and proud to represent

their community," Villarma said.

The next meet is set for Saturday, Aug. 31, in Wrangell.

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Athletic Club raises \$17,000 toward covering students' state travel expenses

By MARK C. ROBINSON

For the Sentinel

The Wrangell Athletic Club has raised more than \$17,000 toward covering the estimated \$24,000 to \$25,000 the school district spent on sending students, coaches and chaperones to state competition in the 2023-2024 school year.

The district had sent the fundraising group an invoice for more than \$29,000, but the nonprofit is contesting about \$5,000 of the charges.

The Wrangell Athletic Club said the additional costs were for school district administrators who accompanied the students to competition, which is outside of what the nonprofit believes it should cover.

"We are an organization for students and sports," said club vice president Jack Carney. "We are paying for coaches. We are paying for chaperones. We are paying for students that qualify. We are not paying for administration to accompany the teams."

The school district in 2023 decided it could no longer cover the expenses of travel to state competition and asked for community fundraising to reimburse the spending going forward. The district used its reserves to cover an accumulated debt of state travel from the prior year.

Carney added that there were some other issues with the invoice for 2023-2024 travel, but didn't elaborate. He estimated the correct amount should be about \$5,000 less. "We have yet to get the updated invoice."

Thus far, the club has raised \$17,390 for last year's state travel. The donations came from businesses and individuals. He encouraged people who want to contribute to send checks to Wrangell Athletic Club, P.O. Box 248, Wrangell, 99929.

Schools Superintendent Bill Burr said he re-

cently discussed the invoice amount with Carney and club president Chris Johnson, and felt it was a fair request but he would need to confer with the district's business manager about the billings when she returns from vacation next week.

Burr said that ideally, an administrator is present at any state tournament so they can make decisions on behalf of the students' parents or guardians in the event of an emergency. "If the (accompanying) coach, by chance, is a teacher, they have that ability to operate in place of parents, but there are very few coaches that are teachers anymore."

Burr conceded that arranging for administrators who aren't also serving as coaches or chaperones to accompany the team would be part of the district's cost, not billed to the nonprofit for reimbursement, but that may not have been conveyed to Andrew when she drew up the invoice.

Johnson, who has been away in Sitka for his full-time job in commercial fishing, has kept in touch with Carney during the summer. They will follow up with potential donors to cover the remaining amount of 2023-2024 travel.

Carney said the club was "in great shape," given that their organization didn't really get started until November 2023, and then the November landslide pushed the start of their fundraising to early 2024. He said once they pay last year's travel costs in full they'll start working on next year, and more companies have begun to express interest in becoming donors. "We have the benefit of working the whole year on this."

"I'm very optimistic, super excited and really thankful that the community is stepping up to help our kids," Carney said.

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Dahlstrom drops out of race to defeat Peltola for Congress

BY JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

Republican Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom is withdrawing from the race for the state's lone U.S. House seat, she announced via social media on Friday, just three days after the primary election.

With most of the votes counted, Dahlstrom is expected to finish third in the state's top-four primary election, behind Democratic incumbent Mary Peltola and fellow Republican challenger Nick Begich.

In a prepared statement published, Dahlstrom said she wanted to see Peltola voted out of office but "at this time, the best thing I can do to see that goal realized is to withdraw my name from the (Nov. 5) general election ballot and end my campaign."

Peltola's campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Dahlstrom had been endorsed by Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy, Speaker of the U.S. House Mike Johnson and other national Republicans, but she struggled to gain support among Alaska Republicans.

While the state's Republican Party did not make an endorsement ahead of the primary, many local party groups endorsed Begich, who also has the support of the Freedom Caucus, a nationwide group of Republicans that generally support positions to the right of the establishment.

In a statement posted on social media, Begich said Dahlstrom's decision means Republicans can "move forward unified in the effort to replace Mary Peltola, who has proven by her alignment with the left that she is not the moderate she claimed to be."

With 399 of 403 precincts reporting results as of Thursday afternoon, Aug. 22, and thousands of absentee ballots yet to be counted, Dahlstrom had 20% of the vote in the April 20 primary election. Peltola had 50.4% of the 96,500 votes, and Nick Begich had 27%.

Peltola led among Wrangell voters but with a slightly smaller margin than statewide. The incumbent collected 46% of the Wrangell votes to 29% for Begich to 25% for Dahlstrom.

Dahlstrom's withdrawal means the expected No. 4 finisher, Republican Matt Salisbury, will likely advance to the general election alongside Begich and Peltola, as would Alaskan Independence Party candidate John Wayne Howe, who is currently No. 5 in the primary.

Salisbury, a little-known moderate Republican, is currently No. 4 with just 0.6% of the vote.

Neither Howe nor Salisbury have raised or spent significant amounts of money, while Peltola has raised more than \$7.5 million in support of her candidacy, and Begich has raised almost \$1 million.

Millions more is being spent by outside groups.

The Alaska seat in the U.S. House could help determine whether Republicans or Democrats control the chamber next session.

In the November general election, Alaska voters will rank the candidates one through four. The candidate who gets more than 50% of first-choice votes will win, unless no one reaches that threshold in the first count, in which case the fourth- and third-place finishers will be eliminated until a candidate has more than 50% of the ballots.

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

Alaska Supreme Court approves ranked-choice repeal vote for ballot

BY JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

A ballot measure that could repeal Alaska's ranked-choice election system is headed to a vote in November, the Alaska Supreme Court confirmed Thursday, Aug. 22.

In a brief order, the court's five members upheld a lower court decision that certified Ballot Measure 2, which would repeal the laws that created the state's ranked-choice general election and open primary election system.

The order came shortly after justices heard oral arguments in an appeal claiming that the Alaska Division of Elections improperly certified the measure.

"Today the court quickly affirmed that the Division of Elections properly interpreted and applied the law in qualifying this initiative for the November ballot," Senior Assistant Attorney General Lael Harrison said in a statement issued by email. "The Department of Law is grateful to the court for their timely review and decision on this issue, in plenty of time for the division's upcoming ballot printing deadlines."

At issue in the appeal was whether the Division of Elections could legally allow petitioners to correct flaws with petition signature books after they had been submitted to the division.

Plaintiffs had argued that the division did not

have the power to allow post-deadline corrections under existing law, something the division has allowed since at least 2019.

If plaintiffs had won, the division would have been required to discard some petition books, denying repeal supporters enough signatures to put the question on the ballot this fall.

Justices did not immediately explain their reasoning but said they affirm the lower court's decision.

Plaintiffs were represented by attorney Scott Kendall, who wrote portions of the state's current election laws. Ranked-choice voting was enacted by a different ballot measure in 2020.

By text message, Kendall said he appreciates the fast ruling but that plaintiffs are disappointed by the ruling. "We do not yet know the court's reasoning, but despite demonstrated irregularities in the Division of Elections' handling of the ... petition, they were obviously unwilling to reverse the superior court," he said.

Kendall noted that backers of the initiative to repeal the new voting system are still in court, facing fines of nearly \$100,000 after Alaska's campaign finance regulator cited them for illegal fundraising.

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



PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Sweet giveaway

(From left) Annette Thompson, Esther Aaltséen Reese and Lexie Hayes laugh around the table as Hayes arrives at the WCA cultural center to pick up some jam. WCA hosted a jam and berry distribution for elders on Aug. 20. All donations were courtesy of Vivian Prescott.

Saxman receives federal money to build new affordable housing

BY ANNA LAFFREY
Ketchikan Daily News

Saxman, a community of about 400 people just south of the city of Ketchikan, will build 14 affordable housing units over the next year.

In partnership with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Saxman will use \$4.5 million in federal COVID-19 relief funds distributed through the Alaska Housing Finance Corp. to develop four apartment buildings — three fourplexes and one duplex — containing a total of 14 two-bedroom dwellings for low-income tenants. The units could be open for occupancy by the

end of 2025.

AHFC, a public corporation and independent state agency, this year is distributing \$26 million in leftover COVID-19 emergency rental assistance funding through its Last Frontier Housing Initiative to support development of new affordable housing units in Kotzebue, Nome, Bethel, Sitka and Ketchikan.

The housing grants come with a catch: Because the federal funding source is expiring, the money must be spent by Sept. 30, 2025.

AHFC Executive Director Brian Butcher, who visited Saxman in July, told city officials that they are the first community to complete the "request for proposals" process for construction and project management firms, and to enter the preconstruction phase.

Saxman this summer hired Dawson Construction and proHNS to complete the respec-

tive construction and management work for the development. The project team hopes to begin constructing the new housing units in September, and to have the roofs on all four buildings by November or December, said Saxman City Administrator Marissa Medford.

Medford said Saxman and the borough have confirmed designs with Dawson Construction for the dwellings the company will build on three city-owned lots in Saxman.

The federal money requires a \$675,000 local match. Saxman will provide the land, and the borough will provide services and cash to cover the balance.

As of this month, Saxman does not have any information from AHFC about how the city should select tenants for the low-income housing units, or how it should set up lease agreements with residents, according to Medford.

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WRANGELL SENTINEL

Petersburg Indian Association buys 45-room Tides Inn hotel

BY OLIVIA ROSE
Petersburg Pilot writer

The Petersburg Indian Association is now in the hospitality business with its purchase of the 45-room Tides Inn hotel and Highliner Car Rental from a longtime Petersburg family.

"My sisters and I are very pleased with the conclusion of the sale of the Tides Inn and Highliner Car Rental to the Petersburg Indian Association," Dave Ohmer said in a written statement. "The Ohmer family started doing business in Petersburg in 1916, and it is wonderful to now be selling the Tides Inn and Highliner to an organization whose families were here long before our Grandfather Earl arrived."

The tribal organization purchased the businesses and real estate for \$1.75 million, using federal COVID-era relief and economic development funds.

"The PIA Council is very excited to be the proud owners of this very successful and long-established business that has been well maintained and managed by the Ohmer family for many years," the council announced in a prepared statement Aug. 19.

"We were not in the market to buy a hotel and a car rental operation. The opportunity presented itself ... and it was just a good investment," PIA Tribal Council President Debra O'Gara said.

The businesses are expected to generate dependable, flexible revenue for the tribe, which receives much of its funding from the federal government with conditions attached. But the new revenue stream was not the only attraction to buying the Tides Inn.

The tribal council said it looks forward to exploring the possibility of job training, providing cultural education and experiences for visitors and space for Indigenous art demonstrations, as some examples of potential long-term goals.

"Pencil has not hit the paper yet," for these ideas, O'Gara said. The council does not plan any immediate changes at the Tides Inn. But brainstorming potential opportunities to support tribal citizens and the community "is what we were really excited about."

The new owners are a good fit, Ohmer said. "Both parties love Petersburg, take great pride in Petersburg ... and their vision was very much what the vision of Tides Inn has been ... it was easy to put the relationship together."

After their mother Gloria Ohmer, who owned and operated the business for more than 40 years passed away, the Ohmer siblings began to consider the future of the Tides Inn. "With her passing last year and all of us kids getting older, it seemed like it was something to start talking about passing along," said Dave Ohmer.

Conversations with PIA took root last winter, and after spending time working out the details and reaching an agreement with the Ohmers, the sale was made official this month.



PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Bounty of the sea

Brian Herman tends to oysters in their "floating bags" on Aug. 21. The family owns Canoe Lagoon Oysters, a mariculture farm tucked away in the Blashke Islands about 30 miles southwest of Wrangell in Clarence Strait. The farm produces roughly one million oysters a year, the majority of which are shipped to restaurants in the Lower 48, in addition to stocking their retail store in Wrangell.

Murkowski convenes summit on rural Alaska weather system failures

BY MARGARET BAUMAN
For The Cordova Times

Alaska communications and aviation entities, together with federal and state officials, convened in a summit in Yakutat led by Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski to collaborate on solutions to reduce weather-related travel delays and boost aviation safety in the state.

"We have 130 weather recording stations in Alaska and at any given time 50% are partially or entirely out of service," Murkowski said on Aug. 15. The senator, a third-generation Alaskan born and raised in Ketchikan, and later Wrangell, is out to resolve this issue, which has resulted in canceled flights in and out of rural communities.

"Earlier this year, I experienced what many rural Alaskans are all too familiar with, a long delay that forced me to redo my travel plans after Yakutat's Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) suddenly went down," Murkowski said.

"As I learned more about the tangled management responsibilities of multiple federal agencies overseeing Alaska's aviation weather reporting systems, it became obvious there has to be system improvements and greater communication between all stakeholders."

The summit in Yakutat "allowed us to drill down to the core of the issue and work on solutions," the senator said.

During the roundtable discussion, several steps to address the issue in Yakutat were identified, including having a community resident become the

local weather observer as a part of the Non-Federal Weather Observation Program.

Other steps include establishing battery backup and power systems and moving forward with a project to consolidate Yakutat's three surface weather observation components in one location with a singular backup power supply. The system is operated by the National Weather Service and Federal Aviation Administration.

The group also discussed improving

collaboration across agencies, and policy changes necessary to address the persistent weather observing issues across Alaska.

Yakutat Airport is a focal point for statewide weather observation challenges critical to improvements in aviation safety, Murkowski said.

Telecommunications are part of the challenge. Jeremiah Beckett, CEO of Cordova Telecom Cooperative, said the utility is on track to have new microwave communication services up and running

at Yakutat by Thanksgiving, weather dependent. "A lot of those plants are run on diesel generators, and they are very antiquated power systems," he said.

"It sounds like the power system is from World War II and the FAA did not have backup batteries and generators," he said of Yakutat's airport. "The airport does have backup power, but the FAA is not connected to it," Beckett explained. "We offered to donate our battery bank ... and that would help alleviate stress on their power system."

Alaska Airlines moves closer to purchase of Hawaiian Airlines

BY MICHELLE CHAPMAN
Associated Press

Alaska Airlines is one step closer to acquiring Hawaiian Airlines after the U.S. Department of Justice chose not to challenge the \$1 billion deal that the carriers say will create a company better able to serve travelers.

The brands of both airlines would be preserved after the merger, which is rare in an industry where decades of acquisitions have left only four big carriers dominating the U.S. market.

Alaska and Hawaiian say they have few overlapping routes and the intent of a tie-up is to allow the new airline to better compete with the nation's Big Four: American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines and United Airlines.

Alaska Air and Hawaiian Holdings, the parent company of Hawaiian Airlines, said in regulatory filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Aug. 20 that the review period for the Justice Department, which had already been extended several times, expired just after midnight.

The closing is still subject to approval from the Department of Transportation. Alaska and Hawaiian have been working

with the department on lingering issues, according to the SEC filing.

The decision by the Justice Department to give the deal a pass runs counter to the Biden administration's opposition to two recent attempts at further consolidation in the airline industry. The Justice Department successfully sued to block JetBlue Airways from buying budget carrier Spirit Airlines and prevented JetBlue from striking a partnership with American Airlines in the Northeast. In both, the administration argued that allowing the deals would have reduced choice and driven up prices for consumers.

If Alaska and Hawaiian close their agreement, it will be the first combination of sizable U.S. airlines since 2016, when Alaska outbid JetBlue to buy Virgin America.

Hawaiian has not recovered from the coronavirus pandemic as have larger airlines, including Alaska. Hawaiian depends heavily on tourism from Japan, which dropped sharply after the outbreak of COVID-19 and now suffers from the weakness of the yen, which has fallen by about 40% in comparison with the dollar since the start of 2021. In addition, Hawaiian faces more competition on flights between the islands and the U.S. mainland and from Southwest on intra-islands service

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
LEGAL NOTICE**

Declaration of candidacy for Borough Mayor, Borough Assembly, Port Commission and School Board, and signature petitions as required, will be available in the Borough Clerk's Office from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, Aug. 2 through Aug. 30, 2024.

Qualified persons may have their name placed on the ballot for the Oct. 1, 2024, City and Borough of Wrangell Regular Municipal Election by filing declarations of candidacy for Borough Mayor, Borough Assembly, Port Commission and School Board.

Borough Mayor: One seat, for 2-year term

Borough Assembly: Two seats, for 3-year terms

School Board: Two seats, for 3-year terms

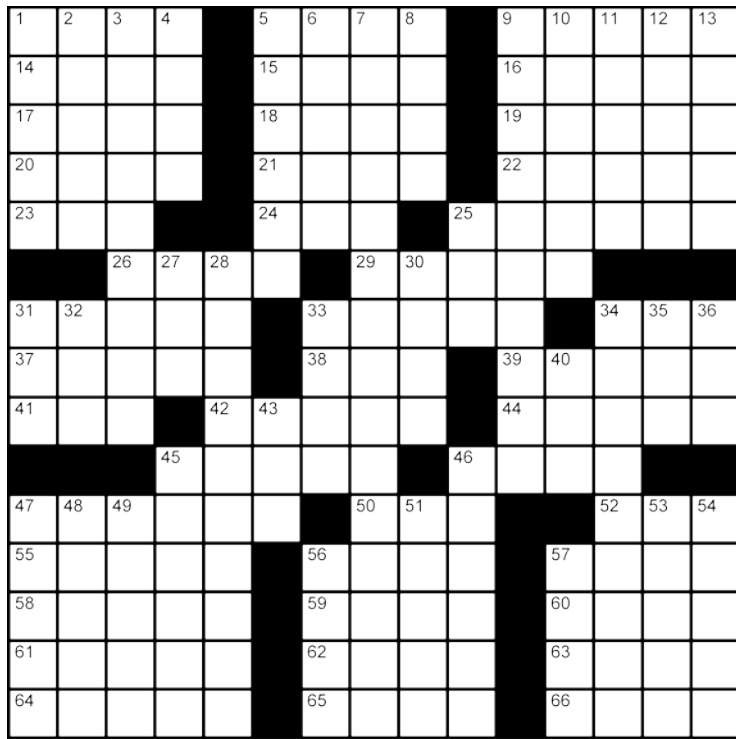
Port Commission: Two seats, for 3-year terms

Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City and Borough of Wrangell

Publish Aug. 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2024

Crossword

Answers on page 12



CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Pitcher's error
- 5 Hall amphibian?
- 9 Enhancement
- 14 Country singer/songwriter Jake ---
- 15 S American flightless bird
- 16 Light gray-brown
- 17 How to start a pudding race?
- 18 Bring in
- 19 Garden tool
- 20 Slant
- 21 Marx or Warners, e.g.
- 22 Adjusted
- 23 Longing
- 24 Place for experiments
- 25 Series of church intercessions
- 26 Prom partner
- 29 Sarcastic praise
- 31 Reluctant
- 33 Ugly encounter
- 34 Oil well equipment
- 37 Arc
- 38 Apollo 11 lander
- 39 New in Tijuana
- 41 Arid
- 42 Stand-in
- 44 Wept
- 45 Thin pancake
- 46 The Volunteer State (Abbr.)
- 47 Wooden hammer
- 50 Batter's stat.
- 52 A long way
- 55 Castaway locations
- 56 Bathtub residue
- 57 Where to find Pikes Peak (Abbr.)
- 58 Trim
- 59 Rent
- 60 Saturnalia
- 61 "Peace on earth, good will ---"
- 62 A k a C C C P
- 63 College sporting org.
- 64 Commence
- 65 Court dividers
- 66 Unload for cash

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Dictatorial
- 2 Up
- 3 Fabled
- 4 Recognize
- 5 Junior's voice
- 6 Vivien Leigh's G W T W role
- 7 Strenuous activity
- 8 Aykroyd and Quayle
- 9 Teetotalism
- 10 Second-in-command
- 11 Actress --- Rigg
- 12 Poet --- Nash
- 13 Wanting
- 25 Wolf Man --- Chaney
- 27 Off-roader
- 28 Now
- 30 --- Martin, cognac
- 31 Flat panel TV type
- 32 Belonging to us
- 33 Pigswill
- 34 Strengthen
- 35 "--- Got No Strings..." (Pinochio)
- 36 Deity
- 40 Gravetop vase
- 43 On a pension (Abbr.)
- 45 Brainy
- 46 Stopwatches, e.g.
- 47 Light fogs
- 48 --- in the arm
- 49 South American ruminant
- 51 Pop
- 53 Kind of pond bloom
- 54 Kingly
- 56 Ostracize
- 57 Drawbacks

Police report

Monday, Aug. 19
Criminal mischief.

Tuesday, Aug. 20
Suspicious circumstance:
Open door.
Subpoena service.

Wednesday, Aug. 21
Summons service.
Theft.
Agency assist: State sex-offender registry.
Reckless driving.

Thursday, Aug. 22
Missing child.
Motor vehicle accident.

Friday, Aug. 23
Motor vehicle accident.
Agency assist: U.S. Forest Service.

Welfare check.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for broken taillight.
Bar check at Rayme's.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for no visible registration.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for parking facing the wrong side of the road.

Saturday, Aug. 24
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for driving habits.

Traffic stop: Verbal warning for parking violation.

Agency assist:
Transportation Security Administration.

Found dog.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for expired registration, broken headlight.

Sunday, Aug. 25

Nothing to report.

During this reporting period, there were four agency assists for the Hoonah Police Department, five agency assists for ambulance calls, four dog-at-large calls, three parking complaints and four verbal warnings for speed.

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
PUBLIC NOTICE
Innovative Readiness Training Program**

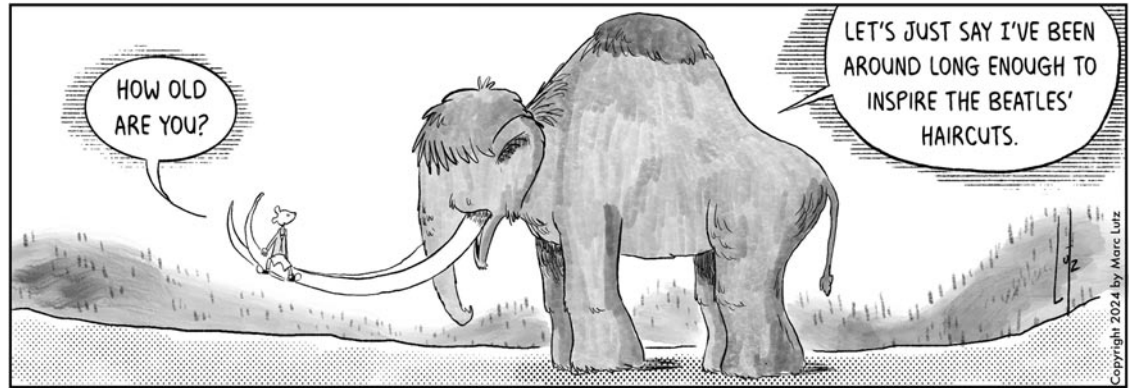
The City and Borough of Wrangell intends to solicit assistance from the Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training Program (IRT). The assistance will include conducting a cold-water dive and salvage mission of a sunken tug and barge. The proposed assistance will take place in the vicinity of the 6-Mile deepwater port tidelands in calendar year 2025. Construction contractors, labor unions or private individuals who have questions or who wish to voice opposition to military assistance for this project may contact Mason Villarma, Borough Manager, City and Borough of Wrangell, at (907) 874-2381 or via e-mail at mfvillarma@wrangell.com no later than thirty (30) days after the first publication of this notice. Persons not filing comments within the time frame noted will be considered to have waived their objections to military assistance for this project.

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

Publish Aug. 14 and 28, 2024

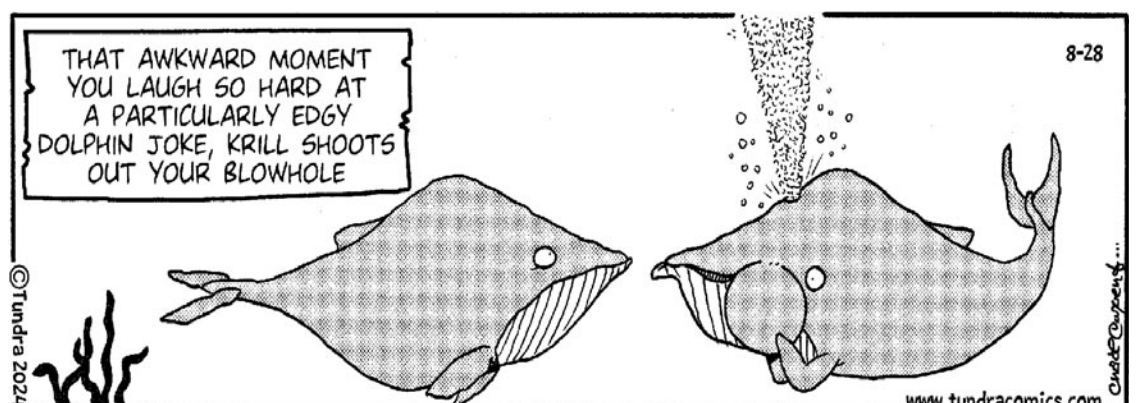
Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE
2009 Ford E-350 bus with 86,341 miles. Runs well and has had all scheduled maintenance. Call Catholic Community Service at 907-874-2006 for more information. \$15,000 OBO.

FOR RENT
Two-bedroom, two-bath, furnished, with office, and dog-friendly trailer. Saltwater view. Text only to 907-305-0464.

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

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

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 some 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.

STAY UP TO DATE
Get a Wrangell Sentinel subscription today and enjoy the convenience of having the paper delivered to your mailbox each week. Subscribers also can enjoy free online access. Call Amber at 907-874-2301 or subscribe online wrangellsentinel.com.

THANK YOU

Thank you for the pies
Beta Sigma Phi would like to give a big thank you and shout-out to all the wonderful people who donated pies for our fundraiser during the 4th of July! The money raised goes toward buying teddy bears for emergency personnel to give out to whoever needs one in a time of crisis. Thanks again, pie makers, you helped us reach our goal!

Beta Sigma Phi

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
NOTICE OF JOB OPENING
WRANGELL HARBOR DEPARTMENT
Marine Service Center Relief Operator**

The Wrangell Harbor Department will accept applications for the position of Marine Service Center Relief Operator through Sept. 6, 2024 at 5 p.m. This is a permanent union position with all City and Borough benefits and is compensated according to grade 18 of the union wage and grade table. The hourly pay range for this position is \$25.13 - \$31.87 per hour.

The Marine Service Center Relief Operator daily routine includes but is not limited to, safely operating multiple types of heavy equipment to move vessels and materials to designated work and storage areas. Schedules vessel haul-outs, operates the yard equipment and dictates traffic flow and yard usage with all users. Performs preventative maintenance on all Marine Service Center equipment and buildings. Keeps daily OSHA logs for equipment compliance. Performs duties as part of the Department of Homeland Security Port Security Plan.

The Marine Service Center Relief Operator is responsible for making sure all equipment and blocking is kept in safe working order. Must be able to operate a 150 and 300-ton Mobile vessel crane and 40-ton hydraulic trailer. Must possess a high regard for safety in the workplace.

A High School Diploma or GED is required. Must have a valid Alaska driver's license, valid CDL, valid TWIC card, forklift certificate, and basic First Aid/CPR certification or the ability to obtain all within 6 months.

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

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

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

Publish Aug. 21 and 28, 2024

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
NOTICE OF JOB OPENING
WRANGELL HARBOR DEPARTMENT
Harbor Maintenance/Security**

The City and Borough of Wrangell will accept applications for the position of Harbor Maintenance/Security through Sept. 6, 2024, at 5 p.m. The position will be posted for no less than 14 days and will remain open until filled. This is a permanent position with all City and Borough benefits. This position is part of the collective bargaining agreement.

This position has considerable responsibility for operations at Port and Harbor Facilities. The post comes with autonomy, but also the duty to coordinate and cooperate with those outside the Harbor Department.

A High School diploma or GED is required. Must have a valid Alaska driver's license, valid TWIC card and basic First Aid/CPR certification or the ability to obtain all within six months.

This is a full-time, hourly position with full benefits, paid at Grade 15 with a wage range of \$21.92 to \$27.80 per hour, DOE. Employment is based on a successful background check and pre-employment drug screening.

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

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

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

Publish Aug. 21 and 28, 2024

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
NOTICE TO VOTERS**

Voter qualifications for the City and Borough of Wrangell Oct. 1, 2024, Regular Election, are as follows:

1. a United States citizen; and
2. registered and qualified to vote in the State of Alaska elections and registered thereat for at least thirty (30) days immediately preceding the municipal election; and
3. at least eighteen (18) years of age; and
4. a resident of the City and Borough of Wrangell for thirty (30) days preceding the election; and
5. not disqualified by reason of having been convicted of a felony involving moral turpitude, and if so, that civil rights have been restored, nor disqualified because judicially determined to be of unsound mind.

Voters are cautioned to make certain their residence address is correct on their State Voter Registration. City law requires that each voter shall be registered to vote in the precinct in which that person seeks to vote to vote in municipal elections.

Your name must appear on the precinct list. If you are registered in another city, you must change your registration prior to Sunday, Sept. 1, 2024, to qualify to vote in the Regular Election of Oct. 1, 2024.

You may ask the Borough Clerk to check the precinct register to assure your qualifications.

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

Publish Aug. 14 and 28, 2024

**STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION
East Charley Timber Sale**

Notice of Timber Sale under AS 38.05.945 & AS 38.05.035(e). The State of Alaska, represented by the Alaska State Forester of the Department of Natural Resources, does hereby notify that the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) is offering the following commercial timber sale for competitive sealed bid: East Charley (SSE-1386-K).

The DOF is offering the State timber sold under AS 38.05.120 as described and represented by the East Charley Timber Sale Forest Land Use Plan.

The East Charley Timber Sale is located within the Southeast State Forest and Habitat Classified land on Kosciusko Island, near Edna Bay, Alaska. The sale is located on the south side of Kosciusko Island with limited road access. The sale includes approximately 201 acres in three harvest units composed primarily of young-growth timber with residual old-growth dispersed in the units. The saw-timber proposed for harvest is Sitka spruce, western hemlock and western red cedar. The estimated No. 3 sawlogs and better within the sale are composed of 7,243 MBF of saw timber. Another 949 MBF of No. 4 sawlogs and (net) utility grade wood is estimated in the harvest units. Removal of the No. 4 sawlogs and utility grade logs is optional.

The term of the contract is three years. The purchaser is required to deposit a performance bond with the State for an amount of \$100,000.00 at the time of signing the contract.

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources hereby gives notice that it is in the best interest of the State to offer this timber sale by a competitive sealed bid process. To qualify bidders must, prior to the bid opening, not be in breach of any prior timber sale contract, and must submit a copy of their current Alaska Business License. The Business License copy may accompany the sealed bid. The sealed bid shall be on forms provided by the Division of Forestry, marked on the outside of the envelope with the timber sale name and number, addressed to the Southeast Area Office, 2417 Tongass Avenue, Suite 213 Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 and will be accepted until 2 p.m. prevailing time, Sept. 16, 2024. Sealed bids may also be presented in person to the Southeast Area Forester before the bid opening. All bids must be in the physical possession of the Southeast Area Forester before the bid opening. Bidders are responsible for ensuring their complete bid package is delivered on time.

For a bid to qualify, prospective bidders will be required to submit a 5% bid deposit of the total bid value. The State reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Unless all bids are rejected, the sale will be awarded to the responsible qualified bidder offering the highest total bid value for the timber on the sale. The State also reserves the right to waive technical defects in this advertisement in the best interest of the State. The minimum acceptable total bid price for the timber is \$138,265.00.

If bidding as an agent for an individual, partnership, or corporation, the agent must submit with the bid a notarized power-of-attorney authorizing such agency. No agent may represent more than one principal, or bid in competition with the agent's principal.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SUBMIT COMMENTS CONTACT:

Alaska Division of Forestry	Contact: Greg Staunton
2417 Tongass Avenue, Suite 213	Phone: 907-225-3070
Ketchikan, AK 99901	Email: greg.staunton@alaska.gov

Copies of the prospectus are available for review at the Division's Area Office in Ketchikan and on the State Online Public Notice System at: <http://notice.alaska.gov/216405>.

The State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Fire Protection complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who may need auxiliary aids, services, or special modifications to participate in this review may contact the number above.

Publish Aug. 21 and 28, 2024

Ketchikan landslide

Continued from page 1

before we send them in," Dial said.

"At this time all individuals have been accounted for," emergency officials said in a statement late Sunday.

Over the past decade, landslides have killed 12 people in Southeast Alaska and caused millions of dollars in damage.

In addition to Ketchikan and the November 2023 slide in Wrangell that killed six people, a 2020 winter storm in Haines triggered a landslide that destroyed homes, killing two residents. In August 2015, heavy rain triggered a landslide in a subdivision of homes under construction in Sitka, leaving three people dead.

Sean Griffin, an employee of the City of Ketchikan's public works team, was identified Monday afternoon as the man killed in the landslide. Borough officials said he was in the area, responding to a call for assistance, during his time off.

"Sean and another team member were clearing stormwater drains when they were caught in the landslide on the Third Avenue Bypass," a borough statement said.

Griffin, 42, was raised in Ketchikan. He was a senior maintenance technician and worked for 17 years for the city. He left behind a wife and four sons, officials said.

The slide started above the Third Avenue Bypass and swept across the bypass and into part of



PHOTO COURTESY KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

A landslide in Ketchikan on Sunday killed one person, damaged homes and forced evacuations in the area about a mile north of downtown.

the neighborhood in the area of Second and Whitecliff avenues.

Ketchikan city officials, in a statement Monday addressing what they called "public concerns regarding the presence of cruise ships in port," said there were no safety concerns related to the port. At least one cruise line canceled shore excursions and tours, according to the statement.

"The decision to continue or suspend operations is ultimately up to individual companies, tour providers and downtown businesses," the statement said. "If

there is no health or safety issue, the city will not intervene into business decisions or impede commerce for our local businesses."

Along with geologists, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather team and representatives from the State Emergency Operations Center were expected to visit the slide area Monday.

It wasn't immediately clear what conditions caused the ground to give way. The slide came after a day of pouring rain coupled with high winds, resi-

dents said.

Resident Leah Canfield said the wall of dirt and debris narrowly missed her home. Canfield, her husband, and two dogs found refuge at a hotel. Their home on Second Avenue was unsafe to re-enter as of Monday.

Canfield, who has lived there since 1997, said she noticed how hard it was raining Sunday afternoon, hoped there wouldn't be a landslide, and said a prayer. By 2 p.m., she said, she saw city workers trying to stem flooding down the sidewalk.

Two hours later, as Canfield and her husband napped, she saw the flash of a damaged

power line and heard a roar and thought a thunderstorm had started. Then her home began to shake. It had been hit by another house.

"It shook. It was just terrifying," Canfield said Monday. "I had to wake up my husband: 'There's something going on. We need to get out.'"

The couple left safely with the clothes they had on, their phones and the dogs. Canfield said her husband was able to return briefly, escorted by responders, to grab some medicines and a few more items.

First responders came to help immediately, she said, listing other parts of the community that also rushed to provide assistance: the recreation center opened for showers; the school provided an emergency shelter; several businesses offered clothing; the tribal clinic was open for walk-ins; a restaurant gave responders free coffee; and some residents opened their homes to families with children displaced by the slide.

"This is just an amazing community," Canfield said. "It was a long night."

She said the amount of rain Sunday began worrying her when it got over 1.5 inches in just a few hours — similar conditions to those in Wrangell last year.

The rainfall total at Ketchikan Airport on Sunday was just over 2.5 inches, not an uncommon amount in the city and far short of the daily record set in 1961 of nearly 8 inches, according to National Weather Service meteorologist Spencer Fielding.

Problems persist for Alaska food stamp recipients

By Claire Stremple
Alaska Beacon

At the height of the food stamp backlog last November, pro bono attorneys and other volunteers at Alaska Legal Services got more than 600 requests in one month from Alaskans seeking a fair hearing to get their overdue food benefits.

So the 97 requests that came in this July didn't feel like anything the group couldn't handle, said Leigh Dickey, the nonprofit's advocacy director.

But the number is still alarming, she said, and it's double the past month's requests.

Dickey said the state's Division of Public Assistance is still dogged by the same problem: paperwork processing delays.

"Which is something the DPA, I think, is saying that they have fixed," she said. "But we are still seeing clients coming in who have delays at recertification."

Lawmakers and the governor have funneled more than \$70 million into tech solutions and new staff, but many Alaskans say they still can't get their paperwork processed. The Division of Public Assistance, which processes the paperwork, said it now completes 89% of applications on time. That is a significant improvement over January through April of last year, when only about 5% of food stamp recertifications were on time.

Dickey said the division also lags on responding when clients report changes in their household that affect benefits, like losing a job, and that it will ask for paperwork but neglect to file it, which can result in people losing benefits. And she said when the division asks for paperwork to verify employment, there are often mix-ups: "The clients will gather that information and will turn it in by a certain day, but DPA will close their case anyway."

"It's like one hand doesn't know what the other hand is doing," she said.

The Division of Public Assistance has taken many steps to get Alaskans benefits faster. It is working to reopen offices, increase training for the staff that process applications and it launched an online application for public assistance benefits in late July.

The goal of the online portal is to decrease the chance of paperwork mix-ups and increase the percentage of applications that are processed on time, officials say. The online application means people can apply for food stamps, renew their applications or report any changes — like a lost job or a new baby — from home.

It's called Alaska Connect and it's one of the first steps in the division moving entirely to a cloud-based system, said division Director Deb Etheridge.

"The primary goal is to provide better customer service to Alaskans and make it easier to access benefits and apply for benefits," she said.

But Etheridge said it also helps reduce the administrative burden on eligibility technicians, which should reduce delays.

"It actually supports us with some administrative simplification. So if individuals have access to upload their documents and fill out their forms and fill them out completely, then that takes away the time that we have to spend getting additional information," she said.

Alaska Connect doesn't allow people to check the status of their applications, but that piece is coming soon, Etheridge said.

But that inability to check applications is a major pain point for some of the 97 people that filed complaints with Alaska Legal Services in July. Several of the state's public assistance offices are still closed after pandemic shutdowns, or only allow "general inquiries," which means people who are concerned about their benefits cannot get status updates or help problem solving when slowdowns occur.

Officials say only the Sitka office is completely closed. The Anchorage, Ketchikan and Nome offices are open only for general inquiries, which means dropping off paperwork or basic questions, but no access to eligibility workers who can process applications or problem solve lost paperwork.

Etheridge said they are working toward fully reopening offices.

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

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PUZZLE SOLUTION

Restoring AMHS: A Vital Lifeline for Southeast

By Jeremy T. Bynum
Alaska House Candidate

The Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) is more than just a transportation service; it's a lifeline that connects communities, supports economic growth, and provides essential access across Alaska and beyond. The AMHS is our primary highway, facilitating movement between our communities and linking us to the rest of the state and beyond. The economic benefits of a fully functional marine highway extend far beyond Southeast Alaska, impacting the entire state.

This system is vital for businesses, enabling the transportation of goods and services, and fostering economic development in areas that would otherwise be isolated. For residents, it's more than just a means of travel; it's an integral part of daily life, ensuring access to essential services.

In recent years, the importance of the AMHS has been overlooked, leading to reduced services with significant negative impacts. Restoring and strengthening this system is essential not only for our communities but for the prosperity of Alaska as a whole. We must explore every opportunity to restore the southern connection.

To ensure the long-term viability of the AMHS, it's imperative that we communicate a clear, strategic vision, specifically our vision for moving people. This vision will directly inform and guide our efforts, ensuring that we have the right vessels in place to meet the needs of our communities. By advocating for this comprehensive approach, we can secure the future of our marine highway system, keeping Alaska connected, prosperous, and prepared for the challenges ahead.

(907) 821-VOTE (8683) votebynum.com

Paid for by VOTE BYNUM, P.O. Box 8683 Ketchikan, AK 99901