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WRANGELL SENTINEL

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Borough considers whether to borrow money for building repairs

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The borough assembly is considering whether to seek voter approval to sell \$10.5 million in bonds for the first phase of rehab work at the rot-damaged 35-year-old Public Safety Building, and \$4.5 million in bonds to help pay for roof, siding and boiler work at school buildings that range in age from 35 to 53 years old.

Repayment of the bonds would come from municipal revenues, particularly property taxes.

The assembly was scheduled to meet in a work session Tuesday evening to discuss the proposal, followed by the regular meeting where members were to vote on setting a special assembly meeting for Aug. 8 to introduce an ordinance putting the question before voters.

If approved after a public hearing at the Aug. 23 assembly meeting, the bond issue question would be on

the Oct. 4 municipal election ballot. General obligation bond issues, which are repaid by tax revenues, require voter approval.

"We're trying to preserve what we have," Borough Manager Jeff Good said last week of the needed repair work at the buildings.

The borough has no debt; it paid off the last of its 2011 school bonds three fiscal years ago. The borough owns the school buildings and is responsible for major maintenance work.

The work at the school buildings is estimated at \$12.9 million, with the borough looking to win a spot on the state's list of major maintenance projects with the potential for 65% state funding, subject to Wrangell's ranking on the statewide list and legislative appropriation.

The community last received funding through the state's major school maintenance program in 2006, according to material submitted by the school district to

the assembly. "Funding under the major maintenance grant program is competitive," the district reported.

If the Alaska Department of Education rejects Wrangell's application for funding, or the Legislature fails to fully fund the list, "the borough will have to reduce the scope of the project to just the critical structural elements of the high school and middle school," according to a summary prepared by Borough Finance Director Mason Villarma for the assembly.

The debt would be issued through the Alaska Municipal Bond Bank Authority, a state agency that sells bonds for smaller communities at a better rate than the municipalities could get on their own. Based on discussions with the agency, the borough is estimating 20-year bonds would come with an interest rate of about 4%. At that rate, repaying \$15 million of debt could cost about

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State license required for child care providers to qualify for financial aid

Alaska Journal of Commerce
and Wrangell Sentinel

More than two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, parents across Alaska are still struggling with long wait lists, high costs and limited capacity at child care centers.

Federal grant funds administered by the state and a child care nonprofit are helping providers cope with financial struggles and staff retention. However, the money is available only to licensed child care facilities — which Wrangell does not have.

But help may be coming later this year. The state plans to distribute federal money as community grants to help new providers start up operations, said Stephanie Berglund, CEO of thread, a 13-year-old statewide child care resource agency and referral network.

In addition, thread is planning an initiative to help startups get licensed, she said last week.

Even before the pandemic, child care spots across Alaska were frequently limited and costly, but COVID-19 introduced a new layer of expense and logistical struggles for providers. When schools shut down or limited on-site in-

struction in 2020, more parents scrambled for day care, but at the same time, care centers had to cut their capacity to allow for social distancing, wrangle with masks and other personal protective equipment, and monitor for symptoms.

What that meant was financial stress for child care centers which struggled to pay their bills without enough tuition payments. In the past year and a half, the state has been working with thread to distribute grants to help stabilize those centers and keep them from closing.

"Since the start of the pandemic, we have seen one-fifth (of licensed child care centers) close," Berglund said. "One of our goals is to not see any more permanently close."

Using federal pandemic relief funds, thread has been working with the Alaska Department of Health to give grants to existing licensed child care agencies to help offset some of their costs. The funds have been split into three phases, with the first awarding about \$4.5 million in the fall of 2021 to 398 programs statewide. Those funds were for short-term assistance

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SPRUCED UP MOOSE



PHOTO BY MARC LUTZ/WRANGELL SENTINEL

Katie Powell, reservations specialist with Alaska Waters and 56 North, stands next to Spruce the Moose, a 7-foot-tall driftwood sculpture created by artist Sigrid Vanek and gifted to the business.

Sculpture drifts to new home at Alaska Waters

BY MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

It would be hard to miss a nearly 7-foot moose in downtown Wrangell. Such is the case with a new addition in front of the Alaska Waters and 56 North storefront.

A driftwood statue of a moose gifted to the business by its creator is helping to attract customers, generating selfie opportunities and producing

lots of offers.

Named "Spruce the Moose," the statue was created by Sigrid Vanek between Memorial Day and the end of June when she returned to Soldotna.

"I've created probably about five moose," Vanek said in a phone interview last Friday. "I had to redo the ones in Wrangell a couple of times, with all the rain ... and with the wind, my

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Almost 1 in 5 state jobs are vacant as hiring struggle gets worse

BY JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

The top employees of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corp. are some of the highest-paid public workers in Alaska, but with wages rising across the country and employers competing for skilled labor, even the \$80 billion Permanent Fund is struggling to keep employees from leaving.

Nine of the corporation's 66 employees have quit this year, including the manager of the corporation's highest-earning investments and the entire three-person team in charge of finalizing trades. Seven other positions are new, and filling them is expected to be difficult.

The corporation's struggles are being shared across state government, according to a May 31 vacancy report published in response to a public records request.

Among the listings:

- 30% of the 196 positions in charge of child support collections and enforcement are unfilled.
- 16% of the 142 jobs at the Department of Motor Vehicles are vacant.
- The state's commercial fisheries division is missing 21% of its 666-person workforce.
- Almost 60% of the state ferry system's 1,275 jobs are vacant, though fewer workers are needed because several ships are not running to save money.

Some vacancies are inevitable as employees come and go, but the Office of Management and Budget expects vacancy rates to stay between 0% and 7%, based on the size of a division or office. Across all branches right now, 19.3% of the state's 17,006 jobs, almost one in five, are vacant.

Those vacancies have canceled ferries, slowed state services and have created worries at the Permanent Fund Corp.

"When you have gaps and staffing issues in this team, it can have a financial impact on the fund," Acting Executive Director Valerie Mertz said earlier this month, speaking about the departure of all three members of the corporation's investment operations team.

She said the corporation will have to temporarily outsource the work. "That will be more costly, but we're really left with no choice at this point," Mertz said.

At another state-owned corporation, the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, talk of outsourcing led a board member to briefly offer his resignation.

AIDEA is the state's investment bank, putting public money to work on development projects across Alaska, but in early June, 20 of its 83 positions were vacant.

During a late-May discussion about staffing issues, AIDEA board chairman

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Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Wednesday, July 27: Daniel Churchill, Ann Johnson, Jean Kuntz, Damon Roher, Lester Schultz.

Thursday, July 28: Gavin DeBoer, Michael Reese Guggenbickler.

Friday, July 29: Jeffrey Brown, Devlyn Campbell, Katie Hagan, Tony Rice, Alice Hunt Rooney, Sheila Short; Anniversary: David and LeAnn Bryner.

Saturday, July 30: Scott McConachie; Anniversaries: Glen and Kelley Decker, John and Joan Sargent.

Sunday, July 31: Dino Brock, Jeffrey Davidson.

Monday, Aug. 1: Jean Brown, Kadin Messmer, Douglas Wickman, Brynlee Young; Anniversaries: Haig and Bonnie Demerjian, Doug and Pam McCloskey.

Tuesday, Aug. 2: Debra Werner.

Wednesday, Aug. 3: Edna Nore, Jillian Privett, Ben Schwerin.

Senior Center Menu

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

Thursday, July 28

Beefaroni Mexicali, vegetables, apricot salad

Friday, July 29

Pork roast stew, salad, Pilot Bread

Monday, Aug. 1

Taco salad, orange slices, fry bread

Tuesday, Aug. 2

Half egg salad sandwich, potato soup, sunshine salad

Wednesday, Aug. 3

Beef stroganoff with egg noodles, mixed veggie, cabbage slaw

Please call the senior center at 907-874-2066 24 hours in advance to reserve a seat at lunch at the center or to request delivery. The senior van also is available to transport seniors to medical appointments, reasonable errands such as collecting mail, getting prescriptions or other essential items.

Ferry Schedule

Northbound

Friday, July 29

Matanuska, 3:45 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 5

Matanuska, 4:30 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 12

Matanuska, 8:45 p.m.

Tuesday, Aug. 16

Matanuska, 5:30 p.m.

Southbound

Monday, Aug. 1

Matanuska, 5:30 a.m.

Monday, Aug. 8

Matanuska, 1:15 a.m.

Monday, Aug. 15

Matanuska, 9:45 a.m.

Thursday, Aug. 18

Matanuska, 4:45 p.m.

All times listed are scheduled departure times.

Call the terminal at 907-874-2021 for information or call 907-874-3711 or 800-642-0066 for recorded information.

Tides

High Tides

Low Tides

	AM		PM		AM		PM	
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
July 28	01:14	16.3	02:16	14.2	07:44	-1.0	07:39	4.0
July 29	01:50	16.3	02:49	14.5	08:15	-1.1	08:13	3.8
July 30	02:24	16.2	03:20	14.6	08:44	-1.0	08:46	3.5
July 31	02:57	15.9	03:49	14.7	09:14	-0.8	09:21	3.3
Aug. 1	03:30	15.5	04:18	14.9	09:44	-0.2	09:59	3.0
Aug. 2	04:06	14.8	04:48	15.0	10:17	0.3	10:42	2.8
Aug. 3	04:46	14.0	05:23	15.0	10:53	1.1	11:31	2.6

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

BEARFEST COMMUNITY MARKET from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at the Nolan Center. Check out the locally grown and handcrafted items.

NOLAN CENTER THEATER presents "Paws of Fury: The Legend of Hand" rated PG, at 7 p.m. Friday and 5 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under age 12, for the animation action comedy film that runs one hour and 38 minutes. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

MUSKEG MEADOWS will hold BearFest, a nine-hole best-ball competition with four-person teams, starting at 10 a.m. Saturday. The KSTK Tournament sponsored by AP&T, a nine-hole, best-ball competition with four-person teams, starts at 10 a.m. Sunday. Must register by 9:30 a.m. on both days.

WRANGELL SCHOOL BOARD will hold a special meeting on Monday, Aug. 1, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. The purpose of this meeting is to approve the final revision of the school year budget and act on personnel matters. <https://bit.ly/3zljvLo>, Meeting ID 816 3812 3442, Passcode 570272. The meeting is open to the public.

PARKS and RECREATION registration for the American Red Cross lifeguard training course Aug. 19-21 is open through Aug. 17. Must complete five to seven hours of coursework online before the first day of the course. There is a recommended prep class Aug. 8-11 to refine your stroke, practice surface dives and prepare for the prerequisites. For ages 15 and up. Fee is \$150. There is a fee waiver for eligible individuals who intend to work for Parks and Recreation. Register online at wrangllrec.com or call 907-874-2444.

WRANGELL HEAD START is accepting applications for children ages 3 to 5 years old. Class begins on Aug. 23. Head Start is a nationwide, federally funded program whose purpose is to promote school readiness by enhancing the social, physical, and cognitive development of children. Head Start is provided at no cost to eligible families. Apply online at ccthita-nsn.gov/.

"READ WITH A RANGER," sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service, at 11 a.m. Fridays through July. Join Forest Service naturalists for nature-themed books and fun activities. Meet at the gazebo outside the Irene Ingle Public Library.

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

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

Want more attendance at your meeting or event? Send information for Roundup to wrgsent@gmail.com or call 907-874-2301.

Continuing Events

PARKS and RECREATION www.wrangellrec.com

Open swim is open by appointment, at reduced capacity. Locker rooms are available.

Weight room: 6 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 6 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 - 8:30 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Saturday

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

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

July 20, 1922

It is safe to say that no governmental activity has contributed so much to the growth and development of Southeast Alaska as road building, and none has contributed more to the pleasure of those living here. The government roads radiating from the centers of population have resulted in the building of many little farms and the location of many settlers. Scores of working men who might not have remained in the territory have built homes along the roads that reach out from the towns and have thus become fixtures in Alaska. It has aided in the development of agricultural resources and mine development. The people in the cities have been given an opportunity to get out into the country and life has been made more agreeable. They have

also contributed immensely to attractions for tourists, and the tourist traffic, now large, is destined to be the foundation of one of the largest of our industries.

July 18, 1947

Mrs. Nicie Ronning, of Wrangell, who recently completed a beauty course in the south, announced today that she will reopen her beauty shop, the Wrangell Beauty Salon, on July 28, in the former W.E. Byrd residence. The former residence has been redecorated and renovated into an attractive beauty parlor and Mrs. Ronning will manage her own shop. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily and Mrs. Ronning is equipped to render all lines of beauty work.

July 28, 1972

The U.S. Coast Guard plans to devote more time to Wrangell and other Southeast ports. Bosun's Mate Chief Robert Schmidt, 32, officer in charge of the Coast Guard's Boating Safety Team at Petersburg, said members of the unit will be in Wrangell frequently now that a 23-foot patrol craft has been put into service. The fiberglass boat, equipped with twin 140-horsepower inboard/outboard engines and capable of speeds up to 40 miles an hour, was operating last weekend in the harbor and the waters around Wrangell. Coast Guardsmen were checking for required safety equipment and safe operation

of vessels, Schmidt said.

July 24, 1997

When Agnes Tschohl's son, John, called and invited her to go with him to Alaska on a fishing trip this summer, she enthusiastically said yes. After all, she thought, she was the one who had taught him how to fish in the first place. Leaving her home in Hopkins, Minnesota, she arrived in Wrangell on June 26, accompanied by John, her other son, Tom, and grandson Matthew, all ready to go ocean fishing for the first time. Their hosts were Hellen and Steve Keller, of Silber Wind Charters. After arriving in Wrangell the group spent two days on the Brandy K, then a day on shore where Agnes went shopping and sightseeing with Helen while the boys went up the river. Returning to the boat the next day, Agnes was sitting close to the back in a chair when suddenly her pole gave the notorious pull recognized by all Alaskans - the halibut strike! Rushing over, she grabbed the pole and recalled everyone began shouting, "Keep turning, keep turning." "It wasn't hard," Agnes says, "but it didn't get away." She caught a 163-pounder that day. The group returned home a few days later, loaded with boxes of frozen fish. Soon after arriving home, Agnes was heading to a big party in her honor. They were going to celebrate her birthday with friends and a large cake. After all, this July 5 was her 97th birthday.

Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Hours
July 27	4:42a	9:08p	16:26h
July 28	4:44a	9:06p	16:22h
July 29	4:45a	9:04p	16:18h
July 30	4:47a	9:02p	16:14h
July 31	4:49a	9:00p	16:11h
Aug. 1	4:51a	8:58p	16:07h
Aug. 2	4:53a	8:56p	16:03h

BearFest promises full schedule of workshops, food, music and more

Sentinel staff

From Wednesday through Sunday, the schedule for BearFest is loaded with something for all ages, whether games and art workshops or food and educational symposiums.

Since the event is focused on bears, there will be bear safety classes, a look at the new Anan Wildlife Observatory for bear viewing, a history of bears in national parks, and bear conservation among other bear-related topics.

BearFest organizer Sylvia Ettefagh said in an interview earlier this month that the mission of the five-day event is to promote Wrangell, the environment and “a very important part of our environment — the bears.”

The following is the schedule as of Monday.

Wednesday, July 27

Art Workshop: 10 a.m.
Nolan Center lobby
Art projects for kids and families. All supplies provided.

Bear Safety Workshop: 11 a.m.
Outdoor shooting range
Bear behavior, safe and effective use of bear spray and more.

“Beary” Pie Contest: Noon
Nolan Center
Judging for the best pie made from local berries. Entries should be delivered to the Nolan Center by 11:30 a.m.

Symposium: 6 p.m.
Nolan Center
Lance Craighead: A history of bears in national parks.
Barrie Gilbert: How bear-viewing sites can advance bear conservation and community business.

Thursday, July 28

Art Workshop: 10 a.m.
Nolan Center lobby
Art project for adults. All supplies provided.

Tree Talk: 1 p.m.
Nolan Center classroom
Elizabeth Graham (U.S. Forest Service, Juneau) on Western blackheaded budworm.

Cub Plunge: 2 p.m.
City pool
BearFest games in the pool! Open to the public. Children under 7 need a parent or guardian over 14 in the water. Non-swimmers under 48-inches tall need a lifejacket.

Symposium: 6 p.m.
Nolan Center
Shawn Crimmins: Is there bear hair there? Monitoring grizzly bears in Interior Alaska using non-invasive genetics.
Harry Reynolds: Relating the bears of northern Alaska and Southeast.
Tory Houser: Presentation of new Anan facility.

Friday, July 29

Read with a Ranger: 11 a.m.
Irene Ingle Public Library gazebo
Children’s books with Forest Service interpreter Corree Delabrué.

Chili Hot Dog Feed: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church
Donations accepted.

Native Stories and Dance: 4 p.m.
Chief Shakes Tribal House
Presentation of Tlingit heritage and culture.

Dinner and Auction: 6 p.m.
Stikine Restaurant
Gourmet dinner by Chef Eric Jackson of Seattle. Auction will include outdoor gear, handmade goods, seafood, fresh fruit boxes and more. Live music by the Banta Band. Tickets are sold out. Call 907-874-3006 to be added to the waitlist.

Saturday, July 30

Golf Tournament: 10 a.m.
Muskeg Meadows
Registration starts at 9 a.m.

Community Market: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Nolan Center
Vendors of local goods. Produce, handmade items, baked goods, art and more.

Kids Games: 11 a.m.
Nolan Center lawn
The famous BearFest fish toss, cub-o-war and more. U.S. Forest Service camp setup.

Cooking Demonstration: noon
Nolan Center

Jam Session/Music Workshop: 2 p.m.

Nolan Center
Jam session and workshop with the Banta Band.

Smoked Salmon Contest: 3 p.m.
Nolan Center lobby
Drop off entries at Nolan Center lobby by 2:30 p.m. for judging.

Marathon Pasta Feed: 6 p.m.
Nolan Center lobby
Pasta dinner for half- and full-marathon runners only. Attendance is not mandatory, but participants are encouraged to come pick up swag bags, check out the course maps, and receive information for race day.

Live Music: 8 p.m.
Rayme’s Bar
The Banta Band

Sunday, July 31

BearFest marathon, half and 5k: 7 a.m.
Nolan Center
6 a.m., self-timed early start for full marathon only
7 to 7:45 a.m., full marathon, half marathon and 5K registration
8 a.m., half- and full-marathon races start
8:30 a.m., 5k walk, run and bike race starts

Raffle drawing: noon-ish
Nolan Center
The first marathon finisher will draw the winning ticket for two roundtrip tickets anywhere Alaska Airlines flies. You do not have to be present to win.

Video Presentation: 2 p.m.
Nolan Center theater
Anan Wildlife Observatory: “Magic in the Alaska Rainforest,” by Robert E. Johnson.



WRANGELL SENTINEL FILE PHOTO

A child hugs Smokey the Bear at last year’s BearFest during the Read with a Ranger event at the Irene Ingle Public Library. This year’s reading event is at 11 a.m. Friday at the library.

NOTICE OF PRECINCT BOUNDARY AND POLLING PLACE CHANGES

The Amended Interim Proclamation of Redistricting makes changes and/or renumbers all 40 house districts within the state. Based on those changes, the Division of Elections has adopted regulations that depict the precinct boundaries. Precinct boundaries were changed to fit within the election districts established in the redistricting plan.

In addition to changing the precinct boundaries, the division assigned polling places to each precinct based on the changes to the precincts.

A copy of the precinct maps and a list of each precinct polling place is available by contacting one of the division’s regional offices listed below or on the division’s website at:

<https://www.elections.alaska.gov/Core/districtmaps.php>
<https://www.elections.alaska.gov/election-polls/>

New voter identification cards will be sent to all registered voters starting on July 13, 2022. The card identifies the house district, precinct number, and polling place for each registered voter.

www.elections.alaska.gov

Region I Office	Region II Office	Region III Office	Region IV Office	Region V Office
Juneau	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Nome	Mat-Su
House Districts 1 – 6	House Districts 9 – 24	House Districts 31 – 36	House Districts 37 – 40	House Districts 7, 8, 25 – 30
(907) 465-3021	(907) 522-8683	(907) 451-2835	(907) 443-8683	(907) 373-8952
1-866-948-8683	1-866-958-8683	1-866-959-8683	1-866-953-8683	1-844-428-8952

Language Assistance: 1-866-954-8683

Toll Free TTY: 1-888-622-3020

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

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

There should be limit on campaign donations

By LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

Inflation smacks drivers in the wallet when they fill up the tank, punches shoppers in the stomach when they load up a grocery cart, and brings travelers down to Earth when they want to buy an airline ticket.

The public complains loudly about rising prices that escalate without limits.

Why then so quiet about unlimited contributions to political campaigns — it's just as harmful to democracy as inflation. Maybe even more so. Inflation eventually will come down. Campaign donation limits will only come back when the Legislature and governor take action.

Ever since a federal court last year ruled that many of Alaska's campaign donation limits were unconstitutional, the open floodgates have allowed money to flow faster than an ATM can spit out cash. The numbers are astonishing, with donations from wealthy individuals to candidates and campaign committees overpowering anything the general public could give.

Gov. Mike Dunleavy, seeking reelection, received \$200,000 from his brother in Texas; \$100,000 from Alaska developer and Kenai River sportfishing advocate Bob Penney; and \$100,000 from Minnesota real estate developer Armand Brachman.

Dunleavy's campaign described Brachman as "a hunting and fishing buddy." Everyone should have such a generous fishing buddy. Most Alaskans only know friends who will share their net, gaff hook and maybe, if they're really good friends, some herring bait.

Those three big contributions comprise nearly half of the money Dunleavy raised in the most recent campaign finance reporting period.

Former Gov. Bill Walker, who wants his old job back and is running again as an independent, also cashed in on big donors in the February-through-July reporting period. Walker received three \$100,000 donations from contributors outside Alaska: Jason Carroll, of Hudson River

Trading, in New York City (a software company); Kathy Murdoch, of New York City; and Greg Orman, who unsuccessfully ran for U.S. Senate and governor in Kansas as an independent.

Orman has supported candidates running as alternatives to the Democratic-Republican lock on power. Murdoch is of a similar political vein. She is the daughter-in-law of Rupert Murdoch, who runs a media empire that includes Fox News. Unlike the elder Murdoch, Kathy Murdoch support efforts to reduce political polarization.

No six-figure checks for former Anchorage Rep. Les Gara, the only Democrat in the field of 10 candidates. His largest donor this past reporting period was Anchorage attorney Robin Brena, who contributed \$16,500 to Gara's campaign. But Brena gave even more — \$25,000 — to Walker, his longtime law partner.

Brena was behind the lawsuit that succeeded in getting Alaska's campaign limits tossed out. Good for him to practice what he pleaded in the court case.

And though Gara missed out on the \$100,000 checks, he reported the most individual contributions and the most from within Alaska of the three leading candidates.

All three of the candidates have benefited from the court decision which eliminated many of Alaska's limits on political donations.

Voters approved those limits 73% to 27% in 2006, and some legislators — but not enough — have tried to write a new set of campaign contribution limits that would survive a legal challenge. There is nothing good about unlimited money flowing to candidates. Wealthy people should be allowed to spend their money most anyway they want, but not when it's so much as to drown out all other donors. The large checks may not buy influence, but it can't help but influence attitudes and policies.

When lawmakers return to work in January, they need to stop spitting over the size of the Permanent Fund dividend long enough to find a compromise on campaign limits.

"The numbers are astonishing, with donations from wealthy individuals to candidates and campaign committees overpowering anything the general public could give."

EDITORIAL

Borough should help with child care efforts

Few would dispute that Wrangell needs affordable, dependable child care services.

The lack of child care keeps parents away from filling the long list of job vacancies around town and, when their kids are sick, can keep them away from the jobs they already hold. People need to work and want to raise children, and the community needs more children in school and more people to take jobs — child care seems a reasonable approach toward meeting all those needs.

And while there are some at-home providers in town, and certainly friends and relatives who help out, too, the lack of any licensed child care centers in the community means that none of the millions of dollars in federal money designated to help child care providers can come to Wrangell.

Thread, a statewide child care resource agency and referral network, is helping to administer those aid programs. The first round, in the fall of 2021, distributed \$4.5 million to 398 state-licensed child care programs across Alaska. The second round, about \$12.2 million as of last month, also went to licensed providers, as did a \$4.4 million program in between to help retain workers.

And now another program, planned to start up later this year, has about \$23 million to distribute to licensed providers.

The licensing requirement is not unreasonable to receive the federal and state aid. It's an assurance that the program meets minimum health and safety standards for families and the use of public money.

A Department of Labor report this past spring estimated that about 61% of Alaskans live in areas without reasonable access to child care. Count Wrangell in that 61%.

Though the community cannot access any of the money designated for licensed care facilities, there is hope for next time. Several individuals and organizations in town have talked about what it will take to offer more child care services. Thread, to help reduce that 61% number across Alaska, is planning an initiative to help start-ups get licensed.

It would be good if a borough assembly member or borough official could serve as the moderator, master of ceremonies or organizer to help get everyone together to talk about the need and possible answers before Wrangell loses out on the next funding opportunity for lack of a licensed provider in town.

— Wrangell Sentinel

GUEST OPINION

President should look to Alaska, not overseas, for more oil and gas

By FRANK H. MURKOWSKI

After saying Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was a pariah for the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, President Joe Biden traveled to Saudi Arabia to engage with the Arab world.

I believe his priorities are out of touch with most Americans. Today, we continue to see escalating oil and gasoline prices and runaway inflation. Yet our president suggests his mission to Saudi Arabia was to contribute "intense diplomacy." He further pledges to stay aggressive against Russia and out-compete China — yet not one word on the U.S. energy shortage.

America has responsible solutions to our energy crisis and inflation here in the U.S. — and in Alaska in particular.

The president should travel to Alaska instead of Saudi Arabia and inspect the prospects for producing more oil on the North Slope, specifically ANWR and NPR-A. He should visit the Willow project and other North Slope opportunities.

He should work with Alaska oil producers to evaluate the role of Alaska's gas in addressing Europe's needs. Supplanting Russia gas with Alaska gas makes environmental sense. Alaska gas is far more climate-friendly: Alaska's North Slope gas is not flared into the at-

mosphere but is reinjected; and Alaska's environmental and safety standards are more restrictive than Russian standards.

By failing to look to Alaska oil and gas, Biden seems more fearful of environmental groups than of doing an about-face with the Saudi prince. He should not be; environmental groups have no place else to go, and the bravery of Ukrainian soldiers shows that this war may go on for some time. Even when it is over, Europe will not want to return to dependence on Russian oil and gas.

The argument is made that the need for oil and gas is short term and is a fossil fuel detour on the road to the 2050 clean-energy transition. The July 1 edition of The Economist suggests that this problem could be addressed by the government providing financial support.

The Economist makes a good point. Environmental groups' arguments for doing away with fossil fuels assumes that carbon-capture technology will not advance sufficiently in the next 25 years to significantly reduce carbon emissions. The pace of technology change in all sectors of our economy should be considered in a manner that supports U.S. and Alaska oil and gas development and jobs, and does not export jobs to Saudi Arabia and the Mideast or increase our growing

balance of payments deficit.

In addition, Biden is withdrawing 1 million barrels of oil a day from the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Oil is stored there for national security reasons and will have to be replaced at some point. It can and should be replaced with oil from the U.S., including Alaska.

Finally, using Alaska oil and gas would be consistent with then-President Barack Obama's all-of-the-above energy strategy that Biden is on record as supporting when he was vice president. In July 2014, a presidential report described that strategy as follows:

"The all-of-the-above energy strategy supports these trends through environmentally responsible production of oil and natural gas. In addition, the administration has advanced the growth of energy sources with low- or zero-carbon emissions through programs that support wind, solar, other renewables and nuclear, and has also helped to reduce energy demand by promoting energy efficiency. The administration is also supporting an ambitious program of carbon capture, utilization and storage for coal and natural gas power plants for industrial facilities."

So, what should Biden do instead of looking for relief from the Saudi prince?

First, his administration should direct the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice to support the Alaska oil projects under attack from environmental groups.

Second, the president should invoke the Defense Production Act to apply the full resources — including financial resources — of the Defense Department to build the Alaska gas line to supply gas to Europe in the name of national security.

Third, the president should order the U.S. Geological Survey to explore the federally owned NPR-A and ANWR for oil and gas resources on an emergency basis, make the USGS results available to the oil and gas industry, and conduct lease sales based on the USGS findings.

Fourth, the president should direct the use of the Defense Production Act to further advance carbon-capture technology and support the energy strategy that our country needs.

The work begins at home, not with oil-rich Mideast nations that control the supply of oil in the world.

Frank H. Murkowski is a former governor (2002-2006) and former U.S. senator (1980-2002) from Alaska.

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Wrangell businesses in the running for \$25,000 start-up prize

MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

Two businesses based in Wrangell and one looking to be based here are among a dozen Southeast finalists for a pair of \$25,000 cash prizes.

Path to Prosperity, a competition for small businesses and start-ups in Southeast, announced 12 finalists, two of which have a chance to win \$25,000 to help grow their business and "assist Southeast Alaska entrepreneurs in contributing to a sustainable and regenerative tourism industry in the region that is community-led and locally owned," according to a statement issued by Spruce Root, the Juneau-based organization running the competition.

Scout AK, Rooney's Roost, Fathoms Alaska and nine other finalists will enter round two of the competition, where they will participate in a "boot camp" to work with mentors to devel-

op their businesses plans.

This year's competition focused on tourism-related businesses.

Scout AK, owned by Aaron Angerman, rents electric scooters for use around Wrangell. Fathoms Alaska, which is owned by five former Crossings guides, works with Alaska Native youth in an outdoors program similar to Crossings, which SEARHC closed down in Wrangell and moved to Sitka this past winter.

Fathoms Alaska is currently based in Juneau, but hopes to establish itself in Wrangell.

Rooney's Roost, which hasn't operated since the owner retired, was entered by Caitlin Cardinell, who is looking to purchase and run the bed and breakfast.

"I have been talking with Becky (Rooney, the owner) about wanting to own her house for at least five years now," Cardinell said. "I am looking for

investors. I have a sound business plan. My financial projections work out. The place will make money."

She said her job as administrator for the Stikine River Jet Boat Association has the potential to earn more income, but the pandemic restricted that ability for the past couple of years. In order to proceed in the competition past the boot camp, Cardinell would need to own Rooney's Roost.

"This is the sticky part for me. If I can't buy the house, what's the point of me staying in the competition?" she said. "Of course, I can pivot and make it apply to any type of bed and breakfast."

But the location and size of Rooney's Roost are ideal, Cardinell said, especially when it comes to tourism and meeting a housing need. In the summer months, she would focus on nightly rentals. In the shoulder and off-seasons, she would focus on long-term

rentals for people such as traveling nurses. "Housing is tight in Wrangell right now."

Cardinell is open to investors and has no intention of dropping out of the competition. "I'm competitive by nature."

The 12 finalists were chosen out of 23 applications from seven different Southeast communities. This is the 10th year the competition has been held. A total of \$610,000 has been awarded to 19 businesses.

Spruce Root was founded in 2012 with seed money from Sealaska Corp. and The Nature Conservancy.

"Sustaining healthy communities in the 21st century means translating Indigenous knowledge, community resilience collaborative adaptability into sustainable jobs and innovative economic opportunities," Alana Peterson, executive director of Spruce Root, said in a statement.

Repair bonds

Continued from page 1

\$1 million a year.

If the assembly goes ahead with the proposal, voters could accept or reject either of the two bond proposals, approve both or reject both. If either one or both are approved, the assembly next June would set the property tax rate suf-

ficient to cover repaying the bonds, and construction work could begin in 2024, according to Villarma's report to the assembly.

The first phase of rehab work at the Public Safety Building would include a new roof, siding, doors, windows and structural framing rebuild due to water

damage, and upgrades to the elevator, fire alarm and heating and ventilation controls.

At the school buildings, "major building components ... are past their useful lives, including roofs, fire alarm panels, siding and boilers," the district reported. New roofs at all the schools and high

school gym are estimated at a total of \$2.8 million, not counting contractor mobilization costs or overhead expenses.

Other repairs on the work list include window replacement, a new gym floor and paving the parking lot at the elementary school, lighting upgrades and new floor coverings at the schools.

Child care grants

Continued from page 1

to help centers remain open.

The second round of grants, totaling about \$12.2 million distributed as of June 1, went primarily for stabilizing licensed programs. Another federally funded program in between the two phases distributed about \$4.4 million, targeted at retaining the workforce.

Now, thread is getting ready to issue a third round, probably this winter, which aims to disburse approximately \$23 million to help stabilize the child care market in the state.

Thread has defined stabilization as access to quality child

care. "What we mean by quality child care is child care licensed by the state," Berglund said.

Thread is measuring success by factors including the number of licensed facilities and whether facilities are actually serving the number of children they are licensed to accommodate. And while many providers have remained open, they've had to defer enrolling new students because of severe staff shortages. While many child care centers are hiring, they are having to compete in an increasingly tight labor market in which they can't match the rising wages.

That's one of the ironies of the child care market, Berglund

said: There's huge demand for workers and capacity, but because tuition is already so expensive, providers don't have much room to pay workers more.

The child care shortage and high costs predate the pandemic, according to an April report from the Alaska Department of Labor. However, the pandemic saw child care employment drop by about 12%, with average wages hovering around \$12.88 per hour.

After workforce issues, affordability is the second biggest concern, Berglund said. The average Alaska family spends about 17% of their annual in-

come on child care, or about \$13,775 per year. That works out to about \$1,148 per month, though there are assistance programs through the state to help with the cost.

However, there are few to no options in many of the smaller towns and villages across the state. The Department of Labor's report estimates that about 61% of Alaskans live in areas without reasonable access to child care in 2018.

Lack of child care translates directly to impacts on the economy, as parents without options have to take time off or drop out of the labor force. A U.S. Chamber of Commerce report

from 2021 on Alaska's child care shortage estimated that the loss in productivity cost the state's economy about \$165 million per year, with most of that related to absences and turnover.

"If a parent is absent, this presents a financial cost to both the employer and the parent," the report states. "The parent may lose wages for time missed, and the employer experiences a loss in productivity as well as the financial cost of paying overtime to other workers or even hiring and paying temporary workers to make up for the missed work."

Spruce the Moose

Continued from page 1

last one fell over and broke apart."

She's made a couple in Soldotna, one of which was given to her niece as a wedding present.

Vanek started making driftwood statues about eight years ago when she saw a horse made from driftwood. Though she's always been artistic, it was the first time she'd worked with the wayward wood of the sea. Her very first sculpture was a moose. The second was "a little eagle with attitude that somebody bought," she said.

Vydell Baker, who works for Alaska Waters and 56 North, is Vanek's granddaughter, which is how Spruce came to live at the business.

"We all love it," said Katie Powell, the reservation specialist for Alaska Waters. "We've named him Spruce the Moose. Someone said it and it just kind of stuck."

Powell said they had been kicking around some other names, but Spruce is the one that grew on them.

Vanek built Spruce using driftwood she found along Wrangell's shoreline, using smaller pieces for the inside and frame. She said she would cut those

pieces where necessary to strengthen the frame, however she kept the pieces used for the "skin" whole. She removed any bark to reduce moisture absorption. The statue is held together with screws and zip ties.

Powell said Grace Wintermyer created the base for Spruce and reinforced the legs. She is also creating a plaque made of driftwood with the business names and Vanek's name burned into it to accompany the moose.

Spruce has generated a lot of interest in the short time he's been hanging out in front of the business.

"People really love him," Powell said. "I'll walk outside and people are constantly taking selfies with him. I think he's going to be a great point for people to visit here in Wrangell and take pictures with."

In the off-season, Spruce will be kept in the back of the store to keep from being damaged by winter weather. But, for now, he'll stand watch over Front Street.

"I consistently get people asking if they can buy him from me," Powell said. "I think it's really funny. I say, 'He's not for sale.' 'How much would you take for him?' 'But he's not for sale!'"

State vacancies

Continued from page 1

Dana Pruhs asked whether more positions might need to be outsourced. Later in the meeting, Pruhs apologized for inadvertently insulting current staff and offered to quit the board. He remains a member.

AIDEA and other state agencies have tried aggressively recruiting through social media, job fairs, headhunting firms and more.

During the Fourth of July parade in Juneau, a truck carried a banner promising a \$10,000 signing bonus for new employees of the Alaska Department of Corrections.

The Alaska Marine Highway System is offering a \$5,000 bonus for new employees from the Inlandboatman's union and has hired a professional recruitment agency to help.

But even when the state finds an employee, it's not always enough. At AIDEA, human resources director Megan Schmidt said it can take two to four weeks to get approval from the Office of Management and Budget

to hire a candidate, even when the position is budgeted and the interviews are over.

Sometimes, she said, that candidate has taken a job with someone else in the meantime.

"I think we're getting hit as hard as everybody else," said Craig Richards, chairman of the Permanent Fund Corp.'s board of trustees.

Richards said the corporation's hiring problems predate the state's recent trouble. Over the past five years, the corporation has had 43 employees quit for other jobs.

The corporation's human resources director said it's "pretty easy to identify the primary reason why a person is leaving. ... Compensation is always No. 1 or No. 2."

"Compensation was a consideration for me, and it is for everyone who leaves," said Steve Moseley, formerly head of the Permanent Fund's alternative investments division.

The Permanent Fund's trustees are answering that issue by advancing the idea of a "salary reset" that will

benchmark employee pay according to what similar organizations pay elsewhere.

In the meantime, Richards said, the corporation will likely take some kind of interim step for employees this year. One possibility — yet to be decided — involves diverting money intended for performance bonuses.

Other state agencies could see pay hikes as well. This year, the Legislature passed House Bill 226, which calls for a 5% across-the-board pay hike for nonunion state employees.

State attorneys would get a 20% hike, and employees of the judicial branch — excluding judges — would get a 15% hike.

That bill is now on the desk of Gov. Mike Dunleavy, who has until Aug. 1 to sign it, veto it, or allow it to become law without his signature.

Earlier this year, Dunleavy vetoed several million dollars intended to pay hiring and retention bonuses.

The AlaskaBeacon.com is a donor-funded independent news organization in Alaska.

Tlingit & Haida behavioral health reaches out across Southeast

By MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

In November of last year, Tlingit & Haida Community and Behavioral Services opened a healing center in Juneau to provide care to tribal citizens and other Alaska Natives.

At the time, care was provided through Zoom Health or over the phone. The center was able to open its doors this year for in-person appointments but still relies on telehealth to reach a greater number of patients who might not have access to such services otherwise.

Healing center staff provides a mix of wholistic healing and western treatment for crisis and access help, mental health issues — such as relationship challenges, mood disorders, eating disorders, soul wounds and risk behaviors — addiction, psychological assessment and re-entry and recovery housing for tribal citizens who are coming out of incarceration or a treatment facility.

Tina Woods, director of the center and a licensed clinical-community psychologist, said many of the issues they see

patients for are often derived from intergenerational trauma that stems from boarding schools, internment camps and missionaries putting Native cultures and languages on pause, causing Indigenous people to lose their sense of self. That trauma filters down through the generations, she said.

“Even if someone came in for anxiety, there’s so much more than that anxiety,” Woods, who is Aleut, said. “It is no secret trauma and co-occurring disorders exist among Native people. Behind those statistics are human beings.”

Older generations tend not to talk about the traumas they experienced, Woods said. “When you oppress things, it will come out somehow,” whether through addiction, behavioral issues or other mental and emotional problems.

Zoom Health helps the healing center reach communities like Wrangell, where tribal citizens might not otherwise have access to the type of support Tlingit & Haida provides at the healing center. There is less of a stigma to mental health treatment when treatment can be done in the pri-

vacancy of one’s own home.

“I know a lot of people (in Wrangell) get support from their church, their culture, their families, also that’s a double-edged sword,” said Valerie Massie, IGAP coordinator for the Wrangell Cooperative Association, who has a psychology degree from University of Alaska Anchorage. “I’ve heard people say, ‘I would never get a counselor here because I don’t want to see my counselor at City Market.’”

Massie said geographical barriers, such as living on an island, make getting treatment difficult. When she learned of the healing center, she was excited because it offers a sense of connectedness to tribal members.

“If it’s coming from your own tribe, I would hope there’s a greater level of trust there,” Massie said.

Woods said out of the 11 staff that provide care at the healing center, only one is non-Native and one is Native from another tribe but was adopted into a clan. The rest are tribal citizens, which leads to the sense of connectedness and trust they are trying to convey.

“We have so much gratitude that people went away to get education and returned to serve their people,” Woods said. “When you’re with someone who grew up the way you grew up, there’s less to explain and trust happens more rapidly.”

SEARCHC Wrangell Behavioral Health provides many of the same services, such as substance use disorder and mental health treatment, according to Lyndsey Schaefer, director of marketing and communications for SEARCHC. “Services include individual, family and group counseling, case management and rehabilitative services as well as psychiatric medication management both in person and by telehealth.”

Those services are open to anyone, Native or not.

The healing center is focused on tribal citizens, yet they do recognize certain caveats exist.

“It’s built for our tribal citizens,” Woods said. “Some tribal citizens marry non-tribal citizens. They have tribal citizen children. We’re healing the family.”

Massie, though not Native,

said she feels a responsibility as a staff member of WCA “to know what services are out there and to be able to refer someone at least to someone who might know more than me.”

The sense of tribal connectedness is something Woods is seeing more of, especially in the younger generations.

“I’ve been seeing this new generation, early 20s, craving their culture,” she said. “I’m interested in returning home. I want to know who I am. They experience a rush of emotions. ‘I don’t know why I’m feeling this.’ You are feeling like you’re returning home. It’s very spiritual. It’s a sense of recognizing you belong somewhere.”

Woods said in order to deal with intergenerational trauma, clients need to talk about it and walk through the healing process, not around or over it, and it begins with connection.

“Sense of connection can be as quick as the sound of a drum,” she said. “Programs don’t heal, relationships heal.”

To learn more about the Tlingit & Haida healing center, visit cbs.ccthita-nsn.gov.

No surprise, weeks of rain bring up water levels at reservoir

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

After mostly dry weather in June and early July, the more typical rain of late has helped refill the community’s water reservoirs.

The lower reservoir was looking pretty low around the Fourth of July and the borough was looking to start siphoning water from the upper reservoir to ensure enough supply to meet community needs, Public Works Director Tom Wetor said last week.

“That’s when we got all the rain,” he

said, adding that water levels are much improved. “It looks like we’re going to get through this year without any major factors.” Rain is in the forecast at least to Aug. 1 — the start of Wrangell’s rainiest season.

Not that Wetor wishes for rain all the time. “If it could just be sunny Thursday through Sunday and rain Monday through Wednesday, that would be perfect.”

The closure of the Trident Seafoods processing plant for the third summer in a row has helped reduce water demand in Wrangell, Wetor said, as has a down year for crab catches, which has reduced water

needs at other seafood processors.

Construction of a new water treatment plant for the community will help reduce some of the worry of insufficient water levels during dry spells, Wetor said.

The new plant will be more efficient than the slow, gravity-based sand filters at the existing facility, treating more water faster to move into the distribution system. “There’s a limitation of what we can even produce,” he said of the 25-year-old system. The new plant also will include more storage capacity for treated water, Wetor said.

Dependent on final designs and construc-

tion bids, the borough is looking for the new treatment plant, last estimated at \$17 million, to start operations in September 2024, Public Facilities Director Amber Al-Haddad said last Friday.

Separate from the new treatment plant, the borough is looking at building a new pipe system to move water from the upper reservoir directly to the treatment plant, providing for backup when needed. Currently, staff has to start up a pump to siphon from the upper reservoir into the lower basin when water levels get low.

Borough plans on core drilling to continue toward dam stabilization project

By MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

A planned project to stabilize Wrangell’s upper water reservoir dam is contingent on finding out just how stable the dam is. Core drilling is necessary to determine the materials and density of the dam which is built of a log-crib core covered with earth.

But before the drilling can be done, a stabilization assessment plan had to be submitted to the

state for approval.

The core drilling “is part of the upper dam stabilization analysis project we are pursuing with (engineering firm) Shannon & Wilson,” said Amber Al-Haddad, borough capital facilities director. “The effort of this project is the first phase of engineering work ... of the design and construction to repair the dam and address the instabilities expected to be caused by continued deterioration of the log-crib core and the known seis-

mic instability of the dam.”

Shannon & Wilson will develop an alternatives analysis after core samples are taken to help borough staff consider different options when it comes to dam stabilization, Al-Haddad said. The project “would help prevent destabilization of the dam embankment, reduce seismic safety concerns and maintain adequate water supply delivery,” she said.

Modeling efforts led to concerns over soil strengths of the

foundation of the dam, which led to the need for core drilling. Al-Haddad said the effort to date has cost \$165,178.

Stabilization of the dam is necessary to pursue a reservoir bypass project, which is needed in case work is required on the lower reservoir, making it necessary to draw water directly from the upper reservoir, said Tom Wetor, public works director.

“Right now, we can’t draw off the upper reservoir. Water only

goes over a spillway” into the lower reservoir, Wetor said. “Instead of having a siphon that’s susceptible to freeze, thaw and ice as it moves up and down on the reservoir in the springtime, we’ll have something permanent, built underground that’s unlikely to be affected by the elements.”

Wetor said having the bypass system in place would allow the community’s water treatment plant to draw off of either reservoir while maintenance work is done on the other. “Our dams are in rough shape; our dams need some work.”

Al-Haddad said the 95%-level cost estimate to complete the bypass project is \$3.129 million, up from the \$2.6 million estimated last year when the project was submitted for federal funding of 80%, or \$2.08 million. A 20% local match is required for the federal grant.

In addition, a plan to replace all of the existing ductile iron pipe from the reservoirs with high-density polyethylene would add \$1.431 million to the overall cost beyond the available federal funding.

Covering the 20% local match on the original \$2.6 million estimate, plus the cost escalation in the past year, plus new piping, could add up to a cost of \$2.48 million for the borough to cover.

Design work for the new water treatment facility is also underway. Wetor said that’s about 65% complete.

“Wrangell’s been working on this for quite a number of years, it’s been a long time in the making,” he said. “We’re seeing more movement in the last year than we’ve seen since this project started.”

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COVID cases among non-residents aboard ships highest all summer

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The COVID-19 case count in Wrangell dropped last week to less than half the number of the previous week, but the infection numbers for cruise ship travelers to Alaska was double the rate of the previous four weeks.

A highly infectious variant of the coronavirus is pushing up case counts in Alaska and nationwide, though illnesses are not as severe and hospitalization rates much lower than in previous waves, state and federal health officials report.

The state's coronavirus data dashboard reported 21 new cases in Wrangell for the seven days ending July 20, down from 46 in the prior seven days. The community's total is 734 reported infections since the pandemic count started in March 2020, though state health officials acknowledge that the increased use of at-home tests means many cases are not reported.

While new infections reported in Wrangell have declined, cases among cruise ship and tour boat travelers to Alas-

ka were at their highest level all summer.

The state on July 20 said 1,021 infections were reported over the past seven days among non-residents in Alaska "at-sea, purpose tourism." That is more than double the weekly count of at-sea non-resident cases, which averaged 483 per week from mid-June to mid-July.

The increase in cases among visitors has not been limited to ship passengers and crew. More than 370 infections were reported in the past month among non-resident tourists in the Denali Borough, which includes hotels and shops serving Denali National Park and Preserve, according to the state's July 20 web posting.

In Skagway, one of the most heavily visited tourism destinations in Southeast, 11 of 14 cases reported last week were among non-resident travelers, the state Health Department reported.

In Valdez, 31 of 35 infections reported July 20 were among non-residents in town for the seafood industry.

Alaska's seven-day case rate among residents, based only on reported test results and not at-home tests, shows

that most regions of the state were seeing higher levels of virus spread. Alaska's seven-day per-capita case rate was fifth-highest among U.S. states as of July 21, according to a federal tracker website.

Meanwhile, a program run by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide information about COVID levels aboard cruise ships has ended. The CDC the past two years actively monitored outbreaks on cruise ships, using a color-coded chart to show the public the varying levels of transmission.

The agency said it decided to end the tracking program for cruises in part because it believes the industry is capable of managing the risks on its own.

"There is no doubt COVID is aboard cruise ships, just as there is COVID spreading locally and abroad. We don't have a way to determine if local COVID is being driven by ship traffic or the reverse," Juneau Deputy City Manager Robert Barr told the Juneau Empire last week.

The industry has been in the spotlight since the beginning of the pan-

dem, including several high-profile instances of infection clusters before the advent of vaccines and effective quarantine policies.

The number of passengers booking cruises crashed over the past two years. In 2020 and 2021, cruise companies lost a collective \$63 billion and shed thousands of jobs, according to industry data.

"CDC has determined that the cruise industry has access to the necessary tools (e.g., cruise-specific recommendations and guidance, vaccinations, testing instruments, treatment modalities and non-pharmaceutical interventions) to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 on board," an agency spokesperson said in a statement to CBS News. "Therefore, CDC's COVID-19 program for cruise ships is no longer in effect as of today (July 18)."

Individual cruise lines may set their own policies, such as travel requirements for passengers and staff, as well as what protocols are implemented aboard ships.

The Juneau Empire contributed to this report.

Alaska school districts struggle with worsening annual teacher shortage

By LISA PHU
Alaska Beacon

Bobby Bolen is trying to fill around 50 teaching positions at the North Slope Borough School District.

"This is our focus 24 hours a day right now — to get classrooms staffed for students," Bolen said.

Bolen is the brand-new human resources director at the district, which has about 2,000 students in 12 schools, some of which start as soon as Aug. 8. He's exploring options like long-term substitutes and the prospect of international teachers to round out the district's usual teaching staff of about 170.

"Our worst-case scenario would be distance-delivery. That's obviously not our goal and that's not our preference, but you know, we do have some experience with it as a result of COVID, so if we have to revert to it to get some initial schools started, then we're prepared to do that," Bolen said.

With the new school year approaching next month, school districts throughout the state are struggling to properly staff schools and classrooms. The national teacher shortage, which pre-dates the pandemic, is uniquely felt in Alaska, which has historically relied on recruiting teachers from the Lower 48.

"We're in the worst place with this that Alaska has ever seen," said Lisa Parady, executive director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators.

"What I'm hearing from administrators is that many districts are not staffed. People are working overtime to try to find high-quality educators for our students, and we are at an all-time high in Alaska for turnover at every level," Parady said.

Other public employers, including the state government, are struggling to fill positions. But the scale of the problem for some school districts is particularly large. According to the Alaska Teacher Placement website, a statewide education job clearinghouse, about 1,100 jobs are open in school districts around Alaska. That includes all areas and levels of school and education staff, from principals, teach-

ers and special education staff to paraeducators, support staff and sports coaches to language teachers, counselors and speech pathologists.

The Wrangell School District is still looking for an elementary school teacher, with classes starting in just four weeks, and has two openings for support staff.

Toni McFadden, manager of Alaska Teacher Placement, said the severity of the issue has been years in the making, "creeping up on us and getting bigger and bigger and bigger."

The trend can be seen in the declining attendance of the spring job fair Alaska Teacher Placement holds every March.

"Back in the '80s and even the early '90s, there were 1,000-plus candidates looking for jobs. This year, we had about 75 candidates at the spring fair that are looking for jobs," McFadden said.

"Now, did it go from 1,100 to 75 in one year or two years? No. Every year, it's just fewer and fewer and fewer," she said. "This is a problem that's been going on probably for 15 years or more, but it's just getting to the point where it's so severe now that districts are really struggling and they're desperate to find qualified teachers to put in front of their children."

One solution to the teacher shortage in Alaska: hiring teachers from the Philippines.

This past school year, 20 of Kuspuk School District's 39 teachers were from the Philippines, radio station KYUK reported. The district includes villages along the Kuskokwim River. Gov. Mike Dunleavy last October thanked more than 100 Filipino teachers who came to Alaska to fill positions throughout the state.

The Bering Strait School District started hiring teachers from the Philippines two years ago because there was no one else to fill the vacancies, Chief School Administrator Susan Nedza said. And it's worked out. Thirty of the district's returning staff are from the Philippines with J-1 visas, the type of visa given to teachers who are part of a work-based exchange program to the U.S.

"They have years and years

of experience, wonderful training. They fit in amazingly. We've had no complaints," Nedza said.

Other districts currently interested in hiring J-1 visa teachers to fill vacancies may have a harder time. The U.S. State Department sent an email in June to sponsor agencies, which facilitate the visa process for the international teachers, saying that teachers placed in rural Alaska "may require additional monitoring and support."

Nedza started out with 40 openings going into this school year. She's down to about three. So, for the moment at least, Nedza is feeling good about staffing. Without

those 36 staff from the Philippines though, "I don't know where we would be," she said.

A number of factors are driving the national teacher shortage — burnout, fewer people going into the teaching field, low pay — all of which were exacerbated by the pandemic.

"It's kind of magnified in Alaska," said Alaska Teacher Placement's McFadden. Some Alaska-specific factors include harsh climate, vast geography and isolation, and a lack of amenities.

Administrators and education experts alike mentioned lack of a pension as a hindrance to recruiting teachers.

Those experts include Juneau School District Superintendent Bridget Weiss.

"Alaska used to be super attractive to educators because we had a really good retirement system. That's not the case anymore. Our retirement system is just not up to speed," Weiss said. The state no longer provides pensions to newly hired teachers. Instead, it offers a defined-contribution retirement plan, with each teacher's savings for retirement based in large part on their individual investment decisions.

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Petersburg player gets his wish and shoots hoops with NBA star

By CHRIS BIERI
Anchorage Daily News

Joseph Tagaban is excited to suit up for the Petersburg High School basketball team this winter as a sophomore. A year ago, that was anything but a certainty.

In December 2020, Tagaban was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia, a potentially aggressive form of cancer.

The 15-year-old spent the better part of a year in Seattle receiving treatments, and his cancer is in remission. Now, after a recent meeting with an NBA superstar, Tagaban is ready to take on opponents on the court.

Tagaban met with Golden State Warriors shooting guard Klay Thompson through Make-A-Wish, and their meeting was part of a segment broadcast Wednesday, July 20, on ESPN's "My Wish."

"I'll be playing basketball next year," Tagaban said confidently in an interview last week. "If everything goes as planned, yeah, I'll be playing basketball for sure."

Tagaban started watching basketball in 2019, when Golden State played the Toronto Raptors in the NBA Finals.

"That's when we actually started getting inspired to play basketball, and he was the first person I actually started to watch," he said. "The entire time I played basketball, he's pretty much been my favorite player."

Tagaban and Thompson, a four-time NBA champion with the Warriors and a five-time NBA All-Star, met in San Clemente, California, on July 15 and spent more than four hours together hanging out.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPN

Joseph Tagaban, a 15-year-old from Petersburg diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia in 2020, got his wish to shoot baskets and hang out with Golden State Warriors all-star Klay Thompson. Tagaban visited with Thompson in San Clemente, California, on July 15, and was featured on the ESPN series "My Wish."

They shot hoops together and even went to get ice cream on the beach. That was when it really sank in for Tagaban that he was in the presence of an NBA star.

"It was pretty dang cool," he said. "His head poked up above everyone else's. He's like, 6-foot-7, and you could really see it was Klay Thompson. There were a lot of people asking to take a photo with

him. It was understandable with him being so famous."

"He's just a nice guy. Despite him winning all those championships, he's still really humble and, I mean, he's really approachable."

On July 19, Tagaban was back in Seattle, and he has tests and checkups with doctors scheduled for most of two days.

Since 2006, the ESPN series has part-

nered with Make-A-Wish to fulfill 75 sports-themed wishes for children with critical illnesses.

Tagaban said he was given a number of options by Make-A-Wish. He put his preferred choice as meeting with an athlete he admired, in this case Thompson. But that meant the process would likely take a while until schedules worked out — and even then, there was no guarantee a meeting would be secured. Once it was, the plans were kept a secret from Tagaban.

In the airport hallway, he was finally tipped off when he saw a sign that read: "Your golden wish came true for a golden guy."

"It was a complete surprise," he said. "I didn't even know if that wish would actually come true."

His mom, Je Tagaban, kept the secret by telling her son that they had to go to the Lower 48 a week early for his doctor checkup.

Tagaban said he asked Thompson for ideas on several topics, from basketball to personal motivation.

He said that after four difficult rounds of chemotherapy, he was thankful for his health and the experience he had with Make-A-Wish.

"I've got to give thanks to the people back home," he said. "And Make-A-Wish for making this happen. Also, Alaska Airlines, they were an amazing crew while I was headed down to Santa Ana. And also Klay Thompson himself."

New law could lead to shellfish hatcheries in Alaska to address decline in stocks

By CERI GODINEZ
Wrangell Sentinel

Shellfish hatcheries could be in Alaska's future, under legislation recently signed into law.

The measure allows the Department of Fish and Game to manage shellfish enhancement and restoration projects. Restoration projects are designed to bring a struggling stock back to a self-sustaining level, while enhancement projects would boost the stock to allow for commercial harvest.

The new laws give the department another tool to address declining shellfish stock, such as red and blue king crab, sea cucumber, abalone and razor clams, said Ketchikan-Wrangell Rep. Dan Ortiz, who sponsored the bill that passed the House and Senate in April with a combined 53-2 vote.

The only votes against the measure came from Wasilla Republican Reps. David Eastman and Christopher Kurka, who is running for governor.

Gov. Mike Dunleavy signed the measure into law on July 8.

Unlike aquatic farming where commercial operations can grow shellfish, such as oysters, for private harvest, projects allowed under House Bill 41 would be run by eligible nonprofits with the goal of releasing hatchery-raised stock into the wild for public use, said Wrangell's Julie Decker, executive director for the Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, a statewide organization that advocates for research and development in the seafood industry.

At present, the department's only tool for managing shellfish stocks is closing fisheries, which doesn't always work, especially if the resource has fallen below a self-sustaining threshold, said Heather McCarty, of the Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association. McCarty has been involved the past seven years in efforts to pass legislation similar to HB 41.

This year's change in the law comes at a time when shellfish populations throughout the state have been in decline due to fac-

tors including ocean acidification, predations and other causes that aren't fully understood, Ortiz said.

There have been widespread king crab closures in the Bering Sea and around Kodiak. In Southeast, Dungeness crab predation by sea otters moving in from the Outer Coast has been a huge problem, Decker said.

"(Sea otters) literally eat everything off the bottom — starfish, sea cucumber, abalone, sea urchins, crab," she said. "They've closed down areas on Prince of Wales Island to crab fishing and dive fishing because there's nothing left."

Decker said the legislation is modeled on the state's salmon hatchery program, which began in the 1970s in response to declining salmon harvests.

Most salmon hatcheries in the state are run by regional nonprofits with a board comprised of local members. The salmon are reared in hatcheries and released into the wild once they reach a certain stage in their

lifecycle. The hatcheries are funded, in part, through cost-recovery harvests of returning salmon and fees collected from commercial fishermen.

Decker said a similar system, made possible by the legislation, is the long-term goal for the shellfish industry. However, that is years away from becoming a reality.

"It takes a lot of time, research and capital to get to the point where a nonprofit will be able to supplement particular stocks of shellfish. Not to mention shellfish can be slow growing," Ortiz said.

At present, there are a handful of nonprofits conducting research projects related to shellfish restoration and enhancement, Decker said. Projects with the most momentum include king crab around Kodiak, the Pribilof Islands and the Bering Sea.

These projects date back to 2007, when a group of crab stakeholders banded together to figure out how to combat declining red and blue king crab populations. The resulting organization, the Alaska King Crab Research, Rehabilitation and Biology Program, began working to perfect the technology to raise crab in a hatchery setting for release into the wild.

Scientists drew from crab-rearing efforts in other countries, working to optimize variables like water temperature and feed in order to create the perfect conditions for baby crab, said McCarty, co-chair of the program.

McCarty said the group knew it would eventually hit a regulato-

ry wall since the laws at the time did not allow for large-scale crab hatchery operations, but first, they wanted to prove they could do it.

"We did multiple years of raising crab, getting them to the point where the survival rate was very high," she said. "We'd reached a point where we really couldn't do anything more without legislative action."

With the passage of HB 41, research projects will be able to scale up over time. While projects remain in a research phase, funding will likely come from grants and other sources available to nonprofits, Decker said.

Although the legislation received wide support, some raised concerns it was moving too quickly.

"Much more information is required to develop and model a meaningful shellfish hatchery program in Alaska," Petersburg-based fisheries consultant Timothy Koeneman wrote in comments submitted to the Legislature in January.

"An outside review of factors contributing to the failures of once significant shellfish fisheries in the state should be accomplished before embarking on a wide-open process on shellfish hatcheries," he wrote.

Decker said she expects projects will start slowly, ramping up over time with the aim of answering such questions. All projects will be reviewed by the Department of Fish and Game before permitting.



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Tribal recognition bill will become law this week

Alaska Beacon

Gov. Mike Dunleavy will sign a bill giving state recognition to Alaska's 229 federally recognized Native tribes, the Alaska Federation of Natives said last week.

In a ceremony scheduled for this Thursday, the governor will also sign bills creating child welfare and education agreements between the state and tribal governments, AFN said.

State recognition is not expected to affect tribes' legal relations with the state, but supporters have said it is an important symbolic statement by the state, which has historically fought efforts by tribes to exert their sovereignty.

The measure, sponsored by Bethel Rep. Tiffany Zulkosky, passed the Legislature in May.

Supporters of the bill have called it an overdue step that would create opportunities for the state and tribes to work together.

"This is an historic moment for all Alaska Tribes," AFN President Julie Kitka said in a prepared statement. "The acknowledgment of our 229 federally recognized tribes by the state of Alaska is a step toward building a stronger relationship with our state government."

Last year, supporters of tribal recognition launched a ballot measure to put the issue in front of voters. The measure garnered enough signatures to put the measure on the November general election ballot, but Alaska's constitution contains a clause that allows a measure to be removed if the Legislature passes a "substantially similar" law.

In June, the Alaska Department of Law concluded that the tribal recognition bill meets that standard and the measure will be removed from the ballot.

The AlaskaBeacon.com is a donor-funded independent news organization in Alaska.

State sues federal government for inventory of polluted lands transferred to Native corps

By JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

The state has sued the U.S. Department of the Interior in an attempt to hold the federal government responsible for the identification of thousands of polluted sites on land given to Alaska Native corporations.

A complete inventory is a first step in the state's ongoing efforts to hold the federal government responsible for cleaning the sites. The state argues that pollution left by the U.S. military and other federal agencies has prevented the development of land transferred from the federal government under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

The state filed its lawsuit July 15 in U.S. District Court in Anchorage, with the state represented by a large private firm, Kelley Drye & Warren.

In its complaint, the state

argues that three acts of Congress — in 1990, 1995 and 2014 — require the Department of the Interior to make a full accounting of contaminated sites in Alaska and to come up with plans for their cleanup.

The suit asks a judge to issue an order compelling the department to conduct surveys and draft plans for cleanup.

Though the suit does not explicitly ask for an order requiring the federal government to clean the sites, the survey process typically includes the identification of a "potentially responsible party" that could be liable for cleanup.

"The federal government has a moral and legal responsibility to address these contaminated sites, which have already languished for far too long," said Jason Brune, commissioner of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, in a 2021 letter to the secretaries of

Defense, Interior and Agriculture.

In a separate letter, Brune asked Interior Secretary Debra Haaland to direct the cleanup of known contaminated sites.

The Interior Department responded later in 2021 with a letter saying in part that the "DOI has no statutory authority to compel or conduct the cleanup of lands that have been conveyed out of federal ownership, nor is it able to impose liability for contamination that is reported on those lands."

After that exchange, the state threatened a lawsuit in December 2021 and followed through with its filing this month.

The federal government has yet to formally respond to the lawsuit, which could take years to resolve.

The AlaskaBeacon.com is a donor-funded independent news organization in Alaska.

Haines commercial longliners pull in 425-pound halibut

By MAX GRAHAM
Chilkat Valley News

Three Haines commercial fishermen caught a 425-pound halibut measuring 91 inches in length.

"It was just an epic fish," said fisherman Cole Thomas, who hooked the fish with his father and captain Bill Thomas and friend Jeff Wackerman. "This one is a lot more special than most."

The three caught the halibut earlier this month in Icy Strait, near Point Adolphus, with a commercial longline using cod and humpy salmon heads as bait.

"I could see the line was going straight down. That means something big's coming. I was telling my friend (Jeff): It's going to be a big one, get ready," Cole Thomas said.

The fight began at the surface, he said. He hooked the halibut's bottom jaw, then wrapped a rope around its tail and used a hydraulic drum to lug the fish tail-first into the boat, before dragging it up onto the deck and cleaning it.

"We usually catch a fish like that almost every year. But it's been a while since we had one at 91 inches," Thomas said. It weighed 310 pounds gutted and headless.

He added that it's not the biggest halibut he's ever caught in 22 years fishing out of Haines but he guessed it would be the largest hauled in by a Haines fisherman this year.

In three trips to Icy Strait, Thomas and his mates caught about 12,000 pounds of halibut, which are selling for a soaring \$8 per pound, Thomas said.

That means the monster halibut netted more than \$2,400. The crew pitched it to a Hoonah processor, Thomas said.

The largest sport-caught halibut on record in Alaska weighed 459 pounds, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Sport fishermen hooked it in 1996 in Unalaska Bay near Dutch Harbor.

A fisherman from California hauled in a 482-pounder in Icy Strait eight years ago but shot and harpooned it before bringing it aboard, violating rules set by the International Game Fish Association, which maintains the record book.

NOTICE OF PRIMARY AND SPECIAL GENERAL ELECTION

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Polling Places will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Candidate Races on Primary Ballot

United State Senator
United States Representative
Governor / Lt. Governor
State Senator (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S)
State House Representative (All 40 Districts)

Candidate Race on Special General Ballot

United States Representative

To find your polling place, call any Division of Elections office or visit:
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Absentee In-Person voting will be available at many locations throughout the state beginning August 1, 2022. For a list of locations and information on absentee voting, visit the division's website at <https://AKVoteEarly.alaska.gov> or call your regional elections office below. If you are unable to go to the polls due to age, disability, or serious illness, you may use the special needs voting process by appointing a personal representative to bring you a ballot.

www.elections.alaska.gov

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Juneau	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Nome	Mat-Su
House Districts	House Districts	House Districts	House Districts	House Districts
1 – 6	9 – 24	31 – 36	37 – 40	7, 8, 25 – 30
(907) 465-3021	(907) 522-8683	(907) 451-2835	(907) 443-8683	(907) 373-8952
1-866-948-8683	1-866-958-8683	1-866-959-8683	1-866-953-8683	1-844-428-8952

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Record harvest in Bristol Bay and the opposite along the Yukon

By YERETH ROSEN
Alaska Beacon

For Alaska salmon fishing, the summer of 2022 is the best of times and the worst of times.

In the Bristol Bay region, the sockeye salmon run and harvest amounts set new records, as was predicted in the preseason forecast. As of July 18, the run had totaled over 73.7 million salmon, with a harvest of over 56.3 million. The previous record was set just last year, with a 67.7 million run of sockeyes and a third-biggest-ever harvest of nearly 42 million of the fish.

But along the Yukon River, a prized salmon run is heading toward a worst-ever season.

The number of chinook counted by sonar while swimming up the river at Pi-

lot Station, a village near the Bering Sea coast, was the lowest on record for this time of the year, the department said.

Things are looking grim for the rest of the summer, Fish and Game said in its most recent update: "The drainage-wide run may be under 50,000 fish, which is so small that escapement goals may not be met in any tributaries." Chinook fishing has been closed all along the river and its drainages.

The Yukon chum salmon run, which starts in the late summer, is also looking grim and "is anticipated to be critically low," meaning that even subsistence harvests will be closed for at least the start of the fall season, the department said.

Fisheries activists are pointing to both cases — a healthy Bristol Bay return and weak numbers on the Yukon — as evidence supporting protective measures.

Opponents of the controversial Pebble Mine say two consecutive years of record sockeye runs demonstrate the value of protecting the Bristol Bay watershed, site of the world's biggest sockeye runs, from that proposed development. They are urging the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to invoke a rarely used provision of the Clean Water Act to preclude any wetlands-fill permit for the mine.

"Salmon have provided for the people of Bristol Bay for thousands of years due to our ancestral stewardship of our pristine lands and waters. We're grateful our salmon continue to return home in record numbers but our watershed is still facing the grave threat of mines like Pebble. The EPA must finalize Clean Water Act protections for the headwaters of our fishery this year," United Tribes of

Bristol Bay executive director Alannah Hurley said in a statement.

Advocates for Indigenous communities dependent on Yukon River salmon, meanwhile, say the continued poor returns there and in the Kuskokwim River demonstrate the need for action to reduce ocean bycatch, the accidental harvest of Western Alaska-bound salmon in nets used to harvest other species.

Several groups have requested a meeting with Gov. Mike Dunleavy to discuss the run failures in the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim regions. And so far, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has not put stricter bycatch rules in place, said Serena Fitka, executive director of the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. "In a crisis, we cannot wait for more research to be done," she said by email.

Dunleavy ahead of Walker in fundraising in final weeks before primary

By JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

Incumbent Gov. Mike Dunleavy has raised more money than any other candidate in this year's Alaska governor's race over the past five months and is heading toward the Aug. 16 primary election with more cash in his campaign war chest than his challengers.

Dunleavy, a Republican, reported raising \$925,380 between Feb. 2 and July 15, according to new filings with the Alaska Public Offi-

ces Commission, and reported having \$768,263 in cash on hand as of July 15, after expenses and debts.

Former Gov. Bill Walker, challenging Dunleavy as an independent, raised \$831,896 between Feb. 2 and July 15, the second-most among the 10 candidates running for governor this year. His campaign reported having \$751,299 in cash on hand.

Democratic candidate Les Gara reported raising \$575,410, with \$655,876 ready to spend.

The total of the top three candi-

dates for governor is \$2.33 million over the past five months.

All three men are seeking to be among the top four finishers in the upcoming primary. There are 10 candidates for governor this year, and the four who receive the most votes will advance to the November general election.

Voters will be asked to pick one candidate in August and then will rank the four finalists in order of preference in November.

Charlie Pierce, the Kenai Peninsula Borough mayor running

for governor as a Republican, reported raising \$64,193, while Christopher Kurka, a Republican state legislator from Wasilla, reported raising \$12,423. No other candidate reported raising more than \$3,000.

Campaign contributions are an indicator of a candidate's support, but they are not directly correlated with victory. In 2020, independent U.S. Senate candidate Al Gross raised more money than incumbent Republican Sen. Dan Sullivan but lost the general election by more than 12 percentage points.

APOC records show Gara had the most individual contributions and the most from within Alaska, followed by Dunleavy and Walker, in order.

All three of the biggest candidates benefited from the elimination of Alaska's limits on political donations. The limit had been \$500 per donor, until a federal court last year struck down the cap as unconstitutional.

Gara's campaign received \$16,500 from Robin Brena, the Anchorage attorney who brought the lawsuit that erased Alaska's donation limits. Brena also gave \$25,000 to Walker's

campaign. Brena and Walker are partners in the same law firm.

Dunleavy received \$200,000 from his brother Francis and \$100,000 from Bob Penney. Both were major backers of Dunleavy's 2018 run for governor. He also received \$100,000 from Minnesota real estate developer Armand Brachman, a personal friend of the governor.

Walker received three \$100,000 donations from contributors outside Alaska: Jason Carroll, of Hudson River Trading, in New York City; Kathy Murdoch, of New York City; and Greg Orman, a former politician in Kansas. Orman unsuccessfully ran for U.S. Senate and governor in Kansas as an independent.

In the 2018 Alaska governor's race, third-party groups spent millions of dollars. Campaign finance disclosures between Feb. 2 and July 15 do not show large donations or spending by third-party groups in this year's race.

The Republican Governors Association previously donated \$3 million to support Dunleavy's re-election campaign, but that money has not yet been spent.

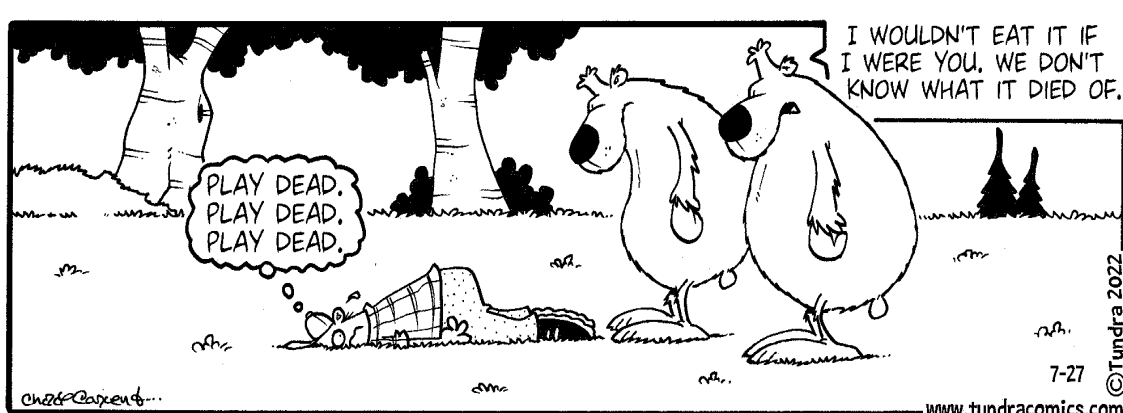
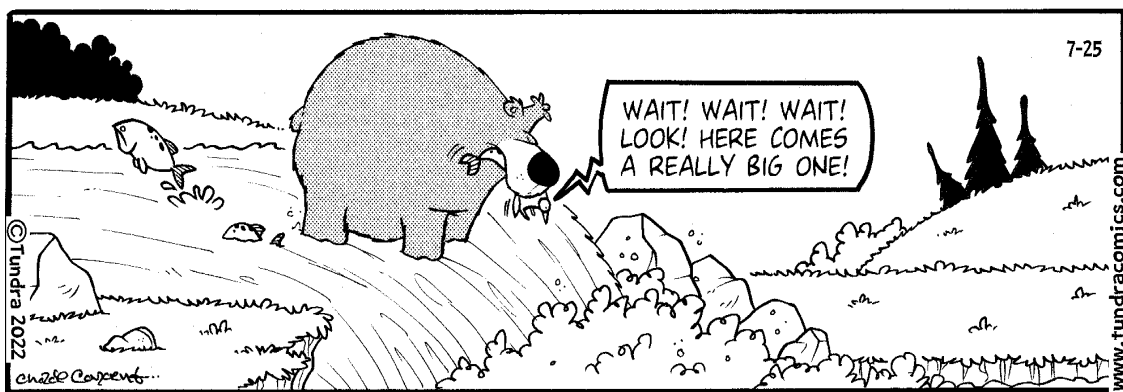
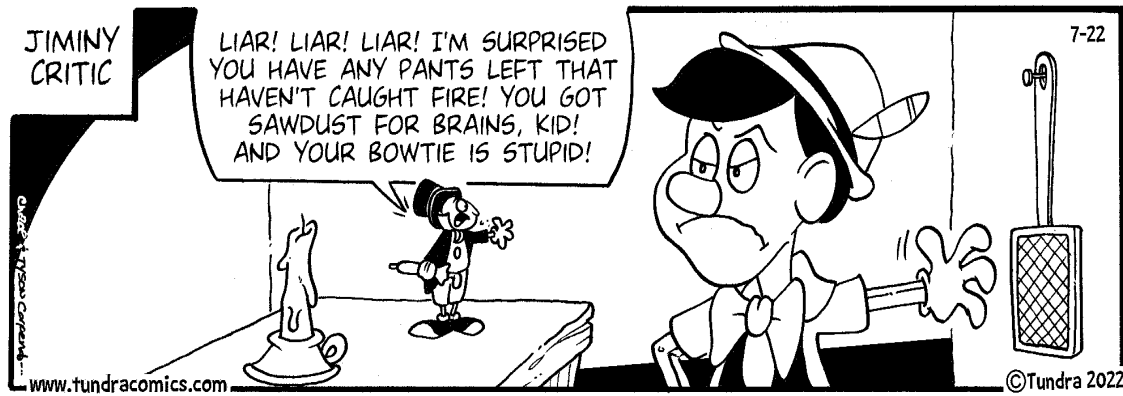
Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



Police report

Monday, July 18
Attempted unlawful contact.

Tuesday, July 19
Agency assist: Ambulance.
Citizen assist: Medication disposal.
Welfare check.
Noise complaint.

Wednesday, July 20
Agency assist: Fire Department.
Found property.
Jail incident.
Subpoena service.
Subpoena service.

Thursday, July 21
Noise complaint.
Assault.
Agency assist: Public Works.
Theft under investigation.
Civil issue.

Agency assist: Petersburg Police Department.
Traffic stop: Citation issued for violating provisional license and verbal warning for no headlights and expired registration.

Friday, July 22
Traffic stop.
Traffic stop.

Saturday, July 23
Found property.
Paper service.

Sunday, July 24
Agency assist: Ambulance.
Disorderly conduct.
During this reporting period there were four agency assists for the Hoonah Police Department.

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Pope apologizes for ‘evil’ committed against Canada’s Indigenous peoples

BY NICOLE WINFIELD
AND PETER SMITH
Associated Press

MASKWACIS, Alberta (AP) — Pope Francis issued a historic apology Monday for the Catholic Church’s cooperation with Canada’s “catastrophic” policy of Indigenous residential schools, saying the forced assimilation of Native peoples into Christian society destroyed their cultures, severed families and marginalized generations in ways still being felt today.

“I am sorry,” Francis said, to applause from school survivors and Indigenous community members gathered at a former residential school south of Edmonton, Alberta, the first event of Francis’ weeklong “penitential pilgrimage” to Canada.

The morning after he arrived in the country, Francis traveled to the lands of four Cree nations to pray at a cemetery. Four chiefs then escorted the pontiff in his wheelchair to powwow ceremonial grounds where he delivered the long-sought apology and was given a feathered headdress.

“I humbly beg forgiveness for the evil committed by so many Christians against the Indigenous peoples,” Francis said near the site of the former Ermineskin Indian Residential School, now largely torn down.

His words went beyond his earlier

apology for the “deplorable” acts of missionaries and instead took responsibility for the church’s institutional cooperation with the “catastrophic” assimilation policy, which Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission said amounted to a “cultural genocide.”

More than 150,000 Native children in Canada were forced to attend state-funded Christian schools from the 19th century until the 1970s in an effort to isolate them from the influence of their homes and culture. The aim was to Christianize and assimilate them into mainstream society, which previous Canadian governments considered superior.

The Canadian government has admitted that physical and sexual abuse was rampant at the schools, with students beaten for speaking their languages. That legacy of that abuse and isolation from family has been cited by Indigenous leaders as a root cause of the epidemic rates of alcohol and drug addiction now on Canadian reservations.

The discoveries of hundreds of potential burial sites at former schools in the past year drew international attention to the legacy of the schools in Canada and their counterparts in the United States. The discoveries prompted Francis to comply with the truth commission’s call for him to apologize on Canadian soil for the Catholic Church’s role; Catholic religious orders operated 66 of the 139 schools in Canada.

Many in the crowd Monday wore traditional dress, including colorful ribbon skirts and vests with Native motifs. Others donned orange shirts, which have become a symbol of residential school survivors, recalling the story of one woman whose favorite orange shirt, a gift from her grandmother, was confiscated when she arrived at a school and replaced with a uniform.

Despite the solemnity of the event, the atmosphere seemed at times joyful: Chiefs processed into the site venue to a hypnotic drumbeat, elders danced and the crowd cheered and chanted war songs, victory songs and finally a healing song.

One of the hosts of the event, Chief Randy Ermineskin of the Ermineskin Cree Nation, said some had chosen to stay away — and that that was understandable. But he said it was nevertheless a historic, important day for his people.

“My late family members are not here with us anymore, my parents went to residential school, I went to residential school,” he said as he waited for Francis to arrive. “I know they’re with me, they’re listening, they’re watching.”

As part of a lawsuit settlement involving the government, churches and approximately 90,000 survivors, Canada paid reparations that amounted to billions of dollars being transferred to In-

digenous communities. Canada’s Catholic Church says its dioceses and religious orders have provided more than \$50 million in cash and in-kind contributions and hope to add \$30 million more over the next five years.

While the pope acknowledged institutional blame, he also made clear that Catholic missionaries were merely cooperating with and implementing the government policy of assimilation, which he termed the “colonizing mentality of the powers.”

“I ask forgiveness, in particular, for the ways in which many members of the Church and of religious communities cooperated, not least through their indifference, in projects of cultural destruction and forced assimilation promoted by the governments of that time, which culminated in the system of residential schools,” he said.

The six-day visit — which will also include other former school sites in Alberta, Quebec City and Iqaluit, Nunavut, in the far north — follows meetings Francis held in the spring at the Vatican with delegations from the First Nations, Metis and Inuit. Those meetings culminated with an April 1 apology for the “deplorable” abuses committed by some Catholic missionaries in residential schools and Francis’ promise to deliver an apology in person on Canadian soil.

Sen. Murkowski has huge campaign fundraising lead over challenger Tshibaka

BY MARK SABBATINI
Juneau Empire

Incumbent Lisa Murkowski has a dominant fundraising advantage over challenger Kelly Tshibaka in the U.S. Senate race. In the race for U.S. House, Nick Begich enjoys a big cash-on-hand advantage despite raising the least of the three main contenders in the race, according to the most recent Federal Election Commission reports.

A total of about \$4 million was raised on Murkowski’s behalf by her campaign (\$1.6 million) and the political action committee Alaskans for LISA (\$2.4

million) during the three-month quarter ending June 30. The 20-year Republican incumbent had \$6.1 million in her campaign account as of the reporting date.

Tshibaka’s campaign reported raising \$587,000 in the same three months, with \$1.1 million in her account.

The totals for the quarter ending June 30, with a filing deadline of July 15, do not include any contributions that came in after former President Donald Trump attended a rally in Anchorage on July 9 where he endorsed Tshibaka for Senate and former Gov.

Sarah Palin for U.S. House.

While Tshibaka and Murkowski are each past \$1 million, Democratic Senate candidate Pat Chesbro, who entered the race in May, reported raising slightly less than \$38,000 during the same period, including \$7,400 from herself, with about \$16,000 cash on hand.

Palin led the House candidates with \$203,000 raised during the reporting period between May 23 and June 30 — the shorter period representing the timespan between the last reporting period before

the special primary election in July. Democratic candidate Mary Peltola raised \$161,000, and Republican candidate Begich \$82,000.

But the cash-on-hand numbers for the three candidates are a mirror image, with Begich reporting \$708,000 in the bank due primarily to loaning his campaign \$650,000 earlier in the race; Peltola, with \$115,000 (and \$10,000 in debt); and Palin, about \$95,000 (and \$40,000 in debt).

Voters on Aug. 16 will choose between Palin, Peltola and Begich to fill out the remaining months of the unexpired term of the late U.S. Rep. Don Young, who died

in March. On that same day, voters will choose from the same three candidates, plus 19 more, in a primary election to decide which ones advance to the Nov. 8 general election for a two-year term to Congress.

Of the \$2.4 million raised by Alaskans for LISA, \$1.5 million came from Kenneth Griffin, a hedge fund manager who has contributed millions to support Republican candidates and PACs nationwide. The biggest donors to Murkowski’s personal campaign account were PACs supporting Republican candidates nationally.

Of the \$203,000 raised by Palin, about \$95,000 went to fees charged by fundraising entities.

CLASSIFIED

HELP WANTED

Wrangell Public Schools is accepting applications for the following positions for the 2022-2023 school year:

- **Elementary Teacher:** This is a full-time teaching position in Grades K-5 (placement to be determined). This position requires an Alaska teaching certificate with an appropriate endorsement in elementary education. The anticipated start date for this position is Aug. 22, 2022.
- **High School Secretary:** This is a full-time, 10-month position with benefits, supporting the principal and completing all office duties of a school secretary in the high school office. Salary placement is Column D on the Classified Salary Schedule. A high school diploma is required, experience working with teens and/or in an office setting is preferred. The anticipated start date for this position is Aug. 8, 2022.
- **Indian Education Director/Tutor:** This is a part-time position administering the Indian Education grant, planning cultural events and activities, and tutoring Alaska Native/American Indian students to ensure that they are successful in school. Salary placement is Column A or B on the Classified Salary Schedule. The anticipated start date for this position is Aug. 22, 2022.

Contact the district office at 907-874-2347 for more information. Positions are open until filled. It is the Wrangell Public School Dis-

trict’s policy to not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

CABIN FOR SALE

New 1-bedroom, 1-bath 12-foot-by-24-foot cabin for sale. Ready for you to move. \$35,000 cash, firm. Call Rusty at 360-535-0367 or 907-874-2044.

BOAT FOR SALE

16-foot Lund with trailer, \$1,500. Call 907-660-7256.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

Remote property for sale on South Wrangell Island (Thoms Place subdivision). 1.88 acres, waterfront. Lot 18, Block 2, Unit 3 of Alaska State Land Survey No. 81-234, Wrangell Recording District. Phone or text 907-321-3240.

SHOES FOR SALE

New shoes. One pair is black slip-ons and the other pair is brown suede boots. \$40 each. Call Marline at 907-874-4414.

PIANIST WANTED

The Wrangell Chorale is looking

for a piano player to accompany them to prepare for a Christmas concert in December. No pianist, no concert! Call Bonnie Demerjian at 907-796-9632 for more information.

TYPING TABLE WANTED

Looking for an antique small typing table that is square and made out of wood. Call Rosemary Ruoff at 609-492-2474.

FIREWOOD WANTED

Quarter to half a cord of seasoned and split firewood. Call Jim at 907-254-1224.

FREE

Recycled newspapers. Stop by the Sentinel to pick some up.

FREE ADS

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

WRANGELL COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION NOTICE OF JOB OPENING Receptionist

The Wrangell Cooperative Association is seeking a receptionist.

Complete job description and applications are available outside at the WCA Office at 1002 Zimovia Highway or by emailing wcatribes@gmail.com. Contact Esther Ashton at 907-874-4304 with questions. Open until filled.

Publish July 20 and 27, 2022

CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL PUBLIC NOTICE Heritage Harbor Boat Ramp Closure

Heritage Harbor boat launch will be closed Monday, Aug. 1, 2022, and will reopen on Aug. 20, 2022, to accommodate parking lot repairs at the top of the ramp. The Shoemaker Bay Harbor boat launch and the Inner Harbor boat launch across from the Power Plant on Case Avenue will remain open.

We appreciate your understanding and thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Harbor Department at 907-874-3736.

Amber Al-Haddad, Capital Facilities Director
City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska

Publish July 27, Aug. 3, 10 and 17, 2022

CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE OF JOB OPENING Temporary Harbor Administrative Assistant Harbor Department

The City and Borough of Wrangell will accept applications beginning July 21, 2022 (until filled) for the position of temporary Harbor Department Administrative Assistant.

This is a temporary 40-hour-per-week position lasting approximately six months. Applicants must have a valid Alaska driver’s license, be proficient with Microsoft Office programs including Excel, Word, Outlook and Access, and have excellent customer service skills.

For a complete list of duties and responsibilities a job application may be obtained and returned to City Hall, 205 Brueger Street (P.O. Box 531), Wrangell, AK 99929, or emailed to rmarshall@wrangell.com.

The City and Borough of Wrangell is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

Jeff Good, Borough Manager
City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska

Publish July 27 and Aug. 3, 2022

ALASKA VOTER ADVISORY

August 16 Statewide Election

The **REGULAR PICK ONE PRIMARY ELECTION** and **SPECIAL GENERAL ELECTION** are on the same ballot.



THE AUGUST 16th ELECTION WILL BE AN IN-PERSON ELECTION
with polling places open on election day 7am-8pm

WANT TO VOTE BY MAIL?

Apply for an absentee by-mail ballot by August 6!

RANKED CHOICE VOTING: HOW TO MARK YOUR BALLOT

Fill in only one oval per candidate, in each column.

You do not have to rank all the candidates. Your second choice is only counted if your first choice candidate is eliminated.

State Senator District B					
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
Larry Doe (Registered Democrat)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mac Allen (Registered Republican)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Edna Mode (Undeclared)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tiffany Strait (Nonpartisan)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-In:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MISTAKES TO AVOID

State Senator District B					
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
Larry Doe (Registered Democrat)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mac Allen (Registered Republican)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Edna Mode (Undeclared)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tiffany Strait (Nonpartisan)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-In:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you skip a ranking your next ranking moves up. Here, if your first choice candidate is eliminated, your third choice counts as your second choice and your fourth choice would count as your third choice.

State Senator District B					
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
Larry Doe (Registered Democrat)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mac Allen (Registered Republican)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Edna Mode (Undeclared)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tiffany Strait (Nonpartisan)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-In:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you give more than one candidate the same ranking, nothing after those candidates will count. Here, only your first choice counts.

State Senator District B					
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
Larry Doe (Registered Democrat)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mac Allen (Registered Republican)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Edna Mode (Undeclared)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tiffany Strait (Nonpartisan)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-In:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Your vote only counts once, even if you rank a candidate more than once. When a candidate is eliminated in a round, they are eliminated from all future rounds.

State Senator District B					
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
Larry Doe (Registered Democrat)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mac Allen (Registered Republican)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Edna Mode (Undeclared)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tiffany Strait (Nonpartisan)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-In:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you skip two or more rankings in a row only the rankings before the skipped rankings will count. Here, your first choice counts and the fourth choice would not count.

For more detailed information, sample ballots, and explainer videos, visit www.elections.alaska.gov/rcv.php.

