



Wrangell, Alaska
June 19, 2024

WRANGELL SENTINEL

Volume 122, Number 25

Oldest Continuously Published Newspaper in Alaska

12 Pages

\$1.50

Assembly plans vote on mandatory boat insurance for harbor users

By BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

The borough assembly has set a public hearing for June 25 on an ordinance that would require boat owners to show proof of marine insurance or pay a monthly surcharge on their moorage fees.

If approved by the assembly, the insurance requirements likely would not be applied until next year, Borough Manager Mason Villarma said in an interview June 12.

The port commission has recommended the assembly require marine insurance to protect the borough from damages caused by boat fires and to ensure payment of any cleanup or salvage expenses.

The assembly at its June 11 meeting amended the proposed ordinance to reduce the minimum liability insurance coverage to \$100,000 from the \$300,000 minimum proposed by staff.

The assembly also amended the ordinance to require coverage for all vessels. The original proposed ordinance only required coverage for vessels more than 29 feet in length.

The ordinance does not specify the monthly fee for boat owners who choose not to buy insurance; it leaves the amount up to the assembly to decide at a later date after a public hearing.

Funds collected by the per-vessel-foot surcharge would be set aside for dealing with salvage costs and derelict vessels.

After collecting the surcharge for a couple of years, the borough could have enough money in the account that the fee could be suspended, Villarma said.

The assembly vote to reduce the insurance requirement from \$300,000 to \$100,000 and advance the ordinance to a public hearing for June 25 came after almost an hour of debate at the June 11 meeting.

Mayor Patty Gilbert recognized it's a tough time financially for many people in Wrangell, and expressed the desire not to add costs unless absolutely necessary.

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Food sales fund the Fourth

Royalty candidate Alisha Armstrong (right) writes up the day's menu at her food booth at the downtown pavilion last Saturday, while candidate Kayla Young (below) serves a waiting customer at her booth. The two energetic teens and their crew of family, friends and volunteers have two weeks left for their fundraising raffle ticket sales which help pay for the Fourth of July celebration organized by the chamber of commerce.



PHOTOS BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Planning nearly complete as Fourth just two weeks away

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

They can't do anything about the weather, but organizers of Wrangell's Fourth of July events are preparing for the wettest and hoping for the warmest.

They have made room at the covered downtown pavilion for musical groups to per-

form in the afternoon and evening of the Fourth. The bands need electricity, which doesn't mix very safely with rain, said Tommy Wells, executive director of the chamber of commerce, which organizes the annual holiday celebration in town.

The events start with a golf tournament at Muskeg Mead-

ows on Saturday and Sunday, June 29-30, and run every day through the street dance the night of July 4.

"The schedule has changed about six times every day for the past four days," Wells said June 13. But it's getting close to final.

One holdup as of June 13 was that the chamber still

needed sponsors and volunteers to chair three events: The log roll and greased pole on July 2, and the "crazy craft"

water races on July 3.

Sponsors also are needed to provide prizes for kids events on July 4, and the Tiny Tot

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Researcher delivers 3,000-year-old bone fragment to tribe

By MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

A large audience turned out to hear an evolutionary biologist explain the connection between a dime-size piece of 3,000-year-old human bone found in a cave near Wrangell and present-day Alaska Natives, who welcomed the opportunity to return a distant ancestor to her final resting place.

Charlotte Lindqvist, a professor in the department of biological sciences at the University of Buffalo in New York, gave the presentation June 13 at the Nolan Center. The event focused on a bone fragment discovered in a cave on the mainland, across Blake Channel from Wrangell Island.

DNA analysis revealed that it belonged to a young woman from 3,000 years ago with a genetic connection to modern-day Tlingit people.

U.S. Forest Service District Ranger Tory Houser said approximately 125 people attended. "It's meaningful to have so many people here," she said. "Whether you are Native Alaskan or if you've lived in Wrangell a long time."

Houser introduced retired Forest Service archaeologist Jane Smith, who provided background on the project which began in 2003 when she and fellow Forest Service archaeologist Gina Esposito joined a professor of paleontology from the University of South Dakota in excavations of remains

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Trident ready for the start of pink and chum seasons

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Trident Seafoods' plan for its Wrangell plant this summer "is to run hard," with as many as 180 workers on the processing lines, packing headed-and-gutted pinks and chum salmon for the fresh-frozen market.

"You've got to get them out of the water and into the freezer" to have the best fish for consumers, said Jeff Welbourn, senior vice president of Alaska operations. It's all about time and temperature, he said of producing a quality product.

The company has added a new fish oil plant to its Wrangell operations for this summer, he said. "We take the heads and extract the oil," selling it in bulk for use in pet foods, in capsules for human consumption and other markets.

"We had an old one (fish oil plant) several years ago," Welbourn said in an interview June 12. The new one will help Trident make better use of the entire fish.

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Senior Center Menu

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

Thursday, June 20

Baked chicken, peas, sunshine salad, angel biscuit

Friday, June 21

Beef burrito, black beans, fruit slaw, spanish rice

Monday, June 24

Shelf-stable meal delivered on Friday, June 21

Tuesday, June 25

Tuna and noodles, steamed spinach, honey mustard coleslaw

Wednesday, June 26

Senior picnic at Shoemaker Park.

Call to reserve a van ride if you need one.

The menu will be french dip sandwiches, potato salad, danish salad

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

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

Ferry Schedule

Northbound

Sunday, June 23

Kennicott, 2:15 p.m.

Sunday, June 30

Kennicott, 6:45 p.m.

Sunday, July 7

Kennicott, 3 p.m.

Sunday, July 14

Kennicott, 5:30 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, June 26

Kennicott, 5 a.m.

Wednesday, July 3

Kennicott, 4 a.m.

Wednesday, July 10

Kennicott, 4 a.m.

Wednesday, July 17

Kennicott, 3 a.m.

Listings are scheduled departure times. Call the terminal at 907-874-2021 for information or 907-874-3711 for recorded information.

Tides

High Tides

Low Tides

	AM		PM		AM		PM	
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
June 19	12:24	13.1	11:59	16.3	05:55	0.1	05:43	4.5
June 20	01:09	13.5	06:36	-0.9	06:25	4.4
June 21	00:38	16.7	01:51	13.9	07:14	-1.6	07:05	4.3
June 22	01:17	17.0	02:32	14.2	07:52	-2.2	07:46	4.2
June 23	01:57	17.2	03:12	14.4	08:32	-2.4	08:28	4.0
June 24	02:39	17.1	03:53	14.6	09:12	-2.4	09:13	3.9
June 25	03:23	16.8	04:36	14.8	09:55	-2.0	10:05	3.8



ALASKA AIRLINES CLUB 49 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

PATS LAKE FAMILY FISHING DAY, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and WCA Earth Branch, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 22. Free outdoor fun for the family, including fishing, games and crafts. Lunch and prizes courtesy of Stikine Sportsmen Association. Some fishing gear and personal flotation jackets may be available for use onsite.

TOUCH A TRUCK 1 to 2 p.m. with horns welcome, and 2 to 3 p.m. with no horns, Sunday, June 23, at the parking lot by Volunteer Park. Join the fun and come check out all the big rigs! All ages welcome. Sponsored by Parks and Recreation.

SUMMER SOLSTICE PARTY, carnival games and food at 5 p.m., music by the Powers starting at 6 p.m., Saturday, June 22, at the downtown pavilion. Sponsored by the royalty contestants.

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

SUICIDE INTERVENTION SKILLS TRAINING 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 28-29. Learn the skills to help save a life. Must attend both days. Free. Registration required, Email khoy@searhc.org to register.

ROLL ON THE ROCK roller skating 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturdays at the TouchPoint Ministries rink on Bennett Street. Children 9 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Skaters must complete a registration form. \$5 per person.

MUSKEG MEADOWS Ottesen's Ace Hardware Day 9-hole best-ball tournament Saturday and Sunday, June 22-23. Play starts at 10 a.m., register by 9:30 a.m.

NOLAN CENTER THEATER "Bad Boys: Ride or Die" rated PG, at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 21-22. The film is an action adventure comedy that runs 1 hour and 55 minutes; tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under age 14. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM FOR KIDS at the Irene Ingle Public Library open to children entering kindergarten through ninth grade in the fall. Register at the library by June 29. The reading program runs through Aug. 3. More than 100 prize drawings and a pool/pizza party for everyone who completes the program. Call 907-874-3535 for more information.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL backpacks now available for tribal youth; applications accepted through July 7. Tlingit and Haida provides backpacks in partnership with Southeast Alaska village tribes. Children must be Alaska Native and/or American Indian, between the age of preschool to grade 12, and live in the Tlingit and Haida service area. Apply online: www.tinyurl.com/TH24B2SApp. For more information, call 907-463-7158.

FOURTH of JULY PIE SALE hosted by Beta Sigma Phi is seeking donations of homemade pies for their Fourth of July pie booth. Funds raised will go to their charitable activities. For more information, contact Olinda White 907-874-3078, Alice Rooney 907-305-0007 or Joan Benjamin 907-874-3252.

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

- **SWIM LESSONS** Monday-Friday starting June 17. Multiple two-week sessions with variable times available. Contact Parks and Rec for more details. Ages 5-12. \$40 fee. Registration required.
- **FOREST EXPLORERS** 10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays through Aug. 6 with Clarie Froehlich of the U.S. Forest Service. For ages 7-13; ages 6 and under must be accompanied by a guardian 14 or older. Meet at Volunteer Park. \$50 fee. Registration required.
- **KICKBOXING**, 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursdays at the community center multipurpose room with Victoria Carney. Drop-in fee \$5; \$3 senior discount; or use a facility punch card.
- **ADULT SIGN LANGUAGE** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 11 through Aug. 8 at the community center multi-purpose room with Franki Gablehouse. Ages 16 years and up. \$30. Registration required.

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

June 19, 1924

President J. Hooper, of the Affiliated Societies, who went up the Stikine River with the Barrington Transportation Co.'s boat, returned on Monday after a week inland. He reports a fine trip, scenery incomparable, a veritable panorama, a moving picture of miles of glaciers and ice-clad mountains, such as no other part of the world affords. He said: "The trip was not only pleasant but had enough thrills to make me feel that it was the big time of the whole tour. We saw some big game, including grizzly and large black bear, and if we had been in the hunting season could have gotten a full bag of caribou, moose, bear and big horn, as

well as Rocky Mountain sheep, which the country abounds in. We were held up at the Great Canyon for three days, saw plenty of wild geese, ducks, ptarmigan and more bald-headed eagles than I ever believed existed. The \$1 bounty on eagle claws and 50 cents on tail feathers evidently is not depleting the bird of freedom."

June 17, 1949

Wrangell's Fourth of July celebration will start with a bang, and a grand and glorious time is promised all, Chairman Don House said today. Festivities will start Saturday night when the American Legion holds its annual Fourth of July dance at the ANB Hall.

The Elks will follow Sunday, the third, with their annual holiday dance. The usual races, boat, bike and foot, will be held on the morning of the Fourth, following a parade for which prizes are awarded for best costume. House said a real lively program is being scheduled for the youngsters and a big street dance will be held. Fireworks "bigger and better than ever" said House, will wind up the holiday activities.

July 21, 1974

Reliance Shrimp Co. has processed more shrimp this year since the season began May 1 then was processed during the entire last year.

Dave Anderson, a spokesman for the company, attributed the increase in volume to the machine pickers the company recently installed. Anderson said the boats fishing for Reliance are not concentrating so heavily on the larger shrimp, as they did last year. When the company used hand pickers, Anderson said the pickers preferred the larger shrimp because they were paid by the number of pounds picked. The machine can pick both large and small shrimp. The cannery has processed more than 40,000 pounds since May 1, and will continue processing through Feb. 15, 1975, when the season ends, Anderson said.

June 17, 1999

The annual salmon derby is over, and fishermen of all ages reluctantly return to their homes, some, however, bearing broad, relieved smiles. Those happy anglers who brought in the larger fish of the derby will receive hefty cash prizes during the awards ceremony tonight at the Totem Bar. This year's top prize of \$6,000 goes to Arlen Neyman who pulled in a king weighing 50 pounds. Coming in at a close second is LaDonna Shilts, winning \$4,000 with her 49.9-pound king. Third place winner is Randy Ferdinand, who gains a \$2,000 cash prize for his 48.3-pound catch.

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WEEKLY FARE SALES



FREIGHT FOR LESS

Time to bait the hooks for Family Fishing Day Saturday at Pats Lake

BY MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

Once again, it's that time of year to catch some fish at the lake and net some fun for the whole family.

The annual Family Fishing Day will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 22, at Pats Lake. The event promises to have something for everyone, including casting practice and even a free lunch.

The U.S. Forest Service Wrangell District and WCA Earth Branch are sponsoring the event, along with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Corree Delabrué, with the Forest Service, confirmed that special youth fishing regulations by Fish and Game are in place the third and fourth weekends of June specifically at that location.

During the special-regulation days, kids 15 and under are allowed to use bait to fish in only Pats Lake and keep two cut-throat trout per day with no size limit. "It's not super easy to fish at Pats Lake," she said.

Shirley Wimberley, the scoutmaster for Boy Scout Troop 40, helped organize the event when it began over 15 years ago. She said the event isn't just for kids. "It's just a nice day out for the whole family."

She added that Tom Sims came up with the idea and worked to make it a reality. "He was the spearhead, he got it through."

Sims said he was one of several people who helped to start Family Fishing Day. At the time, he had been on the Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory Committee and helped negotiate the state's special fishing regulations for youths 15 and under. "We wanted to give the young kids a chance to be able to trout fish and do it the way we did when we were that age," he said.

Delabrué said the event serves "to encourage the joy and fun of fishing (for kids) by making it a little easier to fish at Pats Lake."

A free lunch and prizes will be offered, courtesy of the Stikine Sportsmen Association. In addition to the fishing, there will be activity stations for crafts and games. Some fishing gear and personal floatation devices will be provided, though quantities are limited. For more information, call the Forest Service at 907-874-2323.

Derby underway, continues to June 30

Charlie Webb (left) of Anchorage, stands proud with his 43.5-pound king, alongside Alan Cummings, of All In Charters, who took him fishing Saturday, June 15. Webb topped the leader board for the first weekend in the annual king salmon derby which ends June 30. He caught the salmon near Point Warde, off the mainland at the southern end of Wrangell Island.



PHOTOS BY TOMMY WELLS / WRANGELL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Marcus Ostrander brought in the first fish entered in the chamber of commerce's king salmon derby last Saturday. His early catch — weighed in at 9:59 a.m. the first morning of the derby — hit the scale at 17.85 pounds. He caught the salmon near The Bend, according to the chamber. More than 100 fisherman bought derby entry tickets during the first weekend.

Marine insurance

Continued from page 1

Assembly Member David Powell said he was worried about pricing people out of mooring in the harbors, especially considering Wrangell's declining population.

Assembly Member Bob Dalrymple, however, said the Port and Harbors Department has been struggling with the cost of derelict vessels, and the insurance requirement could help reduce that risk.

Harbormaster Steve Miller estimated the borough has spent between \$50,000 and

\$100,000 over the past 10 years on vessel salvage and derelict vessel removal. Last year, a sinking cost around \$80,000 to deal with, he said, though the U.S. Coast Guard covered most of the expense of that cleanup.

In addition to the insurance-or-fee provision, the ordinance also would require an annual maneuverability assessment — watched by harbors staff — to ensure that all vessels can be moved out past the breakwater in the event of a fire.

Borough to allow tax payments by credit card but will charge fee

BY BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

The borough will allow people to pay sales and property taxes online by credit card, though they will be charged a credit card processing fee of 2.75%.

The assembly approved the credit card option and fee on a unanimous vote at its June 11 meeting.

Utility customers already are allowed to pay their bills with a

credit card, with no fee.

The new option for tax payments will take effect July 1.

Property tax bills will go out by July 1 and payments are due by Oct. 15. Businesses generally pay sales taxes quarterly, with the next round of returns due to City Hall by July 31.

Borough Manager Mason Villarma told the assembly it is about time the borough gives people the option to pay their taxes with credit card, and hopes

that online payments will reduce late payments. He thinks the option will be especially appealing to people who like to amass miles by charging to their Alaska Airlines credit cards.

The borough will use a payment processing software called "PayIt" which charges a 2.75% processing fee.

People will also be able to pay taxes with an online check, with a processing fee of a flat \$2.50 regardless of the amount.

Or businesses and property owners can come to City Hall and pay their taxes in person by cash or check, with no fee.

Currently, roughly 60% of residents pay their utilities via credit card, but the borough does not charge a processing fee. Villarma estimated that the processing fees for online utility payments cost the borough roughly \$100,000 per year.

The assembly action on tax payments does not change the no-fee credit card payment system for utility bills but it does add the \$2.50 charge for paying utility bills online by check.

The borough estimates sales tax and property tax revenues for the fiscal year that starts July 1 at a combined \$5.7 million.

The assembly held a public hearing June 11 on the payment option for sales tax and property tax bills; no one testified for or against the change.

ROYALTY MENU

	<i>Alisha for Queen</i>	<i>Kayla for Queen</i>
June 20 Thursday	L: Green chili chicken enchiladas, refried beans and rice	L: Smoked sausage and salmon patties
June 21 Friday	L: Michelle's Taste of Asia: Pork meat barbeque, chow mein and rice Late night burgers	L: Daily Menu
June 22 Saturday	10:30 a.m. Biscuits and gravy D: Street tacos 5 to 9 p.m. Solstice Block Party	D: Street Tacos 5 to 9 p.m. Solstice Block Party
June 23 Sunday	L: Pie day! Sponsored by Nic's Pizza.	L: Fish or shrimp burger and seafood salad
June 24 Monday	L: Deep-fried fish with coleslaw	L: Daily Menu L: Teriyaki Bowls
June 25 Tuesday	L: Crab with macaroni salad and birthday cupcakes	L: Dirty rice

Daily lunch menu available unless otherwise noted.

Menu is subject to change.

B = Brunch 10 am to 1 pm

L = Lunch 11 am to 2 pm

D = Dinner 5 to 7 pm

Late night = 10 p.m. to midnight.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Governor, please pay more attention to Alaskans

BY LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

Gov. Mike Dunleavy, his attorney general and others in the administration are spending a lot of time and state money defending Alaska against its perceived political enemies, fighting the U.S. government at every turn of the river, protecting Alaskans from the latest federal regulations and standing up for conservative values.

The list includes picking fights with private banks that want to move away from oil and gas lending, egging on fights over library books, supporting the state of Texas in its fight to string razor wire along the border with Mexico, and signing a multi-state brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in support of delaying Donald Trump's trial on charges related to the riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

In February, Dunleavy decided to take sides in the public opinion battle over support for Israel, calling on Alaska state agencies to stop contracting with companies that participate in a boycott of Israel.

Our governor has been a busy guy on big issues.

Whether appearing on Fox News to mimic Trump, speaking at an energy conference in Houston about the Alaska North Slope gas pipeline fantasy, traveling the country for his favorite causes or accepting more than \$55,000 in free hunts and gifts in 2023, Dunleavy is not slouching back in his office.

He is an active governor.

Too bad he doesn't have the same energy level for issues that really matter back home. Dunleavy isn't missing in action in Alaska as much as he is inactive on issues that affect real people's lives in a real way today. While he strives to be a player in national political games, he seems content to sit on the bench back home.

State agency shortcomings at providing services to the public are growing under his

administration, while our governor looks for issues that interest him in the presidential campaign and in national Republican governors' court cases.

Just last week, Anchorage TV station KTUU reported that the state Division of Retirement and Benefits had notified recently retired public school teachers that it would be at least three months before the agency could send them their first pension check.

The agency said it was short of staff to do the work.

Crew shortages at the state ferry system are as longstanding as rain in Southeast.

Elsewhere in state government, staff shortages and other problems created monthslong backlogs for more than a year at the agency that reviews food stamp applications and Medicaid coverage for lower-income Alaskans. Hold tight, people were told, and check out what you can find on the shelves at your local food pantry.

And yet, at the same cost as adding a case-worker to help Alaskans pay their bills and get food in the house, the governor is in the fourth year of a no-bid state contract with a Washington, D.C.-area conservative publicist, now at the rate of \$5,000 a month.

The contractor's job is to create a "national communications plan for Governor Dunleavy," according to the governor's communications director in a memo 18 months ago. The plan, the spokesman said, includes getting Dunleavy on Fox News and other conservative outlets, sending out opinion columns under his name, and engaging with social media to "expand our message."

As of last week, the no-bid contract has been extended or amended eight times.

Once was too much. While Alaskans are waiting for essential services, the governor is spending time and money on non-essential self-promotion. Better he should use his publicist to fill vacant state jobs.

EDITORIAL

Borough right to charge credit card fee on taxes

People in Wrangell, just like the rest of Alaska and the country, love earning airline miles by using their credit cards. It's not paying bills that they love so much, it's the benefit of adding miles to their accounts for free travel. It's understandable, considering the cost of flying in and out of Alaska and the fun of seeing friends and family outside the state.

Another incentive is the fact that Alaska Airlines offers one of the more generous mileage plans among U.S. air carriers.

In 2023, Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan members redeemed miles and companion certificates for seven million award tickets on the air carrier and its partner airlines, according to the company's 2023 annual report. As of Dec. 31, 2023, plan members held 341 billion miles in their accounts. Those numbers show just how popular mileage is to travelers.

Putting everything possible on their credit cards is an easy way to add mileage.

There is a cost, however, to businesses that accept credit cards. They pay a fee to the banks that issue the cards, and the banks pay a fee to the airlines that issue the miles. The system works well: Businesses attract more customers and more spending by accepting credit cards, the banks make money and the airlines make money.

In the case of the Wrangell borough, however, the fees to the banks are substantial, and it's not like residents will spend more on electricity, water, sewer or trash services just because they can earn miles. It's convenient for residents to pay with a card, no question about that, but it costs the borough about \$100,000 a year in bank fees on utility payments.

The assembly last week voted to expand the borough's acceptance of credit cards to payment of property taxes and sales taxes. But rather than continue the no-fee practice of paying utility bills, the borough adopted a 2.75% fee if people pay their taxes by credit card. The money will cover the charges of the card processor that will handle the transactions.

No doubt some people may grumble at paying a fee to put their taxes on a credit card. But it's optional: Want the miles, pay the fee. The borough expects to collect about \$5.7 million this year in sales and property taxes. If even half of that comes in by credit card, the borough could lose \$80,000 a year in revenues if it didn't charge a fee.

Airline mileage is a great thing, and an enjoyable bonus for paying the bills of life. But it's more than the borough can afford to give away for free in its tax collections.

- Wrangell Sentinel

Getting ready for the Fourth

Continued from page 1

Scrap Fish Derby and Art Clark Scrap Fish Derby on July 1, said Kimberly Szczatko, the chamber's treasurer.

Anyone willing to chair or help sponsor the events can call the chamber office at 907-874-3901.

One event that hasn't changed from past years is the fireworks show, set to start at dusk on July 3. Though the chamber has faced tight finances the past year, the fireworks are in town and will be ready to lift off on schedule, Wells said. Future shows will depend on fundraising this year, he said, since the rockets need to be ordered in advance.

Alisha Armstong and Kayla Young have been busy selling raffle tickets in the annual royalty competition to raise money for the chamber's

Fourth of July spending. It's been a few years since two royalty candidates have been selling tickets, giving hope to the chamber's finances.

Other differences in this year's holiday plans include the opportunity for craftspeople, artists, bakers and others in town to show their work during the holiday week at the Nolan Center, and then enter their handiwork in the Southeast Alaska State Fair.

People can bring their homemade goods to the Nolan Center on Thursday, June 27. Local judging will be held June 28, Szczatko said. The items will be on display the week of the Fourth — called the Red, White, Blue Fair — then packed up and shipped to Haines for the Southeast fair July 25-28.

"We haven't had it in a few

years," she said of the Red, White, Blue Fair.

The show is open to artwork, sewing, crocheted pieces, quilts, canned foods, baked goods, "anything they would want to send to the state fair," she said, though entering the fair is optional. People can keep their work in Wrangell and decline the fair entry.

Alaska Marine Lines has donated shipping to and from Haines, she said.

The chamber has added a little more free time between holiday week events this year, Szczatko said, so that people have more time to eat and shop while they're downtown.

The prize drawing from the tens of thousands of fundraising raffle tickets sold will be held right after the parade on July 4, same as past years,

Szczatko said. What will be different this summer is the location: The winning tickets will be drawn at the downtown pavilion, where Armstrong and Young have been selling lunches and other foods. "It's been their home for a month."

Music on July 4 will be provided by the Petersburg group Kin Folks in the afternoon, and the Wrangell band Shotrock in the evening, Szczatko said.

An addition to the schedule this year will give people an opportunity to see racing boats on dry land. The boat races are scheduled for the afternoon of July 4, but the new event, called "Race Boat Show and Shine," is set for 6 to 7:30 p.m. July 3 on Campbell Drive.

Another new event this year will be the July 1 remote-controlled boat races in front

of the City Dock, starting at 1 p.m.

The dog show on July 3 — always a fun and fur favorite — has been moved to the covered playground near Evergreen Elementary School, away from its usual downtown waterfront location, to spare dogs the noise of the nearby logging events, Szczatko said.

The talent show is planned for the evening of July 3 at the Nolan Center. Organizers are calling for a wide assortment of acts, including music, song, comedy, wearable art, magic — even juggling or most anything else people can perform on stage.

To sign up for the talent show, call or text Bonnie Ritchie at 907-305-1211 or Haley Reeves at 406-262-4360.

Oldest continuously published paper in Alaska



ESTABLISHED NOVEMBER 20, 1902
Published weekly by: Good Journalism LLC
PO Box 798, Wrangell, AK 99929
Phone: 907-874-2301

POSTMASTER: send address changes to Wrangell Sentinel, P.O. Box 798, Wrangell, AK 99929

Sentinel Staff:

Publisher Larry Persily
Office Manager... Amber Armstrong-Hillberry
Reporter Mark C. Robinson
Reporter Becca Clark
Production Ola Richards

Wrangell Sentinel (USPS 626-480) is published weekly except the third week of July and the week after Christmas by Wrangell Sentinel, 205 Front St., Wrangell, AK 99929. Periodicals postage paid at Wrangell, AK.
Phone: 907-874-2301; Email: wrgsent@gmail.com; Website www.wrangellsentinel.com. ©Copyright 2022.

Subscription Rates

Wrangell \$50
Out of town \$75
First Class..... \$110
Online-only subscription.....\$40

Markets continue to pressure fishermen, seafood processors

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Consumers think of seafood as a premium purchase, which is not a good image when household budgets are tight and shoppers are worried about inflation.

"The problem is not the fish," said Jeremy Woodrow, executive director of the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute. "The challenge is in the global marketplace."

Woodrow in February called the 2023 market for Alaska salmon "rock bottom" with low prices and weak demand, though maybe the industry was coming off that rocky bottom, he said then.

Now, as the season is getting underway this summer, "a lot of people in the industry are optimistic," he said Friday, June 14.

At least the market "hasn't gotten any worse," he added.

Still, the pain is not gone. "A lot of buyers are barely holding on," Woodrow said. "Our processors lost a lot of money the past year or two."

Shoppers' tight household budgets continue to be a problem, he said. "Consumers still view seafood as a premium."

Markets were so bad last year that some processors paid just 20 cents a pound for chum, and others shut down buying early.

Last year is "nothing we ever want to repeat," said Jeff Welbourn, Trident Seafoods' senior vice president for Alaska operations.

"I do think that things are firming up," he said last week of the outlook for this summer.

The inventory of last year's Alaska salmon in warehouses "has mostly moved," opening up the market for this summer's catch, Woodrow said. But, unlike past years, "we're not seeing significant pre-season commitments" from buyers to ease the worry and financing burden of processors.

"That creates some challenges," Woodrow said, putting processors at risk of freezing and canning more fish than the market is willing to buy in a timely manner.

However, there are some encouraging signs for this summer, he said.

Pre-season base prices for Bristol Bay, the state's largest sockeye fishery, are running about 80 cents a pound, about 20 cents above last year, but still far from the \$1.15 of 2022, \$1.25 in 2021 and \$1.35 in 2019.

And the state has forecast an average year for the Southeast Alaska pink salmon harvest, less than half of last year's catch. "Having an average year helps the industry correct itself," Woodrow said of matching supply with demand.

Full U.S. sanctions on the importation of Russian seafood, which went into effect last month, will help Alaska products better compete in the domestic market, he said. Russia has been flooding the global market with low-priced seafood to boost its revenues.

A ban on Russian seafood into the U.S. started in 2022, but Russia got around it by sending its fish and crab to other countries for processing before exporting the products to the U.S. The full ban ended that practice.

But Russia is still unloading fish at rock-bottom prices elsewhere in the world, Woodrow said. The ban applies only to the U.S. market, where 30% of Alaska seafood is sold, leaving the other 70% of Alaska seafood still facing Russian competition.

Trident

Continued from page 1

Packing fish eggs also is a big part of the Wrangell operation, which plans to run through August.

Trident is the largest seafood processor in town. Sea Level Seafoods, owned by Portland-based Pacific Seafood, and Fathom Seafoods, owned by Peninsula Seafoods out of Washington state, also buy from local boats, taking more than just salmon for their longer operating seasons.

Seattle-based Trident, which bought the Wrangell facility about 15 years ago, has had crews getting the plant ready to start handling salmon this summer.

There were short and limited-area Southeast gillnet and seine season openers earlier this week, though none in the Wrangell-Petersburg area.

Welbourn said the plant "pretty much" buys from the seine fleet. "There will always be a few (gillnetters) close to home who want to dock deliver," he said of fisherman who may bring their fish to the Wrangell plant.

Trident will continue to have tenders on the seine fishing grounds to bring in the catch for processing. "We really feel that for the freshness," running tenders into Wrangell "keeps the fleet on the grounds," he said.

The company ships its Wrangell fish in container vans by barge to Seattle for distribution to markets.

Area gillnetters that sold to Trident generally delivered to the company's Petersburg operation, which Trident sold this spring to E.C. Phillips & Son, which has operations in Ketchikan and Craig.

Trident this spring also sold its Ketchikan operation to fisherman-owned Silver Bay Seafoods, and was looking to sell its facilities in Kodiak and False Pass in the Aleutian Islands too, as part of "a comprehensive, strategic restructuring initiative" amid weak salmon markets.

"Wrangell is our home in Southeast," Welbourn said of Trident, which has been in the Alaska seafood business for more than 50 years.

Fathom Seafoods runs a much smaller operation on leased land at the Marine Service Center, where it has been buying shrimp, king crab, halibut, Dungeness crab, and will soon move into the salmon season, said Jeff Grannum, general manager of the parent company Peninsula Seafoods.

Fathom packs fresh salmon — kings, sockeye and silver — and flies its product to Seattle. "We utilize Alaska Air Cargo a lot, big time," Grannum said.

The company sticks with small- and medium-sized domestic buyers, he said. "They appreciate the small, boutique mix that we are."

The Sentinel was unable to reach anyone at Sea Level Seafoods for comment on its summer plans.

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1:30pm-3pm open swim @ pool	1:30pm-3pm movie @ nolan center	1:30pm-3pm open swim @ pool	1:30pm-3pm craft/stem @ library	1:30pm-3pm open swim @ pool

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Wrangell readers turn to 'romantasy' and a lot of other books

By MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

As the weather warms, residents of all ages will indulge in some leisure reading over the summer.

At the Irene Ingle Public Library, librarian Sarah Scambler

doesn't keep track of the titles checked out by patrons but noted people read a wide variety of different subjects. "We have a pretty eclectic group of readers here at the library."

She noted one popular title

on the shelves that's been on the bestseller list for the past 10 weeks is a novel called "The Women" by Kristin Hannah, based on the true experiences of female nurses during the Vietnam War. A recent look at the library website showed all 10 copies currently checked out.

Scambler also noticed one subgenre that has been growing in popularity in recent years, both across the nation and here in town is "romantasy," works of fiction that merge fantasy with romance such as the books "Fourth Wing" by Rebecca Yarros and "A Court of Thorns and Roses" by Sarah J Maas.

On June 8, Scambler hosted the library's book group which held a lively discussion of their latest book choice: "The Rosie Project" by Graeme Simsion, a lighthearted story about a socially awkward genetics professor's quest to find the perfect wife which leads him to unexpected places.

The group will next meet on July 13 to discuss "The Last Bookshop in London," a novel by Madeline Martin set against the backdrop of World War II-London in which a young woman struggles to maintain a bookstore and its community.

One group member, Kaitlin Bartholomew, said via email that she and her husband often trade off reading books; they recently finished the classic science-fiction novel "Ender's Game" by Orson Scott Card and just started a novel based on a popular Nickelodeon animated series "Avatar, the Last Airbender: The Rise of Kyoshi" by F.C. Yee in consultation with

"Avatar" co-creator Michael Dante DiMartino.

"I generally prefer thriller/mystery and historical fiction with the occasional light romance or comedy," Bartholomew said. "I try to read a good range, but recently newer things."

Also with the book group, Nancy Delpero said she "will read about anything as long as it keeps moving. I'm too ADHD to read a slow or too complicated book." She added that because her busy schedule doesn't always provide much time for traditional reading, she often listens to audiobooks while walking her dog.

Next month, the library will host former resident turned novelist Jennifer Weekley, who will read excerpts from "Soundtrack of Life," a poignant coming-of-age book dedicated in part to "the Wrangell Girls," and heavily inspired by her time in the town.

The reading will be followed by a question-and-answer session where she'll discuss her writing process, inspiration and more. A limited number of copies of her book will be available for purchase. The event is planned for 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 2, at the library.

For younger readers, the library's summer reading program is open to children entering kindergarten through ninth grade in the fall; registration closes June 29 and the program runs through Aug. 3, with more than 100 prize drawings and a pool/pizza party for everyone who completes the program.

Scambler said the kids who participate tend to stick to the accelerated reader list in which they will generally read at their level or above. "The Percy Jackson series is always super popular," she added.

Her son is reading books from the Warriors series (also known as Warrior Cats), which feature adventures involving multiple clans of feral cats and written by different authors all under the pen name Erin Hunter. Other prevalent picks on the list include Jeff Kinney's "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series, the "Dork Diaries" series written and illustrated by Rachel Renée Russell, and books by Mo Willems including his "Elephant & Piggy" series.

Alice Rooney, another book group member, noted: "It would be nice if adults got as much reinforcement for summer reading as the kids do! Even just a pool party!"

For more information on the library's events, including their book discussion group and summer reading program, call 907-874-3535.

Touch-a-Truck split into noisy and quiet sessions on Sunday

By MARK C. ROBINSON
Sentinel reporter

Kids of all ages will have a chance to check out some big rigs at the popular Touch-a-Truck event, from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 23, at the parking lot by Volunteer Park. Attendees will get to see many kinds of work vehicles, including fire trucks, police cars, bulldozers, dump trucks and more.

This is the seventh such event held in Wrangell, with one year staged as a parade due to COVID restrictions.

While it's normally held on a Saturday, Parks and Recreation Coordinator Devyn Johnson said she wanted kids to be able to come to this event as well as participate in Family Fishing Day on Saturday, so the trucks just backed up a day to Sunday.

Johnson began organizing the annual display of heavy equipment and emergency vehicles in 2018 after her sister told her about a similar event where she took her kids in eastern Washington state. She realized that her children had unique access to such vehicles, and she wanted to share with others in the community.

"My husband's on the fire department and he works in construction," she said. "There are a lot of kids who don't have that opportunity."

Johnson also has hopes that after several years of trying, the U.S. Coast Guard will be able to attend this year with a rescue helicopter to display at the event, barring emergencies that call for a helicopter response.

If the helicopter does make an appearance, it will be from 1 to 2 p.m., when sirens and horns will be allowed to wail and blare. Hearing protection will be made available, but for those sensitive to loud noises Johnson recommends they attend from 2 to 3 p.m., when the vehicles will be silent.

For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 907-874-2444.

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PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Evolutionary biologist Charlotte Lindqvist, from the University of Buffalo in New York, explained to an audience at the Nolan Center on June 13 the genetic connection between a 3,000-year-old bone fragment discovered in a cave near Wrangell with modern-day Tlingit people.

DNA researcher

Continued from page 1

preserved in various caves in Southeast Alaska. That's when they found the bone fragment.

An examination by Lindqvist in 2018 determined that the bone fragment was from a human. The Forest Service and the scientific community kept in contact with the Wrangell Cooperative Association regarding their findings. Lindqvist presented the item to the WCA earlier in the day, before the public event June 13.

WCA members spoke at the Nolan Center event, including Sandy Churchill, treasurer Frank Churchill Jr. and WCA President Ed Rilatos, who said they appreciated the return of the remains of the young woman, who they named Tatóok yík yées sháawat ("Young Lady in Cave"). "It's historic that the bone was even found," Rilatos added. "We're proud that we're a part of this."

Lindqvist was equally moved. "To me it was very emotional ... to return the remains to the tribe, and I think it's the way it should always be done."

The biologist made a point in her presentation of acknowledging the Tlingit heritage. "They have been stewards of the land since time immemorial and I really thank them for their hospitality," she said.

"I don't usually work on human remains," she said. Initially, she had assumed it was a bone from a bear, as there were many such bones found in the caves. However, further analysis revealed that it was from a female human. "We were very excited about this, because there have been very few discoveries of actual human remains in Southeast Alaska."

Once Lindqvist realized the true nature of their find, she and her team notified the Forest Service and reached out to WCA to ask permission for further studies of the remains. WCA was also asked to provide a name for the woman.

"They gave us their blessing, and we thought, 'Wow, OK, let's try and analyze and learn something from this individual,'" she said. "What can she tell us? We get a direct view into the past in this region. Can she tell us something about the history of human resi-

dence and occupancy in this area?"

Since the remains were found in the region now populated by Tlingit, Lindqvist and her team worked to determine if there was any connection between Tatóok yík yées sháawat and Alaska Natives living in the region today. Using new DNA technologies unavailable 20 years earlier they were able to find that genetic connection, which corresponded with the Tlingit oral stories about their ancestors' origins as well as the human prehistory of Southeast Alaska.

"We knew after that, we would, of course, return her remains to the tribe, and that's actually why I'm here."

Lindqvist's primary focus of study is climate history, and examining various species during that history, their origins and habits. "That is really what I'm interested in, and what my work is focused on, is looking into the past and trying to understand where we are today."

Part of her presentation also showed how the excavations provided more information through remains and artifacts about Earth's most recent ice age 26,000 to 19,000 years ago and the subsequent populating of the Americas.

With most of Canada and the northern United States covered by ice sheets thousands of feet thick, contact was cut off between the north and south. "What kind of impact did that have and what really happened when the ice sheets started to melt?" she asked. "What happened with all the animals and plants? Where did they go? Where did they come from and how did we get where we are today?"

Lindqvist said that populating the Americas began when those who would become the first people or Native Americans came across the Beringia land bridge, which had formed between northeastern Siberia and western Alaska. She talked about one theory that as the ice sheets started to melt, an interior, ice-free corridor opened along the eastern front of the Rocky Mountains, allowing for the southern migration of Native Americans, or maybe they traveled by sea. However, increasing evidence suggests that migration could have happened along the Pacific Northwest Coast.

Seiners face uncertain market for pinks after last summer's collapse

By ANNA LAFFREY
Ketchikan Daily News

Southeast commercial purse seine fishermen are preparing for a summer season with no confidence they will earn a good price for the pink and chum they catch.

The Southeast seine fishery opened with a one-day pink salmon fishing opportunity on Sunday in areas near Sitka, with more widespread openings to come.

The Department of Fish and Game has forecast a "traditional" fishery harvest of 19.2 million pink salmon by commercial seiners this year, not counting the fish netted in terminal harvest areas near hatchery release sites. That would be an "average" harvest compared with the most recent 10 years.

In its draft management plan for this summer, Fish and Game recognized that there have been "dynamic changes to the salmon industry in Southeast Alaska during the 2023 season and leading into the 2024 season."

A major change in the market midway through the 2023 season sunk profits for Southeast seiners and other salmon fishermen across Alaska when Trident Seafoods slashed the dock price that fishermen earned for their chum and pink to just 20 cents per pound. By comparison, the average price paid to fishermen in 2022 was 34 cents for pinks and \$1.18 for chum, according to state data for that year.

Trident last August said "global markets have collapsed" for salmon, citing a massive Russian pink salmon harvest going to market "at very low prices in part to fund the war on Ukraine."

Other processors across Alaska last August also dropped their prices for pink, chum and sockeye salmon to staggering lows.

Then, Trident in December 2023 announced that it would sell its processing plants in Ketchikan and Petersburg, as well as plants and facilities in Kodiak, False Pass, Naknek and Chignik, as part of a "strategic restructuring" of the largest seafood corporation in the country.

Given big changes last year to fish prices and processing capacity in Southeast and across Alaska, Fish and Game held a preseason meeting with seiners and processors on May 8.

Ketchikan Area Management Biologist Bo Meredith said dur-

ing the meeting that the "assumption a few months ago" was that the seine fishery would "have a reduced fleet, potentially."

However, managers and fishermen were reassured by Trident's mid-March announcement that E.C. Phillips and Son had acquired Trident's plant in Petersburg, and that Silver Bay Seafoods had purchased its plant in Ketchikan.

Plant managers at the meeting said Southeast processors likely will operate at full capacity this summer and will be able to accommodate seiners' hauls. Which leaves managers wondering how much effort seine fishermen will put into the fishery this summer, given potential market constraints such as low prices.

Troy Thynes, the Petersburg-based regional finfish management coordinator for Fish and Game, said during the May 8 meeting that "based on early indicators," he is expecting about 205 to 210 seine boats will be working their nets across the region during the summer.

Thynes said that level of effort would be on par with recent years.

Phil Doherty, executive director of the Southeast Alaska Seiners Association, told the Ketchikan Daily News on June 12: "I think there's a guarded sense of optimism going into the season, and I use that term lightly."

"I think the reasons are fairly obvious — you go back to the 2023 season with the flood of fish on the market, largely Russian pink salmon, pretty much destroyed not just Southeast, but Alaska as a whole, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, any fishery that targets pink salmon," Doherty said.

Going into this summer, "the rumors on prices were very poor for pinks and for chum salmon, too," Doherty said.

"Individual skippers are going to have to look at where they're going to go fishing, how much running they're going to do, how much fuel they're going to burn, how long they can stay out on the grounds for, or how far they can go from the processing plant," Doherty said. "There's no doubt if you're a permit holder looking at the price of fuel and everything else involved with the fishing operations, which could very well affect where you're going to go fishing."

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State limits sportfishing in Wrangell Narrows to protect hatchery kings

BY BECCA CLARK
Sentinel reporter

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has tightened the sport fishing limits for Wrangell Narrows and Blind Slough Terminal Harvest Area where hatchery kings return.

The new limits were put in place due to poor returns of king salmon in the area, and will be in effect Saturday, June 15, through July 31.

In the Wrangell Narrows, south of Matinsens's dock and north and east of the northern tip of Woewodski Island at the southern entrance to the narrows, the new bag and possession limit for all anglers is one king salmon. Nonresident annual limits will now apply in this area as well, the department said in its June 13 announcement.

The fresh waters of Blind Slough, upstream of a line from Blind Point to Anchor Point, are closed to sportfishing for king salmon.

"King salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately," the department said. "While fishing for other species, only unbaited artificial lures may be used."

South of Wrangell on the east side of Etolin Island, Anita Bay has been open to Wrangell anglers since June 1, with additional areas open June 15. District 8 remains closed until July 15, however, to further protect wild stocks of king salmon returning to the Stikine River.

This year's sportfishing restrictions follow a trend of weak salmon runs over the past several years.

"King salmon have been struggling due in part to challenging ocean survival conditions for several years," Jeff Rice, Fish and Game fisheries biologist in Petersburg, said June 14. "Since 2017, there have been greater restrictions in place."

The added restrictions in Wrangell Narrows are to ensure that enough mature king salmon return to the Crystal Lake Hatchery on Mitkof Island. "This year we forecasted for 1,400 kings (to return), which is a very low number compared to historic returns," Rice said.

He added that 1,000 adult kings are needed for broodstock, or reproductively mature fish, at the hatchery. "That leaves a surplus of 400 harvestable kings," if the forecast comes true, he said.

"The goal," Rice said, "is the broodstock goal being achieved, which is 1,000 adult kings back to the hatchery, while still allowing opportunity for anglers to harvest king salmon."

Invasive European green crab found less than 10 miles from Ketchikan

BY SCOTT BOWLEN
Ketchikan Daily News

The anticipated movement of invasive European green crab farther into Southeast Alaska was verified June 13 when 11 carapaces of the shellfish were collected on the shore of Gravina Island's Bostwick Inlet, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

The inlet, less than 10 miles southwest of downtown Ketchikan, is a popular local spot for harvesting Dungeness crab.

The molted green crab carapaces were found by members of the Metlakatla Indian Community Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Alaska Sea Grant program, who were conducting shoreline surveys under a state aquatic resources permit, according to a department announcement on June 14.

The discovery marked the first documented presence of the crabs outside of the Annette Island Reserve, where the crabs were first observed in Alaska waters on July 21, 2022.

Since then, the Metlakatla Indian Community has been conducting an intensive trapping effort for the crab, focused largely in the Tamgas Harbor area on the southern end of Annette Island, in an effort to reduce the invasive population. More than 3,000 European green crab, including gravid female crab carrying eggs, have been removed thus far, according to the June 14 announcement.

This past year, Emily Grason, a marine ecologist and crab team leader for Washington Sea Grant who was working with the Metlakatla Indian Community on trapping green crabs, said "catching gravid females is a relatively rare event" in baited traps. "Females tend to really hunker down and not necessarily take risks required to enter a trap," she said. "It's not impossible, it's just rare, and what it tells us is that the population is fairly large."

European green crab are "highly competitive, voracious competitors" that have destroyed commercial shellfish populations on

the Atlantic Coast of North America, displaced native crabs and reduced eelgrass and other fish habitat in areas where they have become prevalent outside their native range.

"Unless controlled, they can significantly reduce biodiversity and abundance of inter- and subtidal species and cause damage to nearshore ecosystems," said the June 14 announcement.

After first being observed in North America at Massachusetts in 1817, the European green crab eventually made its way to the West Coast, where it was first found in San Francisco Bay in 1989. By 1997, it was found on the Oregon coast, followed by Washington state in 1998 and in British Columbia in 1999.

That northward movement was not lost on Alaska researchers, who as early as 2010 were mentioning the potential arrival of the invasive crab in local waters.

"Unfortunately, Pacific Northwest states (as well as Atlantic Coast states) have been trying to find ways to eradicate (green crabs) for decades with no success," the June 14 announcement said. "The best practice at this point has been to attempt to reduce impacts by intensive trapping called 'functional eradication.'"

People who find the invasive crab are being encouraged to report the find to Fish and Game.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game website has information regarding how to identify European green crab, which can be green, dark brown, yellow, white, red or mottled, and have five spines on either side of its eyes, and three rounded lobes between its eyes. The carapace width can be up to four inches across.

"If you find a crab or crab shell you suspect to be an EGC (European green crab), collect it and take it to your nearest ADF&G office or take photos of the crab or carapace next to a key, coin or credit card for a size reference," the state announcement advised.

Pacific salmon head north to Arctic Canada from Alaska as ocean conditions allow

BY YERETH ROSEN
Alaska Beacon

As the climate warms, more Pacific salmon from Alaska are showing up in the Western Arctic waters of Canada.

But residents in those Arctic Canadian communities are not catching salmon every year, which led them to ask why.

Now a study by scientists from Canada and Alaska has described the ocean gateway that must open to bring salmon from the Bering Sea to those far-north sites. Conditions must line up over vast stretches of ocean for salmon to make the journey through the Bering Strait, across the Chukchi Sea and into the Canadian Beaufort Sea and the freshwater bodies upstream from it, the scientists found.

"What appears to need to happen is you need a warm late springtime Chukchi sea," said Joe Langan of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, one of the lead authors of the study, published in the journal *Global Change Biology*. Those conditions probably correlate with a warm Northern Bering Sea, he said, adding that beyond the Chukchi, a warm coastal Beaufort Sea is also necessary.

In the past, those different seas have often followed different patterns, with some cold while the others are warm. As sea ice melts earlier, water temperatures rise and ice forms up

later, the seas' warm conditions are more likely to converge, Langan said, allowing the ocean gateway for salmon movement north to be open more consistently.

For now, the appearance of Pacific salmon in Canadian Arctic waters is hard to predict, even mere months in advance, he said. "It's going to be volatile in the near term," he said.

Recent years are examples of that volatility.

In 2019, a record-warm year in which ocean waters off Alaska were uniformly warm, there were abundant Pacific salmon swimming into the Canadian Arctic and harvests were high, Langan said. Three years later, when waters had turned cold, no Pacific salmon were caught in those Canadian Arctic communities, he said.

Passage through the Bering Strait, Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea are just part of what it takes for salmon populations to become established in waters that far north, said Karen Dunmall of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, another lead author.

An earlier study she led, published in 2022, described the first documented discovery of a juvenile chum salmon in waters flowing into the Beaufort Sea — proof that, at least in that year, Pacific chum salmon had successfully reproduced in their new Arctic territory. That

young chum salmon was found in 2017 in Jago Lagoon, near the Inupiat village of Kaktovik and near the Alaska-Canada border on the Arctic coastline.

Since then, there have been related discoveries. Last year, a UAF research team found about 100 chum salmon that were spawning in tributaries of the Colville River, a major river on Alaska's North Slope that flows into the Beaufort Sea. While spawning is not necessarily followed by successful reproduction, that was another significant discovery about the northward spread of Pacific salmon.

Although they are harvesting this Pacific salmon when it appears, residents of Canadian Arctic communities, some of them contributors to the new study, have some concerns about the new arrival in these waters, Dunmall said.

People who have depended on more Arctic species have questions about possible disruptions, she said. "Will the salmon take over the rivers? What's going to happen to the char? Do they spawn in the same places? Are they eating the same things?"

Even along Canada's Mackenzie River and similar spots, where salmon harvesting is a tradition, the appearance of different salmon can be unsettling. "There is still con-

cern about salmon, but more from a perspective of that they're an example of a changing climate, a changing Arctic," Dunmall said.

She and her colleagues are continuing to investigate the impacts of salmon emerging that far north.

One focus is the interaction with Dolly Varden, a species that, like salmon, spawns in freshwater and migrates to saltwater. While the Arctic is warming fast, it is still cold in the winter, and while the discovery of that sole juvenile chum salmon shows that reproduction that far north is possible, a lot of hurdles must be overcome for that to happen, Dunmall said.

"Salmon come in and spawn in the fall. The eggs incubate. They have to do that at a suitable temperature so that they can emerge at the right time where there is food available and then access to the ocean or other habitats," she said.

Other ongoing research is examining the food that salmon are eating in their new territory and whether there is enough for all the species. She and her colleagues are also investigating whether the newly arriving salmon might be bringing disease pathogens to the Arctic territory.

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Washington state tribe wins federal waiver for whale hunt

BY GENE JOHNSON
Associated Press

SEATTLE — The U.S. granted the Makah Indian Tribe in Washington state a long-sought waiver Thursday, June 13, that helps clear the way for the tribe's first sanctioned whale hunts in a quarter-century.

The Makah, a tribe of 1,500 people on the northwestern tip of the Olympic Peninsula, is the only Native American tribe with a treaty that specifically mentions a right to hunt whales. But it has faced more than two decades of court challenges, bureaucratic hearings and scientific review as it seeks to resume hunting for gray whales.

The decision by NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Fisheries grants a waiver under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which otherwise forbids harming marine mammals. It allows the tribe to hunt up to 25 Eastern North Pacific gray whales over 10 years, with a limit of two to three per year.

There are roughly 20,000 whales in that population, and the hunts will be timed to avoid harming endangered Western North Pacific gray whales that sometimes visit the area.

Nevertheless, some hurdles remain. The tribe must enter into a cooperative agreement with the agency under the Whaling Convention Act, and it must obtain a permit to hunt, a process that involves a monthlong public comment period.

Animal rights advocates, who have long opposed whaling, could also challenge NOAA's decision in court.

Archeological evidence shows that Makah hunters in cedar canoes killed whales for sustenance from time immemorial, a practice that ceased only in the early 20th century after commercial whaling vessels depleted the population.

By 1994, the Eastern Pacific gray whale population had rebounded, and they were removed from the endangered species list. Seeing an opportunity to reclaim its heritage, the tribe announced plans to hunt again.

The Makah trained for months in the ancient ways of whaling and received the blessing of federal officials and the International Whaling Commission. They took to the water in 1998 but didn't succeed until the next year, when they harpooned a gray whale from a hand-carved cedar canoe. A tribal member in a motorized support boat killed it with a high-powered rifle to minimize its suffering.

It was the tribe's first successful hunt in 70 years.

The hunts drew protests from animal rights activists, who sometimes threw smoke bombs at the whalers and sprayed fire extinguishers into their faces. Others veered motorboats between the whales and the tribal canoes to interfere with the hunt. Authorities seized several vessels and made arrests.

After animal rights groups sued, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned federal approval of the tribe's whaling plans. The court found that the tribe needed to obtain a waiver under the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Eleven Alaska Native communities in the Arctic have such a waiver for subsistence hunts, allowing them to kill bowhead whales — even though bowheads are listed as endangered.

The Makah tribe applied for a waiver in 2005. The process reportedly stalled as new scientific information about the whales and the health of their population was uncovered.

Some of the Makah whalers became so frustrated with the delays that they went on a rogue hunt in 2007, killing a gray whale that got away from them and sank. They were convicted in federal court.

Northwest tribes making progress in quest to restore Columbia salmon runs

BY ALEX BAUMHARDT
Oregon Chronicle Capital

Three Northwest tribes and federal agencies are getting closer to understanding how to revive chinook and sockeye salmon runs on the upper Columbia River that were once among the most abundant in the world but were decimated by dams over the past century.

Leaders from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the Spokane Tribe of Indians met with leaders from three federal agencies and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council in Portland on May 22 to discuss progress on their historic agreement from last September.

The 20-year plan, separate from a related deal signed in December, marked the culmination of decades of work by the tribes, who were deprived of salmon following the construction of the Grand Coulee Dam near Spokane in 1938 and Chief Joseph Dam in Bridgeport, Washington, in 1955. The fish have historically been central to their way of life.

Both the tribal and federal agency leaders discussed a range of subjects, from acquiring the needed fish from hatcheries and moving them via truck to areas blocked by the dams. The Biden administration said it would allocate \$200 million to the effort, but the parties agreed even more money would be needed.

Officials and tribes face challenges working with Canadian dams and hatcheries as well as competing interests for the Columbia's water from hydroelectric and agriculture.

Caj Matheson, natural resources director for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, said getting the reintroduction work underway was exciting and long overdue.

Members of the tribe have for decades been cut off from salmon that used to migrate to

them on the Spokane River, a tributary of the Columbia. Salmon are gone from the river today due to Grand Coulee Dam.

There were once at least 10 million salmon moving through the 13,000 miles of Columbia River Basin waters each year before the dams were built, according to the Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission. Today, many of these salmon species are among the most endangered in the West.

"Over the years, we've sat in rooms with so many federal agencies, so many people, so many leaders across this region," he said, "and so often we've seen people nodding their heads in agreement and even people saying: 'Yeah, it's an injustice. What's happening to you guys, what's happening with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, it's an injustice.' And yet the wherewithal to be able to make that change just wasn't followed through."

The agreement was a long time coming.

About 24 years ago, the tribes urged the federal government and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, which works on power plans and fish conservation, to discuss salmon reintroduction. In 2014, they undertook a feasibility study to explore that possibility, and in the fall of 2023, President Joe Biden acknowledged the years of injustice the tribes had experienced and committed a federal investment of at least \$200 million to rectify it.

The Bureau of Reclamation, Army Corps of Engineers and Bonneville Power Administration are involved along with the council, which is comprised of two governor-appointed representatives from Oregon, Washington, Montana and Idaho and is tasked with managing energy production in the Northwest along with the health of fish and wildlife in the Columbia River

Basin.

So far, several hatcheries have provided researchers with tens of thousands of chinook eggs to study as the fish grow into smolts and then adults and then study them over several generations. Researchers have begun tagging the fish to observe their migration patterns.

Getting sockeye has been more difficult because one of the only hatcheries in the area that has them is in Canada. Scientists said procuring and tracking these fish across borders has been challenging because of bureaucratic procedures.

To get the fish back into needed areas, scientists are evaluating the effects of moving them on trucks. The method — called trap and haul — requires capturing the salmon, putting them in a truck and then driving and releasing them back into water in the desired location.

The idea would be to haul the fish directly to traditional tributaries where they would have spawned before the dams were built, such as the San Poil River on the Colville Reservation. This and other ideas to move fish via ladders are in their infancy, scientists said.

Officials also need to study juvenile fish migration patterns, fish behavior, genetic resiliency and hydraulic modeling over the next two decades. Scientists are trying to understand how to move water through the Columbia both for the fish and to meet increased demand for water storage from agriculture and hydroelectric dams.

Furthermore, a treaty between the U.S. and Canada that governs hydropower and flood control on the Columbia River is up for negotiation and renewal this summer. The treaty, originally implemented in 1964, did not take into account fish and river ecosystem health or tribal fishing rights and resources that are now protected.

There are 15 Columbia Basin tribes working with the two federal governments to negotiate protections and benefits for tribal resources in future versions of the treaty.

On the lower Columbia River, below Bonneville Dam in Cascade Locks, a decades-long battle over dams and fish restoration reached a turning point this year following a deal between the Biden administration and four tribes to restore 13 threatened and endangered fish runs and potentially breach four dams along the Snake River, the biggest tributary of the Columbia River. Such a move, however, would need to be approved by Congress.

The agreement also includes a promise — but not a guarantee — of hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funds and other money for wild fish restoration in the Columbia River Basin over the next decade.

Oregon Capital Chronicle is part of States Newsroom, a non-profit news network supported by grants and a coalition of donors.

Happy Birthday AMERICA!

The Sentinel is offering a firecracker
of a deal with 20% off all ads that mention
the 4th of July in the June 29 edition.
Ad deadline is noon Friday, June 24.

Call, email or stop by to see Amber
at the Sentinel to place your ad.

907-874-2301

wrgsent@gmail.com

WRANGELL SENTINEL

OBITUARY

Celebration of life July 12 for longtime resident John Church

Longtime Wrangell resident John Church, 72, "skipper of the mighty Corvus, lover of music, birds, elaborate knots and puzzles, dear friend to so many with his kind heart, sharp intellect and dry humor", died peacefully from prostate cancer surrounded by loved ones and banjo music on

May 5, 2024, in Port Townsend, Washington.

There will be a memorial and celebration of life for John from 5 to 9 p.m. Friday, July 12, at Shoemaker Bay picnic shelter, with a potluck, grilling, music, singing and sharing memories. "Bring instruments, old photos and your best

yarns," the family asks. For more information about the event, call KaiLea Wallin at 808-264-6044.

John was born in Cincinnati in April 1952 to John L. Church Jr. and Mickey Magee Church, the second of three children. The family lived in several towns in California before relocating to Connecticut.

Immediately after finishing high school in 1970, John headed west for college, where he was assigned a roommate (Leo Barlow) from Wrangell. "During his college years, John was not a standout student, but was known for his prowess as a hitchhiker, having once completed a coast-to-coast jaunt in just 71 hours," his family wrote. Leo and John were friends and housemates during their years at Stanford, and he met enough other Wrangellites to move there after graduation in 1975.

Arriving at a time when many Wrangell workers had left for jobs building the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, John was quickly employed, first on the city road crew and then on a seine boat. After 11 seasons of seining, he became a hand troller, fishing over 30 years on the Corvus. He also halibut fished on different boats, operated an oyster farm for five years, and taught school between fishing seasons, mostly in Juneau.



JOHN CHURCH

When not working or helping to raise his children, John could often be found with his nose in a book or a banjo on his knee. He also enjoyed designing and constructing buildings on his homestead at Thoms Place. Kayaking, skiing, birding, hiking and long road trips were other activities he loved, as well as spending time with his grandsons.

John was preceded in death by parents Mickey and John, stepmother Fran Church, and sister Sally Church Petersen.

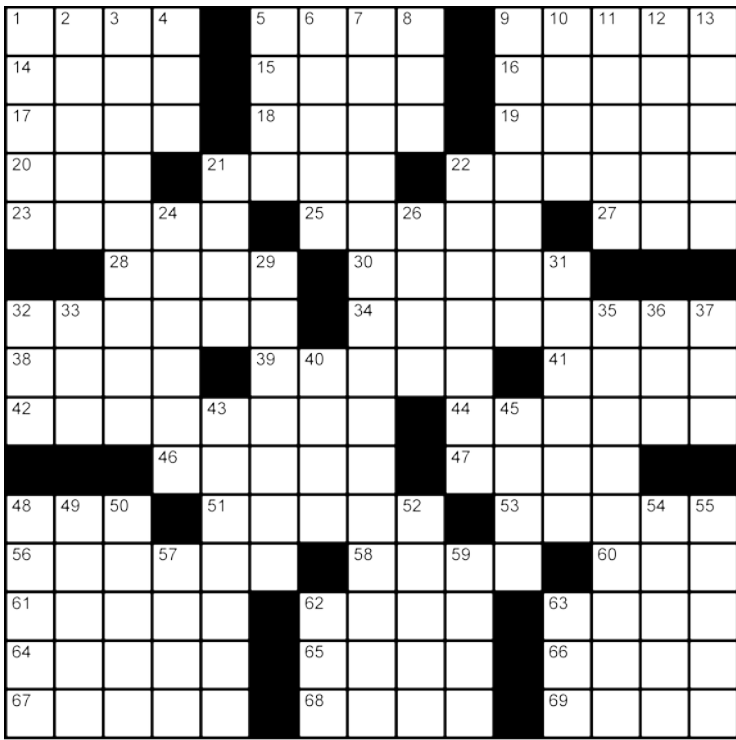
He is survived by sister Eileen Church; daughter KaiLea Wallin (Rob); son Peregrine Woolwine Church;

grandsons Etolin and Kingston; stepsisters Aileen Gagney (Barb) and Sarah Conover (Doug); ex-wife Phyllis Woolwine; past partners and friends Anna (Ja) Wallin, Katya Kirsch, Laurie Lamm and Nikki Carpendale; current partner Betsy Wirt; and various nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Donations in John's name can be made to the Irene Ingle Public Library. Cards may be sent to KaiLea Wallin, 1671 31st St., Port Townsend, WA 98368, and Peregrine Church, 4060 5th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. 98105.

Crossword

Answers on page 12



CLUES ACROSS

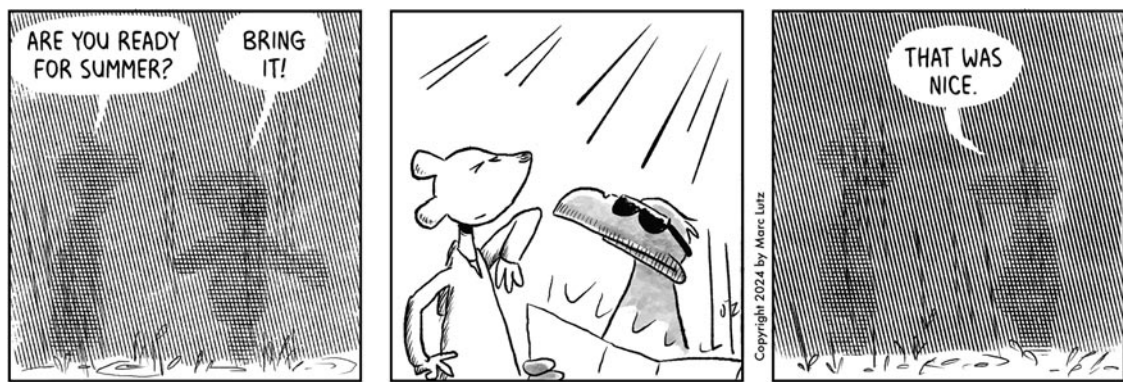
- 1 Pistols
- 5 Police heavy brigade
- 9 Unexpected turn of events
- 14 Long song for one in an opera
- 15 Cairo/Pittsburgh river
- 16 Totaled
- 17 Of the present month (Abbr.)
- 18 Traditional knowledge
- 19 Cosmetics mogul Elizabeth ---
- 20 Monk's title
- 21 Job-discrimination watchdog (Abbr.)
- 22 Plumping
- 23 Moonshine maker
- 25 Liable
- 27 Journey's end forecast
- 28 Swedish aircraft maker
- 30 Astonish
- 32 Take for granted
- 34 Hearth
- 38 Radiation absorber
- 39 "I shall not find myself so --
- die" (Antony, in "Julius Caesar")
- 41 One up on a deuce
- 42 Catholic
- 44 Accuse
- 46 Wide river mouth
- 47 Flying toy
- 48 Batter essential
- 51 Fashion reminiscent of the past
- 53 "What happens in --- stays in ---"
- 56 Short stops
- 58 Decree
- 60 Web site ID
- 61 The first Mrs. Trump
- 62 Singer --- Simone
- 63 Split
- 64 Well mannered
- 65 International trade org.
- 66 Stripe
- 67 Breaks
- 68 Raised
- 69 E.g. Levin, Gershwin and others

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Short attacks
- 2 Ripley's slogan finishers
- 3 Firing
- 4 Posed
- 5 Only
- 6 Cry of exultation
- 7 Battle group main feature
- 8 The very end of a golf club
- 9 Swing in a circus
- 10 Skin blemish
- 11 Self-published author
- 12 Surgically implanted tube
- 13 A k a the Friendly Islands
- 21 Gunslinger actor Jack ---
- 22 Duck ---, medieval child's game
- 24 Exalted
- 26 Leave out
- 29 Fab Four
- 31 Personal assets
- 32 Top-fermented beer
- 33 Moderately dry
- 35 Unorthodox
- 36 Angular meas.
- 37 Peeper
- 40 British Prime Minister when the Constitution was signed
- 43 Food grasses
- 45 Honey factory
- 48 Sagas
- 49 Singer-songwriter --- DeGraw
- 50 Yellow tropical fruit with pink pulp
- 52 Token amount
- 54 Center of an amphitheater
- 55 Snow vehicles
- 57 Saucy girl
- 59 "Shane" star Alan ---
- 62 Toff
- 63 G-men

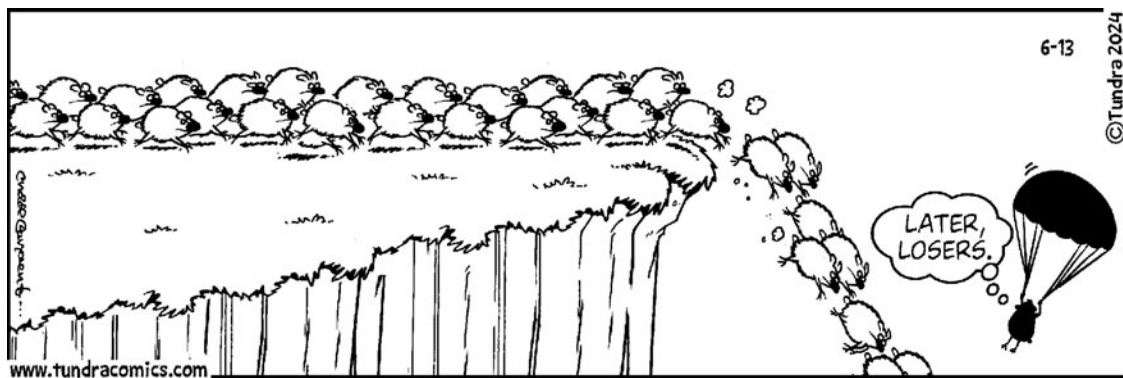
Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



Police report

Monday, June 10
 Agency assist: Wells Fargo.
 Hit and run.
 Traffic stop.
 Agency assist: U.S. Forest Service.
 Agency assist: Municipal line crew.
 Dead deer.

Tuesday, June 11
 Suspicious circumstance.
 Summons service.
 Traffic stop: Citation issued for expired

vehicle registration.
 Alcohol permit.

Wednesday, June 12
 Animal complaint.
 Paper service.

Thursday, June 13
 Lost medication.
 Found property.
 Found property.
 Citizen assist.

Friday, June 14
 Criminal history.
 Parking complaint: Citation issued for
 time-limit parking.
 Objectionable animal.
 Dog bite.
 Traffic stop.

Saturday, June 15
 Agency assist: State Troopers.
 Reckless driving complaint.
 Citizen assist.

Lost property.
 Traffic stop.
 Paper service.

Sunday, June 16
 Traffic stop: Citation issued for speed.
 Report of suspicion of driving under
 the influence.
 Suspicious circumstance.

There were four ambulance requests.

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



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Directors of the Southeast Alaska Power Agency (SEAPA) will hold a regular board meeting on June 26, 2024 from 1 to 5 p.m. and June 27, 2024 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Nolan Center in Wrangell, Alaska. For additional information, please call 907-228-2281.

Publish June 19, 2024

CLASSIFIED

HOUSING WANTED
 Moving to Wrangell mid-July and looking to rent a small 1- or 2-bedroom apartment or a space room. Contact Sam at 207-632-0952 or spausman@outlook.com.

FOR SALE
 1967 pistol, left-hand gun with case. Browning semi-automatic. Medalist XXX189T7. Never fired. \$1,000. 253-854-7523.

FOR SALE
 Southeast hand troll permit. \$7,500. 253-854-7523.

HELP WANTED
 Wrangell Cooperative Association Transportation (WCAT) is seeking two road/trail maintenance laborers.

Complete job descriptions and applications are available outside the Wrangell Cooperative Association office at 1002 Zimovia Highway. Positions are open until filled. Contact Lizzy Romane at 907-874-3077 with any questions.

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

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

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

wrgsent@gmail.com.

LETTERS WANTED
 Do you have an opinion that you would like to share? Send us a typed or clearly written letter up to 400 words with your phone number and we will get it published in the paper. Contact Amber at 907-874-2301 or email wrgsent@gmail.com.

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL PUBLIC HEARING PUBLIC NOTICE

During the Regular Assembly Meeting of Tuesday, June 25, 2024, starting at 6 p.m. in the Wrangell Borough Assembly Chambers at 205 Brueger Street, Wrangell, Alaska, there will be a PUBLIC HEARING on the following item(s):

- a. Resolution No. 06-24-1870 of the Assembly of the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, adopting the Budget for all funds of the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025.
- b. Ordinance No. 1057 of the Assembly of the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, Amending Section 14.05.025, General Moorage Conditions and Restrictions, of Title 14, Harbor and Port Facilities, of the Wrangell Municipal Code, to add a New Subsection requiring Marine Vessel Insurance or alternatively to require users to pay a Moorage Surcharge.

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

Publish June 19, 2024

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE INVITING BIDS SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION LOADING DOCK

Notice is hereby given that the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, will receive sealed bids for the construction of the **SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION LOADING DOCK** project. The work consists of all activities as shown in the contract documents. The work includes mobilization, construction surveying, clearing and site demolition, earthwork, concrete, utilities, overhead door installation, and other improvements. The Owner's Estimate for all work is approximately \$285,000.

Sealed bids will be received by the City and Borough of Wrangell, Post Office Box 531, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, or located at the Borough Clerk's Office, 205 Brueger Street, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, until 2 p.m. prevailing time on June 27, 2024, and publicly opened and read at that time.

The Contract Documents are available in electronic format and can be downloaded from the City and Borough of Wrangell website (www.wrangell.com) under the Bids and RFPs section. Downloading Contract Documents from the City and Borough of Wrangell's website requires registration with the Borough Clerk in order to be placed on the Plan Holders List and to ensure receipt of subsequent Addenda. Failure to register may adversely affect your proposal. It is the Offeror's responsibility to ensure that they have received all Addenda affecting this Solicitation. To be registered, contact the Borough Clerk at 907-874-2381 or at clerk@wrangell.com

The owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in a bid, or to make award as it best serves the interests of the owner.

Mason Villarma, Borough Manager
 City and Borough of Wrangell

Publish June 5, 12 and 19, 2024

STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION Southern Southeast Area Office

Preliminary Written Finding under AS 38.05.035(e) and AS 38.05.945

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DOF), gives formal notice under AS 38.05.945 that the Division has made a preliminary Best Interest Finding decision under AS 38.05.035(e) and proposes to adopt a site-specific Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) under AS 38.05.112 and the administrative standards of AS 41.17.060 regarding the sale of the following commercial timber sale: East Charley Timber Sale (SSE-1386-K).

Before this sale may be held, the Commissioner will make a written final decision that the sale is in the best interest of the State. This decision will set out the facts and applicable policies upon which the Commissioner bases his determination that the proposed timber sale will or will not best serve the interest of the State. The final decision is expected to be available to the public after July 15, 2024.

The draft Forest Land Use Plan is intended to provide the best available information regarding the proposed timber harvest on 201 acres and the management of other non-timber uses in compliance with AS 38.05.112 and AS 41.17.060, and must be adopted by the DOF before the proposed activity can occur. The Forest Land Use Plan is expected to be available to the public with or after the issuance of the final decision.

The area of the sale is proximate to the community of Edna Bay, approximately 1/2 mile to the north of the community of Edna Bay. The timber sale area is found within Sections 10 and 15, Township 68 South, Range 76 East, Copper River Meridian (CRM). The sale area is found within the Craig D-5 NW USGS quadrangle. The main access for this sale area is from the existing USFS Kosciusko Road System, specifically the 1520000 and 15250000 Roads.

The three harvest units total approximately 201 acres and contain approximately 5,000 MBF of timber. This volume will be advertised and sold under provisions of AS 38.05.120, in the form of one or multiple sales.

The public is invited to comment on any aspect of the preliminary decision. Comments can be mailed to the Alaska Division of Forestry, 2417 Tongass Avenue, Suite 213, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 or emailed to dnr.dof.sse@alaska.gov. Comments must be received by the Division of Forestry office no later than July 15, 2024, in order to be considered in the final best interest finding decision of whether or not this sale will be held in whole or in part or to be considered in the adopted FLUP. To be eligible to appeal the final decision or the adopted FLUP, a person must have provided written comment by July 15, 2024.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SUBMIT COMMENTS CONTACT:

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

Copies of the preliminary decision are available for review at the Division of Forestry and Fire Protection at the above address and at the Ketchikan, Craig, Petersburg, Wrangell and Edna Bay Public Libraries and the State Online Public Notice System at: <http://notice.alaska.gov/215720>.

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

Publish June 19 and 26, 2024

Cruise lines agree to daily passenger limit in Juneau

By BECKY BOHRER
Associated Press

A new agreement between Alaska's capital city and major cruise lines seeks to cap the daily number of cruise ship passengers arriving in Juneau starting in 2026, though a prominent critic of the cruise industry said the planned limits do not do enough.

The agreement, finalized late last month, seeks a daily limit of 16,000 cruise passengers Sundays through Fridays and 12,000 on Saturdays. However, officials said that doesn't necessarily mean there will be that many people every day.

Cruise passengers numbers

ramped up rapidly after two pandemic-stunted years, hitting a record of more than 1.6 million passengers in Juneau last year. That's caused tension between businesses that rely on tourism and residents who are fed up with increased traffic, busy trails and the hum of helicopters ferrying visitors to glaciers.

Cruise seasons also have gotten longer, with the first boat this year arriving in Juneau in early April and the last set to arrive in late October. On peak days in the past, passenger numbers have totaled about two-thirds of Juneau's population of roughly 32,000 people.

A daily limit of five large

ships took effect with the current season, as part of a separate agreement signed last year.

Alexandra Pierce, Juneau's visitor industry director, said June 4 that the aim with the current agreement is to hold cruise passenger numbers roughly steady, in the 1.6 million range.

"The idea is that the agreement buys everybody time not only to see if it is sustainable but also to build the infrastructure that will help it feel more sustainable," she said.

Pierce said she expects a number of projects will be completed in the next five years "that will help our current numbers feel less impactful." She cited plans for a gondola at the city-owned ski area, updates to the downtown sea walk and increased visitor capacity at the popular Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area.

The agreement, which was signed by the city manager and major cruise line executives, also calls for annual meetings to "review lessons learned, to review and optimize the subsequent season's operations, and align on community and industry parameters, goals, and opportunities."

Pierce said city leaders are "trying to balance the needs of our residents, the needs of our economy, the needs of future opportunities for people to stay in

our community."

Karla Hart, a longtime critic of the industry, is skeptical of the new agreement, saying it doesn't do enough to address concerns many residents have that current tourism levels are unsustainable.

"It feels like we're just getting led along again, and expansion will continue and more time will pass" and impacts will continue, she said June 4.

Hart is helping push a proposed local ballot initiative that would institute "ship free Saturdays," with no cruise ships with a capacity of at least 250 passengers allowed to stop in Juneau on

Saturdays or on July 4. The signature-review process for the proposed measure is underway. If the measure is certified, it could appear on the October ballot.

Renée Limoge Reeve, vice president of government and community relations for Cruise Lines International Association Alaska, said the latest agreements with Juneau is the first such agreement the industry has signed in Alaska and underscore the cruise lines' commitment "to being good partners in the communities that we visit."

Governor appoints former radio talk show host to fisheries permitting job

By NATHANIEL HERZ
Northern Journal

In May, the Alaska Legislature narrowly rejected a conservative talk radio host's appointment to a highly paid position regulating the state's commercial fisheries.

Now, after the failure of that pick, Republican Gov. Mike Dunleavy has chosen a new appointee with a similar — though not identical — background for the six-figure job at the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, or CFEC.

In an unannounced decision, Dunleavy selected Rick Green last month, according to a letter to Green that the governor's office released June 12 as part of a response to a Northern Journal public records request.

Green's first day on the job is July 1, according to the commission's chair, Glenn Haight; Green will serve at least through the Alaska Legislature's next round of confirmation votes in the spring of 2025.

On the airwaves for more than 15 years, Green was known as Rick Rydell during a colorful career as a talk host, most recently on an Anchorage station. His on-air character was that of an "unabashed redneck," according to one of the books he wrote.

One of those books also chronicled how, with two other hunting enthusiasts, Rydell once attempted to shoot, legally, 30 bears in a single long weekend.

But since 2018, Green has ditched his talk show persona and worked as a low-profile special assistant to Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang.

That government service may make his chances of confirmation to CFEC greater than those of Dunleavy's previous appointee, Mike Porcaro. Porcaro had no experience as a commercial fisherman and was still working as a conservative advertising consultant and talk radio host when the governor appointed him last year.

The fishery commission, with some 20 employees, does largely low-key bureaucratic work — including issuing annual commercial fishing permits, granting and denying permit transfers in the

event of illnesses and deaths, and publishing fisheries reports and statistics.

But it has drawn attention from policymakers in recent years for what critics say is a small workload and yearly commissioner salaries that can exceed \$135,000.

A spokesman for Dunleavy, Grant Robinson, described Green as a good fit for the job. "He's been an avid outdoorsman for the past 40 years, served three years on the Anchorage Fish and Game Advisory Committee, and has a background as a project manager for environmental and engineering firms," Robinson said.

Haight, the commission's chair, said Green's salary would be around \$136,000 a year.

In an email, Green said his work for the state, combined with his personal fishing experience and the time he spent on the Anchorage advisory committee, make the CFEC job a "natural extension."

"I'm grateful to the governor for the faith he placed in me," Green said in his email.

Nathaniel Herz publishes the Northern Journal.

S	A	R	I	D	E	R	S	P	A	N	S
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