



Opinions shared on potential mask mandate

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

During a special borough assembly meeting last Thursday, community members shared their thoughts on a potential mask mandate the city was considering. The mandate would require all individuals, with some exceptions, to wear a mask or face covering in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This mandate, and Wrangell's response to it in general, has been a controversial topic in the community. Over 20 people called into the meeting, and the city also received several letters.

The majority of the people who called into last week's assembly meeting were in favor of a mask mandate. Common talking points amongst them were that masks were a minor inconvenience, that they could help slow the spread of COVID-19, and that the mandate would help protect the community and its economy.

"It's a proven scientific fact that wearing masks, hand washing, and social distancing reduces the risk of COVID virus transmission," Jim Leslie said. "Why would we not use every tool in our arsenal to protect one another?"

"Other parts of Alaska, and most states in the lower 48, are seeing huge spikes in COVID cases, with the scientific community predicting worse to



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Snowy weekend

Winter is coming to Wrangell. Last weekend saw some snow in the community. While it did not stick around in town, for the most part, it can be seen on the mountaintops and out the road. Pictured here is a snowy mountaintop behind the Nolan Center.

come if we do not adhere to two simple things: Mask wearing and social distancing," said Haig Demerjian, reading a letter written by himself and Bonnie Demerjian. "Wearing a mask and social distancing protects us all. Why would we not want to do that?"

"I feel it's important to do

everything we can to protect our fellow citizens, our healthcare workers, our grocery workers, our schools, our businesses, our economy," Nola Walker said. "It seems a small price to pay to avert the potential suffering of our neighbors."

While most of the public who spoke during the meeting fa-

vored the mandate, there were several people who opposed it. Some common themes in their comments were that people who do not want to wear masks will still refuse even if there is a mandate, that there is no need for a mandate since Wrangell has only had one case in several weeks, and that enacting a man-

date would only increase divisions within the community.

"If you're considering mandating masks when the risk level is low, when do you pull it off?" Penny Allen said. "When it's zero? When we have a vaccine? ... I feel like a broken record saying that this is something that's here to stay and will always be around, and you'll never get rid of it."

"I have been down in Seattle several times," Don McConachie said. "The Seattle area is a very, very depressing place to be. Everybody is looking at each other as if they are Attila the Hun or Charles Manson, or whatever the case may be, and it's very bothersome. I just do not agree with a mandatory mask mandate."

"I concur 100 percent with Penny Allen, which is basically 'not yet,'" Mike Lockabey said. "I've seen a lot of bad come to this town from COVID-19 in the last six months. Not with health issues, because all of our people survived, which was fortunate, and very few people got very sick ... I live without fear, although many people in the past six months have tried to scare me."

As this was only a discussion meeting, no formal action was taken regarding the mask mandate. The assembly decided that it was worth further discussion, and decided to bring it up again in a future meeting.

Assembly discusses mask mandate in special meeting

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell Borough Assembly met last Thursday evening, Nov. 5. This was only a discussion meeting, to take in public opinion and decide whether or not a mask mandate would be worth considering in a formal meeting. This mandate was being considered at the behest of the local Emergency Operations Center, who requested the city look at the possibility.

The potential mandate, outlined in the meeting's agenda packet, would require all individuals to wear a mask or face veering while "indoors in public settings or communal spaces outside the home." This would include places like grocery stores, restaurants, while riding on public transportation, and communal areas where people from multiple households are present, among other locations.

There are exceptions to this rule, such as children under the age of two-years-old, those with medical conditions that a mask would exacerbate, those who are exercising, public speakers or musicians, and others.

Anyone found in violation of this mandate would be subject to a \$25 fine. Businesses, under this mandate, would be responsible for making sure employees have access to masks. Businesses would not be subject to fines if a customer

refuses to comply with the mandate, so long as they have clearly posted signs informing customers they have to wear a mask. If adopted, this mandate would sunset on Dec. 31, unless the assembly decides to take action.

Captain Dorianne Sprehe, with the fire department and the EOC gave a presentation on why the EOC thinks a mask mandate should be considered. Wrangell saw its first case in several weeks earlier in the week, on Nov. 3.

While Wrangell itself may not be seeing the brunt of the pandemic, she said that factors across the state mean that Wrangell is still at risk. Cases are rising at an accelerated rate across Alaska, she said. Most of the state is considered at a high alert level, while the majority of Southeast Alaska is at an intermediate alert level.

Hospital bed capacity is becoming a concern, she added. According to her presentation, Sprehe said that there are 481 adult inpatient beds available across Alaska, and 28 adult ICU beds. In Southeast Alaska specifically, there are 141 adult inpatient beds available and 8 ICU beds. While Wrangell, and in general Southeast Alaska, is not seeing as dramatic an increase in case numbers as the rest of the state, Sprehe said it would be unwise to think that their community is



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Packages of face masks, offered for sale at City Market. The city of Wrangell is moving forward with consideration of a mask mandate, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

not still at-risk.

"The EOC brought this request forward to the assembly because we think this is serious, given the situation within the state," she said. "I know there are some that feel this is taking away their freedoms or their life choices. COVID has

asked all of us to make life choices. The mask is not about closing your business or taking your freedoms, it's a mitigation measure, and mitigation measures are about keeping people healthy so we can keep businesses open, keep schools open,

Continued on page 2

Mask mandate

Continued from page 1

so we can keep moving forward."

Much of the meeting was devoted to accepting public comments. After taking in these comments, and a brief recess, the assembly got into a discussion about their own thoughts on the potential mask mandate. There was some question amongst assembly members about the legality of a mask mandate. Joseph Levesque, the borough's attorney, was present in the meeting and said that Wrangell would have the legal authority to enact a mask mandate. Wrangell is a

home rule municipality. This means, he said, that Wrangell can do just about anything when it comes to local laws, so long as there isn't another law explicitly prohibiting it.

"In Title 29, there's actually a section that, that's section 29.10.200, and it has limitation of home rule powers," Levesque said. "It says only the following provisions of this title apply to home rule municipalities as prohibitions on action otherwise than as provided. None of those provisions that they're saying do apply to home rule municipalities, under Title 29, have any-

thing to do with health powers."

Another topic of concern for city officials was enforcement of this mandate. Police Chief Tom Radke said, in his opinion, his department could enforce this mandate. He could not anticipate how many calls regarding people breaking the mandate they could expect, he said, but he said he believes they have the capacity to handle it. If things became overwhelming, Radke said that he would come back to the assembly to make sure they knew.

Radke was not the only member of the police department to speak in the meeting. Lt. Bruce Smith, during the persons to be heard portion of the meeting, shared some of his concerns. There are very passionate and stubborn people on both sides of the argument when it comes to a mask mandate, he said. Forcing people to wear a mask, he said, will only cause an escalation of tensions. He also said he does

still have concerns about the legality of the mandate, despite the city attorney's assurances. The police can enforce this mandate, he said, but he wanted to know how far the city was willing to take that enforcement.

"Your decision here will make some happy, but will alienate and anger many others," Smith said.

On the topic of enforcement, Assembly Member Terry Courson asked what would happen if an individual refused to accept the \$25 fine for not wearing a mask. There are a lot of people in Wrangell who would refuse that citation, he said, and he was concerned about a situation escalating. By his understanding, refusing to accept the fine would lead to a mandatory arrest, he said. Radke confirmed that this would be the case, but the arrest would likely not last for very long.

"Under the new COVID regulations we're going to be push-

ing the person out," he said. "They're not going to let us hold a person for this."

Courson said this potential situation was something he wanted the assembly to consider when thinking about this mask mandate. Mayor Steve Prysunka said that he believed the Wrangell Police Department was good at deescalating situations.

"There's going to be a lot of talking, and education, and working with the public," he said. "The intention's not to be tossing people in jail. The intention is to try and work with the public."

After further discussion, the general consensus amongst the assembly was that the mandate was worth giving formal consideration in a future meeting. They originally planned to put it on the agenda for their meeting on Nov. 10. However, they later decided to push it back to a future special meeting, or their next regular meeting on Dec. 8.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Thursday, November 12: Alan Frank, Ruby Brock, Andrew Feudner, Joe Stover, *Anniversary:* Ken & Krissy Smith. **Friday, November 13:** Ken Lewis. **Saturday, November 14:** Jake Mork, Brent Mill, Tai Brown, Barbara Hommel, Jordan Bunes. **Sunday, November 15:** Dick Angerman, Steve Ramsey, Floyd Ramsey, *Anniversaries:* Laura & Winston Davies, Ryan & Rhonda Edgley. **Monday, November 16:** Lorri Angerman, Fred Angerman, Jr., Connor Guggenbickler, *Anniversary:* Jack & Terree Pino. **Tuesday, November 17:** Leo Summer, Kelsey McGee, Talon Churchill, Cody Angerman. **Wednesday, November 18:** Ann Phillips. **Thursday, November 19:** David Joseph, Madison Robinson, Kimberly Cooper.

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

Senior Center Meals Menu Delivery Only

Friday, November 13

Sweet & Sour Pork with Rice, Green Beans, Romaine & Radish Salad.

Monday, November 16

Pineapple Lemon Chicken, Mixed Veg, Fruit Slaw, Rice.

Tuesday, November 17

Venison Stew, Peas, Creamy Slaw, Biscuit.

Wednesday, November 18

Pork Chop Suey, Broccoli Cauliflower Toss, Salad/Rice.

Thursday, November 19

Egg Salad Sandwich, Bean Soup, Apple Salad.

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

Senior van also available to transport seniors to medical appointments reasonable errands like collecting mail, getting prescriptions at pharmacies or other essential need items.

FERRY

November Sailings CANCELLED

Call 874-2021 for information or call 874-3711 or Toll Free 800-642-0066 for recorded information.



TIDES

November 12 - November 19

	High Tides		Low Tides					
	AM Time	PM Time	AM Time	PM Time	Ft	Ft		
Nov. 12	10:16	17.4	10:45	16.2	03:48	0.5	04:29	-0.5
Nov. 13	10:58	18.8	11:36	17.0	04:37	0.1	05:16	-2.5
Nov. 14	11:40	19.7	05:22	-0.1	06:01	-3.9
Nov. 15	00:25	17.3	12:21	20.1	06:06	0.2	06:45	-4.5
Nov. 16	01:12	17.2	01:03	19.9	06:48	0.7	07:29	-4.4
Nov. 17	02:00	16.6	01:46	19.2	07:31	1.6	08:14	-3.7
Nov. 18	02:49	15.7	02:31	18.0	08:16	2.7	09:02	-2.4
Nov. 19	03:40	14.7	03:19	16.4	09:05	3.9	09:54	-1.0

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

November 11, 1920

One of the matters which claimed the attention of the Town Council at its meeting Thursday night was the matter of the use of tobacco by children. The town marshal was directed to notify every tobacco dealer in Wrangell not to sell tobacco in any form to any child under 17 years of age. The marshal was further directed to advise the tobacco dealers that they are not to sell children tobacco for use by their parents or other adults, except on a written order stipulating the date and quantity of tobacco to be delivered to the child, and this written order cannot be extended to apply to more than one purchase of tobacco at a time.

November 9, 1945

Monday, November 12, will be a holiday in the town of Wrangell. Stores will be closed as well as the City Hall and Post Office. Holiday weekend will be kicked off by the American Legion dance at the ANB Hall, Saturday night, at which a new Thor washing machine will be awarded by the Legion Auxiliary. Dance promises to be a gala affair with hot music playing in the best swing-time style, and a large crowd is expected to attend.

November 12, 1970

Many people in Wrangell have parakeets or canaries for pets, but Martin Massin has pigeons — about 50 of them. Each and every work day of this

year he provides treats of chicken scratch for his feathered friends which amounts to about 50 pounds a month, 600 pounds a year and over a ton to date. As he wheels and deals his massive 950 forklift around Wrangell Lumber Co.'s mill yard, Martin is surrounded by whirring wings and contented cooing, and it's quite a colorful sight to see dozens of these bright-plumaged birds as they use the machine's huge spinning tires as a treadmill, alternating the speed and direction of their strutting to match their idol's driving. It's not so much that Martin has found himself some "pigeons" as it is the pigeons have found themselves a real "human."

November 9, 1995

Bullets, Bulls and Wildcats opened the first week of Wrangell Park and Recreation youth basketball Saturday with wins to place them in a three-way tie for first with 1-0 records. Wildcats defeated Panthers 45-23, Bulls beat Bears 45-31 and Bullets downed Eagles 38-19. Games scheduled for this Saturday are Bears-Eagles, 9 a.m.; Wildcats-Bullets 10:15 a.m.; and Panthers-Bulls 11:30 a.m. This year's coaches are Todd White, Dean Barker, Craig Villarma, Fred Angerman, Greg Roberts and Holly Nore. Assistants are Jeff Jabusch, Gary Allen Jr., Monic Martin, Mark Seimers, Joel Peterman and Mark Jeffers.

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

Friday, November 13

Wrangell High School and Stikine Middle School Parents Conference: 1:20 pm, for appointments, please contact your site secretary.

Monday, November 16

Wrangell Public School Board Regular Meeting: 6:30 pm via Zoom. Meeting ID: 932 2045 8229. Passcode: 860370. www.zoom.us/j/93220458229?pwd=aTJBbIRJQ0xwZmlpZ0dEd2NTSGJsQT09

Jury duty for November. You will be receiving notices in the mail in the next few weeks. Court number: (907) 874-2311.

Anyone doing business at the Wrangell Court are required to wear a mask unless under 2 years of age or exempted for medical reasons. This is effective until further notice. All hearings are being conducted telephonically until further notice. Contact the court for the call-in number at (907) 874-2311.

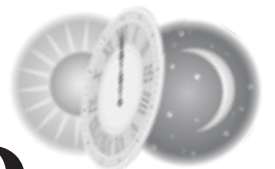
Continuing Events

AA Meetings: North Star Group Meeting Tuesdays and Fridays 7 - 8 p.m at St. Philips Episcopal Church.



Wrangell Weather

Date	High	Low
Nov. 2	55	39
Nov. 3	40	34
Nov. 4	43	37
Nov. 5	39	0
Nov. 6	35	30
Nov. 7	34	26
Nov. 8	38	27
Nov. 9	39	37



Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Hours
Nov. 12	7:18a	3:45p	08:27h
Nov. 13	7:20a	3:44p	08:24h
Nov. 14	7:22a	3:42p	08:20h
Nov. 15	7:24a	3:40p	08:16h
Nov. 16	7:26a	3:38p	08:12h
Nov. 17	7:28a	3:37p	08:09h
Nov. 18	7:30a	3:35p	08:05h
Nov. 19	7:32a	3:34p	08:02h

Division of Elections to begin counting absentee ballots

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Alaska Division of Elections, in a Nov. 9 press release, announced a schedule for conducting absentee ballot counts. Moving forward, they announced that the public could expect updated counts to be released twice daily, at 5 p.m. and again at the close of business.

"It is the mission of my office and the Division of Elections to ensure public confidence in the electoral process by administering elections with the highest level of professional standards, integrity, security, accuracy, and fairness," said Lt. Governor Kevin Meyer in the press release. "With a record amount of absentee ballots issued, and an outstanding amount of early voter turnout, we are taking very seriously our role in tabulating all ballots."

According to the Division of Elections website, as of Nov. 9, Alaska saw 193,477 ballots cast early, or were otherwise questioned. Sarah Whittlesley-Meritt, LIO for Wrangell, told media on election night that

Wrangell had 316 early ballots cast.

Tiffany Montemayor, PR Manager for the Division of Elections, said that they were currently not sure when they would get to District 36's absentee ballots, which includes the city of Wrangell. They have to wait for all the precincts' registers to be turned in, so they could check the names of absentee ballots that were cast in-person, before counting could begin. There was some delay in this, she said, because there are several remote communities in Region I, which District 36 is a part of, that are remote. Montemayor said as of 5 p.m. on Nov. 10 that they were not certain what the schedule would be. She was not sure exactly when they would get to District 36's ballots, but they would hopefully be able to release that information soon.

There were 732 ballots cast on election day in Wrangell, plus four special needs ballots and 23 questioned ballots.

For President, Wrangell cast 171 ballots for Joe Biden, and 526 votes for Donald Trump.

For U.S. Senator, Wrangell cast 167 votes for Al Gross, and 504 votes for Dan Sullivan.

For U.S. Representative, Wrangell cast 196 votes for Alyse Galvin, and 519 votes for Don Young.

For State Senator, Wrangell cast 605 votes for Bert Stedman, and 35 votes for write-in candidates.

For State Representative, Wrangell cast 344 votes for Dan Ortiz, and 366 votes for Leslie Becker.

On retention of Susan Carney to the Alaska Supreme Court, Wrangell cast 400 votes for "yes," and 249 votes for

School board accepts 2020 audit

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell School Board met Monday night for a special work session and meeting regarding the district's FY 2020 financial audit.

According to the audit, the school district has approximately \$3.57 million in total assets across different funds: \$2.07 million in assets in its general fund, \$1.07 million in its capital improvement projects fund, and \$437,786 in other governmental funds. Meanwhile, there are approximately \$1.65 million in total liabilities. An income statement of the district's major funds show that the general fund's end-of-year balance is \$757,486, increasing from \$578,999 at the beginning of the year. The capital improvements fund remains the same, according to the audit, at roughly \$1.07 million. The other governmental funds balance decreased from \$97,741 to \$95,760.

In total governmental activities funding, which covers items like instruction, special education, student activities, and other items, the district is in the red for approximately \$1.17 million. However, this is a step up from their net position at the beginning of the year, according to the audit, of roughly \$1.97 million.

"Overall I think you guys are in really good shape," said Maxim Mamontov, auditor with Altman, Rogers & Co. "You have plenty of liquidity, your fund balance is healthy ... Overall

your school district is, it's not a large district but it looks like it's well funded, and you're in a very healthy financial position, in my opinion."

There was some discussion around particular details and other aspects of the audit. Board Member Patty Gilbert wanted to know specifically where about \$9,500 in capital improvements money came from and went to. Mamontov said it was his understanding the money came from the City and Borough of Wrangell, for reimbursement for brick work around the high school. Gilbert also expressed some concern that she felt the balance in the capital improvements fund was slightly off, by about \$6,000. Mamontov said, after some research, that this was correct. It appeared that one of the categories of funding under "non-major funds" had been combined with capital improvements, he said, creating the discrepancy. That was something he would look into and get back to them on, he said.

The discussion went on for some time, over various portions of the audit. Eventually, the board did decide to accept the FY 2020 audit unanimously. Several school board members commented on the thoroughness of the auditor.

"Really, thank you for this presentation," Board Member David Wilson said to Mamontov. "This is the best that I've ever seen, that we've had."

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On retention of Tracey Woltenberg to the Alaska Court of Appeals, Wrangell cast 414 votes for "yes" and 219 votes for "no."

On Ballot Measure One, Wrangell cast 240 votes for "yes," and 451 votes for "no."

On Ballot Measure Two, Wrangell cast 322 votes for "yes," and 379 votes for "no."

Including the 316 early votes Merrit reported, Wrangell had a turnout of

about 54 percent this election, presidential election. Election an increase of about ten per cent since the last results can be found at www.elections.alaska.gov.

Police report

November 2

Agency Assist: Department of Public Works.

False Alarm.

Agency Assist: Petersburg P.D.

Agency Assist: Alarm.

November 3

Traffic Stop: Tykan Daly, 28, Citation issued for Failure to provide proof of insurance.

Paper Service/civil standby.

Traffic Stop: Olivia Stead, 33, Citation issued for speeding in a school zone.

Traffic Stop: James VandeBunte, 58, Citation issued for Failure to use turn signal.

November 4

Agency Assist/Paper Service: Domestic Violence Order paper service.

Traffic Stop: Tykan Daly, 28, Citation issued for Speeding in School Zone and Failure to Provide Proof of Insurance.

November 5

Traffic Stop: Bryan Ottesen, Citation issued for Failure to Provide Proof of Insurance.

Traffic Stop: Winston Davies, Citation issued for Failure to Provide Proof of Insurance.

Agency Assist: U.S. Forest Service.

Motor Vehicle Accident: School bus hit a deer.

November 6

Agency Assist: U.S. Postal Service.

Paper Service.

Subpoena Service.

Suspicious Incident.

Agency Assist: Wrangell Medical Center.

November 7

Agency Assist: U.S. Forest Service/Alaska Wildlife Troopers.

Subpoena Service.

November 8

Bear Activity.

Disturbance.

Found Bike.

Citizen Assist.

Agency Assist: U.S. Forest Service.

Suspicious Incident.

Disabled Motor Vehicle.

During this reporting period there were three assists to EMT calls, four Agency Assists for Hoonah P.D. and two Dog Complaints.

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As positive cases increase across our state, SEARHC continues to provide the healthcare coverage that you and your family need in a safe and secure environment.

COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies



Testing is available to anyone with symptoms and those identified as close contacts.



Our facilities are taking extra precautions to ensure safe in person clinic visits.

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- Making waiting areas social distance friendly
- Enhancing onsite cleaning and disinfection
- Requiring face masks
- Limiting visitors



Increased access to video appointments for primary and specialty care.

If you are experiencing symptoms such as fever, headache, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, call the **COVID-19 Hotline at 907.966.8799** to speak to a nurse 24/7 or call your local clinic to schedule a test.

To learn more about COVID-19, testing and SEARHC's safety precautions visit covid19.searhc.org.

SEARHC
healthy is here.

Tin Can Country receives accolades

Arlington, VA - Fifty-two museum publications have gained accolades in the 29th annual Museum Publications Design Competition, presented by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). This competition recognizes and encourages superior execution and ingenuity in the graphic design of museum publications and is the only national, juried competition of its kind.

Tin Can Country: Southeast Alaska's Historic Salmon Canneries was given an Honorable Mention in the Book Design category. Published with the Clausen Museum, Tin Can Country shares the development of Southeast Alaska's salmon industry and how canneries serve as sites of Alaska history. A dozen contributors chart the story of Southeast Alaska as it manifests within regional salmon canneries, sharing history that



Karen Hofstad

ranges from the early establishment of canneries on Tlingit and Haida land, to how the industry was involved in World War I and World War II, to the story of Asian American Civil Rights. Much of the book is based on the writing of Patricia Roppel, with a treasure trove of illustrations coming from the collection of Karen Hofstad. The book features

custom maps for each chapter, created by David Johnson. Anjuli Grantham served as editor and co-author. Sarah Asper-Smith of ExhibitAK in Juneau designed the book. "It was such a pleasure to design this book, and have access to Karen's beautiful collection of salmon can labels." Since then, Hofstad has generously donated much of her collection of salmon can memorabilia to the Alaska State Library and Museum.

This year winners were chosen from over 250 entries from the US and globally in 12 print media categories for their overall design excellence, creativity, and ability to express

an institution's personality, mission, or special features.

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Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

A big thank you to the people in Wrangell who operate our elections. Sarah Whittlesey-Merritt and Kim Lane and their teams do a great job. Our election process goes smoothly here, pandemic or not. Sarah and Kim are part of a national army of election workers and volunteers who are dedicated to ensuring fair voting in every election.

I'm disturbed to see people shouting 'Fraud' against conscientious people who do their jobs like Sarah and Kim, accusations of hiding ballots or counting votes twice. There are always reasons why a candidate loses, but Election Day integrity should never be one of them.

Alice Rooney



Boat is gone

His bright and joyous light was a blessing to us all.

Obituary: Wayne Jabusch, 74

Wayne Jabusch, 74 died November 4, 2020 due to medical complications at St. Francis Hospital in Federal Way, Washington surrounded by family.

Wayne was born November 16, 1945 to James and Vivian Jabusch.

He moved with his family to Edna Bay, Alaska in 1956 and then moved to Wrangell in 1958. After attending high school, he joined the Marine Corps. Following his service he came back to Wrangell and worked as a longshoreman, fisherman and logger.

In the late 1960s, Wayne moved to Seattle to work for Western Airlines and retired from Delta Airlines but Wrangell was always his home.

In his visits back to Wrangell over the years, he enjoyed fishing, the Stikine River, friends and family. He also enjoyed traveling, coin collecting and playing cards.

He is survived by his son Richard (Barb) Jabusch; grandchildren Kaitlyn and Alex Jabusch; step-daughter Melissa (Kevin) Lominick; step-grandchildren Rilee and Jaxon Lominick; sister Lynn Maxand; brother Jeff



Wayne Jabusch

(Kay) Jabusch; and nephews Mike (Natalya) Jabusch, Jake (Alesha) Jabusch and James Maxand.

There will be a celebration of life in the summer of 2021.



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Salmon harvest down from last year

By **CALEB VIERKANT**
Sentinel writer

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has released preliminary data on state salmon harvests for 2020. Information for Southeast Alaska shows that only half as many fish were hauled in this year compared to last year.

2020 data shows that 14,301,964 salmon were harvested this year, totaling a little over 74 million pounds. The estimated ex vessel value for this harvest is about \$50 million. This is a major decrease from 2019 numbers, reported at about 32 million fish, 163 million pounds, and almost \$102 million in ex vessel value. This is a decrease of roughly 50 percent of value, 44 percent by numbers of fish.

For the entire state of Alaska, about 117 million fish, totaling about 518 million pounds, brought in an ex vessel value of about \$295 million. In 2019, state numbers were a little less than 207 million fish, at 872 million pounds, for an ex vessel value of a little less than \$658 million.

"When compared to the long-term time-series (1975-2019), the 2020 commer-

cial salmon harvest of 116.8 million fish is the thirteenth lowest on record," a press release from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reads. "In terms of pounds of fish, the all-species salmon harvest of 517.5 million pounds is the eighth lowest all-species salmon harvest recorded since 1975. Adjusted for inflation (CPI, 2020 prices), the 2020 ex vessel value estimate of \$295.2 million is the lowest ex vessel value reported since 2006."

Mike Lockabey, a Wrangell fisherman, said that this year was one of the biggest fluctuations he's seen in 30 years of fishing. There were many factors for this, in his opinion. He said that the COVID-19 pandemic really hurt salmon prices by reducing demand. There was also a weak salmon run, he said, as well as poor management that impacted the number of fish able to be harvested.

"This was one of the ugliest seasons I've seen in a long time," Lockabey said. "COVID is responsible for a lot of it ... compounded by an exceptionally weak run and poor management.

Craig Evens, of Petersburg, agreed



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Boats at rest in Wrangell's boatyard.

that it had been a bad season. With a low forecast, COVID-19, and the global political situation, the forecast turned out even worse than had been originally predicted.

"The uncertainty due to COVID kept prices low, and the trade war with China kept the markets depressed," Evens said. "Nobody's to blame, it was just a bad year."

The outlook amongst fishermen right now is rather bleak, Lockabey said. Nobody wants to try and predict how next

season might go. This season is behind them, but it is hard to guess what the future might hold. Evens added that all they can do is hope next year is better. He also said that the cannery workers and the fishermen all deserve a shoutout for their hard work this season, dealing with uncertainties and doing their parts to keep everyone healthy and still be productive.

More information on the salmon harvest can be found online, at www.adfg.alaska.gov.



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Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH
Fisheries columnist

Decline in number of boots on deck in Alaska; fisheries have lost jobs over past five years

The number of boots on deck in Alaska has declined and most fisheries have lost jobs over the past five years. Overall, Alaska's harvesting sector ticked downward by 848 jobs from 2015 through 2019.

A snapshot of fish harvesting jobs is featured in the November edition of Alaska Economic Trends by the state Dept. of Labor. The findings show that after hitting a peak of 8,501 harvesters in 2015, fishing jobs then fell to around 8,000 for the next two years before dropping again in 2018 to about 7,600.

In 2019, average monthly fishing employment was 7,653 and the industry added just 33 fishing jobs all year, reflecting growth of about 0.4 percent.

Estimated gross earnings in 2019 totaled over \$1.7 billion, of which only about \$660 million went to permit holders who were Alaska residents; the bulk went to fishermen who call Washington home.

Alaska's salmon fisheries, which represent the most workers on deck, added 93 harvesters in 2019 but remained below the five year average of 4,472 jobs.

Crab harvesting followed a similar trend, gaining 26 jobs in 2019 but remaining below the fishery's five-year average by 21 jobs. That drop is the largest in percent terms by species since 2015: a loss of nearly a quarter of that workforce.

Halibut harvesting gained just three jobs last year at 1,071, hovering below its five-year average by 28 fishing jobs, a 2.6 percent decline.

Sablefish (black cod) was the only other category to add jobs over the five years by 22, settling in at a yearly average of 646 black cod fishermen.

Two fisheries lost jobs last year - herring and groundfish, which has dropped fishing participants nearly every year since 2015. Kodiak, for example, is one of Alaska's top groundfish ports, and lost one-fifth of its harvester

jobs (162) over five years, due in great part to reduced fishing of cod.

By region, the Yukon Delta shed the largest share of fishing jobs due to poor salmon seasons. Last year's 170 Yukon fishing participants was a 55 percent drop from 2015.

Bristol Bay lost just 11 fishing jobs over five years, a decline of 0.7 percent.

Four regions - Southeast, Southcentral, Kodiak and the Aleutians - added jobs last year but haven't regained their 2015 highs.

Harvester jobs are tricky to calculate because fishermen are considered self-employed. Labor economists infer jobs in a given month from fish landings, and because fishing permits are tied to specific gears and boat sizes, they can roughly estimate how many people are on the job averaged across a year.

The November Trends also features processing seafood in Alaska during a pandemic and the state's deflation statistics. "Alaska's economy began to shut down in March due to COVID-19 and remains weak... of all the nation's consumer price indexes generated at the state or city level, Alaska's is the only one showing consistent overall deflation this year. The reasons aren't yet clear, and it will take time to know whether it's a temporary aberration, especially if the economy rebounds with any vigor," wrote DOL economist Neal Fried.

Offshore fish farms advance - Two U.S. regions have been selected as Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOAs) as part of the Trump Administration's executive order in May "Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth" in waters from three to 200 miles offshore.

The two regions are in the Gulf of Mexico and off Southern California and are the first of 10

sites that NOAA's Aquaculture Program is tasked with identifying over the next five years.

The AOAs will use existing infrastructure, such as docks, processing plants, and transportation routes in selected regions to create new sustainable economic opportunities,

said Danielle Blacklock, director of NOAA Fisheries' Office of Aquaculture, at a recent Seafood-Source webinar.

"We're looking for places that are appropriate in multiple different ways - they need to be appropriate environmentally or ecologically, meaning that areas have the right kind of current flow, the right depth, but they also need to be appropriate socially so we're looking to minimize user conflict," Blacklock explained. "We're not going to be in shipping lanes and we're looking to stay out of traditional fishing grounds. And we're also trying to make sure that they are economically appropriate, meaning that they are close enough to a port that landing their harvest is not too much of a challenge."

There is no predetermined size for an AOA and they could vary depending on what species of fish, shellfish and seaweeds are being grown. And while the areas are planned for waters that fall under federal jurisdiction, Blacklock said NOAA hopes to also collaborate with states for opportunities in their regions.

The state of Washington got onboard with NOAA Aquaculture a few years ago and it helped drive shellfish development on the west coast, said Paul Doremus, Chief Operating Officer for NOAA Fisheries. He believes that could have some appeal for Alaska, which has banned fish farming since the 1980s.

"There is a very vibrant mariculture industry in Alaska and an enormous amount of interest in seaweed production and various mollusks and shellfish," Doremus said. "This also is a

path to diversifying the seafood sector and something that a lot of folks in Alaska are very excited about. They are not excited about finfish so that is unlikely to happen."

The public can comment through December 22 on the Aquaculture Opportunity Areas being selected; a national listening session is scheduled for November 19 from 1-3p.m. ET

Kodiak awaits Tanners, hauls in Dungies - There was some slim hope that a small Tanner crab fishery could occur in January for westward region crabbers, which includes Kodiak, Chignik and the South Peninsula.

The summer survey indicated there might be enough mature male crabs to sustain a small 2021 fishery. But after crunching all the data, it was not meant to be.

Crabbers are in a gap year between a 2013 Tanner year class that's pretty much tapped out while awaiting a 2018 cohort that's the biggest ever, said Nat Nichols, regional manager at the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game office in Kodiak.

"We're fully between the two big groups of crab that we've been watching for the last couple years. Last year, we had a fishery on the 2013 group but they were coming up on seven years

old at that point, so they were pretty much aging out of the population," Nichols said. "For the 2018 group, it typically takes about four years to get them to legal size, so the expectation that a lot of them were going to be legal in 2020 was very low. The upshot is that this 2018 group seems to be surviving well and it's very widespread. If they continue to do that, we could certainly see a meaningful chunk of that group getting legal next year, and then the year after that looks even better."

Nichols agreed that fewer cod fish throughout the westward region could account for the steady uptick in Tanners.

"I don't think it can hurt," he said. "There's just a lot fewer mouths out there trying to eat a crab dinner right now."

Meanwhile, Kodiak just wrapped up its best Dungeness crab fishery in 30 years with a catch nearing 3 million pounds for 29 boats. At the Alaska Peninsula a fleet of 16 boats saw good hauls at 1.4 million pounds, and three boats took over a half million pounds at Chignik. That added up to a total take of 2.13 million animals.

The one downer was the Dungeness price. The crabs, which weigh just over two pounds on average, reportedly fetched \$1.85 a pound at Kodiak

Continued on page 7

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA AT WRANGELL

In the Matter of the Estate of:)
JOYCE VIVIAN PHILLIPS,)
Deceased) Case No. 1WR-20-17 PR
Date of Birth: 10/13/1933)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

You are notified that the court appointed Rynda M. Hayes as personal representative of this estate. All persons having claims against the person who died are required to present their claims within four months after the date of the first publication of this notice or the claims will be forever barred.
Dated this October 20, 2020.

Rynda M. Hayes
P.O. Box 886

Wrangell, Alaska, 99929

Published: October 29, November 5 and 12, 2020

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PUBLIC NOTICE Request for Qualifications

Wrangell Cooperative Association Transportation (WCAT), a federally recognized tribe, is soliciting proposals and rate information from qualified professionals to provide services for: Civil, Architectural, Mechanical, and Electrical Engineering schematic level design of a Maintenance/Warehouse Facility, and related services. The firm will also provide an associated cost to construct estimate for the design. For more information and to request a copy of the RFQ, please Call Bill Willard at (907) 874-3077, or email wwillard@wca-t.com and lizcabot@wca-t.com. Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please leave a message if calling after hours. Deadline: 4:00 p.m. (AKST), Monday, November 16, 2020.
Publish: October 22, 29, November 5 and 12, 2020

Puzzle answers from Nov. 5 Edition



4	8	7	1	3	5	9	6	2
1	3	6	9	4	2	5	7	8
2	9	5	6	7	8	4	1	3
6	5	1	8	2	3	7	4	9
9	7	3	4	5	1	2	8	6
8	2	4	7	9	6	1	3	5
3	1	9	2	8	7	6	5	4
7	4	8	5	6	9	3	2	1
5	6	2	3	1	4	8	9	7

WHS competes in fourth swim meet of the season

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell High School swim team competed in their fourth meet of the season last weekend. This was a virtual meet, according to a Facebook post by Coach Jamie Roberts, hosted by Sitka High School. The swim team managed to achieve multiple new personal bests, she said.

Friday results

Jacob Allen, Jimmy Baggen, Jack Roberts, and Nikolai Siekawitch swam a 200-yard medley relay for a combined time of 1:56.48.

Tyson Messmer swam a 200-yard individual medley for 2:45.47, and a 100-yard freestyle for a personal best of 1:03.81. Renee Roberts swam a 50-yard freestyle for a personal best of 25.66, and a 100-yard backstroke for a personal best of 1:06.03. Aaliyah Messmer swam a 50-



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMIE ROBERTS

The Wrangell High School swim team (left to right): Bruce Smith, Jacob Allen, Tyson Messmer, Ashleigh Loomis, Aaliyah Messmer, Jimmy Baggen, Renée Roberts, Nikolai Siekawitch, and Jack Roberts.

yard freestyle for 30.87, and a 500-yard freestyle for a personal best of 7:23.50. Ashleigh Loomis swam a 50-yard freestyle for a personal best of 31.75, and a 100-yard freestyle for 1:24.49. Jack Roberts swam a 50-yard freestyle for 25.67, and a 100-yard butterfly for 1:04.12. Jimmy Baggen swam a 50-yard freestyle for a personal best of 25.03, and a 100-yard butterfly for a personal best of 1:03.16. Bruce Smith swam a

50-yard freestyle for a personal best of 31.92, and a 100-yard breaststroke for a personal best of 1:32.31. Nikolai Siekawitch swam a 100-yard butterfly for a personal best of 57.12, and a 100-yard breaststroke for a personal best of 1:06.03. Jacob Allen swam a 100-yard freestyle for a personal best of 1:02.50, and a 100-yard backstroke for a personal best of 1:16.50.

Saturday results

Jack Roberts swam a 200-yard individual medley for a personal best of 2:23.53, and a 50-yard freestyle for 26.19. Renee Roberts swam a 50-yard freestyle for 25.37, and a 100-yard freestyle for 57.25. Aaliyah Messmer swam a 50-yard freestyle for 30.73, and a 100-yard freestyle for 1:28.06. Ashleigh Loomis swam a 50-yard freestyle for 32.56. Jack Roberts swam a 50-

yard freestyle for 27.78, and a 100-yard backstroke for 1:16.55. Tyson Messmer swam a 50-yard freestyle for 27.15, and a 100-yard freestyle for 1:14.19. Jimmy Baggen swam a 50-yard freestyle for a personal best of 24.66, and a 100-yard freestyle for a personal best of 57.78. Bruce Smith swam a 50-yard freestyle for 32.03, and a 100-yard breaststroke for 1:35.43. Nikolai Siekawitch swam a 100-yard butterfly for 58.55, and a 100-yard breaststroke for 1:07.74.

"Highlights from the weekend include: Jimmy Baggen earning 4 personal bests and dropping below 25 seconds in the 50yd Freestyle, Bruce Smith dropping significant time on his 50yd Freestyle and swimming 100yd Breaststroke for the first time in competition, and Jacob Allen swimming a high school career personal best 100yd Freestyle time," Roberts wrote in an email. "On Friday, the team earned 12 personal bests out of 18 swims. On Saturday, the team earned 5 personal bests out of 17 swims."

The swim team's next meet is scheduled for Nov. 20 and 21.



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Fish Factor

Continued from page 6

and \$1.75 further west, down from more than \$3 in previous seasons.

Upper Inlet salmon wrap -

State fishery managers are calling the 2020 Upper Cook Inlet salmon fishery harvest and value "historically low." The commercial harvest of roughly 1.2 million salmon was 65% less than the recent 10-year average harvest of 3.2 million fish.

A season summary by the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game said that the estimated ex-vessel (dock side) value of all salmon species is approximately \$5.2 million, the worst on record, and about 81% less than the previous 10-year average annual value of \$27.0 million.

While all five species of Pacific salmon are found in the UCI, sockeye account for nearly 93% of the total value to fishermen during the past 20 years.

The 2020 total run forecast for sockeye salmon was 4.3 million, and the actual run came in at 4.4 million fish. Salmon escapements to UCI streams were mostly above or within established ranges for sockeye, chum and coho salmon, but were poor for Chinook salmon.

Assembly holds discussion on CARES Act funding

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell Borough Assembly met Tuesday, Nov. 10. During this meeting, among other items, they held a discussion about the borough's CARES Act funding. They reviewed expenses so far, as well as possible future projects.

Wrangell received a \$3.85 million grant from the CARES Act, to help the city respond to the COVID-19 update, according to a memo from Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga. Between March and October of this year, \$2.3 million has been spent on a variety of programs and payroll for borough employees. About \$1.55 million remains unspent, but a significant portion of this is already set aside for future wages and other expenses. There is \$517,190.64 available for expenditure, according to the memo. The city currently has proposed uses for these funds totaling \$498,500. If all these requests were approved and there were no other expenses, Wrangell would only have \$18,690.58 in CARES Act funding unspent by the end of 2020.

Some of the new requests for funding include the possible use of \$50,000 for an airport generator, a combined \$45,000 for rent and utilities for the COVID alternate isolation site, \$5,000 for legal expenses, and \$100,000 for fire department pay through Dec. 31, among other requests. Von Barga pointed out the fire department pay specifically, as a potential response to a decreased amount of volunteer fire fighters being willing to respond to calls during the pandemic, and to an increased workload on paid staff. Another potential use of money, which Von Barga said she did not know the estimated cost of, would be continued airport testing after the state discontinues its testing program.

In addition to all this information, Von Barga reported that there are several authorized expenses that have not yet used their full allocations, meaning that some money could potentially be moved to different items. For example, \$125,000 has

been allocated to the school district to help with their COVID-19 related costs. Only approximately \$63,000 has been used so far. The remainder could potentially be re-allocated.

Von Barga also pointed out that all their CARES Act money has to be spent by the end of the year. The city would also need to consider the city's staffing needs in continuing to respond to the pandemic, even after the money is gone. With trends in the state being what they are, she said she is concerned the pandemic might get worse before things get better.

"We can pay for things through January, because bills will come in after the fact, etc.," she said. "One of the things we know we cannot pay for is staff ... What is not factored into the budget is the staff that has been pulled on in addition, to assist us."

The discussion around CARES Act funding went on for some time. Assembly Member Julie Decker said she would like more information on what the situation might look like for Wrangell post-Dec. 31. Assembly Member Patty Gilbert also suggested that the city check and see if a \$4,000 expense for Text-to-911 for the police department could be covered by the CARES Act.

Mayor Steve Prysunka said his ideal situation would have Wrangell spending every cent of their CARES Act funds, so they don't have to return any. The money is meant to support local communities, he said, so every bit spent will help the community. He also added that they should look at ways to spend this money that could offset future expenses, too. This opinion was shared by other members of the assembly.

"They [the funds] were put in place for those dollars to roll around our community," he said. "We've done our level best to do that."

As this was only a discussion item, no formal action was taken.

"We will be coming back with a final spending plan in very short order," Von

Barga said.

Other items covered in the meeting include the assembly accepting a \$55,000 grant from the NRA for skeet range improvements, authorizing the expense of \$9,602 for a new cable for the Marine Service Center's crane, amending the job description of the parks and rec custodian light maintenance position, and amending the position of accounting generalist. Before adjourning,

they held an executive session on the status of collective bargaining negotiations.

Prior to their meeting, the assembly held a workshop on proposed upgrades to the Municipal Light and Power metering system. As this was only a workshop, no formal action was taken on this item. A writeup of this workshop will be made available in next week's edition of the Wrangell Sentinel



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Tribal elections

The Wrangell Cooperative Association held its 2020 election Tuesday, Nov. 10. Tribal Administrator Esther Reese explained that members of the WCA tribal council hold two-year terms, and every two years half of the board opens up for election. There were six candidates on the ballot this year: Incumbent Lovey Brock, Sam Campus, Jason Clark, Incumbent Frank Churchill, Incumbent D.J. McConachie, and Ed Rilatos.

"Turnout, so far, is great," Reese said, manning the polling location at the WCA carving shed on election day. Pictured here are Chris Jenkins and Betsy McConachie, having just voted. The Wrangell Sentinel will report on election results in the following edition.

Former Wrangellite honored by ANS

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Alaska Native Sisterhood recently honored one of their members, according to a press release from Anne Fuller, ANS Camp 70 secretary. Ethel Lund was recently elected to Grand President Emeritus. Her Tlingit name, according to the press release, is Aanwoogeex', meaning "The Raven as he walked about when creating the earth."



Ethel Lund

Grand President Emeritus is an advisory role, Fuller explained to the Sentinel, and there is only one Grand President Emeritus at a time. These people have years of experience to pull from, she said, so their advice is highly regarded.

"I just think that this is a wonderful example of being respectful of our elders," Fuller said.

Lund was born to Carl Lund of Sweden and Martha Ukas of Wrangell, according to the press release. Sandy Churchill, Wrangellite and ANS Grand First Vice President, said that she grew up in Wrangell. She also added that she is a granddaughter of Josephine Ukas, Wrangell resident and one of the founders of the Alaska Native Sisterhood.

"What an honor," Churchill said. "Ethel has done so much for us."

According to the press release, Lund is an ANS life member of Camp 70 in Juneau where she served as president in the 1960s. She has also served as ANS Grand Secretary and ANS Grand President. According to the press release, she helped found the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, and was a leader in that organization from 1977 to 2000. She was also a founder and board member of the regional Sealaska Corporation.

The Wrangell Sentinel reached out to Lund at the Sitka Pioneer Home where she is a resident, but she declined to comment for the paper.

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