

## Annual payment to Alaskans \$1,702; direct deposits will start flowing Oct. 3

By JAMES BROOKS  
*Alaska Beacon*

This year's Permanent Fund dividend, plus a one-time energy rebate bonus, will be a combined \$1,702 per recipient, the Alaska Department of Revenue announced Sept. 19.

The amount is slightly higher than previous estimates from the spring, in part because the number of eligible Alaskans is lower than expected.

The payments will be direct-deposited into bank accounts starting Oct. 3. Paper checks, for those Alaskans who requested them, will be mailed later in October.

This year's combined dividend is about \$400 more than last year's payment, in part because lawmakers set aside some of the state's surplus oil revenue to boost the payment.

Since 2017, the Alaska Legislature has set the amount of

the dividend via budget negotiations. That year, the Alaska Supreme Court ruled that lawmakers were not required to follow a payment formula that dates to the 1980s.

Legislators and Gov. Mike Dunleavy have been unable to agree on a replacement formula, and the amount has been set by political compromise since then.

In December, Dunleavy proposed using the traditional formula to pay a dividend of about \$3,500 per recipient, but lawmakers rejected that proposal because — at proposed levels of spending on services — it would have resulted in a state budget deficit of about \$1 billion.

Instead, legislators for the second straight year used an alternate formulation based on the annual cash transfer from the Alaska Permanent Fund to

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## Local election Oct. 1; early voting available now through Sept. 30

By LARRY PERSILY  
*Sentinel writer*

Registered voters in Wrangell have several decisions to make in this year's municipal election — not just deciding their choices for seven elected offices and two ballot propositions, but when they want to vote.

The polls will be open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 1, at the Nolan Center. But for people who like the convenience of voting early, or will be out of town Oct. 1, they can choose to stop by City Hall weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. though Monday, Sept. 30, to cast an early ballot.

All of the ballots will be tabulated at the same time after polls close Oct. 1.

After deciding which day they want to vote, residents will be handed a double-sided ballot with multiple decisions to make. The mayor's job is on the ballot, with David Powell and incumbent Patty Gilbert running for the seat. And two of the six assembly seats also are on the ballot, although incumbents Jim DeBord and Bob Dalrymple are unopposed in their quest for another three-year term each.

Dan Powers and incumbents Angela Allen and Brittani Robbins are running for two seats on the school board; the top two finishers will win a three-year term.

And Antonio Silva, Chris Guggenbickler and Eric Yancey are running for the port commission, along with incumbent Chris Bunes; the top two finishers or the four will win a three-year term.

The back side of the one-sheet ballot asks voters two questions: Do they approve of the borough borrowing \$3 million to start repairs on the rot-damaged Public Safety Building; and do they approve amending the municipal charter to allow payment to the mayor and assembly members.

**Continued on page 4**



PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Police Chief Gene Meek stands at the corner of St. Michaels and Church streets. The intersection will be converted to a four-way stop due to concern from borough officials about pedestrian and student safety. Meek believes, "we're on the clock to have somebody hit."

## Four-way stop aims to improve pedestrian safety near schools

By SAM PAUSMAN  
*Sentinel senior reporter*

Borough Manager Mason Villarma stopped his truck at the top of St. Michaels Street when a car driving down Church Street whizzed by him going 40 miles per hour — 15 mph over the speed limit — in a school zone, nonetheless.

"We need to slow things down here," Villarma thought to himself this summer. In response, he reached out to other borough officials to see what could be done. The result is a four-way stop at the intersection of St. Michaels and Church streets, next to the Stikine Middle School and Wrangell High School.

The idea is a partnership between Villarma, Police Chief Gene Meek, Dwight Yancey from the borough's light and power team, and Public Works Director Tom Wetor.

Villarma said he expects the four-way stop to be fully operational around the beginning of November. The borough is waiting on the fabrication of the curved post for the stop sign

that will be planted on the corner outside the KSTK offices.

Meek said the four-way stop cannot come soon enough.

"I believe we're on the clock to have somebody hit," he said. "But the city is doing a great job being proactive. It's a dangerous intersection."

For people bothered about having to stop on their commute to work, Meek was forthright.

"The normal speed limit is 25 mph. You will literally have to leave 30 seconds earlier," he said. "Thirty seconds is well worth the cost of somebody's life."

Initially, the team wanted to hang a blinking traffic light over the center of the intersection. However, Meek said the 300-pound light fixture would cause the cables to sag too low over the road. Specifically, he was concerned about large trucks like the Alaska Marine Lines trailers "dragging down the whole thing."

Instead, the team opted for a much easier

**Continued on page 4**

## School Advisory Committee wants its voice heard directly by board

By SAM PAUSMAN  
*Sentinel senior reporter*

In January, the School Advisory Committee (SAC) asked the school board to provide an explicit and direct pathway of communication between the two entities. The school board responded with a proposed policy that limits the committee's access to exclusively working through the secondary school principal.

The SAC is a community-run group that provides recom-

mendations and suggestions to school administrators. Membership is open to the public, allowing parents, families and community members to ask questions, air concerns and make recommendations for the schools.

The ongoing discussion applies exclusively to the advisory committee for the middle and high schools. The Parent Teacher Community Club is the elementary school's equivalent organization, but it has served

primarily in a fundraising capacity in recent years.

The school board policy that defines the role of the SAC is called BP-1220. Essentially, it serves as the committee's by-laws. It defines the group's mission and level of access to administrators and the school board.

This January, the school board organized a work session to clear up the disconnect between itself and the committee.

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## Senior Center Menu

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

### Thursday, Sept. 26

Chicken enchiladas, black beans, calico corn salad, romaine and orange salad

### Friday, Sept. 27

Half a tuna sandwich, cream of tomato soup, cucumber and onion salad

### Monday, Sept. 30

No meal service on Mondays.

### Tuesday, Oct. 1

Menu for this day not available by the Sentinel printing deadline

### Wednesday, Oct. 2

Menu for this day not available by the Sentinel printing deadline

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

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

## Ferry Schedule

### Northbound

#### Sunday, Sept. 29

Kennicott, 7:15 p.m.

#### Sunday, Oct. 6

Kennicott, 11:15 p.m.

#### Sunday, Oct. 13

Kennicott, 6 p.m.

#### Sunday, Oct. 20

Kennicott, 1:30 p.m.

### Southbound

#### Wednesday, Oct. 2

Kennicott, 6 a.m.

#### Wednesday, Oct. 9

Kennicott, 10:15 a.m.

#### Wednesday, Oct. 16

Kennicott, 5:45 a.m.

#### Wednesday, Oct. 23

Kennicott, 7:30 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
Sept. 25	08:01	11.3	07:41	13.6	01:04	1.6	01:03	6.4
Sept. 26	09:31	11.7	09:12	13.5	02:35	2.2	02:50	6.6
Sept. 27	10:36	12.8	10:24	14.1	04:02	1.9	04:25	5.6
Sept. 28	11:25	14.0	11:19	14.9	05:05	1.2	05:25	4.1
Sept. 29	....	...	12:04	15.0	05:48	0.6	06:06	2.8
Sept. 30	00:05	15.6	12:38	15.9	06:23	0.2	06:40	1.6
Oct. 1	00:44	16.0	01:08	16.4	06:52	0.2	07:10	0.8

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

### Sept. 25, 1924

Henry H. Darud, a hydraulic expert who went into the Cassiar early in August for the purpose of making a thorough examination from a hydraulic standpoint of the holdings of the Dease Creek Mines Corp. on Dease Creek, arrived in Wrangell on Monday. Mr. Darud stated that his investigations were highly satisfactory. He expects to return shortly after the first of the year, and will go up the Stikine by dog team over ice. It is significant that H. G. Nichols, one of the best known mining engineers living today, made the following statement over his own signature after having spent part of a season in the Cassiar: "Dease Creek, in particular, is attractive. There are

benches of gravel with very little overburden and from 20- to 75-foot deep and with no indications of cement gravel. There is probably far more gold to be won from the Cassiar gold field than it has yet produced, and that by hydraulicking."

### Sept. 23, 1949

William M. Maxey, president of the Alaska Telephone and Engineering Co., which owns and operates the Wrangell telephone system, addressed the Seattle Chamber of Commerce on Monday, telling that body that Alaska will never be fully defended until its telephone system is modernized. He set about to organize the company with the purpose of modernizing the

communications system of every community in Alaska. The first project, upon which he is now engaged, involves the purchase of the Seward, Wrangell and Nenana exchanges and converting them to dial phones. Maxey said his idea is to have a unified standard system throughout the territory, adding that although the Army's Alaska Communications System does a good job, it needs help.

### Sept. 27, 1974

"Joint surveillance on the Taku River went well last weekend and I see no reason why it can't go just as smoothly on the Stikine River," state Public Safety Commissioner Pat Wellington said Tuesday. The commissioner said Gov. William

A. Egan will be on hand to dedicate the new \$1.4 million Public Safety Training Academy in Sitka on Oct. 11. The new building will accommodate 56 students in 14, four-man rooms. There will be two classrooms, a library and facilities for videotape training and production. Department of Public Safety recruits, village police, municipal police, emergency medical technicians and various specialized schools will be held at the academy. Members of the Wrangell police and fire departments have graduated from past schools.

### Sept. 23, 1999

In a recent press release from the Environmental Protection Agency's Seattle office,

Wrangell was listed as one of three Alaska cases being pursued for asbestos violations, with a \$55,375 fine. The City of Wrangell contracted with two contractors to handle asbestos removal from the old Wrangell Institute. Alaska Abatement of Anchorage was the contractor responsible for the actual removal and disposal of the asbestos. Carson Dorn, of Juneau, was contracted to act as the inspector at the site in order to ensure that the asbestos was removed and disposed of properly. According to City Manager Dave Soulak, City Attorney Robin Taylor has contacted each of the contractors, and they are working with the EPA to address the concerns.



# ALASKA AIRLINES CLUB 49 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

NOLAN CENTER THEATER - no movies until October.

RUMMAGE SALE 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, at the Lutheran Church.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD CELEBRATION to honor Kay Larson, founder of BRAVE, one of five Alaskans to receive this year's Alaska Children's Trust Champion of Kids award. At 6 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, at the Nolan Center. Light refreshments provided; potluck dishes appreciated but not expected.

PET BLESSING 11 a.m. to noon Sunday, Sept. 29, at St. Philip's Church. Open to all critters and their people.

FALL STORYTIME for children 10 to 11 a.m. Fridays at the Irene Ingle Public Library. Stories, crafts and snacks. This week's theme is friendship.

HOMESCHOOL HANGOUT 10 a.m. to noon Tuesday Oct. 1, at the Irene Ingle Public Library. Bring school work, play games and be with friends. Snacks provided.

DRUG TRENDS AFFECTING OUR COMMUNITY 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 5, at the Irene Ingle Public Library. Wrangell Police Department will provide insight into the most common drugs, what those drugs look like, and how to visually identify the affects of those drugs on a person.

HAUNTED HOUSE 7 to 10 p.m. Friday and Sunday, Oct. 11 and 13, at the community center. All proceeds will go to The Salvation Army's youth program. If you can help as a scare actor or help with setup, contact Damon Roher at 907-305-0844.

ADVENTURES CLUB 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 12 and 26, at the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Come learn about the Bible, pick up valuable skills and earn badges. Register and learn more at <https://bit.ly/3TBw0fl>. A \$10 fee covers the school year.

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. Runs through Dec. 16. Free.

PRE-K ART 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. every Monday 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.

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.

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.

TEEN GAME NIGHT 6 to 8 p.m. every Thursday at The Salvation Army. All are welcome. Call for more information at 907-874-3753.

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](http://www.wrangellrec.com) or call 907-874-2444.

- PICKLEBALL 6 to 8 p.m. Monday and Saturday at the community center gym.
- 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.
- INDOOR SOCCER CAMP, Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning Oct. 22. Sessions are 4 to 5 p.m. for kids in grades K-2 and 5 to 6 p.m. for kids in grades 3-5. \$40 registration fee. Coaches are needed to teach the fundamentals of soccer.

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FREIGHT FOR LESS



# Forest Service honors Nelson for his efforts responding to last year's landslide

By MARK C. ROBINSON  
Special to the Sentinel

U.S. Forest Service law enforcement officer James Nelson was honored at the 2024 Law Enforcement and Investigations Director's Awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 11, for his actions responding to the deadly landslide in Wrangell last November.

Nelson was presented with the Award for Bravery, Valor or Heroic Act.

"It was well earned and he's very deserving of the award," said Patrol Captain Bill Elsner, Nelson's supervisor out of Ketchikan.

Nelson, who will have been with the Forest Service eight years as of January 2025, said the awards ceremony "was kind of a whirlwind," and "overwhelming ... definitely a lot of emotions, some are still pretty fresh."

He said it was a couple of months earlier that he received word about the award. "Somewhere around July I got notification that I had been selected."

While honored to have received the recognition, Nelson stressed that his actions were part of a collaborative effort with other first responders after the Nov. 20 slide near 12-Mile Zimovia Highway.

"We did what we had to do that night," he said. "Between the volunteer fire department, search and rescue

and Alaska State Trooper (Chadd Yoder) that responded, it was pretty amazing, the support that was put into that."

He went on to praise the outpouring of assistance during and after the disaster, not just from within the community but also from outside. "I had phone calls from people as soon as I got into cell service asking what we need," he said. "It was amazing to have that much support from Southeast and truly national. I had friends calling me up from down south saying, 'Hey, what do you guys need? I can send guys up there.'"

Nelson's wife Tyla announced the news of the award on the Wrangell Community Group Facebook page. "It was heartwarming to see others recognize Jimmy for his commitment to his community and have them hear about the great guy that we get to know and love," she said in the post.

"It is wonderful," Wrangell District Ranger Tory Houser said of Nelson receiving the award. "We at the district are so proud and grateful to get to work with somebody of his caliber."

According to the Forest Service website, employees and law enforcement partners are annually nominated in 12 award categories based on dedication and outstanding achievements in support of the agency's priorities and core values.



PHOTO BY TYLA NELSON

U.S. Forest Service law enforcement officer James Nelson was honored for his response to last November's landslide in Wrangell at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 11.

Wildlife Trooper Yoder also received a commendation from the Alaska State Troopers on Jan. 18 for his actions responding to the landslide.

# Borough opts for Chicago over Seattle Boat Show next year

By SAM PAUSMAN  
Sentinel senior reporter

Wrangell is trading in the stormy skies of Seattle and heading east, hoping for favorable tourism trade winds in Chicago.

For the first time in two decades the borough will not send any representatives to the Seattle Boat Show. Instead, the Economic Development De-

partment has elected to attend the Travel and Adventure Show in Chicago.

The two-day event kicks off on Feb. 1 of next year. Economic Development Director Kate Thomas said she expects an audience as large as 19,000 travel enthusiasts and an additional 2,000 to 3,000 attendees who work in the travel industry.

The switch is the borough's most recent attempt to attract more of a different type of traveler to town. Thomas and Matt Henson, the borough's marketing and community development coordinator, want to make Wrangell a premier destination for all sorts of travelers — not just the ones stepping off a cruise ship.

This "new era of tourism," as Borough Manager Mason Villarma referred to it, is in line with the chamber of commerce's

goal to attract more independent travelers to Wrangell.

The community sees a few thousand independent travelers a year, a mere fraction compared to the cruise ship numbers. However, independent travelers tend to spend more money on food and accommodations compared to cruise ship visitors. They also tend to stay in town for longer periods of time.

"We are well aware people don't get on the cruise ships because they want to seek out Wrangell," Thomas said. She hopes the Chicago conference will inspire people to intentionally pinpoint Wrangell as a travel destination instead of only visiting because their cruise ship made port in town.

Thomas and Henson both believe the borough will benefit from the move to the Chicago show. The pair studied

Wrangell's tourism demographics and identified the Travel and Adventure Show as an ideal locale.

Thomas said Wrangell has a "secure demographic" of tourists older than 55, but now she wants to focus on affluent visitors between 35 and 55 years old. She believes the conference, scheduled for a convention center near Chicago's O'Hare Airport, will help target such individuals. Henson also noted that 35% of the conference's attendees are expected to be a part of this target age demographic.

The demographic data also inspired the move away from the Seattle Boat Show, as many of the boat show's attendees fit within Wrangell's already-secured age demographic of 55 years and older.

Travel Wrangell is the borough's destination marketing

campaign. Henson monitors user activity on the Travel Wrangell social media platforms as well as on Travelwrangell.com. Notably, the city that is home to the fourth-most user interactions on such platforms is Chicago.

Additionally, Thomas mentioned that the Chicago show is a more affordable option for the borough than the Seattle Boat Show, as they will only need to pay for accommodations for two days. For context, the Seattle show is 10 days long.

However, the borough has not completely severed its ties to Seattle. Thomas said there is no contractual penalty for a one-year absence from the boat show. The borough also purchased full-page Travel Wrangell ads in Seattle-area markets of The New Yorker magazine and Conde Nasté Traveler. Those ads will run in November and December. Henson said most people book their summer travel during those months.

Thomas and Henson are constantly reevaluating what is best for the future of the borough's tourism economy and will "closely monitor the impact and return on investment of this new venture," Thomas said.

The switch from Seattle to Chicago comes after City Hall recently released a draft of the 2025 cruise ship schedule. Wrangell is expected to nearly double its number of cruise ship tourists from this year to next, possibly reaching 40,000 visitors next summer. It will also boast more than triple the number of port calls from ships with maximum capacities of over 1,000 visitors.


This, in addition to a new executive director of the chamber of commerce, reinforces the recent changes to Wrangell's tourism blueprint.

"We are confident that this strategic shift will position our department for greater success in the coming years," Thomas said.

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**CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL ALASKA**


**VOTER PAMPHLET**

**for the October 1, 2024, Local Election**

The Voter Pamphlet for the upcoming October 1, 2024, Regular Local Election is available by clicking on the QR Code. Paper copies are also available at City Hall. The voter pamphlet provides information about the two propositions up for vote.

**PROPOSITION 1**  
**Ratification of Ordinance 1063**  
Amendment to Section 2-3 of the Home Rule Charter to remove the prohibition on compensation for assembly members as set forth in Ordinance 1063.

**PROPOSITION 2**  
**Ratification of Ordinance 1065**  
General obligation bond for major renovation of Public Safety Building as set forth in Ordinance 1065.



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



FROM THE PUBLISHER

# I learned change wasn't so bad after all

BY LARRY PERSILY  
Publisher

To say I am resistant to change is an understatement. I acknowledge that it happens in life — after all, I am about to turn 73 — but that doesn't mean I embrace or enjoy it.

Rather, I quietly accept change, though not happily, just like I accept that rainy fall comes after summer, and that my 20-year-old spices don't seem to smell like anything anymore and it is time to buy new jars.

My resistance to change in life was obvious when I was getting coffee with a friend recently and pulled actual change out my pocket, just as I've done since a nickel bought a candy bar. From the expression on his face, you'd have thought I pulled a rabbit out of a hat.

Of course, he could not pass up the opportunity to make fun of me. No one carries change anymore, he said. Why bother, he said. Use a credit card for the coffee (and donut), he said.

I told him not only do I carry change but I carry cash, prompting a look of bewilderment. I worried he might not want to sit at the same table with me.

OK, I'll admit I don't need change for pay phones any longer, and coin-fed parking meters are disappearing too. Though it is a lot easier to drop coins into a parking meter than standing out in the snow, trying to get your credit card into the iced-up slot and then waiting while the machine thinks about it.

Putting everything on the credit card? That's real money to me. There is something special about buying coffee, with or without a

donut, from the loose change and dollar bills in my pocket. It's almost like it's free. I won't see it on my credit card; it won't come out of my checking account as a debit charge; it was just loose money I had on hand. It's like finding a dollar bill on the street and spending it.

I swear my donut tasted better than my friend's selection, since he will have to pay for it when his credit card comes due. Free food always tastes better.

And thinking of food, there is one edible area where I have changed. As a kid, teen, young adult and middle-age curmudgeon, I would take great effort to keep the different foods on my plate separate. Not just building dikes and dams to hold back the mashed potatoes and gravy from the vegetables, but ensuring that the salad dressing never touched anything that wasn't leafy and green. And horrors if the lima beans encroached on the space assigned to bread and butter.

Then, at some magical point, I changed. I figured out I was spending far too much time directing the occupants of my plate, far too much effort accounting for runoff and overflow. It was as if I needed a building permit to eat dinner.

I learned it didn't matter if the foods touched. I survived, still enjoyed dinner, and stopping making faces when the server missed the target zone on my plate with the gloppy bean casserole.

It got me wondering, maybe there were other things in life I should change. I'll think about it, but first I am going to buy a cookie with the change in my pocket.

EDITORIAL

## Vote yes on bond issue and charter amendment

The Public Safety Building needs work. Water and rot damage have taken their toll on the almost 40-year-old wood-frame building. Yes, the borough could have and should have spent more on maintenance and repairs in years past but that doesn't change the fact that the work is past due and the community needs to pay the bill.

Voters are asked on the Oct. 1 municipal election ballot to approve a \$3 million bond issue to help pay for new roofing and siding and other critical repairs. The Sentinel supports a "yes" vote.

The borough would borrow the money and repay the debt over 40 years, keeping the annual payments low enough to hopefully absorb the cost within the budget — without any tax increase.

In addition to the borrowed money, the borough has requested \$2.4 million from Congress, a request which U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski supports and has asked budget writers to include in next year's federal spending plan.

In total, the federal money with the local funds would pay for the most-needed repairs to the building which is so important to the community. Not only does it house the police and fire departments and emergency call dispatch center, but the rent the state pays on the courtroom and jail pretty much covers all of the building's operating expenses such as heat and utilities.

Clearing out the rot and putting on a new roof will make it an even better building. Approving the \$3 million bond issue is a good investment.

Serving on the assembly is work. It takes a lot of time to read, study and ask questions about the issues on the agenda; to go through the budget in detail; to make wise decisions on millions of dollars of spending every year that affect the community.

Residents serve because they care about the town, and it's time the town returned in kind.

The Oct. 1 election ballot asks voters to change the municipal charter, eliminating a longstanding prohibition against paying any compensation to the mayor and assembly members. The Sentinel supports a "yes" vote.

The intent is that by paying a small stipend per meeting, more members of the community, particularly younger members, parents with children, would be willing to serve in elected office. They could use the money to help with child care, or maybe it would make up for cutting back on their hours at work.

However the small payments help at home, it'd be worth it if they help bring out more people to run for office.

Voter approval of the charter amendment would be only the first step. The assembly, if it wants to proceed with a compensation plan, would need to prepare an ordinance, hold a public hearing and vote on any pay chart. A possible payment plan discussed in February would total about \$25,000 a year for the entire seven-member assembly. That's 0.33% of the borough's general fund revenues.

It's a small cost toward a more representative government. And it's a small way to acknowledge all the time it takes to serve.

- Wrangell Sentinel

## Four-way stop

Continued from page 1

option: two new stop signs, one for the northbound traffic on Church and another for the southbound traffic. Both signs will be outlined with blinking lights to better catch drivers' attention. The lights will be powered by attached solar panels. Villarma said the borough will be able to complete the project for around \$5,000.

Drivers on St. Michaels already have stop signs at the intersection, with the right-of-way belonging to those traveling on Church Street (which turns into Zi-

movia Highway just south of the intersection with St. Michaels).

When the two new signs are erected on Church, the right of way will belong to whoever arrives at the intersection first. If two vehicles arrive at the same time, the right-of-way belongs to whichever vehicle is furthest to the right.

The new stop signs are not the first change to road safety near the secondary schools. The borough installed a solar-powered speed tracker sign in August. The signs display a vehicle's speed if under 25

mph. It lights up red if someone is traveling between 25 and 35 mph. If a driver exceeds the speed limit by 10 mph, the sign displays a blinking "slow down" message.

The borough is also installing new solar-powered electric crosswalk signs outside the schools. The crosswalk upgrades are expected to be completed by the end of September. The total cost for all the new safety measures will be under \$10,000, according to Villarma.

"The priority is public safety, but most importantly, student safety," Meek said.

## Elections

Continued from page 1

The charter amendment vote is sort of like a permission slip; if approved it would allow but not mandate compensation. The assembly still would need to set up a pay plan, hold a public hearing and adopt an ordinance before anything could happen.

Turnout in last year's municipal election was low, with just 218 voters casting a ballot. But the mayor's seat was not on the ballot, and only one of the four races for assembly, school board and port commission were contested.

Voter turnout was substantially higher in 2019 through 2022, averaging close to 500 ballots each year.

## PFD

Continued from page 1

the state treasury.

They split that transfer 75%-25%, following an idea that originated with members of the Alaska Senate. Three-quarters of the transfer of investment earnings was reserved for public services, with the remaining one-quarter for dividends.

That accounts for \$1,403.83 of this year's dividend. The remaining \$298.17 was covered by higher oil revenues. The energy relief bump started last year.

That year, lawmakers said that if oil prices and production exceeded a specific threshold, the extra proceeds would be reserved for a dividend bonus. That proposal was modified and confirmed this spring.

Designating the bonus as an "energy relief payment" is expected to make it exempt from federal taxes. The remainder of the dividend is still subject to federal taxation.

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### Sentinel Staff:

Publisher ..... Larry Persily  
Office Manager..... Amber Armstrong  
Senior reporter ..... Sam Pausman  
Production ..... Ola Richards

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PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

## Award winners

Lucy Robinson (left) and Devyn Johnson, with Wrangell's Parks and Recreation Department, accepted the Facility Excellence Award at the Alaska Recreation and Park Association awards banquet. The event was held Sept. 19 at the Stikine Inn, at the conclusion of the three-day conference. It capped off the second year in a row Wrangell has hosted the statewide group's annual gathering.

# Voters will decide whether mayor, assembly members should be paid

By LARRY PERSILY  
Sentinel writer

The Oct. 1 election ballot asks voters whether they want to remove a provision in the municipal charter that prohibits any payment to the mayor and assembly members for their work as an elected official.

If voters approve the change, the assembly, at a future date, could propose, consider and vote — after a public hearing — on an ordinance to adopt a compensation plan.

Supporters of the proposed change say the intent is to attract more people — including younger people — to run for office and serve on the assembly, rather than continue to rely on the preponderance of retirees who have volunteered to serve in recent years.

The proposed charter amendment does not set a payment amount — that would come later, in the form of an ordinance. However, assembly members in February discussed \$225 a meeting for the mayor and \$150 per meeting for assembly members.

The assembly at its Feb. 13 meeting discussed the pros and cons and possible payment amounts but took no action and later learned that any compensation would require changing the charter.

The charter prohibition is so absolute that more than 40 years ago a state Superior Court judge ruled that the city's traditional practice of giving a frozen holiday turkey to city council members violated the

charter. (Wrangell switched from a city to a borough in 2008.)

"We have a real difficult time getting more people to run (for office)," said former Mayor Steve Prysunka, who supports the charter change and a "small stipend" to assembly members.

"I think it's a great idea. A lot of communities do it already."

Prysunka said it takes a lot of time to serve as mayor or assembly member, and a small payment is reasonable compensation.

The assembly voted 6-1 on Aug. 27 to put the question before voters. Assembly Member Bob Dalrymple was the only no vote.

Petersburg pays its mayor

\$225 a month and assembly members \$150 a month. The city of Ketchikan pays its mayor \$330 a meeting, with \$300 for council members.

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough pays by the month and the meeting, at \$350 a month plus \$150 per meeting.

Haines pays \$175 per meeting, plus extra if assembly members have to drive more than 20 miles to attend. Skagway pays its mayor \$1,000 a month, with assembly members receiving \$125 per meeting.

"Almost every assembly (in the state) pays some compensation," said Nils Andreassen, executive director of the Alaska Municipal League.

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PHOTO BY MORAN FOR HOUSE DISTRICT 1 - P.O. BOX 1264 WARD JOVE, AK 99626

# Voters again asked for OK to make repairs at Public Safety Building

By LARRY PERSILY  
Sentinel writer

The borough assembly is making a second try at winning voter support for borrowing money to start repairs at the water- and rot-damaged Public Safety Building.

Voters defeated a 2022 bond issue proposition by a 65-vote margin, 324-259.

The 2022 proposal was to borrow \$8.5 million. The Oct. 1 municipal election ballot asks voter approval of a scaled-back plan to issue \$3 million in bonds.

The borough also is hoping for a \$2.4 million federal grant to add to the local funding, though that will require congressional approval and the House and Senate are far from reaching a deal on next year's federal budget.

In total, the \$5.4 million in local and federal funds would pay for new exterior siding, windows and doors; structural repairs to walls weakened by water damage and rot; a new roof which will include building over the flat roof sections; and installing exterior gutters to protect the structure.

"The subsequent rot and corrosion have affected the primary wood structural framing and sheathing, and mechanical and electrical system components," according to the borough's report on the building.

The 34,500-square-foot, two-story wood-frame building opened in 1988. It houses the fire and police departments and dispatch center, state courtroom and jail, state Division of Motor Vehicles office and U.S. Customs and Border Protection office.

Separate from repair costs, most of the building's operating expenses are covered by about half-a-million dollars a year the state pays in rent for the jail and courtroom space.

"It's a great building for what we use it for," former Mayor Steve Prysunka said last week.

He said poor design choices — such as the flat roof and internal rain gutter system — led to extensive water infiltration into the walls, leading to rot. Past estimates to fix everything that needs repair total far in excess of the current \$5.4 million work plan.

"You've got to start somewhere," Prysunka said. "This is a small way of getting to the worst of the worst."

He cautioned people not to vote against the bond issue just because they are angry over decisions made in the 1980s to build with a flat roof, or the borough's failure over the years to fix all the problems.

"It is important to recognize that the maintenance program could have been better in the past," Prysunka said, though he credits the current administration at City Hall for confronting the problem and proposing a reasonable solution.

Repaying the borrowed money and interest on the bond issue would cost an estimated \$151,570 per year over 40 years.

Borough officials, in their explanation of the ballot question, state that the intent is to cover the debt service payments by making "operational adjustments and budget cuts," not increasing the property tax rate. The \$151,570 represents about 2% of this year's borough general fund revenues.

But if the cuts and using other revenues cannot cover the payments, and if a future assembly decided to shift the entire cost to property tax payers, the bond issue would add about \$14 a month to the tax bill of a \$250,000 home, according to the borough's calculations.

"Property tax increases related to the Public Safety Building general obligation bond would be a last resort," the borough said in its election materials.

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# THE PORT COMMISSION CANDIDATES

## Buness says it's important to meet needs of harbor users

BY LARRY PERSILY  
Sentinel writer

Chris Buness, who is finishing up her first term on the port commission, is running for reelection to another three-year term.

One thing she would like the commission to take on is an in-depth review of every provision in the municipal code governing the port and harbors.

"Some sections need a deep dive" and some are out of date, she said. A thorough review could answer the question for every section of the code: "Does this still make sense for doing it this way in Wrangell?"

It's all about serving the public, she said. "It's important to address the needs of harbor users."

Buness said she has learned a lot in her three years on the

commission and looks forward to putting that education to greater use in a second term.

"We continue to chip away at small and large maintenance projects," she said. "It's a constant."

She is particularly eager to help develop plans for rebuilding the Inner Harbor, Reliance and Standard Oil floats, for which the federal government has granted \$25 million to Wrangell for the work. Heritage and Shoemaker harbors are in good condition and now it is time to improve the downtown facilities, she said.

Another project that interests Buness is the possibility of relocating the barge ramp and freight staging area from the downtown waterfront out to the borough-owned former mill property near 6-Mile.

"My first inclination ... that



Chris Buness

would be a more practical location," she said. The move would open up a large area on the downtown waterfront for other users, though she cautioned she would want to talk with users of the barge landing facility to get their views.

Buness moved to Wrangell

in 2006 at the urging of fellow Canadian Steve Prysunka, who already had moved to town to work at Alaska Crossings, a multi-week wilderness behavioral health program for at-risk teens. Prysunka helped co-found the program in 2001.

Buness, who was born in Ontario, moved in her early 20s to the Calgary area to work at an outdoor school, which is where she met Prysunka. After a stint working in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, she made the move to Alaska. "He kept bugging me to come and work for him."

SEARHC later took over Alaska Crossings, then closed the Wrangell operation in 2022.

Buness now owns and works at Stik Built Homes. "Most folks know that my business is creating housing." She said her mission is to build

economical housing in Wrangell.

She is currently finishing up a floathouse build — a 14-by-34 single-story spec home that has a buyer waiting to move in. "I just wanted to learn more because I spend so much time on the docks."

Her home several years ago was a floathouse at the Fish and Game float, where she lived for two or three years before coming to land and converting the floathouse to a vacation rental and now a long-term rental.

She describes herself as a "self-propelled" water user, traveling by canoe and kayak. "I think I offer a little different perspective."

Buness is one of four candidates for two seats on the port commission in the Oct. 1 election.

## Guggenbickler wants to improve harbor safety

BY LARRY PERSILY  
Sentinel writer

Tony Guggenbickler has owned seven boats and spent time in harbors from Seward on Alaska's Prince William Sound to Puerta Vallarta on Mexico's west coast over the past 60 years. He retired from commercial fishing earlier this year and said he now has time to serve on the port commission.

He is not completely out of the water. He has a small boat for sportfishing. "That is going to help out with the crab salad and help keep the smokehouse going," he quipped.

Almost as long as he fished for salmon, halibut, black cod, ling cod and shrimp, Guggenbickler served 50 years on the

Wrangell advisory committee to the state boards of fisheries and game.

He is one of four candidates for the port commission in the Oct. 1 municipal election. The top two vote-getters will each win a three-year term.

His fishing career started as a young man on his father's boat, working up to owning his own, including the 59-foot Toni Marie, his third boat, which he built over the course of seven winters almost a half-century ago. Named for his daughter, it was a troller/freezer vessel. "We fished it for 40 years" before selling it. The Toni Marie now works out of Sitka, he said.

Guggenbickler has several ideas that he said focus on im-

proving security and safety in Wrangell harbors.

He would like to see the borough accommodate more liveaboards in the harbors. Attracting more liveaboards would put more "eyes on theft" in the harbors, he said.

As part of the work plans for the \$25 million federal grant to rebuild the Inner Harbor, Reliance and Standard Oil floats, he hopes the design will add public restrooms for the Inner Harbor. "That's got to get corrected."

He also wants to correct what he sees as a safety risk at the Marine Service Center. There is a gap when someone steps off their boat when the vessel is hauled out of the water, he explained. That cre-

ates the risk of falling into the water if the boat owner slips or misses the dock while stepping out of the boat.

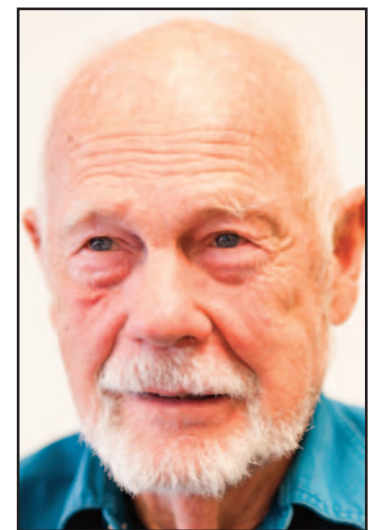
"I would support an enclosed walkway, like a gangway with a roof."

Guggenbickler does not support the port commission proposal — which is now dormant — to require boat owners to provide proof of insurance in order to rent a slip at any of the harbors.

Many fishermen have wooden boats, he said, and most wooden boats are not insurable.

"I am not in favor of forcing mandatory insurance. ... It'll put these guys right out of business."

Guggenbickler said he



Tony Guggenbickler

doesn't have an opinion on whether the borough should relocate the barge ramp and freight staging area from downtown to the former 6-Mile mill property. If elected, he said, "we can discuss that."

## Silva wants to ensure younger fishermen stay in Wrangell

BY LARRY PERSILY  
Sentinel writer

Antonio Silva is running for port commission — his first try at public office — and says he looks forward to representing the next generation of fishermen.

"We have a great younger fleet of fishermen here. It would be awesome to keep that fleet here," said the 38-year-old candidate.

While appreciative of all the successful work by past and present port commissioners, Silva said, "it's important to have someone younger" representing the next generation of the fleet on the commission.

He is one of four candidates for two three-year terms on the commission, with the seats going to the top two vote-getters in the Oct. 1 municipal election.

A full-time commercial fisherman since 2013, the year he moved to Wrangell, he operates a 46-foot "combo vessel" that he uses to troll and gillnet for salmon and run crab pots and shrimp pots. He also deckhands



Antonio Silva

on a halibut boat.

As much as he enjoys the work, he acknowledges it's a challenging business. "Fishing is so cyclical, those of us who have to be in it for the long haul have to be wise in our decisions."

He sees a couple of upcoming decisions facing the borough, including the port commission, as key economic development opportunities for the community.

The federal government has awarded Wrangell a \$25 million

grant to rebuild the Inner Harbor, Reliance and Standard Oil floats. Silva said he would like to see the plans include work floats in the Inner Harbor, a larger covered fish-cleaning station downtown for the sport fleet, and maybe a collection point for cardboard which is currently banned from harbor trash dumpsters.

"We have a huge opportunity with that grant money to really build a harbor to benefit everybody."

While the borough continues to look for a buyer or long-term tenant for the former 6-Mile sawmill property, Silva would like to see another boat haul-out as part of any development plan for the borough-owned waterfront property.

"I have first-hand experience with the tremendous benefits of having the yard (Marine Service Center) in town," he said.

"Wrangell has benefitted tremendously from the shipyard," which he said is known throughout Southeast for its convenience and the quality of the workers in town who repair

boats. "It would be a big benefit to have that property down by Shoemaker used" for additional boat repair services and storage.

And while he supports projects to benefit the fishing fleet, Silva also is aware of the importance of tourism to the town's economy — and that cruise ship tourists arrive by boat and appreciate an attractive downtown waterfront.

In an effort to make more room available downtown, the borough is considering moving the barge landing and freight

staging area from downtown to the mill property at 6-Mile.

"I am all for turning the Shoemaker lot into an industrial area. As far as moving the barge ramp ... I'm not sure. ... I think it's something to consider," Silva said.

"My goal would be to find a nice balance," he said. "Tourism is important, so is fishing important."

His job on the port commission, he said, would be "to find a balance."



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# THE PORT COMMISSION CANDIDATES

## Heritage Harbor could use a second boat launch, Yancey says

BY LARRY PERSILY  
Sentinel writer

Port commission candidate Eric Yancey would like to see a second boat launch ramp constructed at Heritage Harbor, "right alongside the one that is there."

The ramp can get busy and backed up, he said. "One thing would be nice during the summer over at Heritage ... a second boat launch."

The 20-year-old harbor has a large parking area and is popular with people who trailer their boats in and out of the water. It's much closer to town than the launch ramp at Shoemaker.

Another pinch point for boat owners during busy times can be the Marine Service Center every spring, Yancey said. "All of a sudden everybody who needs jobs done wants it done."

The first-time candidate said the port commission runs well, as do the harbors, and he is comfortable with the port and harbor fees that Wrangell charges. He said the borough's charges are around the middle of what other harbors in Southeast charge for facilities and services.

Yancey is looking forward to the improvements that will come from the pending rebuild of the Inner Harbor, Reliance and Standard Oil floats. The borough earlier this year received a \$25 million federal grant for the project and hopes to get the final piece of \$3 million from the state to fully cover the work.

"It's an exciting time to get on with it," he said of the project, calling it "phenomenal."

He sees long-term benefits of relocating the barge ramp and



Eric Yancey

freight staging area away from the downtown waterfront to the former 6-Mile mill property, which the borough wants to redevelop for industrial uses.

However, he said he understands the added time and cost of hauling freight from a barge

landing six miles out the road.

"Nobody has a crystal ball. The reality is tourism will become more and more important," and opening up more of the downtown area for tourism and other businesses could be positive, he said. "The waterfront is a vital part of Wrangell."

Yancey operates the Rain Forest Islander, a landing craft that can carry about half-a-dozen vehicles and up to a few dozen passengers.

In addition to taking tourists on short tours in front of town or carrying a film crew up the Stikine River, he has been making trips for 20 years to Banana Point on the south end of Mitkof Island to ferry school sports teams to and from Petersburg. He also runs the Islander in the other direction, south to Coffman Cove, to bring

teams to competition on Prince of Wales Island.

He started his charter business with Breakaway Adventures in 1989, later selling off that operation and boats while keeping the Islander, which he runs under the name Breakaway Ferry and Freight.

"Years ago, I thought about running for the borough assembly," when he was managing Breakaway Adventures, but decided "I couldn't dedicate the proper amount of time" to elected office.

Now he has the time and would like to serve on the port commission. Yancey is one of four candidates for two seats on the commission in the Oct. 1 election. The winners will be the top two vote-getters.

PHOTOS BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

## School Advisory Committee

Continued from page 1

The issue has not been resolved and continues as a source of contention with advisory committee members and the school board.

Following the January work session, the school board's policy committee — appointed by the board itself — released a new draft of the SAC's governing policy, notably removing the community group's access to the school board through the principal. Any recommendations would go only to the principal, who could then decide what to do with them.

"They approached us and said they wanted more explicit guidelines for the advisory committee," Board President Dave Wilson said of the proposed revisions. "They just didn't like guidelines we gave them."

Before the proposed changes, the policy stated that the committee should "serve as an advisory body that makes recommendations to the board members through the principal." The version of the policy that Wilson (and the rest of the

policy committee suggested) states that the group should instead "serve as an advisory body that makes recommendations to the school principal."

The language change, committee members said, would reduce their ability to get recommendations before the school board.

The proposed revised policy, however, leaves intact the provision that the chair of the advisory committee "shall report to the board at least once per school quarter," though some members say their recommendations receive little response.

James Edens serves as the chair of the advisory committee. He explained the group's desire to maintain access to the board stems from a place of community input.

"One of the missions of the school board is community engagement," Edens said. "And now, here's a community committee made up of community members, and there is no way to ever access the school board except by being a persons-to-be-heard at one of their meetings."

When City Hall officials heard about the proposed changes, they were concerned. So much so that Assembly Member Bob Dalrymple attended a June 6 school board policy committee meeting to emphasize the importance of community advisory groups.

Borough Manager Mason Villarma echoed Dalrymple's sentiments in a separate interview. "I see the SAC as parallel to the borough's Economic Development Board or Planning and Zoning Commission," Villarma said. "They provide non-binding recommendations, but the assembly agrees with them 95% of the time. It's a great way to hear right from the people."

Villarma added that if the assembly made its decisions without committee input, "we would have a far lesser product."

After the Sept. 16 school board meeting, the Sentinel asked Superintendent Bill Burr if he has ever followed recommendations made by the advisory committee.

"Well, they don't always

have all the information," Burr said on Sept. 16. "They proposed all these safety changes to the schools, like buzzers for the doors and that sort of thing. But school shootings have always been around. This isn't anything new."

Wilson and board member Brittani Robbins also expressed concern at the Sept. 16 board meeting about being directed by a non-elected committee. Wilson repeatedly reinforced that school matters should follow the established chain of command: principal, superintendent, school board.

"How would you feel if someone wanted to get a story published in the Sentinel and they went to your editor instead of you? Not great right?" Wilson said, explaining his logic in an interview.

Just like the borough's advisory boards and commissions referenced by Villarma, the SAC's current role is only to make recommendations to the board; its advice is not binding. School Board Member John DeRuyter explained this at the

Sept. 16 board meeting. DeRuyter comes to the issue with unique experience; before he was a school board member, he sat on the advisory committee.

"The SAC cannot and should not ever direct the school board to do anything," he said. "However, the SAC can advise and suggest things worth considering. That's different from a demand."

Committee member Brian Ashton emphasized the group is specific in its recommendations, and only makes official recommendations when it sees fit.

"It's rare when we go on record to make a recommendation," he said. "But there are a few things that we've weighed in on that should have been considered very valuable."

One proposed solution is for the advisory committee to provide a regularly scheduled non-binding report to the school board. Community member Sylvia Etefagh and board member Angela Allen both support this idea.

The school board tried to pass a compromise version of the policy at its Sept. 16 meeting, but board members DeRuyter, Allen and Liz Roundtree voted to send it back to the policy committee for further consideration. Robbins and Wilson both voted to pass the policy as written.

The compromise version does grant the SAC access to the school board. It states the committee can provide recommendations "to the principal and to the school board through the principal when the topic is in their purview."

However, it also rewrote the "purpose" section of the SAC's governing policy. The compromise version states the committee's role is to "assist the school principal in enacting the school board's mission." Previously the responsibility was to directly "assist the school board."

SAC members Ashton and Edens spoke against the proposed version at the meeting.

"It's a process," Edens said. "Our goal is to get some sort of

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## Feel the paddle, be the paddle

Tyler Best, of Kenai, hits a drop shot in the Alaska Recreation and Park Association's pickleball tournament in Wrangell on Sept. 18. The group held its annual conference Sept. 17-19. Wrangell's Sam Pausman and Heather Howe won the tournament, defeating Best and his teammate in route to victory. Best was recently elected to serve as the next president of the statewide association.



## Wrangell High swimmers open season in Petersburg meet

By SAM PAUSMAN

*Sentinel senior reporter*

The results from Petersburg are in and head coach Jamie Roberts is feeling good.

The Wolves competed in the Petersburg Invitational Swim Meet on Sept. 6-7. Wrangell swimmers raced against Southeast rivals Ketchikan, Petersburg, Sitka, Juneau and Craig, and boasted impressive times considering it was the first meet of the season.

By structuring the two-day competition as two separate meets — one on Friday and one on Saturday — swimmers were able to compete in different events on both days.

Amura Roher, Andrei Bardin-Siekawitch, Johanna Sanford, Maddy Davies and Peter Houser all boarded the flight back to Wrangell with

new personal-best times, a feat the Roberts is especially proud of.

"This is a big deal for the returning athletes," Roberts said, alluding to Bardin-Siekawitch. "Typically, their personal bests are posted near the end of the season once they've had three months of practices."

Of the 28 individual events in which the team competed, Wrangell swimmers achieved eight personal-best times.

Freshmen swimmers made an impact as well, and Roberts was impressed with the class of 2028's first competitive outing in the water. While freshmen cannot compare their recent scores to last year's results, both Roher and Houser improved their times in the 24 hours between the Friday and Saturday meets.

"The freshmen swimmers swam well," Roberts said. "Ellee Voltz and Amura Roher had some nice individual swims and contributed to the relays. Houser had a nice time drop from Friday to Saturday in his 100-yard breaststroke."

In the girls 200-yard medley relay, Roberts relied on the same group of four swimmers both days. The relay team, made up of Voltz, Davies, Anika Herman and Johanna Sanford finished with a time of 2:48.15 on the first day and 2:50.96 on the second.

Notably, Herman was also named team captain earlier this season. Herman is the team's sole senior and just one of five returning swimmers. She competed in the 500-yard freestyle and the 100-yard backstroke in Petersburg, finishing with times of 7:37.14 and 1:25.28, respectively.

The Wolves headed to Ketchikan for competition on Sept. 20 and 21, to be followed by a weekend trip to Juneau before heading to Sitka for the last of the regular season meets this year.

The girls freestyle relay team was equally consistent across both days. Made up of Sanford, Roher, Voltz and Davies, the 200-yard medley team's best finish came on Friday with a time of 2:48.15.

## Cross-country runners navigate muddy trails in Juneau

By SAM PAUSMAN

*Sentinel senior reporter*

Contrary to mud-caked impressions, the Capital City Invite was not an officially organized mud run, but it certainly wasn't a fast and dry high school cross-country meet either.

Held in Juneau on Sept. 21 with teams from 10 Southeast high schools, the Capital City Invite went forward as scheduled despite the slow and muddy conditions. In speaking to the Juneau Empire, Sitka senior Marina Dill reflected on the course's condition.

"Through my entire years of running, I've never run on something this muddy," she said.

Over 200 runners competed in the Saturday meet. Wrangell placed third in the boys team standings but did not place in the girls official team scores. In their home meet, Juneau-Douglas Yadaa.at Kale finished atop the standings for both the boys and girls teams.

Boomchain Loucks — once again — crossed the finish line as Wrangell's quickest runner. Loucks finished with a time of 17:01.89, just 10 seconds away from a podium finish. The Wolves boasted three other top-20 finishers. Ian

Nelson finished 16th while Jackson Carney and Daniel Harrison crossed the line within two seconds of each other in 19th and 20th, respectively.

Bella Ritchie was the fastest Wrangell runner on the girls side. The sophomore finished in 30th with a time of 25:40.80. Kourtney Barnes and Kailyn McCutcheon finished back-to-back in 38th and 39th.

For the boys, Jackson Powers finished in 35th, Everett Meissner finished in 38th and Lucas Stearns finished right behind his teammate with a time of 19:56.83.

Unfortunately, the rough conditions made it all but impossible for any runners to achieve new personal-best times, but for now the Wolves have their eyes on Southeast championships.

The championship meet will take place in Ketchikan this week. The Saturday, Sept. 28, race will arrive after a week of forecasted rain throughout Southeast, so runners may need to wait for the state championship in Palmer on Oct. 5 if they are hoping for clear skies and dry trails.

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# Alaskan charged with threatening to kill U.S. Supreme Court justices

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST  
The Associated Press

An Alaska man accused of sending graphic threats to injure and kill six Supreme Court justices and some of their family members has been indicted on federal charges, authorities said Sept. 19.

Panos Anastasiou, 76, is accused of sending more than 465 messages through a public court website, including graphic threats of assassination and torture coupled with racist and homophobic rhetoric.

Anastasiou appeared in federal court in Anchorage on Sept.

18 and pleaded not guilty. He was assigned a federal public defender.

A federal magistrate judge in a Sept. 19 hearing ordered Anastasiou released as long as he follows a series of conditions including remaining in Anchorage, GPS monitoring, not contacting the people he has threatened or possessing any devices with internet access that can send messages.

A search of Anastasiou's home last week turned up ammunition and a handgun that it's illegal for him to own because he is a convicted felon, according to

the U.S. Attorney's office. Anastasiou pleaded guilty more than 30 years ago to federal charges tied to distribution of cocaine, tax evasion and falsely reporting his income.

Last week's indictment does not specify which Supreme Court justices Anastasiou targeted, but Attorney General Merrick Garland said he made the graphic threats as retaliation for decisions he disagreed with.

"Our democracy depends on the ability of public officials to do their jobs without fearing for their lives or the safety of their families," Garland said.

Prosecutors said in the indictment that the messages were sent between March 2023 and mid-July 2024. Anastasiou has been charged with 22 counts, including nine counts of making

threats against a federal judge and 13 counts of making threats in interstate commerce.

After the agents contacted Anastasiou in 2023, he sent another message to the Supreme Court referencing the interview and "'daring' the justices to personally visit his house," according to a memorandum from the U.S. Attorney's office.

He faces a maximum of 10 years in prison for each count of making threats against a federal judge and up to five years for each count of making threats in interstate commerce if convicted.

A sign hanging Sept. 19 above the door of a single-story home listed in Anchorage municipal records as belonging to Anastasiou featured an image of a gun and said, "I don't call 911."

Threats targeting federal judges overall have more than doubled in recent years amid a surge of similar violent messages directed at public officials around the country, the U.S. Marshals Service previously said.

In 2022, shortly after the leak of a draft opinion overturning *Roe v. Wade*, a man was stopped near the home of Justice Brett Kavanaugh with weapons and zip ties.

In Alaska, a Delta Junction man was sentenced to 32 months in prison and a \$5,000 fine after pleading guilty to federal charges he threatened to murder U.S. Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan.

The Anchorage Daily News contributed reporting for this story.

**Re-Elect**  
**Patty Gilbert for Mayor**

Maintain our forward momentum

- Repaired many city structures
- Initiated multiple economic development projects
- Secured \$38 million in grant funding

(Awaiting an additional \$14.5 million in grants)

**Keep the Progress Moving!**

**Vote Patty Gilbert for Mayor**

Paid for by Patricia Gilbert, P.O. Box 288 Wrangell, AK 99929

**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE**  
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PHOTO BY SAM PAUSMAN / WRANGELL SENTINEL

**Ready to roll**

Isla, Eli and Sammy Carney (from left to right) readied for Skater Tots on Sept. 19 at Touchpoint Alaska Ministries' free skating program for kids up to 10 years old. Skater Tots is open from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at the facility on Bennett Street; there is also a play area available for kids who prefer not to skate.

# Alaskans will have eight choices for president on the Nov. 5 ballot

By ALASKA BEACON

Alaska's first ranked-choice presidential election ballot will list eight candidates, according to the final roster approved by the Alaska Division of Elections — and voters will be able to rank all eight people if they choose to do so.

Alaska's ranked-choice primary system to narrow down the candidates to the top four vote-getters for general elections does not apply to presidential races.

The first ballots for the Nov. 5 general election are scheduled for mailing to international voters starting Sept. 20.

On the front of the ballot are eight options for president: Democrat Kamala Harris, Independent Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Libertarian Chase Oliver, American Solidarity Party Peter Sonski, Independent Jill Stein, Constitution Party Randall Terry, Republican Donald Trump and Aurora Party Cornel West.

Kennedy announced in August that he would be suspending his presidential campaign and endorsing Trump, but his campaign failed to remove his name from Alaska's ballot.

The candidate to receive more than 50% of the first-place tallies in November will win Alaska's electoral college votes. If no one takes 50% in the first round, the bottom finishers will be eliminated and the votes retabulated with voters' second or third choices until winner emerges at 50% plus one.

In every one of Alaska's presidential elections since 1992, before ranked-choice voting, the winner of the state has earned more than 50% of the overall vote. Four years ago, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump won Alaska's three Electoral College votes after earning 52.8% of the state's votes. Democratic candidate Joe Biden had 42.8% of the vote.

Four years before that, Trump earned 51.3% of the vote.

Back in 1992, independent candidate Ross Perot claimed 28.4% of the state's presidential vote. Eventual winner, and Republican nominee, George H.W. Bush had 39.5% of the state's vote.

The only other time that a candidate won with less than 50% of the state's vote was in 1968, when Richard Nixon took 45.3%.

Alaska has voted for a Republican presidential candidate in every election since statehood except for 1964, when Democrat Lyndon Johnson won as part of a national landslide.

The Alaska Beacon is an independent, donor-funded news organization. [Alaskabeacon.com](http://Alaskabeacon.com).



# New Alaska law makes vandalism of religious sites a felony

By YERETH ROSEN  
Alaska Beacon

Vandalism of houses of worship and other religious sites is now a felony, under a bill that was signed into law on Sept. 3 by Gov. Mike Dunleavy.

The measure, House Bill 238, was signed in a ceremony at the Lubavitch Jewish Center of Alaska, a campus in Anchorage that is home to an Orthodox Jewish congregation, a preschool and a museum devoted to Alaska's Jewish history.

It was also the site of recent

antisemitic vandalism, part of a national trend of increasing attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions.

Anchorage Rep. Andy Josephson, the bill's sponsor, spoke about that trend, as well as a pattern of attacks against Muslims, mosques and Muslim institutions. The Council of American Islamic Relations reported that complaints of discrimination and attacks against

The new law, which classifies such vandalism and desecration as a felony instead of a misde-

meanor, addresses intentional acts, Josephson said. "This requires more than an accident. This is not the soccer ball errantly kicked through a window by a child next door. ... It requires a substantial probability that someone knew that what they were doing would harm a religious education or a place of

worship," he said.

A Class C felony in Alaska is punishable by a jail term of up to five years and a fine of up to \$50,000.

Also speaking at the event was Rabbi Yosef Greenberg, who talked about a 2021 incident at the Jewish campus in which swastika stickers were affixed to

the museum, as well as bomb threats that forced preschoolers to evacuate the building. "Other communities have suffered as well," he said, mentioning recent incidents at churches.

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

## Police report

**Monday, Sept. 16**

Agency assist: Harbor Department.  
Welfare check.

Traffic stop.

Letter served for removal from a licensed premise.

Unattended death.

**Tuesday, Sept. 17**

Fraud.

**Wednesday, Sept. 18**

Complaint about deer.

Fire alarm.

Agency assist: Hospital.

**Thursday, Sept. 19**

Dog at large.

Agency assist: Fire Department.

**Friday, Sept. 20**

Suspicious activity.

Parking complaint.

Missing person.

Agency assist: Ambulance.

**Saturday, Sept. 21**

Suspicious circumstance.

**Sunday, Sept. 22**

Domestic disturbance.

Report of possible driving while under the influence.

Complaint about deer.

Complaint about a dog.

Report of possible driving while under the influence.

Agency assist: Ambulance.

Agency assist: Public Works.

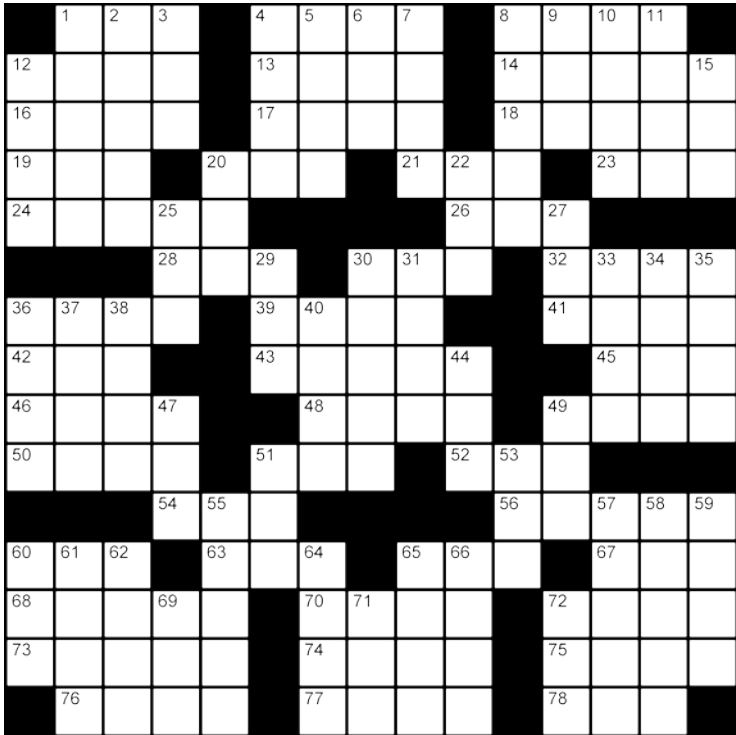
Agency assist: Line crew.

Found property.

During this reporting period, there were four agency assists for the Hoonah Police Department.

## Crossword

Answers on page 12



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Spanish hero El ---
- 4 Deep cut
- 8 Big cheeses
- 12 Flower jar
- 13 --- Falco, Nurse Jackie
- 14 Paragon
- 16 Formerly Persia
- 17 Rich, in Spain
- 18 Soothing ointment
- 19 Small cell
- 20 Author
- 21 Oregon summer clock setting
- 23 Lone Star State (Abbr.)
- 24 One over a major
- 26 Small amount
- 28 Neighbor of Neb.
- 30 Noncom
- 32 Irritate
- 36 Open pastry dessert
- 39 Carnival
- 41 Nothing
- 42 Lubricate
- 43 Untamed
- 45 Chafe
- 46 Speck
- 48 Enticement
- 49 Software menu option
- 50 Crystal ---
- 51 Tucson time
- 52 West Atlantic international grp.
- 54 Menagerie
- 56 "A Doll's House" dramatist
- 60 Atlanta-based health grp.
- 63 Lettuce variety
- 65 Building extension at a right angle
- 67 Gaza Strip grp.
- 68 Pray in Latin
- 70 Minnelli with a zee
- 72 Weeder's tools
- 73 Country music's --- Tucker
- 74 "--- in the Dark" (Streep movie)
- 75 Appetite
- 76 "--- there, done that"
- 77 Podded vegetables
- 78 "--- Porter" (Johnny Cash song)

### CLUES DOWN

- 1 Diamond weight unit
- 2 Writer --- Asimov
- 3 Room for relaxing
- 4 Buddhist actor Richard ---
- 5 Tennis server's edge
- 6 Attack command
- 7 Abundance
- 8 Grand view
- 9 Actress/director/producer --- Lupino
- 10 Bombard
- 11 Preserve
- 12 Pharmacist's container
- 15 Latin law
- 20 Provide
- 22 Banned insecticide
- 25 Possess
- 27 Show --- (entertainment industry)
- 29 Rancid
- 30 Support column
- 31 Apparatus
- 33 Slender fork-tailed gull
- 34 Gunk
- 35 Drifter
- 36 Floating bubbles
- 37 Low calorie variety
- 38 Loads
- 40 Long slippery fish
- 44 Fifth sign of the zodiac
- 47 Freq. unit
- 49 Type of computer connection
- 51 Low
- 53 Suffer
- 55 Huge amount
- 57 Pollen grain
- 58 Lament
- 59 Small winning margin
- 60 Military bed
- 61 Dingy
- 62 Malacca
- 64 Strike with an open hand
- 65 Writer --- Pound
- 66 Sung poems
- 69 Whiskey variety
- 71 Diamonds
- 72 Bewildered response

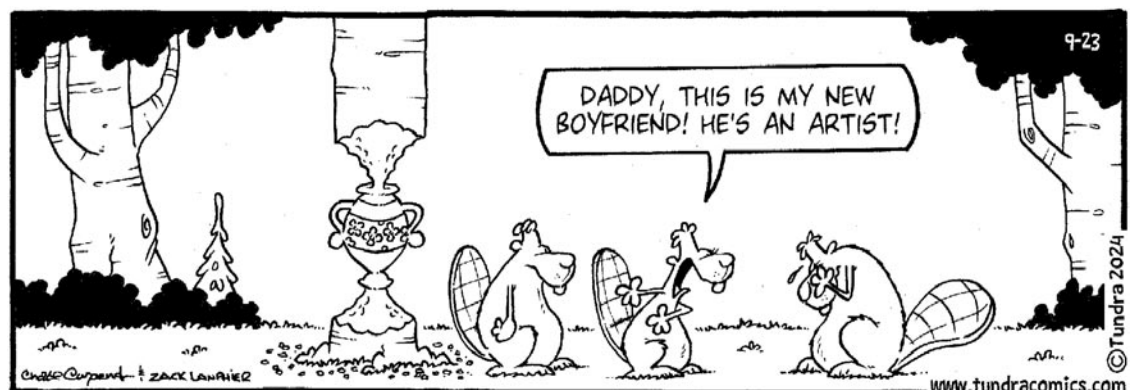
## Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



## Tundra

by Chad Carpenter





# Judge rejects state law that prohibited advanced nurses from performing abortions

By YERETH ROSEN  
Alaska Beacon

An Alaska law prohibiting anyone other than a licensed physician from performing abortions violates the state constitution's equal protection and privacy guarantees, a state Superior Court judge ruled.

There is "no medical reason" why abortions cannot be provided by advanced practice clinicians, such as nurse practitioners and physician assistants, said the Sept. 4 ruling issued by Superior Court Judge Josie Garton.

Limiting abortion services

to state-licensed physicians violates the equal protection guarantee because other pregnancy-related services may be provided by advanced clinicians, Garton said in her ruling. The restriction "imposes a substantial burden on patients' fundamental privacy rights to make reproductive decisions and access abortion care," she said.

Her ruling bars the state from preventing "otherwise qualified medical clinicians" from providing abortions.

The decision came in a lawsuit filed in 2019 by Planned Parenthood Great Northwest.

The lawsuit targeted the physician-only provision, which dates to Alaska's 1970 law that legalized abortion. It also targeted an Alaska Board of Nursing rule, based on the legal provision, that barred

nurse practitioners from prescribing abortion medication.

In the decades since that law was passed, medical technology and services have changed, with more treatment provided by advanced practitioners. In its lawsuit, Planned Parenthood argued that the restriction of abortion services to physicians has become obsolete and results in unfair obstacles in a state facing a shortage of doctors and increasingly reliant on non-physicians such as nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

Garton, in her ruling, agreed with that argument, noting that the prohibition against advanced clinicians means "there are fewer available providers, fewer appointments and potential for greater delay. Given the time-sensitivity of accessing abortion care

and the way the service is delivered statewide through three health centers many patients must travel significant distances to reach a health center."

Shortly after the lawsuit was filed, the COVID-19 pandemic started, slowing legal procedures statewide. In 2021, Garton issued a preliminary injunction that barred enforcement of part of the restriction. Her injunction allowed clinical providers to provide medication abortions. After some delays, there was a nonjury trial last November in Anchorage.

The Alaska Department of Law said it is considering its next steps after losing the case.

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

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL, ALASKA**  
**Public Notice**

For the upcoming City and Borough of Wrangell Regular Election of Oct. 1, 2024, 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 5 p.m. on the Friday preceding the election (Sept. 27, 2024) 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 the 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

**Publish Sept. 11, 18 and 25, 2024**

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL, ALASKA**  
**Public Notice**

ABSENTEE VOTING for the Regular Borough Election, to be held October 1, 2024, begins on Monday, Sept. 16, 2024, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, at City Hall. Qualified Voters may vote an Absentee Ballot until Monday, Sept. 30, 2024, at 4 p.m. for the Regular Borough Election. For those voters who cannot VOTE ABSENTEE IN PERSON, you may submit an application to have your ballot mailed, emailed or faxed to you. Please stop by the Borough Clerk's Office to apply.

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

**Publish Sept. 11, 18 and 25, 2024**

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL, ALASKA**  
**Notice of Regular Election**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the 1st day of October 2024, in the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, a Regular Local Election will be held for the purpose of voting on the following Borough Official positions and Propositions.

Borough Mayor:	One – (2-Year Term)
Borough Assembly:	Two – (3-Year Terms)
School Board:	Two – (3-Year Terms)
Port Commission:	Two – (3-Year Terms)

**PROPOSITION 1**  
**Ratification of Ordinance 1063**

Amendment to Section 2-3 of the Home Rule Charter to remove the prohibition on compensation for assembly members as set forth in Ordinance 1063.

**PROPOSITION 2**  
**Ratification of Ordinance 1065**

General obligation bonds for major renovation of Public Safety Building as set forth in Ordinance 1065.

The polls for said election will be open at 8 a.m. on the said day and will close at 8 p.m. on the same day. Each voter must have the qualifications prescribed by state law. A qualified voter shall vote only once per election and shall exercise that right at the polling place established in the designated Wrangell Precinct (James and Elsie Nolan Museum/Civic Center) and in which he/she resides within the borough boundaries of the City and Borough of Wrangell.

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

**Publish Sept. 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2024**

# Sitka back online after undersea cable repaired

By SITKA SENTINEL

GCI notified Sitka customers by text message Sept. 16 that it had successfully restored cell phone and internet services which had been disrupted for more than two weeks by a fiber optic cable break on the bottom of Salisbury Sound.

The break in the cable on Aug. 29 shut down GCI's internet service and also affected texting and phone service.

Company spokesman Josh Edge said Sept. 16 the cause of the break still wasn't known. The undersea cable repair ship was headed back to its homeport of Victoria, British Columbia.

The repair work started Sept. 8 when the

ship, the Cable Innovator, arrived at the site to locate, pull up and repair the line. The 477-foot-long ship, built in Finland in 1995, serves West Coast undersea cable operators.

During the outage, a substantial amount of Sitka's essential internet services was carried over the satellite-based Starlink system that was already installed for a number of high-volume users, including Sitka's city offices.

The Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska stepped up and shipped multiple Starlink terminals to Sitka to serve community organizations most seriously affected by the cable outage.

## CLASSIFIED

**RUMMAGE SALE**  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, at the Lutheran Church

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

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

Johnson's for an application.

**FREE**  
Recycled newspapers. Stop by the Sentinel to pick up.

**FREE ADS**  
Do you have something to sell? Having a garage sale? Looking to buy something?

Classified ads for individuals and community groups are free in the Sentinel. Contact Amber at 907-874-2301 or email wrgsent@gmail.com.

**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 at wrangellsentinel.com.

**CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**City Board and Committee Vacancies**

Persons interested in serving on the following City Boards and Committees, please submit your Letter of Interest to the Office of the Borough Clerk, City and Borough of Wrangell, P.O. Box 531, Wrangell, AK 99929. You can also email your Letter of Interest to the Borough Clerk at: clerk@wrangell.com.

Deadline for Letters of Interest is 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024, for the following vacancies:

- Planning and Zoning Commission: Two seats, for 3-year terms
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Two seats, for 3-year terms
- Wrangell Convention and Visitor Bureau: One seat, for 2-year term
- Economic Development Committee: One seat, for 3-year term

Appointments will be made at the Oct. 8, 2024, Regular Assembly meeting. A copy of the code chapter for any of the above boards and commissions can be obtained by contacting the Borough Clerk's Office or viewed at the Borough's website at www.wrangell.com.

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

**Publish Sept. 25, 2024**



# New law expands eligibility for food stamps in Alaska

BY CLAIRE STREMPLE  
Alaska Beacon

More Alaskans will be eligible for food stamps and access to health care for school-age children and young adults will increase under a new state law.

Gov. Mike Dunleavy sponsored the original legislation, whose goal was to expand the services covered by Medicaid to include things like workforce development and food security. The bill takes advantage of a federal waiver that allows states to consider the underlying causes of ill health in granting benefits.

The legislation was amended to include a proposal from Anchorage Rep. Genevieve Mina and Anchorage Sen. Cathy Giessel aimed at increasing SNAP (food stamps) access after the Alaska Department of Health failed to process

thousands of applications within the legal timeline in a backlog that left thousands of people without food aid for months at a time.

The state Senate passed the final version of the bill by a unanimous vote and the bill passed the House by a vote of 26-14 on the final day of the legislative session. The measure became law last month.

With the law's passage, Alaska became the 43rd state to expand access to federal food assistance.

The law will increase the income threshold for food stamp applicants and allow them to have savings while using the program when it takes effect on July 1, 2025. Currently, SNAP participants may have only limited savings and may be no more than 30% above the federal

poverty level.

Next summer, there will be no cut-off for the amount of savings or assets SNAP participants can have and the income threshold will be twice the federal poverty level.

"The SNAP program is a crucial tool for low-income households, but the income threshold was too low. As a result, people in need were going hungry or, in some cases, people were forced to turn down a better paying job because the pay difference was not enough to make up for the lost food benefits," said Giessel in a news release.

Mina said the change means that Alaskans on the edge of those limits will not automatically lose SNAP benefits when they get a pay increase or save their money, which is called a "benefits

cliff."

The new law doesn't eliminate the cliff entirely, Mina said, but it does reduce its severity with a graduated, step-down program as beneficiaries' incomes increase — more of a hill than a cliff.

The new law also allows the state to be reimbursed by the federal government for health care services for students who are eligible for Medicaid. Anchorage Sen. Löki Tobin made an amendment to the bill that increased Medicaid eligibility.

"The students that will be helped are already eligible for Medicaid. ... (The bill) simply allows health care services to be given to students in a more convenient location, which is often their school," said Tobin in her newsletter on Sept. 3.

# Governor vetoes bill to improve access to birth control pills

BY IRIS SAMUELS AND  
SEAN MAGUIRE  
Anchorage Daily News

Gov. Mike Dunleavy has vetoed a bill that would have made birth control more accessible to Alaska women.

House Bill 17 would have allowed women to get a year's worth of prescription birth control at once. Currently, most insurance providers in Alaska cover only up to 90 days'

## Alaska Air closes deal to take over Hawaiian Air

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Alaska Airlines closed its \$1 billion purchase of Hawaiian Airlines on Sept. 18, a day after the federal government removed the last major regulatory obstacle to the deal.

Alaska will also assume about \$900 million in Hawaiian debt. Alaska says it will keep Hawaiian as a separate brand, eliminating the need to repaint planes.

To win approval from the Transportation Department, the airlines agreed to maintain current levels of service on key routes within Hawaii and between the island state and the U.S. mainland where they don't face much competition.

The Justice Department, which had opposed previous deals between large airlines including JetBlue's attempt to buy Spirit Airlines, did not challenge the Alaska-Hawaiian deal on antitrust grounds.

Alaska and Hawaiian also agreed to a handful of consumer protections, including not lowering value of frequent-flyer rewards as they combine their loyalty programs and promising to compensate passengers for cancellations and significant delays that are the carriers' fault.

Seattle-based Alaska Airlines said those conditions were similar to its plans from the time it announced the deal in December.

The deal solidifies Alaska's position as the fifth-largest U.S. airline by revenue.

worth of birth control pills at a time.

At least 24 states and Washington, D.C., have adopted laws enshrining the 12-month rule. Proponents say it is particularly important for rural women who may not be able to visit a pharmacy every 90 days, and for victims of domestic violence. Advocates for the bill also say it could prevent unintended pregnancies, thus leading to a reduction in abortions.

Similar legislation has been introduced in the Legislature since 2016. But this was the first year it had passed in both the House and Senate. It did so with solid bipartisan support.

The Senate voted 16-3 to approve the measure in May. The House voted yes 26-13.

Dunleavy wrote in a letter explaining the Sept. 4 veto that "compelling insurance companies to provide mandatory coverage for a year is bad policy."

Fairbanks Rep. Ashley Carrick, the primary sponsor of the

legislation, said she had attempted to speak with Dunleavy or members of his administration multiple times about the bill during the legislative session. All requests were "ignored or denied," she said.

Carrick said the veto "after eight years of tireless effort, overwhelming community support, and positive collaboration with the insurance companies, is deeply disappointing."

The bill was amended as it advanced through the legislative process to address concerns from conservative legislators. Specific exemptions were added to allow religious employers to deny birth control coverage. Provisions to provide coverage for emergency contraception drugs were removed from the bill as it advanced through the Legislature.

Still, some Republican lawmakers were unconvinced.

Rep. Dan Saddler, an Eagle River Republican, voted no when the bill was before the House. Saddler said he felt some of the arguments were "unpersuasive" for 12 months of mandatory insurance coverage for contraception.

"I guess I would say that the existing structure of insurance, I felt, was sufficient to provide for the needs we heard about," Saddler said. "Not everything requires a governmental, legal mandate as a solution."

PUZZLE SOLUTION

Y	E	H	S	A	P	N	E	E	B
E	G	U	Y	R	A	A	Y	A	T
S	O	H	A	Z	L	E	R	A	O
L	P	L	L	E	S	C	C	D	C
N	E	S	B	I	O	O	Z	M	A
		S	A	O	T	S	M	H	T
O	D	N	U	E	R	L	U	L	O
B	U	R	R	A	L	F	E	I	L
O	R	E	Z	E	T	E	F	N	A
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L	A	L	I	D	E	I	E	A	S
		S	V	I	P	H	A	S	G

# It all adds up!

**25% off**  
all ads in the Oct. 2 Sentinel that promote Wrangell's

## Tax-Free Day

### Oct. 5

Shoppers get a break that day and the Sentinel wants to give businesses a break too

Call, email or visit Amber at the Sentinel to order your ad  
**Deadline to order your ad is noon Friday, Sept. 27**

**WRANGELL SENTINEL** 907-874-2301 • wrgsent@gmail.com  
205 Front Street