



Wrangell, Alaska
August 31, 2017

WRANGELL SENTINEL

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Access improved at Anan, first phase in overhaul

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Improvements to the observatory at Anan Creek are complete, improving access and security for one of Wrangell's top visitor attractions.

Managed by the Forest Service, Anan Wildlife Observatory is best known for its bear population, one of the few where brown and black bears can be observed feeding together nonconfrontationally. Along with LeConte Glacier and the Stikine River, the sites brought in half of Wrangell's

total tourism earnings in 2014, or \$2 million, according to a study by Rain Coast Data, a Juneau consultancy. Under current management guidelines, between 1,700 and 1,850 visitors make the trip there each summer, with some of the best viewing falling during the annual salmon run. But the site is popular year-round, and during the offseason groups still make the journey down, either from Wrangell by boat or from Ketchikan by floatplane.

Because of its economic and cultural value, the Forest Serv-



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

A group of visitors make their way up the new stairway at the Anan Wildlife Observatory's main beachhead. Completed before the summer, the permanent concrete and cedar fixture improves the ascent to the trailhead.



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

A black bear grabs hold of some breakfast at Anan's lower falls on Saturday. Drawn by returning salmon keen to spawn, nine different bears and cubs kept visitors to the Anan Wildlife Observatory entertained that morning.

ice has in recent years made site improvements to the observatory, making trail and culvert improvements in recent years. Beyond that, a major facelift was planned for this year, with work that was meant to address some key shortcomings of the site and its trail linkage.

The rockiness of the beach landing made it difficult for visitors to access the trailhead, particularly during high tide. The bay lacked a place to safely moor boats and planes after their passengers had disembarked. The viewing deck's outhouse was also detached from its enclosure, meaning those responding to nature's call would occasionally be trapped inside by passing or lingering bears. The scenic overlook of the lagoon was likewise succumbing to age and wear.

To address these, the landing was widened and a permanent staircase added granting access to the beach. Additionally, new outhouses were added near the top, at a discreet distance. A 24-foot by 48-foot float was added near the USFS floathouse allowing commercial and private mooring.

Once accessing the trail itself, visitors can still detect the fresh scent of cedar from the platform overlooking the lagoon, which was completely reconstructed. At the observation area, access into its enclosure was reorganized for traffic, and a new outhouse was constructed with a connecting boardwalk. Further, waste containment was improved to prevent nosy bears from damaging the outhouse.

The work was undertaken by

Rainforest Contracting, a Petersburg firm. In addition to the aforementioned improvements, the company also upgraded the walkways at and around the trailhead with a barrier-free gravel path. USFS did its own work installing the mooring float. Work had been completed ahead of the site's permitted viewing season, which began June 15 and ended August 25.

The project's funding came from Wrangell Ranger District's capital improvement budget. Its design began two years ago during a site master planning session, which identified various needs at Anan. This year's work was a first phase, with future phases prioritizing reassessment of the trail's design and a replacement of the observatory's current decking structure.

Budget biggest worry at municipal conference

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

At last week's meeting of the Wrangell Assembly, the city manager and mayor updated members on the outcome of Alaska Municipal League's Combined Summer Meeting held earlier this month.

Held in Haines August 16 and 17, the annual conference combines the summer meetings of the Alaska Municipal Management Association, the Alaska Conference of Mayors, and AML's Summer Legislative Conference. Speaking on it last Tuesday, Mayor David Jack recalled the main subject happened to be the state's primary worry, its budget.

"The most important thing is that the Legislature for the last two years kind of kicked the can down the road for the budget," he explained.

For the past five years, multi-billion dollar deficits each year have drained the state's Congressional Budget Reserve, which with a special subaccount had been valued at nearly \$12.8 billion in 2014. Subsequent spending of it to offset steep declines in oil-based revenues have the fund set to be worth only around \$2 billion by next year.

"They have made cuts, you've got to give them credit for that," Jack added, referring to 44 percent cuts to state spend-

ing over the same five-year timeframe. "But a source of revenue, they haven't really been willing to take that on."

Manager Lisa Von Barga had also attended the summer conference, and concurred with its focus. "There was a lot of discussion," she told members of the Assembly.

From a municipal standpoint, Von Barga noted that cuts to state funding — be they to capital budgets, agency payrolls, education funding or cost-sharing — are less a matter of cutting than they are a shifting of the burden for public services onto individual communities.

"We are facing cuts from the state, such that we're not getting as much money in terms of community assistance," she summarized. "Cuts to departments are trickling down in the form of expenses now that have to be borne by the municipalities. We're being squeezed at both ends."

A number of communities across the state have subsequently had to increase fees and utility rates, or enact new forms of taxation. In other cases, loss of funding for programming has meant cuts to services. In Wrangell's example, the impending loss of a security contract between the airport and local police will likely necessitate a reduction in staff.

"We're losing an entire officer because of cuts," said Von

Barga. Further reductions for upkeep of Wrangell's jail and to training assistance have their impacts as well.

As she explained to the Assembly, limitations on available funding for services and for projects means the city is going to need to change the way it handles them. On projects, Von Barga indicated she would prefer to have site evaluations and designs done less often by in-house staff, which on the face of it seems at odds with saving money.

"Given the shortage of funding here in Wrangell, I think the priority has been on trying to have as much work done in-house as possible. And that is important and commendable, but it puts an enormous amount of pressure on staff, and it puts a huge amount of liability on the municipality," she explained. "What ends up happening there is that things can get missed. ... You end up with a scope that has a lot of unknowns associated with it, or you end up with an inappropriate scope," which can significantly alter projects down the line.

With the Alaska Legislature passing another budget lacking a fiscal plan, Jack said Alaska's mayors have decided they will increase their presence in Juneau.

"The mayors came up with the idea of sending a delega-

Continued on page 7

Birthdays & Anniversaries



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

Thursday, August 31: Susan Bushnell, Scott Eastaugh, Joel Peterman, Anna Haug, Rose Johnson. **Friday, Sep. 1:** Missy Wright, Joshua Campbell, Toni Guggenbickler. **Saturday, Sept. 2:** Allen Taylor, Kameron Stough, Tristan Botsford, Clara Haley, Kristen Atkins. **Sunday, Sept. 3:** Janice Churchill, Tasha Peterman, Colby Nore, Shailyn Nelson. **Monday, Sept. 4:** Kenny Davis, Rynda Hayes, Jim Leslie, *Anniversary:* Glenn and Rebecca Smith, Paul and Bonnie Stutz. **Tuesday, Sept. 5:** Sandra Byrd, Luke Steele, Helen Keller, Devan Massin, Jason Rooney, Randy Oliver, *Anniversary:* Matt and Amber Walker-Scott. **Wednesday, Sept. 6:** Dan Nore, Casey Shilts, Heidi Armstrong, Luke Feurhelm, Phil Carey, *Anniversary:* Jeremy and Brandy Grina. **Thursday, Sept. 7:** Chris Versteeg, Clara Waddington, Leah McCandless, Mathias Wiederspohn, Donna Wellons, *Anniversary:* Colin and Erin Anderson.

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

Senior Center Menu

Thursday, August 31

Roast beef with gravy, mashed potatoes, spinach, fruit.

Friday, Sept. 1

Ham, potato salad, baked beans, fresh fruit.

Monday, Sept. 4

CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY.

Tuesday, Sept. 5

Sloppy Joe, mexicali veggie, Texas cole slaw.

Wednesday, Sept. 6

Chicken adobo, rice, carrots, fruit cup.

Thursday, Sept. 7

Cup of tomato, ham sandwich with lettuce and tomato.

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

Milk, tea and coffee will be served with meals.

FERRY

Departures

Northbound

Saturday, Sept. 2

Matanuska 7:00 a.m.

Sunday, Sept. 3

Malaspina 6:45 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 5

Matanuska 1:30 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 9

Matanuska 11:15 a.m.

Southbound

Thursday, August 31

Matanuska 10:00 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 4

Matanuska 4:00 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 6

Malaspina 7:00 a.m.

Thursday, Sept. 7

Matanuska 7:30 p.m.

Arrival times may vary. Call 874-2021 for verification or call 874-3711 for recorded information.



TIDES Aug 31 - Sept 7

	High Tides				Low Tides			
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
Aug. 31	9:49	11.4	9:42	13.5	3:01	3.4	3:01	5.9
Sept. 1	10:49	12.2	10:40	14.3	4:15	2.6	4:18	5.4
Sept. 2	11:38	13.3	11:29	15.2	5:11	1.6	5:16	4.4
Sept. 3	12:19	14.3	5:55	0.6	6:01	3.3
Sept. 4	0:12	16.0	12:56	15.2	6:31	-0.3	6:39	2.3
Sept. 5	0:51	16.6	1:29	15.9	7:04	-0.8	7:13	1.4
Sept. 6	1:28	17.0	2:01	16.5	7:35	-1.2	7:48	0.6
Sept. 7	2:04	17.2	2:32	16.9	8:07	-1.2	8:23	-0.0

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

Thursday, August 31

SAIL Class: 10 a.m. Senior Apartments Atrium. Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) free class is a strength, balance and fitness class for adults 65+. For more info call 874-3375.

Healthy Eating Demo on Healthy Food Preparation: 11:30 a.m. Senior Apartments Atrium. Free class. Learn how easy it is to prepare healthy and delicious food. Samples will be available. For more info call 874-3375. **Yoga:** 5:30 p.m. AICS Medical Clinic. Yoga for everybody, please come and join.

Tuesday, September 5

SAIL Class: 10 a.m. Senior Apartments Atrium. Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) free class is a strength, balance and fitness class for adults.

Is the attendance at your meeting or event low? Call Adrienne at the Sentinel to have it placed here.

Continuing Events

PARKS & REC ACTIVITIES: **Lap Swim:** M, W, F 6:00-7:30 a.m. & 5:00-6:00 p.m., M-F 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., S 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; **Arthritis Foundation Exercise Class:** at the Pool: M, W, F, 9:00-10:00 a.m.; **Water Aerobics:** M, W, F 10:00-11:00 a.m.; **Family Swim:** F 6:00-7:00 p.m.; **General Swim:** M & W 6:00-7:00 p.m., F 7:00-8:00 p.m., S 1:00-2:00 p.m.; **Weight Room:** M-TH 6:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 3:30-7:30 p.m., F 6:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 3:30-8:30 p.m., S 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. **Extra 2 Lane Lap Swim:** M-W-F 10:00-11:00 a.m.

OTHER MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES/EVENTS:

AA Meetings: Tu. 7 p.m., Toss Off Th. 7 p.m., Smoked Fish F 8 p.m., Step Study Sat. 7 p.m. at the Episcopal gChurch Parish Hall, Study Materials provided. Wed. M & M 12 p.m. at the Catholic Parish Hall, use back entrance.

NA Meeting: Wednesday, We Do Recover, 8 p.m. at the Episcopal Church Parish Hall.

Bridge Social: F, 1 p.m. at th Island of Faith Lutheran Church 874-3440, 874-3507.

Salvation Army Food Bank: Tuesday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. For information or questions please call Major Michael Bates at 874-3753.

The Way We Were

In the Sentinel 100, 75, 50 and 25 years ago.

Sept. 6, 1917: Little Glenora Waters made her social debut Tuesday afternoon when she entertained a number of her little friends in honor of her first birthday. The large birthday cake with a single candle alight upon it formed an attractive feature and the tiny hostess gave her assistance in the cutting of it most ably. A photo of the babies was taken and refreshments were served. The tiny tots present were Anita Wheeler, Louise Dahl, Beatrice Palmer, Eunice Mitchell, and Anne Elizabeth Matheson.

Sept. 4, 1942: Sept. 4: Double holiday looms this weekend with business ceasing, Monday, Labor Day. All stores and most business houses will be closed. Tuesday is general election day and the polls will be open in the City Hall 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Kickoff for the holiday weekend will be the big USO Jamboree tomorrow night in the ANR hall with a full evening of entertainment and eats. There will be dancing, games and other features. With its motto "You help someone you know when you help the USO," the committee is working to put over Wrangell's quota in a short time. USO means United Service Organizations and it includes the various groups such as the Salvation Army, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Jewish, Catholic and other organizations such as participated separately in bringing comforts to the service men in the last war. Russ Warfel's orchestra will furnish the music for tomorrow night's jamboree.

Sept. 1, 1967: Sale of the Wrangell Sentinel and Petersburg Press to the Nome Nugget

Publishing Co. was announced today by Mr. and Mrs. Lew Williams Jr., publishers of the weekly newspapers. The Nome Nugget Publishing Co. owns the tri-weekly Nome Nugget. Charles F. Willis Jr. is publisher and Al Phelps is general manager of the publishing company. Willis also is president of Alaska Airlines but he emphasizes that the publishing company is a separate business venture, not connected in any way with the airlines.

Sept. 3, 1992: The Starfish Timber Sale on southern Etolin Island will be offered exclusively to Ketchikan Pulp Company to fulfill that company's contract with the U.S. Forest Service under the Tongass Timber Reform Act. Gail Kimball, Forest Supervisor for the Stikine Area said she made the decision to offer the sale to KPC on Monday. Because of the proximity of the 42 million board feet sale to Wrangell, the City Council on behalf of the people of Wrangell

issued a letter on July 30 requesting Kimball to consider offering the sale to Alaska Pulp Corporation as well.

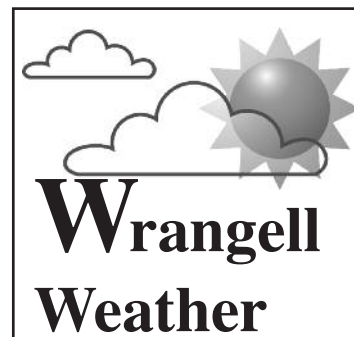
Castle Mountain Entertainment Presents

Dunkirk

Rated PG-13 • 1 hr 46 min
Tom Hardy, Jack Lowden
Action / Drama / History

SHOWTIMES:
September 1-3
FRI • 7 pm
SAT • 7 pm
SUN • 7 pm

Tickets: \$5 for 12 & under,
\$7 for 13 & up
Buy movie gift certificates
at the Museum gift shop
Check out more movie info at
www.imdb.com



Wrangell Weather

Date	High	Low
Aug. 21:	62	55
Aug. 22:	62	51
Aug. 23:	57	52
Aug. 24:	57	51
Aug. 25:	60	51
Aug. 26:	59	52
Aug. 27:	59	51
Aug. 28:	61	48



Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Daylight
Aug. 31:	5:48am	7:48pm	14:00h
Sept. 01:	5:50am	7:45pm	13:55h
Sept. 02:	5:52am	7:42pm	13:50h
Sept. 03:	5:54am	7:40pm	13:46h
Sept. 04:	5:56am	7:37pm	13:41h
Sept. 05:	5:58am	7:35pm	13:37h
Sept. 06:	6:00am	7:32pm	13:32h
Sept. 07:	6:02am	7:29pm	13:27h

Shellfish testing clears Shoemaker, except for butter clams

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell Tribe's environmental program office announced last week that most species of shellfish have been cleared for

consumption at a pair of local beaches.

On August 24 results from the week's sampling had indicated levels of saxitoxin – the root cause of paralytic shellfish poisoning –

evident in mussels at Pats Creek and Shoemaker Bay beaches had dropped below federal safety guidelines. Conducting the site testing, the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program had previously issued a warning for Pats in January and Shoemaker last August. The Pats site has subsequently been given the all-clear at the end of July, and most of Shoemaker Bay's shellfish species are also again acceptable to harvest and eat.

The exception is its butter clams, which as a species takes longer to relinquish the saxitoxin it takes in than other filter-feeders. Those near the Shoemaker Bay helipad still maintain elevated levels of the toxin.

"Because we cleared all of our species – minus the butter clams at Shoemaker – we can go ahead and use blue mussels as our indicator species. They pick up fastest," explained Kim Wickman, Wrangell

IGAP's technician.

For more than a year she has been regularly collecting samples from the two beaches, which then get sent to Sitka's Southeast Alaska Tribal Toxins laboratory. Operated through Sitka Tribe of Alaska, the program collaborates with other tribal partners, state and federal agencies, and regional fishing groups to monitor toxicity in the region's shellfish.

Saxitoxin is just one of three potentially deadly neurotoxins produced by species of area phytoplankton. When in bloom, Alexandrium produces enough saxitoxin to be absorbed by nearby filter feeders like clams and oysters. The bivalves themselves are unharmed, but the toxin can be transmitted to humans through ingestion.

The most serious risk posed by local plankton, Wickman warned that people should be aware of the warning signs of PSP if consuming shellfish. "Lips can start getting tingly. Trouble with breathing, light headedness, but tingling lips is like the number one," she said. "From there it can progress really quickly."

In severe cases, these symptoms can soon turn to nausea, vomiting, neurological effects, respiratory failure and, ultimately, death. If signs become evident, a person should seek medical assistance immediately.

Wrangell's IGAP collects shellfish for testing, but also monitors samples of the local water. Using a microscope, Wickman keeps an eye out for Alexandrium and other potentially harmful species, Dinophysis and Pseudo-nitzschia. Dinophysis produces okadaic acid, the cause of diarrhetic shellfish poisoning.

Pseudo-nitzschia produces domoic acid, which can lead to am-

nesic shellfish poisoning. Symptoms of this include vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, cramps and hemorrhagic gastritis. The substance also damages neurons in the brain, and symptoms can include headache, dizziness, loss of short-term memory, seizures and cardiac arrhythmia.

"These are all ones that are known to cause issues," Wickman explained. On her slides, she has observed Dinophysis and Pseudo-nitzschia, though contamination of area shellfish by them has not been evident. But the culprit behind saxitoxin has been harder to find.

"Actually, Alexandrium has eluded us. We have not seen that one," she said. "That's the most fascinating part of our project."

With the end of summer, the office will be conducting tests only once a month. In addition to water, Wickman also measures conditions like temperature and salinity. This information is then provided to Sound Toxins, a Washington-based monitoring program focused on algal bloom events.

"We identify everything we can," said Wickman. "They're using it as a way to track different species coming through." The hope is that a pattern for algal activity can be identified, which could be used to better predict and react to such blooms. "Someday, maybe, we'll be able to see the differences, what's going on in that area."

For ongoing data on Southeast Alaska's shellfish, Southeast Alaska Tribal Ocean Research maintains an up-to-date list of test sites online, as well as any warnings associable with local shellfish. The page is at www.seatorg.org. On its Facebook page, Wrangell Cooperative Association's IGAP also posts updates as well as a "plankton of the week" highlight.

Office of Children's Services centralized

ANCHORAGE — The Office of Children's Services has made it easier to report cases of suspected child abuse. Alaskans who know of a child that may be at risk of abuse or neglect can now call 1-800-478-4444 or email reportchildabuse@alaska.gov.

"The number-one priority at the Office of Children's Services is to ensure the safety and well-being of Alaskan children," said OCS Director Christy Lawton. "We rely on Alaskans to call and report children at risk of maltreatment. We are now offering an easier way for citizens to help us protect Alaskan children."

In the past 12 months, OCS received 18,599 reports of child abuse. Every report is screened by the division for additional action. Further investigation resulted in 8,200 of those children and families identified for assessments by OCS.

The division has also expanded its intake office hours from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., allowing Alaskans to report suspected child abuse outside regular business hours. The division will continue to expand its intake office hours in the future to increase accessibility.

Senior and Disability Services is moving on September 5th.

You will now be able to get your care coordination services and provider services at the Behavioral Health building (333 Church Street).

Please stop by and see us there soon!
Feel free to contact us with questions: 907.874.2373

Alaska Island Community Services

Community Services

SEARCHC

Police report

Monday, August 21

Unsecured Premise: Officer went and checked building all was okay.

Suspicious person.

Tuesday, August 22

Rocks on Roadway: Damage to vehicles.

Wednesday, August 23

Citizen: Civil.

Agency Assist: Alarm.

Thursday, August 24

Vacation check.

Parking complaint.

Report of trespassing.

Friday, August 25

Welfare check: Person is no longer in Wrangell.

Saturday, August 26

Driving complaint.

Agency Assist: Alarm.

Parking complaint.

Traffic stop: Verbal warning was given.

Traffic stop: Verbal warning for equipment.

Sunday, August 27

Abandoned vehicle.

Citizen Assist.

Calls received regarding loud noise. UTL.

Report of theft: Item found.

There were three ambulance calls this week.

The
WRANGELL SENTINEL

Will Be

CLOSED
LABORDAY

Monday,
September 4

Regional conference to examine environmental challenges

By **DAN RUDY**
Sentinel writer

For the first time, Wrangell will host the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska's (CCTHITA) annual environmental conference.

Hosted at the Nolan Center, the Southeast Environmental Conference will begin the afternoon of September 5, continuing through the middle of the 8th. Since its inception, the conference's focus has been on building collaboration between the region's tribes, corporations and other agencies.

"This is something we have been doing since the early, mid-2000s," said Ray Paddock, environmental coordinator for CCTHITA. Before its start, he explained groups often attended statewide conferences in Anchorage.

"A lot of the issues were pertaining to what is happening in that area up north," he said. "We wanted to have a focus on our region."

The Juneau-area conference thus focused on more regionally pertinent issues, ones which Southeast communities could better cooperate on addressing as a cohesive unit. Identifying these problems has been an evolving process, and today a conference planning committee sends out a survey to the different tribal governments. This gives each community the opportunity to list their top five concerns, which together shapes the focus on the year's agenda.

"We kind of start prioritizing as those come in," Paddock said.

"We come with prioritizations of climate change," he said, with this year featuring a workshop focused on adapting to changing conditions. Next week's climate change panel is scheduled for Thursday, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Earlier that morning, starting at 9:45 a.m., members of the conference's mining panel will discuss transboundary issues. And prior to that at 8:30 a.m., the conference will ad-

dress the topic of fish consumption rates.

Under discussion the last two conferences, this year the latter could potentially see a major development, Paddock explained. The conference is looking to undertake a regional effort that might be the first of its kind.

Another important subject to be explored include water quality, which will be the subject of a number of presentations Wednesday morning, from 8:30 to noon. Afterward during the afternoon, groups of participants will have the opportunity to see the Stikine River itself. One field trip will witness water quality sampling procedures, while the other will learn about stream temperature monitoring and sampling.

"These are some of the issues that we've come together for as a group," said Paddock.

Getting to take a site visit during the conference is a relatively new development, as last year's was the first held outside of Juneau, in Ketchikan. In an effort to better

build working relationships and cooperation, hosting the conference in communities such as Wrangell could provide conference partners a unique opportunity to showcase their projects and highlight local challenges.

One change this year is the time allotted. Normally a week-long event, the conference this year has had to be condensed to around three days. Partly this is due to the Labor Day holiday, but also the group has had to work around subsistence-related schedules. Right now a number of communities are still in the midst of their harvest season, and many are preparing to go hunting.

Still, the agenda should prove to be interesting, and Paddock has hopes it will be productive. "We're hoping we can come together as a cohesive unit."

Presentations will be open to the public. The conference opens up with a welcoming presentation by Wrangell Cooperative Association, Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.

Dan's Dispatch

By **Representative Dan Ortiz**

If legislators do not pass a budget within the regular legisla-

tive session, they should not receive legislative per diem during the subsequent special session. Alaskans for Integrity – a group

founded by one independent lawmaker, one Democratic lawmaker and one Republican citizen – proposed a ballot initiative for 2018 that will raise legislative standards of financial transparency and accountability to the public. I support this initiative, known as the "Alaska Government Accountability Act."

If approved by voters, this ballot initiative would end legislative per diem if the legislature does not pass a budget during the regular legislative session. The initiative would also prohibit lawmakers from accepting gifts and dinners from lobbyists. It would additionally strengthen Conflict of Interest rules for legislators and prohibit foreign-owned companies from financially supporting legislative candidates.

In my three years as your representative, I have voted to take action to reduce legislative per

diem and advocated that legislators avoid stretching their work into overtime. I argued to cut legislative per diem by 15 percent. I co-signed a bill that would require legislators to work within the voter-approved timeframe of 90 days and remove per diem after those 90 days passed. I voted this year to reduce legislative per diem by 75 percent. Unfortunately, none of these measures have made it all the way to the Governor's desk for his signature. This initiative allows Alaskan voters to control legislative per diem, questionable fringe benefits of lobbyist dinners and gifts, weak Conflict of Interest rules, and foreign campaign donations.

Losing per diem is a natural and fair consequence in the event that legislators fail to address the budget within the timeframe outlined by Alaska's Constitution. The additional stipulations out-

lined in the proposal will hold legislators to a higher standard of governance. Alaskans deserve lawmakers who act in an honest, responsible, and trustworthy manner. I hope to see the "Alaska Government Accountability Act" approved by voters in 2018.

Wrangell...

I so enjoyed playing music and sharing smiles in this wonderful town.

Thank you seems not enough.

I made a donation to long term care and said it was from all of you.

Together is a great place to be.

Keep in touch and know I am already planning my next show here!



Your fan, Matt Koerner

POLICY FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- Letters should be typed or clearly written and no longer than 400 words.

- All letters must be signed by the writer and include a phone number and any affiliation with a group which pertains to the letter.

The Sentinel reserves the right to edit any submissions.

The Deadline for submissions is Monday at 5 PM for Thursday publication.



Letters are run on a space available basis.

P.O. Box 798 205 Front Street, Wrangell, AK 99929
PHONE: 874-2301 • FAX: 874-2303 • EMAIL: wrgsent@gmail.com

The Wrangell Chamber of Commerce

is getting ready to submit the 2018 Birthday Calendar

If you have any additions or changes please let us know ASAP!

Our FINAL deadline is 8-31-17.



POSTED FUEL

WRANGELL

L N M: \$3.75

Alpine Mini Mart: \$3.75

PETERSBURG

SE Island Fuel: \$3.69

Petersburg Motors: \$3.61

Unleaded gas prices posted Tuesday, August 29

Oldest continuously published paper in Alaska



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Music and food highlights end of summer

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Before summer gives way to autumn, several Wrangell business owners decided to have one more hurrah downtown with food and live music.

Set for Sunday afternoon, "Warm August Nights" was thought up by Heidi Milazzo, Clay Culbert, Lucy Robinson, Brooke Leslie and Brenda Schwartz-Yeaeger. "All of us have been working on it together," said Milazzo. "We

just wanted to have a fun family event."

Culbert pointed out the lull in local activities around August, with not much by way of entertainment between Bearfest at the end of July and Halloween festivities. With a chance of some late summer sunshine and use of the downtown pavilion, Milazzo said the opportunity was there to have another gathering.

For entertainment, she invited her nephew, country musician



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

Tennessee-based musician Matt Koerner plays a two-hour set on Front Street Sunday. Arriving the previous Thursday, he gave shows the following evenings at the Elks Lodge and Rayme's Bar.



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

Participants in Sunday's afternoon 5K helped raise funds and awareness for Wrangell's proposed mariners memorial project.

Matt Koerner. It didn't take any convincing, having already visited Wrangell for last year's Independence Day celebration.

"Matt came up last year with his family. He brought a guitar, played a couple of songs, and just loved it," said Culbert.

Koerner was raised in Tustin, California. Pursuing a career in music, in 2014 he moved to Nashville, Tennessee. He has released a five-song eponymous EP, and has put out a single, "Welcome to the Doghouse." Shortly before coming up to Wrangell for the weekend, Koerner toured several spots in the greater Los Angeles area. He is currently touring the country as he works on his first full-length album.

"He's a solid musician. He's a performer, it's what he does for a living," Culbert commented. "I think his sincerity and the way he handles people, in a town like Wrangell he just fits right in. He's already made friends here and likes being here."

As their idea started coming together, the event's organizers spent the week leading up to the gathering spreading the word. Milazzo said one of the more challenging parts was getting an inviting name for the do. After a particularly rainy couple of months, they had decided something warm and evocative of sunshine would be welcome. The

Front Street pavilion was booked, a pair of food booths set up for the afternoon, amps and a microphone readied, and posters began appearing on storefronts.

"The local Chamber (of Commerce) was really supportive. It wasn't their event but they helped get the word out," Milazzo added.

As it turned out, the weather matched the name just fine. About 150 people turned out for a couple of hours of music, plus there was additional foot traffic from the Seven Seas Mariner docked that day. Even after the main show drew down, a number of people sat around a fire with Koerner for some time, strumming the guitar.

Culbert thought it was all in all a success, hitting the right notes for the summer. He also thought it had been a good opportunity for some of Front Street's newer shops to liven things up some. Like Tent City Days and Midnight Madness, such annual gatherings help bind the community together.

"This place has a spark," he said of Wrangell. "If we don't have events in Wrangell, and everybody doesn't kick in and do this, we're going to lose that spark."

Just prior to Warm August Nights, a run to benefit the mariners memorial project was organized by Southeast Beasts, Wrangell's running club. Planned for Heritage Harbor, the memorial

wall and gazebo's design was approved this year by the Port Commission, and fundraising efforts have since been taken up by an independent board.

"We have a five-person board that's been working on picking up where the project left off," explained one of its members, Jenn Miller. She is joined on it by John Martin, Brennon Eagle, John Yeager and Gig Decker. "Right now we're just trying to gain supporters," people to pledge support for the project. "That membership base will help us be able to apply for larger funding so we can get the project started."

Southeast Beasts' chair, Robinson explained the run was meant to raise awareness of that effort. The run itself raised about \$260 in donations, but five new memberships and two \$500 donations to the memorial project brought in \$1,510 in all.

"Every little bit helps," said Robinson. "It's nice, because the fishermen are a big part of our community, and that's what we're all about."

"By the end of this fall we were hoping to have 200 supporters," said Miller. So far the group is about a quarter of the way there. Progress on the project can be tracked on www.wrangell-marinersmemorial.com, or one can sign up to be a supporter through the site.

Last day to file for open ballot positions

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Today is the last day to file for the October 3 municipal elections, and there are still some uncontested spots.

As of Tuesday, five residents have put in their names for consideration, though at the moment each will be running uncontested. Assembly member Mark Mitchell will not seek another term on that body, but will be running instead for one three-year term on the Port Commission. Current commissioner Walter Moorhead has not submitted his name for another term.

Two three-year terms on the Borough Assembly are coming up for election, with the seats of Mitchell and Stephen Prysunka both expiring this year. Prysunka has filed to run for another term.

For the Wrangell School Board, Jessica Rooney has put herself up for consideration. The three-year term is that of former board president and current member Susan Eagle.

A two-year unexpired term on the board is also open, with appointed member Robert Rang seeking reelection. On Tuesday resident David Wilson has put himself up for consideration as well, and will be running against him.

On the Wrangell Medical Center Board, Jennifer Bates has declared for one of two four-year seats, currently filled by Bernie Massin and Terri Henson. A third, two-year, unexpired term vacated by Woody Wilson in October 2016 is also open on the upcoming ballot.

Once the August 31 filing deadline has passed, write-in candidacy is still an option for those interested in running for a position. A letter or statement of intent will need to be filed with the borough clerk's office by September 29 to run as a write-in.

Should the election come and go without a full ballot, any vacant positions can be filled by appointment by the mayor with the consent of the Assembly. Any appointments would last until October 2018.

The deadline for voting is also coming up quickly. Residents need to be registered by September 3 in order for their vote to be counted. Clerk Kim Lane said she could make herself available on the weekend for any last-minute registrations, if need be. Call or stop by City Hall for forms or contact details. Additionally, information on the requirements for candidacy and voting locally can be found in the Sentinel and on the city's <http://www.wrangell.com> website.



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AT CITY HALL**

FOR THE OCTOBER 3, 2017 REGULAR ELECTION
QUALIFIED VOTERS MAY VOTE AN
ABSENTEE BALLOT UNTIL
5:00 P.M., Monday, OCTOBER 2, 2017

For those voters who cannot VOTE ABSENTEE IN PERSON, you may submit an application to have your ballot mailed or faxed to you beginning Tuesday, September 8, 2017, at 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.
Please stop by the Borough Clerk's Office to apply.

Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
Publish: August 24, 31, September 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2017

City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
Notice to Voters

Voter qualifications for the City & Borough of Wrangell, October 3, 2017, Regular Election, are as follows:

1. a United States citizen;
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;
3. At least eighteen (18) years of age;
4. A resident of the City & Borough of Wrangell for thirty (30) days preceding the election;
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 in order 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, September 3, 2017, to qualify to vote in the Regular Election of October 3, 2017.**

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

Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
Publish: July 27, August 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, 2017

City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
PUBLIC NOTICE
Vacancy on the Inter-Island Ferry Authority

The City and Borough of Wrangell is accepting letters of interest for the following vacancy:

**One (1) seat to the Inter-Island Ferry Authority
(to represent Wrangell)**

The term for this vacancy is until June 30, 2021

Any interested person is eligible to apply. Letters of interest should be submitted to:
Mayor David L. Jack
PO Box 531
Wrangell, AK 99929
or you can email your letter of interest to the Borough Clerk at: clerk@wrangell.com on or before **Tuesday, September 12, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.**

Kim Lane, MMC
Borough Clerk
Publish: August 31 and September 7, 2017

CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL, ALASKA
NOTICE OF REGULAR ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the 3rd day of October 2017, there will be held in the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, a Regular Election for the purpose of voting on the following City Offices.

Assembly:	Two – (3 Year Terms)
Port Commission:	One – (3 Year Term)
School Board:	One – (3 Year Term)
School Board:	One – (2 Year <i>Unexpired</i> Term until 2019)
Hospital Board:	Two – (4 Year Terms)
Hospital Board:	One – (2 Year <i>Unexpired</i> Term until 2019)

Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
Publish: August 24, 31, September 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2017

PUBLIC NOTICE

For the upcoming City and Borough of Wrangell Regular Election of October 3, 2017, the following ordinance applies:
2.16.030 Write-in Candidates and Write-in Votes. Individuals who fail to file a declaration of candidacy but wish to run for office as a write-in candidate, must file with the borough clerk, a letter of intent no later than five p.m. on the Friday preceding the election (September 29, 2017) in which the candidate plans to participate.
Write-in votes cast for individuals **who do not file a letter of intent will not be counted.**

In order to vote for a write-in candidate, the voter must, in space provided, write in the candidate's name as the candidate's name appears on the letter of intent filed with the borough clerk. In addition, the voter must mark the oval opposite the candidate's name.
Stickers shall not be used.

Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
Publish: August 31, September 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2017

City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
PUBLIC NOTICE
Vacancy on the Wrangell Medical Center Board


The City and Borough of Wrangell is accepting letters of interest from citizens who wish to serve on the Board of Directors for the Wrangell Medical Center.
The unexpired term of appointment is unexpired until October 2017.
Any interested person is eligible to apply. Letters of interest should be submitted to:
Mayor David L. Jack
PO Box 531
Wrangell, AK 99929
or you can email your letter of interest to the Borough Clerk at: clerk@wrangell.com on or before **Tuesday, September 12, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.**

Information on the powers and duties of the Wrangell Medical Center Board are contained in the Board of Directors' Bylaws. A copy of which can be obtained by contacting the Borough Clerk at 205 Brueger Street or email to clerk@wrangell.com.
The City & Borough of Wrangell is an equal opportunity employer.

Kim Lane, MMC
Borough Clerk
Publish: August 31 and September 7, 2017

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Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH
Fisheries columnist

The “bread and butter” salmon catches are far better than last year despite the 2017 statewide salmon take falling short

Alaska’s salmon season is winding down and while catches have made the record books in some regions, the statewide take will fall a bit short of the 204 million fish forecast. “We are within about 10 percent of the forecast, so that’s very positive and overall it’s been a pretty good season,” said Forrest Bowers, deputy director of the commercial fisheries division of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

The statewide salmon catch through Friday topped 191 million. The shortfall, Bowers said, again stems from the arrival of fewer pink salmon.

“We were expecting a harvest of about 142 million, right now it’s at 114 million. We’re probably not going to catch another 30 million pinks between now and the end of the season,” he said.

Still, the “bread and butter” catches are far better than last year when pink returns were so dismal, it prompted a disaster declaration by Governor Walker.

This summer’s humpy haul at the three prime producing regions all are within the lower ends of the forecast ranges with Southeast’s take so far on its way to 28 million, Kodiak at 19 million and Prince William Sound nearing 42 million pink salmon (humpback whale predation is being blamed on lower pink salmon catches there).

One big pink winner this year, Bowers said, is the Alaska Peninsula which had a “spectacular sea-

son.”

“Their pink harvest (nearly 19 million) and chum catch (nearly 2 million) will end up in the top five on record,” Bowers said. “And the Peninsula sockeye harvest (7 million) is going to the second or third largest ever.”

It will be sockeyes that help offset any number shortfalls this season with a statewide take of about 52 million, of which nearly 37 million came from Bristol Bay.

“It is the 10th time in history that we’ve harvested over 50 million sockeye salmon,” Bowers said. “Catches for the previous two years also topped 50 million, but prior to that, you had to go back to the mid- to late 1990s to see such a large sockeye harvest.”

Perhaps the biggest salmon surprise this year was the huge returns of chum salmon across the state. The catch to date of 21.2 million chums is just shy of the all-time record of 24 million fish set in 2000.

“It’s one of the six times we’ve ever harvested over 20 million chums. That was a surprise. We didn’t expect that at all,” Bower said, adding that coho catches are also stronger than usual.

Salmon fishermen way out west also are enjoying some of the best returns ever.

At Norton Sound, catches of chums and cohos (over 300,000 combined) are among the top 10 of all times. At Kotzebue, the chum fishery has topped 400,000 for the second year in a row and could rank as the sixth best in the 56 year history of the fishery.

On the Yukon River, a catch of more than one million chum salmon have been taken so far, with the best fall catches in history.

The Yukon also has seen the biggest king salmon returns since 2005.

Salmon even appeared at Barrow where locals were able to pack their freezers with a mix of chums, pinks and kings.

“That’s a relatively new phenomenon,” Bowers said. “We don’t have any assessment projects to monitor up there, but it’s pretty exciting. That would be a range extension potentially for some species and it will be interesting to hear if those have established themselves as spawning populations or if it’s just a few strays that wandered up there.”

The only westward region that was a total bust was at the Kuskokwim River where enough sockeyes and coho salmon returned to allow for harvest opportunities, but no buyers meant no fishing. Another big salmon downer this year was the unprecedented and complete closure for king salmon in Southeast Alaska, the largest producing area. Catches there totaled just 165,000 fish; the statewide king salmon take stands at 244,000.

Bowers said it’s too soon to predict a total dockside value for the 2017 salmon catch, but with higher prices across the board, it will certainly eclipse the 2016 value of \$406 million. Preliminary totals for the 2017 salmon season will be released in November.

Escaped salmon watch – Alaskans should be on the lookout for some of the 300,000 Atlantic salmon that escaped a week ago from a failed net pen near Bellingham Bay, WA. The 10 pounders are reportedly “heading for every river in Puget Sound,” according to the Seattle Times.

The salmon were undergoing a year-long treatment for a bacteria called yellowmouth. They are the property of Cooke Aquaculture, the largest farmed salmon producer in North America, and the new owners of Icicle Seafoods in Alaska.

Several hundred Atlantic salmon have been taken in Alaska waters in past years, and Forrest Bowers said some of the latest escapees will probably make their way here. He said it is not likely that the Atlantics would breed with Pacific salmon, or even with each other.

“They may be triploids that are sterile but I’m not sure about that. But certainly large numbers of these fish competing for food and other habitat resources with native Pacific salmon, Dolly Varden or steelhead trout is a concern for sure.”

Anyone catching an Atlantic salmon is urged to report it, and if possible, bring the fish to a local ADF&G office. The department’s home page has an “Invasive Species” link with reporting instructions, and a hot line number (1-877-INVASIVE).

As a side note: every fish species caught in Alaska has a unique fish ticket number. For Atlantic salmon, the number is “666” – the Biblical number for Satan.

Discards drop - Fewer fish are being discarded by the world’s fishing fleets, but they still are tossing back 10 million tons of fish every year – 10 percent of global catches. Nearly half of all discards occur in the Pacific Ocean.

The discards are fish that may be too small, damaged, inedible, out of season or of little market value.

Prior to the year 2000, discards comprised up to 20 percent of the world catches, reaching a peak of 19 million tons in 1989. The discard levels have been dropping steadily ever since.

Those are some of the conclusions in a new University of British Columbia catch reconstruction project that derived discard estimates for all major fisheries in the world going back to the 1950s.

High discards result from poor fishing practices and inadequate

management, the report says.

The biggest reason discards are declining likely reflects lower global fish catches. Fishing operations are catching less fish, so there’s less for them to throw away. From 1950 through 1996, world catches rose from 28 million to 130 million tons per year; since then fish catches have declined by 1.2 million tons a year.

Better fisheries management in some areas also has played a role in reducing discards, including strict rules on reducing waste and forbidding discards in Norway and parts of Europe.

The location of fish discards also has shifted over the decades. From the 1950s to the 1980s, discarding mostly occurred in northern Atlantic waters off the coasts of the U.S., Canada and Europe.

In the Pacific Ocean, discards hit a high of more than nine million tons in 1990 and have declined since to under five million tons per year. Pacific fish discards are happening mostly off the coasts of Russia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. Russian fishing

fleets have accounted for more than half of the discards in recent decades.

In Alaska waters, much of the fish taken as bycatch is not discarded but instead is donated to food banks.

Halibut updates – Meeting dates and the call for regulation proposals to be considered for 2018 were just announced by the International Pacific Halibut Commission.

Any proposed changes to halibut management, including catch limits, must be submitted by October 29 to be on the agenda for the interim meeting, set for November 28 and 29 in Seattle. The proposals considered at that meeting will automatically be included at the IPHC annual meeting January 22-26 in Portland, Oregon.

Informal statements also may be submitted by email and will go directly to the commissioners at each session. (Statements@iphc.int) New this year: people planning to attend the IPHC meetings will be required to pre-register.

Budget

Continued from page 1

tion representing the mayors of Alaska, from Anchorage to the North Slope, and Southeast,” he said. A committee has since been formed, to organize a plan to this end in the coming month. “To be present at the next budget hearing, whenever the governor decides to call a session for that purpose. To be present and basically say ‘It’s time to do something.’ We can’t go on kicking the can down the road. It’s time to do something, and the people of the state of Alaska are tired of them not getting the job done.”

Alaska Conference of Mayors have for the past couple of years submitted resolutions to the Legislature calling for a “three-legged stool,” or a plan involving cuts, a Permanent Fund restructure and new revenue. “We weren’t specific on how that was done,” Jack explained.

“They’re just not listening,” he added. By having a group of mayors there in Juneau when the next special session is called, ACM members hope to make themselves better heard. “At least the news media would be interested, if the legislators aren’t.”

“The mayors really decided they need to have a strong presence speaking to elected officials about getting a budget solution,” said Von Bargaen. “I think everybody understands that budget solution at some point has to include other revenue sources. We can dance around what ‘new revenue sources’ means, but the fact of the matter is it’s going to be a sales tax or an income tax, or a combination of both – it has to be.”

In Wrangell’s case, a sales tax could further undermine its financial position. Already one of the state’s highest, at seven percent, the addition of a statewide rate could become untenable for residents.

“If that becomes an unaffordable standard for the people in that community, the only option is for the municipality to lower their sales tax amount. So that’s revenue lost,” Von Bargaen explained. This effectively could hamper the municipality’s ability to collect the revenue it needs to function. “They are at the same time facing all of these cuts. Those expenses are being pushed onto the municipalities.”

The conference at least caught the ear of Gov. Bill Walker, Jack noted. Arriving by the morning ferry, he had been the keynote speaker for lunch during the legislative conference. He remained the entire day, meeting with delegates and hearing their concerns. “I think it was good of him to stay and listen to everybody,” Jack commented.

Gov. Walker, was a member of AML for years, “He comes to every one of our meetings. Every one,” said AML director Kathie Wasserman.

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Wrangell auxiliary honored at national convention

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Women from the local American Legion Auxiliary took part in the national organization's 97th annual convention last week.

Three members from Merlin Elmer Palmer, Auxiliary Unit 6, joined 1,500 other delegates, as well as alternates and guests from around the United States in Reno, Nevada. Accompanied by Barbara Hommel and Zona Gregg, respectively the chapter's vice president and treasurer, president Marilyn Mork was recognized as Alaska's Woman of the Year.

"I was kind of surprised that I was the woman of the year," Mork said of the award. She has been a member of the AMA for about eight years, supporting the Wrangell chapter's various projects and endeavors. "It's something I like to do, to help people wherever I'm needed."

It was her first time attending the national convention, and it was a memorable affair. "I was in awe at all the people that were there," Mork recounted. "It was overwhelming to me."

A luncheon honored the awardees from all 50 states, with recipients given a plaque and flowers for their service.

For nearly a century, the ALA has been dedicated to serving the United States' veterans, actively serving personnel and their dependents. The group es-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

At the far left, president for Wrangell's American Legion Auxiliary Marilyn Mork stands with a dozen other recipients of their states' "Woman of the Year" awards, during the ALA National Convention in Reno on August 22.

timates its members provided millions of hours of volunteer service annually, about \$2 billion worth.

The group's weeklong convention started with a parade on August 18, and attendees participated in meetings, divisional caucuses, sessions on how to continue the ALA's mission, the nomination of state- and national-level officers, and other recognitions.

On August 23 the Auxiliary conventioners also joined the

American Legion and Reno-area residents for a presidential visit. About 9,000 people were estimated to have been in attendance as President Donald Trump signed into law an act prohibiting the sale of either the Medal of Honor or the Purple Heart, respectively the military's highest decoration and awarded to those wounded or killed during service.

He also delivered a speech of about 20 minutes, encouraging national unity.

"It was a nice treat to have the President there," said Mork. It had been the first time she had been in the same building as a sitting president, and she had a good view of the podium. "I was about seven rows from the front."

The group's next activity is

to replace the doors on the Legion Hall. A grant from the American Legion's national headquarters is paying for the needed improvements. The project is planned for the morning of September 9, from 8:30 until noon. The Legion is looking for around 30 volunteers to help with the door replacement. Mork said lunch will be provided afterward.

102 kids helped in annual schoolbag distribution

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Ahead of local kids starting school this week, a regional program wanted to make sure students started prepared.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) department for Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska distributed more than 2,000 backpacks and athletic bags to communities across Southeast Alaska. Working with Wrangell Cooperative Association, several CCHITA employees were in town last week with 102 bags, each filled with age-appropriate school supplies to start the year off right.

"It's a great program," said Teresa Sarabia, acting manager for CCHITA Employment & Training in Juneau. Because of the scale of the program, she explained members from other tribal departments pitch in to help TANF distribute its bags.

Coworkers Barbara Taug and Rhonda Mann spent the preceding week on Prince of Wales, in Skagway and other communities for the distribution.

"We were on the go," commented Mann. This year was her first assisting the program. A Juneau resident, she said the give-away had actually gotten her around to communities she had never before visited; in the case of Wrangell, she had never set foot past the ferry terminal. "It's been wonderful being able to experience some of our communities."

Sarabia explained WCA provided a place to distribute the bags from, inside its Cultural Center. Wrangell's Tribe had also picked up the bags and materials from the airport, conveying them to the site.

"It's a great partnership with Wrangell," she said.

Parents and guardians sign up their children for the program in advance. The bags themselves are good quality, with brands like Under Armour, Adidas and JanSport. Every bag is accounted for as they are given out, and this year the program also provided a variety of healthy snacks for the first week or two of classes.

"We bought snacks locally," Mann added.

The school bag distribution is just one of TANF's programs. The office largely provides financial assistance to families, while emphasizing and setting goals for work participation, education, family stability and responsibility.

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