



Borough up against costly fix of anodes at Heritage Harbor

By CAROLEINE JAMES
Sentinel reporter

Late last month, the borough discovered an oversight in the construction of Heritage Harbor — its steel pilings and piers do not have corrosion-preventing anodes on them.

These pieces of oxidizing metal protect pilings from underwater degradation. Without them, the supports underneath the Heritage floats have begun to corrode. The borough plans to work quickly to install nearly \$1 million worth of anodes at the harbor to prevent further wear.

Near the end of March, the Port and Harbors Department sent a diver to check the anodes at Heritage Harbor and confirm that they were functioning properly. When the diver couldn't locate any, Port Director Steve Miller checked the harbor's design plans and discovered that anodes had never been included in the project to begin with.

"I don't know if somebody didn't catch it," Miller told the port commission at its meeting April 6. "I'm not 100% sure why they weren't included." He was not the harbormaster when Heritage

was designed and constructed in the years leading up to its completion in 2009.

On March 30, he got a cost estimate back from PND Engineers outlining how much it will cost to add anodes after the fact. "When I got the number is when I really got sick," he said. The total recommended budget is \$988,403 — and that number could increase if Miller wants divers to test the integrity of the pilings while anode installation is being done.

Anodes are metal bars about four feet long that range from 250 to 400 pounds. According to current borough plans, the harbor will need 486 of them in a variety of sizes to protect all the pilings.

Miller plans to take action on the project immediately. It has already been bumped to the top of his department's priority list and will be added into the borough budget July 1. Hopefully, anodes will be installed within the year.

"I don't think it's one that we should sit back on," he said. In the past, many of the department's pricier projects have been funded through grants, but grant money isn't

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Chamber of commerce will ask borough to help fund 4th of July events

By MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

In light of the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce's operating deficit over the past six years, it has sought to cut costs and find added revenues to continue the popular Fourth of July celebration.

To that end, the chamber board of directors will be asking the borough's economic development department to support funding for this year's event.

The borough this fiscal year contributed \$27,000 toward the chamber's general budget — not specifically designated to the Fourth of July. That is a small increase over \$23,000 in the previous year.

At a work session meeting on April 5, the chamber board discussed its options for additional borough funds targeted for the Fourth, with input from Kate Thomas, the new director of the department.

Since time is tight, Thomas suggested the chamber submit a proposal before Friday so that it can be added to the agenda for a possible vote at the next economic development committee meeting April 20.

"I think it would be good to say, 'Here are all the descriptions

of expenditures for the Fourth of July,'" Thomas suggested. "Here's the dollar amount. Here are some contingencies we're considering, some strategies for recovering that revenue, and here's what we need to cover the bare minimum and here's what we would request of you to run this event as we have in the past. Essentially two dollar amounts."

She said Borough Manager Jeff Good has requested any funding request for the Fourth of July be "routed through the economic development department committee for this particular issue."

Chamber board president Bill Burr said the request should be a list of everything it takes to run the Fourth events as has been done in the past and also showing the bare minimum needed. "We want to do it all on our own and we don't want to lose that incentive if the economic (development committee) is supportive."

Typically, the royalty competition (fundraising raffle) held the entire month of June will fund the next year's Fourth festivities. As participation in the competition has

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AIMING FOR THE TOP

Climbing 1,311 steps, 9-year-old tirelessly raises money for blood cancer research

By MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

Piper Buness might not be big on words but she's big on making and setting goals.

The 9-year-old fourth grader participated in the Big Climb in Seattle on March 26 to raise funds for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, and her accomplishment had big results.

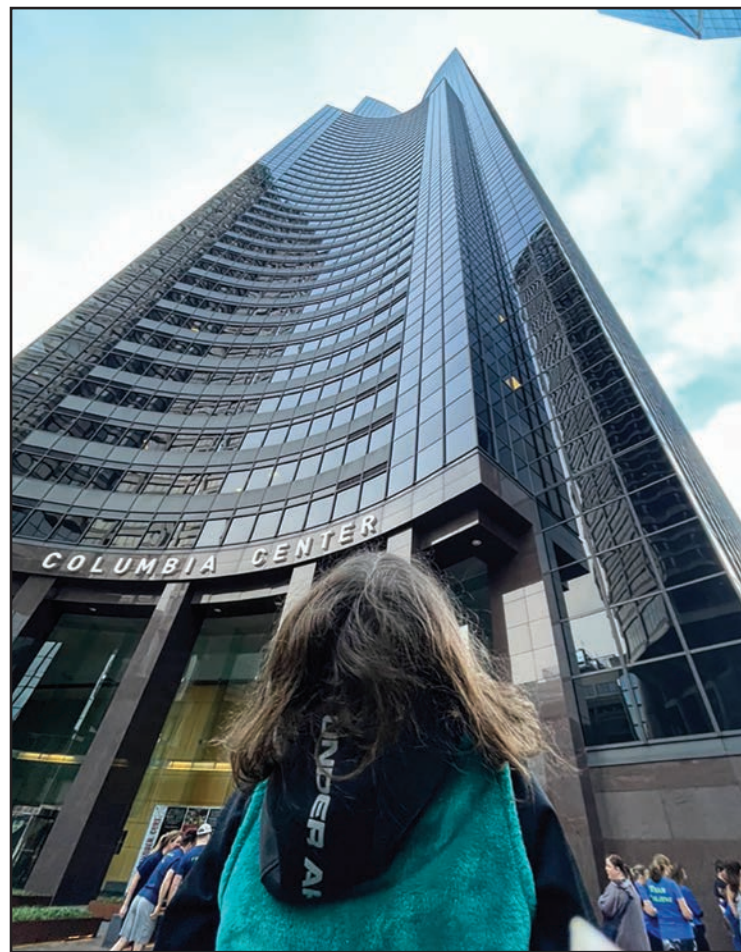
Chris Buness, Piper's grandmother, has been participating in the firefighter version of the Big Climb in Seattle's Columbia Building off and on since 2011. Firefighters wear their gear to scale the 69 floors two weeks before the Big Climb, which is open to anyone.

"Piper asked me one day last year when I was training for the Firefighter Stairclimb if she could do the climb and I said yes," her grandmother said. "We trained by using the stair stepper at the fire hall and walking up Mount Dewey."

They also hiked the Sawdust Trail off the Spur Road, Piper said, which helped when they faced the challenge of 1,311 steps of 788 vertical feet in the Columbia Tower.

"I felt energized at first," Piper said. "Then, when I started getting up (higher), my legs started getting tired because I was going way too fast because I was energized. But the (final) three flights, me and my nana ran."

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Above: Piper Buness looks skyward at the daunting challenge before her on March 26, climbing the 1,311 stairs to the 69th floor of the Columbia Tower in Seattle as part of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Big Climb fundraising event. Left: Chris Buness, left, and Piper pose for a selfie on the 69th floor of the tower after completing the climb challenge.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHRIS BUNESS

House advances budget with one-time boost in school funding

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell School District would receive an additional \$425,000 in one-year state money under a budget headed toward approval in the Alaska House, falling short of a permanent increase in the education funding formula sought by school districts statewide.

Under the House budget, state funding for K-12 public education would increase by about 14% for the 2023-2024 school year.

The state's foundation funding, based on enrollment, covers about 60% of the Wrangell district's total general fund budget.

The Republican-led House majority structured the budget last week to draw the \$175 million in one-time help for districts across Alaska from a state savings account, which will require consent of Democrats to achieve the three-quarters supermajority vote needed to tap the restricted account.

A House vote on the budget bill could come as soon as Wednesday.

The Democratic-led House minority has expressed frustration that the increase in funding for K-12 education is less than school supporters and districts requested, and that it is a one-year boost and not a change in the formula in law.

The minority also objected to drawing from savings for education while at the same time Republicans pushed ahead with a large Permanent Fund dividend covered entirely by general fund dollars.

"We are holding our kids hostage. We are singling out children," Rep. Jennie Armstrong, D-Anchorage, said during budget debate last week.

Even with drawing on savings to pay for the one-time bump in school funding, the House spending plan shows a deficit of almost \$600 million for the fiscal year that starts July 1.

Without cuts to public services, a smaller PFD or new

taxes, the Legislature eventually would need to approve an even larger draw from the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund, which the state has relied on for much of the past 30 years to cover spending as revenue-generating oil production has declined.

The savings account is expected to hold about \$2 billion before any drawdowns to cover gaps in next year's budget.

The budget will go next to the bipartisan-led state Senate, where leadership has not been as supportive of the large PFD — \$2,700 — as the House, and also appears less willing to cover state spending by drawing down savings.

After Senate changes, the budget would head to a House-Senate conference committee to resolve differences.

Senate leadership has been working toward a budget without a draw on savings, possibly a \$1,300 dividend — in line with the average of the past decade

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Birthdays & Anniversaries

The Sentinel extends its best wishes to everyone listed in the chamber of commerce community birthday calendar.

Wednesday, April 12: Michael Cook.

Thursday, April 13: None.

Friday, April 14: Anniversary: Rod and Jean Brown.

Saturday, April 15: Anniversary: Jamie and Kim Reading.

Sunday, April 16: None.

Monday, April 17: Alyssa Royster.

Tuesday, April 18: Sue Nelson.

Senior Center Menu

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

Thursday, April 13

Halibut chowder, fry bread, sunshine salad

Friday, April 14

Chicken cacciatore over noodles,
Brussels sprouts, tossed salad

Monday, April 17

Crispy chicken, steamed carrots,
cauliflower broccoli toss, curry rice pilaf

Tuesday, April 18

Creole pork steaks over pasta,
cauliflower, sunshine salad

Wednesday, April 19

Salisbury steak, peas, peach salad,
mashed potatoes and gravy

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, April 16
Columbia, 7:45 p.m.
Sunday, April 23
Columbia, 4:45 p.m.
Sunday, April 30
Columbia, 5:45 p.m.
Sunday, May 7
Columbia, 12:15 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, April 19
Columbia, 6:45 a.m.
Wednesday, April 26
Columbia, 5 a.m.
Wednesday, May 3
Columbia, 5 a.m.
Wednesday, May 10
Columbia, 4 a.m.

All times listed are scheduled departure times.
Call the terminal at 907-874-2021 for information
or call 907-874-3711 or 800-642-0066 for recorded information.

Tides

	High Tides		Low Tides	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
April 12	05:10	15.1	06:53	11.7
April 13	06:24	14.1	08:28	11.9
April 14	08:05	13.7	09:45	13.1
April 15	09:36	14.3	10:43	14.7
April 16	10:46	15.4	11:31	16.3
April 17	11:44	16.4
April 18	00:14	17.6	12:35	17.1

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

NOLAN CENTER THEATER "Shazam! Fury of the Gods," rated PG-13, at 7 p.m. Friday, April 14, and 7 p.m. Saturday, April 15. The action adventure comedy runs 2 hours and 10 minutes; tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under age 12. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

ANIME FAIR from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, April 15, at the Nolan Center for a history of anime and influential Manga writers. Workshops, movies and buy-sell-trade table available for anime items. More information at: <https://www.nolancenter.org/anime-fair-2023.html>

FREE TAX RETURN PREPARATION Saturdays through April 15 at the Nolan Center. Sponsored by the AARP TaxAide Foundation. Open to all, regardless of age. IRS-certified volunteers will prepare and e-file your return at no charge. Refunds can be direct-deposited into your bank account. By appointment only. Call Paula at 907-874-3824 or 907-305-0309.

SALVATION ARMY will re-dedicate the Martha Jager Fellowship Hall at noon Sunday, April 16, to gather stories about Jager's life and celebrate her ability to build community. Lunch will follow.

WRANGELL SCHOOL BOARD meets at 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 17, via Zoom. Go to: <https://bit.ly/40sFhs0>. Meeting ID is 886 8385 7596; passcode 680281. Community members can email comments to kpowell@wpsd.us, or can sign up under guests to be heard by emailing the same address before 3:30 p.m. April 16.

STORY TIME AT THE LIBRARY, 10 to 11 a.m. Fridays until April 28. Enjoy the stories, crafts and snacks at the Irene Ingle Public Library. Call 907-874-3535.

LET'S TALK ABOUT GRIEF presentation from 1 to 2:30 p.m., Saturday, April 29, at the Episcopal Parish Hall. Presented by certified grief educator Rev. Julie Platson from Sitka. Open to all. Sponsored by St. Philip's Church and Hospice of Wrangell.

LITTLE LEAGUE VOLUNTEERS needed for coaching, umpiring, scorekeeping, concessions, pitching machine runners, field upkeep and more. Volunteer applications can be picked up at the chamber of commerce or filled out online at <https://bit.ly/3KOivZ>.

HEAD START is accepting applications for preschoolers. Apply online at cchita-nsn.gov or get a paper application at the school behind the old hospital building. Call 907-874-2455 with questions.

KINDERGARTEN enrollment is now open for the 2023-2024 school year to any child that will be 5 years old by Sept. 1. Call Kendra at 907-874-2321 or stop by the Evergreen Elementary School office.

WRANGELL PARKS & REC 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.

- **YOGA CLASS**, 8 to 9 a.m. Saturdays at the community center multi-purpose room until May 27. Open to adults, 18 years and older. \$5 drop-in fee. Bring a yoga mat and wear athletic clothing that bends and flexes. For more information and to register online visit www.wrangellrec.com or call 907-874-2444.
- **FAMILY PICKLEBALL**, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Saturdays at the community center through April. Open to 14 years and older. \$5 drop in fee. Bring gym shoes and wear athletic clothing.

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

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

April 5, 1923
The regular meeting of the executive committee of the Red Cross was held at the town hall last Monday. The principal business transaction was the appointment of Mrs. Stephen D. Grant as public health nurse for Wrangell for a year beginning April 16, with a two months leave of absence without pay during June and July at which time Mrs. Grant will take a six-week course in public health nursing in Portland, approved by the American Red Cross. Mrs. Grant, who is a graduate nurse with post-graduate work, enjoys the confidence of the community and is recognized as being thoroughly competent. That the

local chapter of the Red Cross is providing a community nurse for Wrangell is a forward-looking movement which will produce far-reaching results in the health and well-being of the community.

April 9, 1948

Wrangell, like California recently, was suffering a drought and water for the town still remains at a critical stage. A party which went up to the dams yesterday found the water low and, though there is plenty of snow at that level, it is not melting to any degree. Citizens are warned to still be careful of water use. There is still danger that it will have to be shut off at certain times during the day, and a break in a main on Front Street this morning did not help the situation. Residents from Bro. Gunn's shoe shop at Grant's Corner were out of water while repairs were made. So far in April, weather records show Wrangell has had 0.08 inches of rain, and the forecast is for continued clear weather. While saving water is not necessary at present, people are urged to preserve pressure IN CASE OF FIRE.

April 6, 1973

Two-thousand dollars worth of new equipment has been purchased by Wrangell General Hospital with funds provided by the Hospital Auxiliary. The money

was collected through donations, money-raising bake sales and other projects, according to past Auxiliary President Carolyn Bullerwill. Hospital Administrator Emma Ivy and Mrs. Bullerwell announced the funds were used to buy two cold-air streamers, an air compressor to operate a breathing-assistance machine, and an X-ray viewing box. Mrs. Ivy said it was decided the equipment for respiratory patients was needed immediately because of the recent flu epidemic. The X-ray viewing device was needed with the addition to the hospital staff of Dr. Estol Belflower, a radiologist from Juneau. Dr. Belflower will work in the hospital on a monthly-visit basis.

April 9, 1998

The new Alaska Marine Highway System ferry Kennicott will be delivered a month later than expected. Halter Marine, the Mississippi shipyard building the Kennicott, said construction time was lost due to the lateness of the design's completion, El Nino-related weather delays and testing needed for equipment on the ship. The Kennicott was to have started serving the Bellingham-to-Skagway run in early June, but now it won't enter service until July 7. In the meantime, the Malispina will pick up the slack.

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FREIGHT FOR LESS

Henson takes on tourism marketing job with borough

By CAROLEINE JAMES
Sentinel reporter

Whether he's promoting independent artists or advertising to independent travelers, musician and business-owner Matt Henson uses his marketing know-how to connect buyers with products. In the past, he worked in music marketing, where he got the word out about up-and-coming artists. In his new job as borough marketing and community development coordinator, he'll be promoting Wrangell.

"The core concepts of marketing stay the same no matter what you're doing," Henson explained. "For the borough, it's going to be visibility in its local market ... showing people what Wrangell has to offer because it's an amazing place."

Henson will manage the borough's social media presence, represent the community at trade shows, track visitor numbers and assist as needed with economic development programs.

Though his music career has taken him all over the United States and his compositions have been recorded and performed as far away as Colombia and London, Henson experienced love at first visit when he touched down in Wrangell.

After two brief trips to the



PHOTO BY CAROLEINE JAMES/WRANGELL SENTINEL

Matt Henson has accepted a job at the borough as marketing and community development coordinator, working in the economic development department to help promote Wrangell.

community in spring and summer of 2022, he signed a lease and moved to the island in October. "It's easily one of my favorite places I've ever been to, which is why I moved here," he said. He hopes to use his perspective as a former tourist and now-resident to share what the community has to offer, with an emphasis on sustainability.

"We want to respect what

Wrangell has built here," he said. "And make sure that Wrangell stays Wrangell, and not a tourist town."

His company, Matt Henson Music, offered marketing services for independent artists, like tour management, merchandising, record distribution and more. The company matched artists with venues and leveraged social media to increase the

reach of new musicians.

At the borough, he'll apply the same skillset to bolster cruise ship numbers, attract independent travelers and increase Wrangell's visibility as an Alaska destination.

Over the next several years, he hopes to build effective systems and establish best practices so that the next coordinator can smoothly transition into the role. Eventually, he plans to return to his music company.

Henson was hired March 23 and officially started work under new Economic Development Director Kate Thomas on Monday. Henson is confident in the department's ability to foster a successful, sustainable visitor industry.

The pair plans to prioritize transparency and collaboration with community members. "We want to hear from people," he said. "We want to make sure we're being as transparent as possible with all of our work."

The borough assembly ap-

proved the new tourism position on Jan. 10 to help boost Wrangell's visitor economy and relieve pressure on the multi-tasking economic development director. The director job description encompasses everything from grant writing to zoning to community outreach.

"Competition for visitors to stay and spend money in Wrangell as part of their Alaska itinerary is tremendous," retiring Economic Development Director Carol Rushmore told the assembly. "Without this (new) full-time position to focus on community marketing of all Wrangell's assets and business needs, the industry will not grow, and Wrangell will miss out on critical job opportunities and economic growth."

Business owners and tourism industry professionals throughout the community expressed strong support for the new position.

Community shelters vandalized by fire, human waste

Sentinel staff

The shelters at Shoemaker Park and City Park were damaged by fire and vandalism last week in two separate incidents.

On April 3, the south-end shelter at City Park was used by a group of youths to camp overnight. Food, garbage and human waste were left behind, the Parks and Recreation Department reported.

On April 6, more destructive damage occurred at Shoemaker Park as two fires were built inside and outside the shelter. The inside fire, caused by burning a pallet in the fireplace, scorched the face of the chimney and plexiglass and melted some of the patio lights. The outside fire was built near larger rocks that were blackened. Plastic was melted into the surrounding grass which was also charred by the fire.

Both parks are maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. The Shoemaker shelter received new paint and renovations last year. Es-

timates on the cost of the damage weren't available Monday afternoon.

Two young men took responsibility for the damage at Shoemaker, and the department will work with them to repair the damage, said Lucy Robinson, director of Parks and Recreation.

"Vandalism in our parks is quite common, unfortunately," Robinson said. "It weighs heavy on our team, who work very hard to ensure the parks look great for everyone to enjoy."

Robinson said such destructive acts also pull staff away from other projects to make the needed repairs where vandalism has occurred.

The department sent out a reminder that the shelters are not for camping purposes but can be reserved for gatherings such as wedding receptions and other events.

Damage to Parks and Recreation facilities can be reported to the department at 907-874-2444. If someone witnesses vandalism or other misuse taking place, it can be reported to the police.

Close to half of Wrangell households received Medicaid last year

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The state has embarked on a mandatory income eligibility review of about 150,000 households receiving Medicaid benefits — covering as many as 260,000 people, more than one in three Alaskans. Nearly 500 Wrangell households could be in that stack.

That represents about half of all the households in the community of just under 2,100 residents.

The Alaska Department of Health reported an average monthly caseload of 476 Wrangell households enrolled in Medicaid in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2022.

The program provides health care coverage for lower-income individuals and families, with the federal government picking up most of the cost and the states paying the rest. Income limits vary by household size and whether children in the household under the age of 19 are covered by other insurance. For a family of four in Alaska, the monthly income limit varies from \$4,157 to \$6,344.

The federally required annual review of income eligibility for Medicaid recipients was suspended for three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The federal government has lifted the suspension and the state Di-

vision of Public Assistance has restarted its reviews, with the pace expected to pick up this summer.

Regardless of income, no Alaskan will have their coverage involuntarily terminated before June 1, according to Deb Etheridge, director of the Division of Public Assistance.

During the pandemic, the federal government paid to help keep people enrolled in Medicaid even if their incomes increased beyond eligibility limits, while eliminating the annual review requirement. Congressional action last December returned the program to its past practices.

"This is just reinstating that sort of traditional practice of annual renewal for our Medicaid beneficiaries," Etheridge said during an hour-long online presentation April 4 hosted by the University of Alaska Anchorage.

The pace of reviews is expected to start slowly April through June, then pick up July through December, Etheridge reported during the online session.

Under the review, Alaskans who no longer meet the income limits will lose Medicaid coverage. They have the option of going to the federal marketplace for subsidized private insurance provided under the Affordable Care Act.

The state is advising Medicaid recipients to make sure their contact information is correct so that they receive their review questionnaire. People can update their information online at the division's website or by calling the state's Medicaid Information Update Hotline at 833-441-1870.

Anyone losing coverage will receive a notice at least 10 days before the effective date and will be able to appeal the decision, Etheridge said.

Total state Medicaid funding in Alaska has remained relatively stable during the past decade at roughly \$600 million a year, but federal funding has increased from about \$800 million in 2012 to more than \$1.8 billion in 2022 as the number of enrollees has increased.

The Division of Public Assistance reports about 30,000 more Alaskans are enrolled in the health care program than at the start of the pandemic in 2020.

About 42% of Alaska residents up to 19 years old were covered by Medicaid as of January 2022. The number was 23% for Alaskans 20 through 64 years old. At age 65, Medicare takes over with health care coverage for senior citizens.

Juneau Empire reporter Mark Sabbatini contributed to this report.

State food aid distribution underway, but Wrangell food pantries opt out of help

By CAROLEINE JAMES
Sentinel reporter

Tons of free non-perishables and canned goods are headed to Alaska communities through the Food Bank of Alaska, but Wrangell's food pantries haven't signed on to the program.

The town's largest food pantry at The Salvation Army says it is well stocked with local donations.

After a state agency's monthslong backlog of processing applications for food stamp benefits left residents throughout Alaska struggling to feed their families, the governor in late February directed \$1.7 million to help. The money is intended to stock food pantries, particularly in rural communities, where food prices are already high and where the delay in food stamps has taken the hardest toll.

State officials say that the delays have been caused by ongoing staffing shortages, a 2021 cyberattack, outdated online systems and a flood of applications needing review.

Of Wrangell's roughly 1,000 households, an average of 122 a month received food stamps through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2022, totaling more than \$700,000 in benefits for the state fiscal year that ended June 30, 2022.

According to a four-year average between 2015 and 2019, Wrangell's percentage of households that receive benefits is about 5% higher than

the overall state average, but on par with other rural Alaska municipalities.

However, neither of the community's food pantries at The Salvation Army or Seventh-day Adventist Church signed up for the state program of additional food donations. As a rule, The Salvation Army does not accept state aid and "it's unlikely that the (Seventh-day Adventist Church) would take advantage of this opportunity because it's so different from what they usually do," explained Anthony Reinert, director of programs with the Anchorage-based Food Bank of Alaska. The Seventh-day Church typically focuses on seniors, he said.

"Different organizations have different capacities to distribute the food," explained Cara Durr, the food bank's media spokesperson. "Some might not have the capacity to distribute it."

The Food Bank of Alaska relies on its local partners to determine their level of need and their ability to distribute goods. Any aid that might have gone to a Wrangell food pantry — if any had applied — will likely be headed to another municipality.

Wrangell Salvation Army Lt. Jon Tollerud has found the church doesn't need state food aid. Its current offerings are "sufficient and more," he said, to meet the community's needs. "We have not closed due to lack of food in 3.5 years," he said. "The community is excellent at providing."

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

House Republicans need to rethink priorities

By LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

There is no wisdom in the state House majority's decision to put Permanent Fund dividends ahead of the public education budget.

Paying for larger PFDs before schools is not the way to build a better state, to keep families from leaving, to entice new residents and businesses to move here, to educate children. It does nothing to address the fact that more people have left Alaska than moved here in each of the past 10 years.

It's as if the legislators want a new state motto: "Give me liberty, or give me death, but give me my dividend either way."

House and Senate committees have been working this session on a

much-needed increase in the state's per-student formula to help fund local school districts. That number has moved up just a tiny one-half of 1% over the past six school years, leaving districts — meaning teachers, staff, students and parents — far short of even covering inflation in educating young Alaskans.

Districts across the state are in distress, looking at closing schools, cutting staff and courses and programs to balance their budgets.

In Wrangell, the school district has run through its federal pandemic aid and this year is at the maximum borough contribution allowed under state law.

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District superintendent last week reported that the budget could come up about \$400,000 short and job cuts would be needed unless there is an increase in state funding.

The Sitka School District superintendent said that without more state funding for the 2023-2024 budget, the district could lose 15 teaching positions, about one in seven in the district.

The Petersburg School District finance director reported higher heating fuel and utility bills will

cost the district an additional \$240,000 this year.

Despite the need and despite all the work on legislation to increase the state funding formula in law, the House Republican-led majority last week found a way to transform it into a game of political strategy when the budget was before the full House for amendment.

In order to have enough general fund dollars to pay a big dividend this fall — about \$2,700 per person — the majority amended the budget to rely on restricted savings to pay for about a 14% increase in state aid to schools. Even with that increase, the budget would still spend a few hundred million dollars more on the PFD than K-12 education.

House Republican leadership appears lined up against the idea of approving a permanent increase in the state education funding formula, and the budget maneuver makes clear it's something they are not at all interested in doing.

But what's worse is that the additional school money is for one year only. House Republican leadership appears lined up against the idea of approving a permanent increase in the state funding formula, and the budget maneuver makes clear it's something they are not at all interested in doing.

Still, the budget has to go to the Senate and then a House-Senate conference committee to resolve differences, so the number and the terms of any education increase could change before adjournment next month.

The biggest political maneuver of the House majority last week was structuring the one-time increase for schools to come from state savings, which requires a three-quarters majority of each chamber. Republicans need Democratic votes to reach that threshold in the House. The message to the Democrats is "give us your votes, or school funding dies."

No such maneuver with the dividend, which would come entirely from the state general fund, requiring no Democratic votes.

Sly politics, putting the Democrats on the spot for schools. Bad politics putting the PFD ahead of schools.

EDITORIAL

Fourth is about freedom, but it's not free

No question about it, Wrangell loves its Fourth of July celebration. Residents, families and visitors all gather downtown to watch and participate in the games and races, enjoy the food and, hopefully, some summer sunshine, though that is the least predictable of the festivities.

Putting on the days of the Fourth is not cheap for the chamber of commerce. The celebration totals somewhere around \$115,000 for fireworks, event expenses, insurance, prize money, running the royalty fundraising raffle and everything else that everyone enjoys every year.

In the past, raffle ticket sales covered much or most of the Fourth of July expenses, but sales have been in decline due to the pandemic shutdown and fewer royalty candidates and their families willing to devote the entire month of June to selling raffle tickets seven days a week.

The chamber, which puts on other events during the year, also feeds its treasury with members' dues, profits from pull-tab sales and an annual contribution from the borough, which this year is at \$27,000. But just as Fourth of July royalty ticket sales are down, so, too, are pull-tab revenues and chamber memberships.

Which brings us back to the Fourth. Yes, it takes volunteers, but it also takes money, which the chamber does not have. The nonprofit organization has a plan: Ask the borough for funding, which means less money for some other public needs; cut expenses, which means fewer services provided by the chamber; maybe raise membership dues, which could result in fewer members joining up; and ask businesses and individuals to pay to sponsor specific Fourth events. It's just like sports stadiums that sell naming rights, only the signs will be a lot smaller.

For \$100, plus the cost of a new pole, you can sponsor the greased-pole event. Sponsoring disc golf will cost \$200. The price to get your name on the 3-on-3 basketball tournament is \$400. Sponsorship of all the street games is priced at \$3,500, plus the cost of eggs for the annual toss.

The chamber was even talking of charging parade entrants \$5 each.

None of this will make the chamber popular. What's been free for years isn't going to be free forever, and that will be hard for many people and businesses in town to accept.

But the math does not work without more revenues and less spending. The chamber has little choice but to make some very hard decisions, and the community has little choice but to accept that free is just not affordable.

— Wrangell Sentinel

GUEST OPINION

No justice in White House decision to deny land trade

By FRANK H. MURKOWSKI

The lack of respect and hypocrisy in the Biden administration's application of its policy of environmental justice toward Alaska's Natives was on full display when on March 14 Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland withdrew from the 2019 land exchange in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge that the department had agreed to with the King Cove Corp. and Agdaagux and Belkofski tribes.

This land exchange was intended to provide the people of King Cove with the opportunity to seek permits to construct an 11-mile gravel road to medevac people from the all-weather Cold Bay airport when bad weather prevented aircraft from landing in King Cove.

The Department of Justice had defended the land exchange in a March 2021 appeal to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals (which it won) and in an August 2022 appeal to a larger panel of the same court, a decision from which was pending at the time of the administration's withdrawal from the land trade. That's right, the Biden administration defended the land exchange for two years after it came into office.

Why did the White House suddenly withdraw from the land exchange on March 14?

The day before the Biden administration had ever so reluctantly agreed that the Willow oil project in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska could proceed. This was the right call from a national energy securi-

ty perspective. But hyper-outrage about the Willow decision from environmental groups went into overdrive.

So, a sacrifice was needed. Someone decided that withdrawing from the land exchange would somehow appease environmentalists for the Willow decision, and Haaland was required to take responsibility.

The betrayal of Alaska Natives in King Cove is consistent with the pattern of environmental justice application to Alaska. When environmental groups oppose a project in Alaska, such as the Tongass National Forest exemption from the 2001 roadless rule or the Ambler road project to open up a mining district in Northwest Alaska, the White House will oppose it on environmental justice grounds. But there's no environmental justice for a project needed by Alaska Natives when the environmental groups oppose a project.

In fairness, environmental groups have opposed the 2019 land exchange since former Secretary of Interior David Bernhardt made it in 2019. They have ceaselessly lobbied the Biden White House to withdraw from it. It took Biden's approval of Willow to provide the administration's political need to make it happen.

It is painful to see how the administration and environmental groups' environmental justice hypocrisy impacts the lives of the people of King Cove. I have been intensely involved in the issue since my time in the Senate and when I was governor.

Continued on page 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

New director should sequester her political party affiliation while running the Division of Elections

Will Carol Beecher, who was appointed to serve as director of the Alaska Division of Elections, comply with Alaska state statutes in the future?

The relevant statute clearly states that the elections director must be nonpartisan and may not make political contributions. The Sentinel reported Feb. 22 that Beecher made recent contributions to the campaigns of Republican candidates including Donald Trump, Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy and Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom. Four months later, Dahlstrom appointed Beecher as director of the Alaska Division of Elections.

Her prior partisan political activity does not prevent her appointment. But Beecher should now sequester her Republican affiliation. The citizens of Alaska need a truly nonpartisan director of state elections.

Michael Henry Clark
Houston, Texas

River's Mouth is inexpensive and has cheerful, helpful staff

There isn't another business in this town, bar none, that looks out for its citizenry the way River's Mouth does. That is the most important thing I have to say, so I'll repeat it, and hold that thought.

But first let us take a peek at this endearing little place on Earth that we call home. In Wrangell, as residents we fall into one of those two categories: buyers and/or sellers.

We are all in this together. We are all trying to survive in this day and age while inflation is eating us alive and the almighty dollar buys nothing.

Enter the solution: River's Mouth to the rescue. In my own vernacular, I refer to River's Mouth as The Happiness Store. Nowhere else in town will your dollar stretch so far.

Kelly Ellis saw a screaming need and filled it promptly and efficiently.

A bonus too for those who live more comfortably. You have a local destination for your used things and the satisfaction of knowing that they will be put to good use, not wasted, and that they will be appreciated.

At River's Mouth you will find nice things, a room filled with sunlight, windows and brightness wonderfully organized, clean and neat and cheerful with a dedicated, hard-working staff delighted to serve you. And the best, I save until last: At prices you can afford. Way to go, Kelly!

Personally, I'd like to nominate you for grand marshal of our Fourth of July parade and best business with the chamber of commerce.

You and your staff deserve the recognition for a job well done.

Rosemary Ruoff

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Legislation would require financial literacy class in Alaska high schools

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Pointing to high credit card balances, growing student loan debts and inadequate savings for many U.S. households, Anchorage Sen. Bill Wielechowski believes it is important to teach students "to avoid common financial pitfalls and manage their money successfully."

He has proposed legislation that would require Alaska high schools to teach a financial literacy course. His bill also would require that students complete the course to earn their diploma.

The course would have to cover managing a bank account, setting a budget, credit card debt, insurance, loans, financial fraud and scams, college and vocational training scholarships, savings and retirement accounts and taxes.

The senator proposes that school districts start offering the course in the 2025-2026 school year, and that the graduation requirement start applying to students in 2026.

Wrangell High School incorporates financial literacy into its career planning and job-skills classes, and seniors also take economics, according to a statement from the school district.

This is the first time Wielechowski has offered such legislation. He picked up on the idea after hearing about similar programs in almost two dozen other states.

"It will teach students the ability to understand and manage their personal finances," he said when he introduced his bill to the Senate Education Committee last month.

The committee heard Senate Bill 99 again

"It will teach students the ability to understand and manage their personal finances."

Sen. Bill Wielechowski

on April 5, with a third hearing set for Friday. If the committee approves the legislation, it could move to the full Senate for a vote and would then need to win House approval before the May 17 adjournment deadline or be held over for consideration next year.

Flora Teo, president of Juneau Achievement of Alaska, testified in support of the bill at the Education Committee meeting on April 5. The legislation, she said, has the same goal as Junior Achievement: "Ensuring that the youth of today enter adulthood with an understanding of the fundamentals of personal finance."

Financial literacy, she said, "connects for students why education is important and how it affects their lives" and their earnings.

Bradley Loncar, a University of Alaska Anchorage student, told committee members that he participated in Junior Achievement every year while in high school. "Because of the things I learned there," such as taxes, credit scores and budgeting, "these lessons ... have helped me greatly over the years."

For example, he said, he saved and bought his first car with cash, "and I am very careful about not taking any additional debt." Speaking in support of a financial literacy course in high school, Loncar said "these are skills I use every day."

Columbia climb

Continued from page 1

Shawna Bunes, Piper's mom, said she wasn't surprised when her daughter told her she wanted to do the climb and raise money for blood cancer research.

"They've both got big hearts," Bunes said. "I was very proud of her when she said she wanted to that but wasn't necessarily surprised."

The training came easy, Bunes said, since Nana Chris is "extremely hands-on" with her grandchildren. "She's amazing about getting them outside, even if it's not to exercise but just to get them outside and enjoy nature. Everything she does with them gets turned into an educational learning experience. She's just amazing with them."

To date, Nana Chris and Piper have raised \$2,200 together. Of that, \$1,508 is what Piper has raised, which is more than five times her original goal of \$300. "What made me want to do it because I want to help people with blood cancer."

Goal setting isn't foreign to Piper, as her mom points out she's an entrepreneur, having started her own business, Piper's Pickles. She pickles various vegetables and sells them at the monthly community market.

The higher the grandmother-granddaughter duo

went on their climb, the more Piper said she noticed a change in the signs posted on each flight of stairs.

"Well, I felt really happy, but a little sad because the higher that we got into the tower, there was more 'In memory of (signs),' she said. "And I said to my nana, 'There's not enough in honor of.'"

Nana Chris said the event is very emotional, with cancer patients and their families in attendance. "As I reminded Piper as we climbed, the people with cancer have it harder than we do," she said. "We're climbing for them."

Upon finishing, Piper and her grandmother received a medal. Piper said she would probably do it again. "I felt good and exercised. My legs were just tired, and the view was great up there."

Piper doesn't know if she's inspired any of her classmates to set their own challenges, but she did impress her educators after completing the endeavor. Her art teacher Tawney Crowley interviewed her during morning announcements, which is a video feed into all the Evergreen Elementary classrooms.

"Miss Tawney said, 'If you see Piper, give her a high-five or say congratulations,'" she said. When she got back into her class, her fellow students all applauded her.

Heritage Harbor anodes

Continued from page 1

often available for maintenance. "It could take one to five years to even get qualified for a grant," he added. "My feeling is that it's too important not to address. We're already battling rotten infrastructure everywhere, and for this to be part of our rotten infrastructure is a travesty."

He plans to request that the assembly approve use of borough funds for the project, rather

er than grants or bonds.

The water in Heritage Harbor is a mix of salt and freshwater that interacts with the steel pilings and other supports to create rust, which can corrode metal. Anodes provide these pilings with "cathodic protection." Since they are more easily corroded than the pilings, they act as a "sacrificial metal," taking on damage so the structural integrity of the steel is preserved.

Attaching anodes to pilings — and even to the bottoms of boats — is the industry standard.

The borough doesn't have any reason to be concerned about the structural integrity of the docks, but if it wants the harbor to last decades into the future, the corrosion can't be allowed to persist, Miller said. "There's a lot of meat there, but it's not something we can continue to let happen," he said of the pilings. "When you hit those spots with your hand, it just looked like glitter. Glitter bombs in the water."

Commissioner John Yeager was shocked that anodes were not included in the initial plan

and questioned how such an oversight could have occurred. "We had a design that was seen by the engineers, was seen by project managers, was seen by our harbor master at the time, which was not (Miller), and we still are looking at a million dollars to fix something that is pretty common practice," he said. "I'm speechless."

Miller is unsure why anodes were not part of the project design and doubts the borough's ability to get satisfactory answers to the few questions at this point. He has a few guesses, but they're just that — guesses.

"The only way I could probably explain it is that Wrangell

doesn't have a dime into Heritage," he said. It's possible that designers or overseers took a more casual approach to the project since the federal government was footing the bill. It also could have been a conscious decision due to lack of funding — galvanized steel pilings without anodes are supposed to last for 30 years on their own. "Maybe it was discussed, but they didn't have the money," Miller conjectured.

Regardless, he's glad he found out about the issue so soon. "I think we're catching it probably at the best time to go ahead and protect these for another 30 years."

Chamber request

Continued from page 1

dwindled over the years, so too have ticket sales.

Brittani Robbins, the chamber's executive director, said last year's royalty competition was the first in its history to lose money. "The overall costs with the royalty for wages as well as supplies and whatnot came out to ... almost \$83,000," versus the \$56,260 raised in ticket sales.

Burr pointed out the entire Fourth celebration costs approximately \$115,000 to \$120,000 and the organization fell short in its fundraising by about half last year.

In addition to seeking borough help for the Fourth, the chamber is soliciting sponsors for each event, such as: \$100 for the tiny tots scrap fish derby, \$300 to sponsor toddler games and \$550 for log rolling.

Along with the request for funding from the borough's economic development committee for the Fourth, the chamber board will make a request to the borough assembly in May for additional help with the non-profit organization's general operating funds.

School funding

Continued from page 1

— and with stronger support than the House for a larger and permanent increase in state aid to schools.

Ketchikan Rep. Dan Ortiz, a minority member of the House Finance Committee and sponsor of legislation for a permanent increase in the state's per-student K-12 funding formula, said school funding is "still very much in play" as lawmakers work toward their mid-May adjournment deadline.

Under the representative's bill, the increase in state funding would be almost double the House budget number, more in line with a proposal working its way through the Senate. The higher formula would produce about \$600,000 a year for Wrangell schools, depending on enrollment numbers.

"We've heard resoundingly from around the state" that schools need more help in covering rising costs, Ortiz said in an interview last weekend. The representative also represents Wrangell.

The state's funding formula has inched up just one-half of 1% since 2017.

Much of the political debate over the budget in the House has focused on school funding and the dividend, with education advocates lamenting that the Republican-led majority was putting the PFD ahead of schools and structuring the budget to use savings for the one-time boost to school districts.

During budget debate in the House last week, Anchorage Democratic Rep. Zack Fields said it should be the other way around, with the larger PFD relying on a withdrawal from savings, not

school funding.

As drafted by the House, the budget would spend \$1.76 billion on dividends and \$1.35 billion on K-12 education.

The House minority opposed the majority's amendment to pay for the one-time school funding increase from the savings account. After the minority lost the vote, most of its members left the Capitol for almost four hours on April 5 and could not be found. They later returned to the building, though their walk-out did not change the outcome of the budget bill.

Rep. DeLena Johnson, a Palmer Republican who co-chairs the House Finance Committee, triggered the school funding debate in the House when she introduced a budget amendment for the one-time funding. She announced to House members that perhaps a longer-term solution could be achieved next year, but a change in the funding formula in state law "is unlikely to occur" this year.

Ortiz said he isn't willing to accept that outcome. "I would say that remains to be seen," he said.

The House voted 39-1 to approve the \$175 million one-time increase in state aid last week, but then spilt over the provision that used savings to pay for the boost — only the 23-member Republican-led majority coalition voting in support.

Linking state spending to winning minority support for a draw on savings is a longstanding tactic in the Alaska Legislature. In past years, when the House was led by a predominantly Democratic majority, it was common for the budget to rely on the three-quarters supermajority vote to fully fund the budget.

Murkowski

Continued from page 4

Why? For humanitarian reasons. There is no certain way out of King Cove in a medical emergency during one of its notorious and frequent bad weather events.

Nancy and I are aware of a mother trying to keep a sick newborn warm while crossing Cold Bay during a winter storm and then having to climb a 25-foot ladder on the Cold Bay side. How can anyone think that this is OK? If this problem occurred where they live, they would react very differently. It is disgusting that the environmental groups are not concerned for the

health and safety of people who live there.

Alaska's problem is that our transportation lanes go through federal land, and access is always opposed by environmental groups. Alaska must have the opportunities that only the federal government can give us. We must continue to fight for our rights of access.

This surely must include an 11-mile gravel road to medical safety for the people of King Cove. The White House's lack of compassion is not acceptable.

Frank H. Murkowski is a former U.S. senator (1981-2002) and Alaska governor (2002-2006).

Canoe Lagoon brings its oysters and more to retail store downtown

By CAROLEINE JAMES
Sentinel reporter

For Kristy and Brian Herman of Canoe Lagoon Oysters, operating an oyster business has been an exercise in efficiency. Since buying the farm in 2020, the pair has cut labor costs and oyster growing time, streamlined their cleaning and sorting processes and formed lasting relationships with restaurants in the Lower 48. Now, the company is ready for its next big step — a retail location in Wrangell.

In the past, Canoe Lagoon Oysters has had a minimal presence in town, since the business's primary customers are in Arizona. But once the company's new brick-and-mortar retail store opens on Lynch Street at the end of April, its briny delicacies will be readily available to residents, alongside a selection of health foods, Alaska gifts and Canoe Lagoon-branded products.

The official date of the chamber-sponsored ribbon cutting ceremony is yet to be announced, but when the shop opens its doors, residents will be able to peruse loose-leaf teas, all-natural cleaning products, Alaska-made jewelry, oyster-shaped keychains and butter knives, kelp hot sauces, apparel and packages of the company's unique coffee blend.

Initially, the decision to open an in-person store was a response to tightening state regulations surrounding paralytic shellfish poisoning, or PSP. The Hermans needed a holding facility in town to store oysters while awaiting test results.

But soon, the whole family got excited about the possibility of expanding into retail. Kristy has extensive experience as a department store manager and her daughters, Anika and Kaylee, would get yet another opportunity to learn valuable lessons about running a business.

When they aren't attending school in



PHOTO BY CAROLEINE JAMES/WRANGELL SENTINEL

Kristy Herman is getting the shelves stocked for later this month when she and her husband, Brian, plan to open their Canoe Lagoon Oysters retail shop. In addition to oysters, the shop will carry loose-leaf teas, all-natural cleaning products, coffee and other foods and goods.

Wrangell, Anika and Kaylee are helping out with all aspects of Canoe Lagoon Oysters, from farming, to design, to balancing the books.

Anika, who loves the arts, drew up the company's logo and Kaylee, who loves math, is learning bookkeeping.

Working together has strengthened the family's bond, explained Brian Herman. "That's been the best thing, I think, for our whole family," he said. "Doing this stuff in Alaska has really brought us close together. ... When COVID hit, it wasn't stressful for us to spend a lot of time together because this is what we do. We're already working together."

Since oysters don't naturally reproduce in the cold waters of Alaska, the company sources its larvae from Hawaii. After the larvae mature, they are placed in submerged "float bags" in the lagoon, where they spend two months feeding on the environment's micronutrients. Then, they are sorted by size and resubmerged, to prevent larger oysters from crowding out the smaller ones.

The farm is located about 30 miles south of Wrangell on the Blashke Islands.

Once they mature, the oysters are cleaned and sorted using the conveyor-belt contraption that's visible through an interior window of the Canoe Lagoon retail store.

From smokey to buttery, musky to algal, like citrus or like honeydew melon, the possible flavor profiles for oysters are seemingly infinite. Since oysters are filter feeders, absorbing and expelling over 50 gallons of water per day, their taste is highly dependent on the conditions of the water where they grow.

"There's 10 billion different types of phytoplankton and each one is specific to the water salinity, water temperature, latitudes — I mean it just varies so much," said Herman. "Our oyster is a different flavor profile than any other oyster because most oysters are grown in estuaries — brackish water — not high-salinity water."

The Herman family rears their oysters in cool, clear, salty water, for a taste that is "sweet, clean and bursting with briny sea flavor," according to the company's website.

The oysters that aren't sold in the family's new shop are either smoked or transported to Buck & Rider restaurants in Scottsdale, Arizona. "They've actually branded our oyster ... as the Buck & Rider oyster," said Herman. "They love our oyster and we're consistent with providing a product."

During the pandemic lockdown years, when the Hermans' business was just getting its sea legs, the Alaska oyster industry faltered as restaurants in the Lower 48 closed their doors. Arizona restaurants, however, never shuttered. "I'd bring 20 dozen oysters back with me and I started driving around the state with oysters," recalled Herman, "knocking on people's restaurant doors."

Ultimately, the hard work paid off. He and Kristy wanted to "find something that the whole family can be a part of and have different roles," he said. "The girls love it out there."

New shop offers tire mounting, repair services after seeing local need

By CAROLEINE JAMES
Sentinel reporter



PHOTO BY CAROLEINE JAMES/WRANGELL SENTINEL

John Hurst has opened a tire service shop on Third Street, just off the road to the airport. He provides repair and tire-mounting services.

If you're having trouble with your tires — or you want to commission a custom blade — John Hurst of John's Junk Removal has expanded his offerings to include tire repair, mounting and balance, plus handmade metalworks from his new forge.

Hurst bought his tire-mounting machine on a whim last December, after seeing one available for sale. "I needed my tires changed and the one guy who did it here in town was really busy at that time," he explained. "I said, what the heck, I'll buy it for 150 bucks and change my own tires." After successfully operating the machine on his own tires, he decided to open a repair business to help out

other community members.

Unfortunately, Hurst's machine can only handle tires with steel rims, typically found on cars that were made before 2005. "I have an older tire machine," he explained. "It will ruin newer rims." Hurst refers customers with aluminum or aftermarket wheels to another repairman who can handle the job.

In the future, he hopes to invest in a swing-arm tire machine that can accommodate all kinds of tires and rims. However, these machines don't come cheap. "You're looking at \$25,000 for the lowest, cheapest model, plus shipping, of course," he said. Saving up for one may take a while — "unless I win the lottery or something," Hurst laughed. "Or the Fourth of July contest."

The tire-mounting machine is housed on Third Avenue behind the old car wash. To set up an appointment, call or text Hurst at 907-305-0648. His usual hours are Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Quick tire repairs, like plugs, cost \$15. Other repairs range from \$25 to \$85 for changing out all four tires. Customers can anticipate a roughly 20-minute wait time per tire.

But tire repair and junk removal aren't all Hurst does — he has a side gig as an aspiring blacksmith. The Third Avenue garage doubles as a blacksmith shop where he creates custom metalworks on commission for members of the community.

Weapons like knives and swords have always interested Hurst, and in recent years he decided to try his hand at forming blades of his own.

"Somebody asks, 'Hey, can you make this?' And I say, 'I don't know. Maybe. Probably. Most of the time, yes,'" Hurst said. "I've only been doing it for a year and a half, two years now." But even though he picked up the skill recently, he's already produced knives, metal tools, a hammer, a marlinspike (used in rope work), a harpoon and more for customers around Wrangell.

After watching a few episodes of the History Channel's blade-smith competition series "Forged in Fire," Hurst picked up a propane bottle and piece of steel and headed to his front yard to try his hand at the craft. Unsatisfied with the results of these initial metallurgic experiments, he bought a forge in March 2021 and started learning the trade in earnest.

"It was slow going at first," he recalled, especially since blacksmithing requires many specialized tools. "It took me a year to finally get an anvil," he wrote.

Blacksmithing doesn't pay the bills like Hurst's other jobs do, but he's passionate about learning the trade. "It's more of a personal side thing that's really fun," he said.

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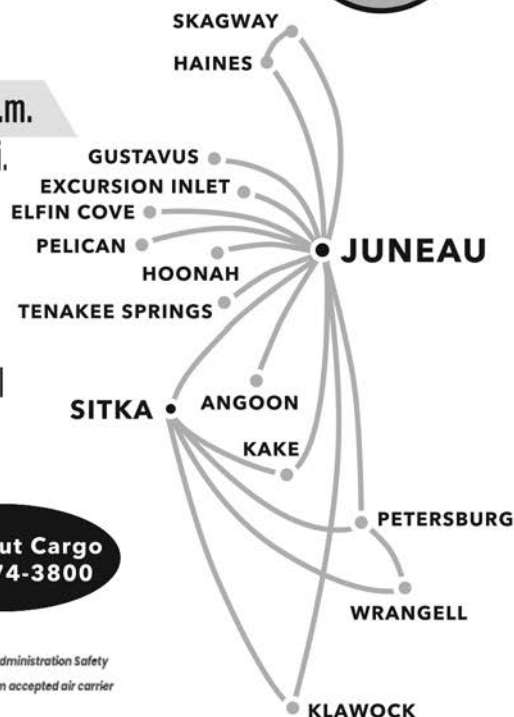
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Senior giving back to adoptive culture with historical fix-it project

BY MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

What started out as merely a way to show support for her best friend ended up being a life-changing experience for high school senior Brodie Gardner.

Last June, she was asked by Mia Wiederspohn to go with her to the Sealaska Heritage-organized Celebration in Juneau, which led to Gardner becoming more involved in the Tlingit culture and restoration of the Chief Shakes gravesite on Case Avenue.

"I went to Celebration with Virginia (Oliver), and I'm not part of her Tlingit class but my best friend Mia has a big role there," Gardner said. "She said, 'Please go so I can have a buddy.' I did and it was one of the coolest experiences of my life."

Upon her return to Wrangell, Gardner started getting more active in the Native culture. Though she isn't Native, she said she now has a "deeper appreciation" for the culture.

That appreciation played heavily into her decision on what her senior project should be. DaNika Smalley, Indian education director for the Wrangell School District, mentioned the gravesite for Chief Shakes, which has fallen into disrepair over the years.

"I haven't been up there in probably a few years, then I went up there and said, 'Oh, my gosh. This is bad,'" Gardner said. "From the road (the fence) looks completely fine, but the two you can't see are completely down."

The gravesite was originally surrounded on all four sides by a white picket fence, connected at the corners by posts, two of which were adorned by killer whale sculptures. Buried at the site is Kaawishté, Chief Shakes V, according to the 1945 book "Monuments in Cedar," by Edward L. Keithahn. The fifth Chief Shakes died in 1878 and held the title longer than any of the other six Shakes. The sculptures are a symbol won in battle by Kaawishté's ancestor Gush X'een (the first Chief Shakes) from Niska Chief We-Shakes. Keithahn writes the name Shakes, "a corruption of 'We-Shakes' was won in the same battle."

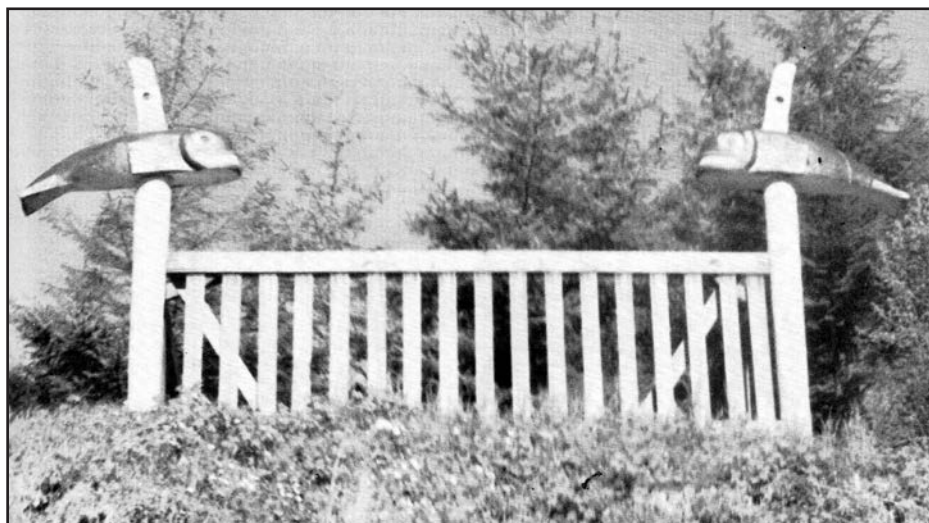
Both killer whale sculptures have rotted over time and are now wrapped in tarps at the gravesite.

Gardner plans to pressure wash the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRODIE GARDNER

Above: Brodie Gardner, left, and Richard Oliver look over the Chief Shakes gravesite, seeing what work needs to be done to repair the fence and stairs. Gardner picked the site as her senior project graduation requirement. Below: The gravesite is the resting place of Chief Shakes V, who died in 1878. This photo shows how it appeared a little before 1945.



fences and stairs, then give them a fresh coat of paint. New fence posts will be created to help connect the four sides once again.

Inside the fenced area will remain untouched.

"I was going to rake it out, but Virgin-

ia said you don't want to take land away from the gravesite," she said.

Gardner is also enlisting friend Spencer Petticrew to create a new sign for the site in shop class. She said it will more than likely be an engraved wooden sign with more information. She's not sure where it

will be posted just yet, whether next to the site or at the bottom of the stairs.

Before starting the work, Smalley said permission had to be obtained from Chief Shakes' descendants, which includes sisters Elsie Lindley and Rose Johnson, who own the site.

The repairs have been a long time in coming.

"It's been falling apart for as long as I remember," Smalley said. "I know that they've redone the stairs because there weren't stairs there for a while. That's a new addition in the last 20 years to get up there in a nice fashion because it used to be really, really steep stairs."

Smalley said Gardner's willingness to take on the project means a lot to her since it has a significant cultural impact.

"For me, her taking this on shows me that she's understanding and respecting the culture, regardless of her heritage," Smalley said. "Being that she is like a little sister to me ... that was like this huge heartfelt moment. That's going to be a way that she's putting something on this island that she's done. She can take pride in it."

Smalley plans to adopt Gardner into the tribe during a ceremony later this year. Johnson would like to hold a ceremony highlighting the restoration and Gardner's work when it's completed.

"Honoring her and what she's done for the tribe and clan and acknowledging that we love and appreciate her, of course, we want to share our culture with her," Smalley said.

Upon graduation in May, Gardner plans to take her certified nursing assistant certification earned through the high school this year and put it to use. She will work before leaving in the fall to attend Washington State University in Pullman, Washington, to earn a degree in genetics.

"That's what makes us," she said of her decision to pursue a career in the field. "You can look deeper into yourself."

She said will miss her built-in social network and all the help that's readily available in the Wrangell community. She's a bit anxious about meeting new people and starting the next chapter of her life.

"I'm just a little scared," Gardner said. "I'm really going to miss my mom, too."

School district begins strategic plan update process with survey

BY MARC LUTZ
Sentinel editor

As the school year hastens to its May 25 end, the district took its first steps toward updating its strategic plan, a document that lists specific goals and outcomes, how those will be achieved and the deadlines for each.

Though discussions about updating the plan were held at the beginning of the school year, the district has recently issued a survey, inviting community members to share what they think the schools should focus on.

"This is our initial foray into getting as much information as possible," said Schools Superintendent Bill Burr. "Then we can start paring things down. But right now, we are wide open to ideas."

Burr said the process will allow them to collect as many ideas as possible on what the community would like to see in the strategic plan, whether it's moving the elementary school into the middle school building, curriculum reviews, staffing, technology or anything else.

"This is what we need to begin filtering down because, obviously, we can't do everything," he said.

The school district has been spending down its savings and using one-time federal pandemic aid to cover its budget the past few years.

The money-saving suggestion of consolidating the elementary

school into the middle school building came up at a March 6 budget workshop between the school board and borough assembly. It was just an idea floated at the meeting, not a specific proposal.

Originally, the school board began talking about the need to update the strategic plan at its Sept. 19 meeting after an accreditation assessment called the current plan, which expires this year, too vague. The last time the strategic plan was updated was in 2018. Plans typically cover a five-year span.

The district wants input from anybody in Wrangell, not just parents or educators. Burr said it can be students, staff, community members and anybody who has the link to the survey. He refers to it as the "educational community," or all those who are concerned with education.

Items on the current strategic plan can also be carried over to the new plan, board president David Wilson said at the Sept.

19 meeting.

The current strategic plan can be found at wpsd.us on the bottom of the homepage. To pro-

vide input for the new strategic plan, complete the survey at surveymonkey.com/r/strategicplanning2023.

"We've reached out to everybody possible," Burr said. "If you have the link, send it to anybody you want."

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Southeast chinook harvest limit cut 23% for all gear groups

By LARRY PERSILY
Wrangell Sentinel

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has reduced this year's non-hatchery chinook catch limit for Southeast commercial trollers by 44,000 fish — about 23% lower than last year's harvest quota.

The catch limit for sportfishing, commercial seine and gillnet fleets also were set about 23% lower than last year.

The largest salmon are the main moneymaker for many trollers.

This year's harvest limit, while down substantially from 2022, is about the same as was set for 2021 and 2020. It's almost 50% higher than 2019, when several runs were not expected to reach escapement goals for spawning that year.

The state sets the preseason catch limits for each gear group in Southeast under the management provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty between the U.S. and Canada, which is intended to protect and allocate chinook harvests on the West Coast.

"The preseason outlook is for continued poor produc-

tion of Southeast Alaska chinook salmon stocks," the Department of Fish and Game reported in its announcement last Thursday, citing "stocks of management concern" in the Chilkat, Taku, Stikine, Unuk and Chickamin rivers, along with Andrew Creek which flows into the Stikine.

"Although the Chilkat and Taku stocks are projected to meet their escapement goals, run forecasts are still well below long-term average production. This will necessitate a management regime aimed at minimizing catches of these stocks," the announcement stated.

The department set the 2023 preseason target for non-hatchery chinook at 201,900, down from 261,250 last year.

The all-gear catch limit is allocated among sport and commercial fisheries under management plans specified by the Alaska Board of Fisheries: 149,100 for commercial trollers this year (down from 193,150 last year); 37,280 for sportfishing (down from last year's 48,290); 8,680 for purse seiners (down from 11,230); and 5,850 for drift gillnetters (down from 7,580).

The Pacific Salmon Commission announced in February that it will use a new method to set chinook harvest

caps for Southeast — intended to improve accuracy — combining annual data of the effort and harvest of king salmon by the winter power troll fishery in the Sitka Sound area with the chinook salmon abundance model that the commission usually uses.

The winter chinook fishery in Southeast is set to end April 15. Harvest of non-Alaska hatchery chinook during the spring fisheries, which run through June 30, will be counted toward the 2023 treaty harvest limit for each gear group.

For the summer season, Fish and Game explained it will subtract the "sum of the treaty chinook salmon harvested in winter and spring troll fisheries from the annual troll treaty allocation."

The summer troll fishery will be allowed to harvest 70% of the remaining troll allocation in the first summer chinook salmon opening in July. Then, any remaining allocation will be open to harvest during a second (August) opening, Fish and Game said.

Anna Laffrey of the Ketchikan Daily News contributed to this report.

Federal fishery council votes to close California, Oregon coast to chinook catch

By JULIE WATSON
AND LISA BAUMANN
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A federal regulatory group voted last Thursday to officially close king salmon fishing season along much of the West Coast after near-record low numbers of the fish returned to California's rivers last year.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council approved the closure of the 2023 season for all commercial and most recreational chinook fishing along the coast from Cape Falcon in northern Oregon to the California-Mexico border. Limited recreational salmon fishing will be allowed off southern Oregon in the fall.

"The forecasts for chinook returning to California rivers this year are near record lows," Council Chair Marc Gorelnik

said after the vote in a news release. "The poor conditions in the freshwater environment that contributed to these low forecasted returns are unfortunately not something that the council can, or has authority to, control."

Biologists say the chinook salmon population has declined dramatically after years of drought. Many in the fishing industry say Trump-era rules that allowed more water to be diverted from the Sacramento River Basin to agriculture caused even more harm to spawning areas.

The closure applies to adult fall-run chinook and deals a blow to the Pacific Northwest's salmon fishing industry.

Much of the salmon caught off Oregon originate in California's Klamath and Sacramento rivers. After hatching in freshwater, they spend three years on average maturing in the Pacific, where

many are snagged by commercial fishermen, before migrating back to their spawning grounds. After laying eggs, they die.

The council is an advisory group to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, which makes the final decision but historically has followed the council's rulings. The secretary's decision will be posted in the Federal Register soon.

Experts fear native California salmon are in a spiral toward extinction. Already California's spring-run chinook are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, while winter-run chinook are endangered along with the Central California Coast coho salmon, which has been off-limits to California commercial fishers since the 1990s.

Recreational fishing is expected to be allowed in Oregon only for coho salm-

on during the summer and for chinook after Sept. 1. Salmon season is expected to open as usual north of Cape Falcon, including in the Columbia River and off Washington's coast.

Though the closure will affect tens of thousands of jobs, few are opposed to it. Many fishers say they want to take action now to guarantee healthy stocks in the future.

They hope the unusually wet winter in California that has mostly freed the state of drought will bring relief. An unprecedented series of powerful storms has replenished most of California's reservoirs, dumping record amounts of rain and snow and busting a severe three-year drought. But too much water running through the rivers could kill eggs and young hatchlings.

Dunleavy rejects more state funding for child care; forms task force on issue

By IRIS SAMUELS
Anchorage Daily News

Gov. Mike Dunleavy said he does not support a request to add millions of dollars to the state budget to help child care providers, instead announcing the formation of a task force to examine the issue and provide policy recommendations by the end of the year.

Child care, expensive and in short supply in Alaska, has benefited from more than \$50 million in federal pandemic aid paid as grants to providers since 2020. With the end

of federal funding, child care advocates have asked legislators to add \$15 million to the state budget to boost provider wages, which they say average around \$13 per hour and could be raised by \$5 per hour with the requested funding.

Dunleavy said such a funding boost this year would constitute a "knee-jerk reaction."

"I'm not going to support \$15 million in child care because we don't even know what the child care is we're talking about," Dunleavy told reporters last Thursday in Anchorage. "But just to say \$15

million — who knows, after the task force is done, it could be more. It could be less. We don't know that until we go through this process."

No state-licensed child care providers operate in Wrangell.

The task force will include three members from state government, and eight members representing child care providers, advocates, the business community, local government and parents. They will be charged with coming up with policy solutions including ones to provide incentives for private businesses to sponsor

child care, and to offer on-site care for the children of state employees.

Child care advocates said they were hopeful that the formation of the task force signals a recognition by the administration of a problem that has long plagued the state. The lack of affordable, available child care services prevents many parents from taking jobs, costing Alaska \$165 million in lost economic activity per year, according to one estimate.

But advocates also said urgent action is needed while the task force completes its work.

"I'm very concerned about what is going to happen if some funding is not added to the budget to specifically address the low wages that child care providers earn, which is currently the primary cause of the child care shortage," said Blue Shiber, executive director of the Southeast Alaska Association for the Education of Young Children.

"The child care sector has been largely stabilized with (federal) pandemic-era dollars and those are going away, and we need some sort of infusion of money to replace those dollars right now, as soon as possible."

The House Finance Committee narrowly voted down an amendment to the state operating budget late last month that would have added \$15 million for the child care grant program. But Shiber said she and other advocates in the newly formed Child Care Coalition of Alaska would continue to push the Senate to add the funding to the budget.

Dunleavy announced the formation of the task force at the Credit Union 1 Alaska headquarters in Anchorage, which operates an on-site day care for employee children. Dunleavy signaled that while state investment could be needed, he was also looking to the private sector to provide solutions.

He was accompanied at the announcement by Kati Capozzi, president of the Alaska Chamber of Commerce, who said child care is "one of the top concerns" for the state's business community, and related directly to recruitment and retention of workers.

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- Letters must include the writer's name
- And give us your phone number, in case we have questions

Email letters to
wrgsent@gmail.com
or drop your letter off
at the Sentinel office.



Putting tribal lands in trust raises new legal issues in Alaska

By ALEX DEMARBAN
Anchorage Daily News

A lawsuit over a driveway-sized parcel in Juneau and a sales tax disagreement involving a food truck in Craig both highlight the learning curve facing city, state and tribal officials in Alaska as the federal government slowly accepts tribal lands into trust.

So far, only two tribes in Alaska have placed land into trust — in Craig in 2017 and in Juneau this year — after the federal government in 2014 began reversing a decades-old ban against the practice in the state.

The Alaska Department of Law early this year filed a lawsuit to stop the policy, after the Bureau of Indian Affairs announced last November it would accept the vacant parcel in Juneau into trust for the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

The state argues that land in trust threatens its authority. Trust lands, often referred to as Indian Country, are governed by tribes and generally are not subject to state laws, though the state of Alaska maintains criminal jurisdiction and certain civil authority within trust lands.

Tribes say the status gives them more power over their own affairs, such as employing tribal police who can supplement the state's limited law-enforcement presence in rural areas. It opens the door to federal programs and services, including opportunities to enhance housing aid, energy development and environmental protections.

"It keeps the land in the tribe forever," Tribal President Clinton Cook Sr. said of the land in Craig. "If the tribe got into business and it went sideways," the land would be protected from being sold off. "It will forever be our homeland."

City officials in Juneau and Craig say they're committed to working with local tribes to address jurisdictional questions on issues such as city taxes and services.

But there are issues to sort out.

The city and tribe in Craig, population 1,000, created an agreement to prevent disputes after the tribe in 2017 placed a roughly one-acre parcel that housed the tribe's offices into trust. Soon after that, the Fish & Chicks food truck, which has tribal member ownership, drove onto the newly designated trust land and stopped paying Craig sales taxes, said city administrator Brian Templin.

The city maintains that the business is not a tribal enterprise and should pay the city sales tax, Templin said.

The Craig Tribal Association says its members don't have to pay taxes to the city for businesses they operate on trust land, Cook said.

"As long as I'm tribal president, I'll never give into sales tax on our lands," Cook said. "We have inherent control of the 1.08 acres. The city doesn't seem to get that."

Templin said both sides have an incentive to find a compromise on the issue as the tribe applies to put more land into trust. The tribe needs city services, and the city needs revenues from all its residents to sustain the services.

"It's been a learning experience," Templin said. "But the bottom line is the tribe is part of the fabric of the community, so this is not really an 'us and them' situation. But there are issues that we will want to see resolved in any future land into trust acquisitions."

The state's 25-page complaint, filed in U.S. District Court in Alaska, says trust land "jeopardizes the state's rights to tax and to enforce land use, natural resource management, environmental, and public safety regulations."

The state says more tribes want to put land into trust. The Tlingit and Haida council has submitted four additional applications to place parcels into trust, totaling more than three acres in downtown Juneau, the complaint says. Tribes in Ninilchik and Fort Yukon have also

applied to put land into trust.

Richard Peterson, president of the Tlingit and Haida council, signed the deed in January to put the Juneau land in trust.

He called the tribe's successful application a "benchmark achievement" that would keep the tiny parcel in tribal hands forever. The land is located in a traditional Tlingit village site near the tribe's headquarters.

Peterson said the state and federal government already lost in federal court on the issue. The state apparently wants a different answer now, he said.

A U.S. district court, in a case brought by the Akiachak Native Community and other Alaska tribes, issued a ruling in 2013 allowing the federal government to take Alaska lands into trust as it does with Indian tribes in the Lower 48.

The state, which had intervened, appealed the case. But an appeals court vacated the lower court's decision in 2016, saying the controversy between the tribes and federal government was moot after the Obama administration created new rules allowing Alaska tribes to apply for land in trust. The administration of former Gov. Bill Walker declined to appeal that decision and said the state would work with the federal government and tribes to resolve differences.

Still, the issue wasn't decided. The Trump administration reinstated the ban. That was reversed under President Joe Biden, again opening the door to tribes.

The Alaska Department of Law says the question about whether the Interior Department can legally take land into trust in Alaska hasn't been finalized by an appellate court or the U.S. Supreme Court.

State officials say they want certainty on the matter.

Peterson said the state should give up its fight against Alaska's 229 federally recognized tribes.

"They're suing the federal government, but this is really over the tribes," Peterson said. "I'm of the belief that if you have a disagreement, you sit down with a cup of coffee and have a discussion."

Since the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act granted land to Native corporations, tribes don't own much land in Alaska. But that could change, said Eric Fjelstad, a partner with the law firm Perkins Coie in Anchorage. The international law firm has no trust-land cases in Alaska, but it represents Lower 48 entities that have conflicts with tribal trust lands there, he said.

It's not hard to imagine complicated questions arising, Fjelstad said.

The Clean Water Act contemplates treating tribes with trust lands as similar to the state, which could lead to conflicts involving environmental issues, he said. Companies wanting to build a road may one day need to seek permission from a tribe with trust lands, along with local, state and federal agencies, adding complexity to permitting.

Lloyd Benton Miller, an attorney with law firm Sonosky who is advising the Tlingit and Haida council, said the state's concerns are theoretical in nature. Potential disagreements are being worked out the local level, and if state operations are somehow impacted in the future, it can sue then, he said.

"This is a ridiculous lawsuit," Miller said.

The City and Borough of Juneau won't get "in the middle" of litigation, said Rorie Watt, the city manager.

It sees an opportunity to work closely with the Tlingit and Haida council, he said. Issues involving taxes, law enforcement, emergency services and utilities will need to be worked out.

"I think the issues can be resolved," Watt said. "The federal government is favorable to putting parcels into trust, so we have to find ways to resolve things."

State senator tries third time for tax on e-cigarettes, vape sticks

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

For the third time in as many legislative sessions, Kodiak Sen. Gary Stevens is leading the push to get a tax on e-cigarettes and vaping products into state law.

"Taxes have been proven to reduce youth tobacco use, resulting in fewer kids becoming life-long smokers," Stevens said in offering his legislation, which would add a 25% state tax to the sales price to dissuade youth from vaping.

Senate Bill 89 also would raise the legal age to buy vape sticks, electronic smoking devices and other similar nicotine products in Alaska to 21, matching the federal rule.

Stevens' first effort died when the Legislature adjourned early

in the pandemic-shortened 2020 session. Then, in 2022, although lawmakers overwhelmingly approved his second attempt, Gov. Mike Dunleavy vetoed the measure. "A tax increase on the people of Alaska is not something I can support," the governor said in his veto message.

Though the tax could raise a few million dollars a year, Stevens promotes the legislation as an attempt to stem the increase in teen use of vape products, not as a money-maker for the state.

The Alaska Department of Health's Tobacco Facts 2022 Update "shows an increasing trend among young Alaskans in high school, indicating 26% of the statewide population as active users of electronic smoking products (ESPs) in 2019 ... and 46% of students having 'tried'

ESPs," Stevens reported in his sponsor statement for the bill.

"These products are cheap. If you measure it by the puff, it (the tax) is pennies," Stevens' aide Tim Lamkin testified at the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee on April 3.

The measure is a priority for Stevens, who serves as Senate president. It is one of only two bills this session where he is the prime sponsor.

Tabitha Blades, a high school assistant principal in Soldotna on the Kenai Peninsula, testified in support of the bill at the Labor and Commerce Committee meeting. She told senators underage vaping is a growing problem, requiring that she spend more than an hour every school day dealing with vaping incidents. In addition, the school

district has spent thousands of dollars installing vape detectors in restrooms and locker rooms.

The Senate committee held the bill for amendments and could bring it up again as soon as this week, though it has a lot of ground to travel to win approval before the Legislature's mid-May adjournment deadline. In addition to the Senate Finance Committee and full Senate, the measure would need to win approval in the generally anti-tax House.

Bills that fail to advance this year — the first half of the Alaska Legislature's two-year ses-

sion — remain on the table for action next year.

More than 30 states tax e-cigs, vape sticks and such. There is no federal tax.

Alaska taxes regular tobacco cigarettes (\$2 a pack) and cigars and loose tobacco (75% of the wholesale price). Several Alaska municipalities have their own cigarette tax, and a few impose a tax on electronic smoking products. Anchorage has collected a 55% tax on the wholesale price of e-cigs and vape sticks since 2011; Juneau and Petersburg add a 45% tax on the wholesale price.

Federal judge denies environmental groups' request to halt major North Slope oil project

By JAMES BROOKS
Alaska Beacon

A federal court judge on April 3 ruled against environmental groups seeking to block preliminary construction of the Willow oil project on Alaska's North Slope.

The decision allows ConocoPhillips, the project developer, to begin digging a gravel mine and building a gravel road to access the area projected to be the largest new North Slope oil development in decades. A boat ramp to support subsistence hunting and fishing is also planned.

Legal challenges will continue, multiple environmental groups said.

At peak production in the early 2030s, Willow is predicted to produce up to 180,000 barrels of oil a day — more than 30% of the North Slope's current volume. A recent estimate from legislative fiscal analysts put the project's overall development cost at \$10 billion.

The Alaska Legislature voted unanimously to support ConocoPhillips' position in the

lawsuit, and the oil firm also received support from industry groups, the AFL-CIO and Alaska's congressional delegation.

ConocoPhillips said in court filings that it has already constructed ice roads and could begin gravel work as soon as the day after the judge's ruling.

Environmental groups, which have been seeking to stop the development, said they were unhappy with the ruling from Alaska District Court Judge Sharon Gleason.

"This is a profoundly disappointing decision," said Karlin Itchoak, The Wilderness Society's senior regional director for Alaska. "Willow poses a serious threat to air quality and subsistence resources for Indigenous communities in the region — as well as the world's climate — and ConocoPhillips should not be allowed to begin work on a destructive project that was poorly evaluated by the Bureau of Land Management. We will continue to fight with all means at our disposal."

Continued on page 11

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WRANGELL SENTINEL

Police report

Monday, April 3
Abandoned vehicles complaint.
Suspicious circumstance.

Tuesday, April 4
Unsecured premise.
Reckless driver.

Wednesday, April 5
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for driving too slow and failure to maintain lane.

Thursday, April 6
Agency assist: Fire alarm.
Dance permit.

Summons service.

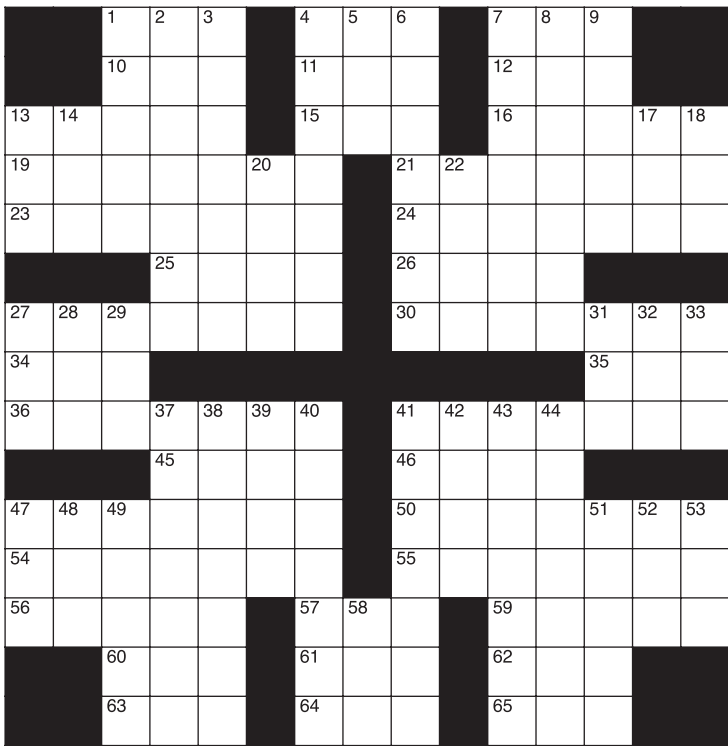
Friday, April 7
Citizen assist: Vehicle unlock.

Saturday, April 8
Agency assist: Fire Department.
Motor vehicle accident.
Dog at large.

Sunday, April 9
Agency assist: Search and Rescue.
Dog complaint.
Traffic stop.

Crossword

Answers on Page 12



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Atomic mass unit
- 4. Criticize mightily
- 7. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- 10. Stand in for
- 11. Everyone has one
- 12. Brew
- 13. Rectify
- 15. Popular Dodge truck model
- 16. Beef or chicken intestine
- 19. Satisfy
- 21. Of a particular people or localized region
- 23. Movements in quick tempos
- 24. Able to pay one's debts
- 25. Fleishy bird beak covering
- 26. Dueling sword
- 27. Helps
- 30. Court is in it
- 34. Touch lightly
- 35. Airborne (abbr.)
- 36. Of one
- 41. Baked good
- 45. Jai __, sport
- 46. About aviation
- 47. Low oval mound
- 50. Rugged mountain ranges
- 54. Compel to do something
- 55. A way to carve
- 56. Sao __, city in Brazil
- 57. Mustachioed actor Elliott
- 59. American Idol runner-up Clay
- 60. A way to soak
- 61. Car mechanics group
- 62. Born of
- 63. Time zone
- 64. Sea eagle
- 65. Even's opposite

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Sharp mountain ridge
- 2. Thin, fibrous cartilages
- 3. Provides new details
- 4. Muscular weaknesses
- 5. Ottoman military title
- 6. Banes
- 7. Horse-riding seats
- 8. Arms of a shirt
- 9. Narrow path along a road edge
- 13. Viper
- 14. Disfigure
- 17. Variety of Chinese language
- 18. Portray in a show
- 20. Wrongful act
- 22. No (slang)
- 27. State of agitation
- 28. __ Diego
- 29. One point east of due south
- 31. 007's creator
- 32. The NBA's Toppin
- 33. Midway between north and northeast
- 37. Examples
- 38. __ Gould, actor
- 39. The habitat of wild animals
- 40. Artful subtlety
- 41. Infielders
- 42. Keep under control
- 43. Herb
- 44. Distressed
- 47. A way to go down
- 48. Type of acid
- 49. Take by force
- 51. Collected fallen leaves
- 52. Shout of welcome or farewell
- 53. Monetary unit
- 58. Swiss river

Policy for Letters to the Editor

- Letters should be typed or clearly written and no longer than 400 words.
- All letters must be signed by the writer and include a phone number and any affiliation with a group which pertains to the letter.

The Sentinel reserves the right to edit any submissions.

The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon for Wednesday publication.

WRANGELL SENTINEL

Letters are run on a space-available basis.

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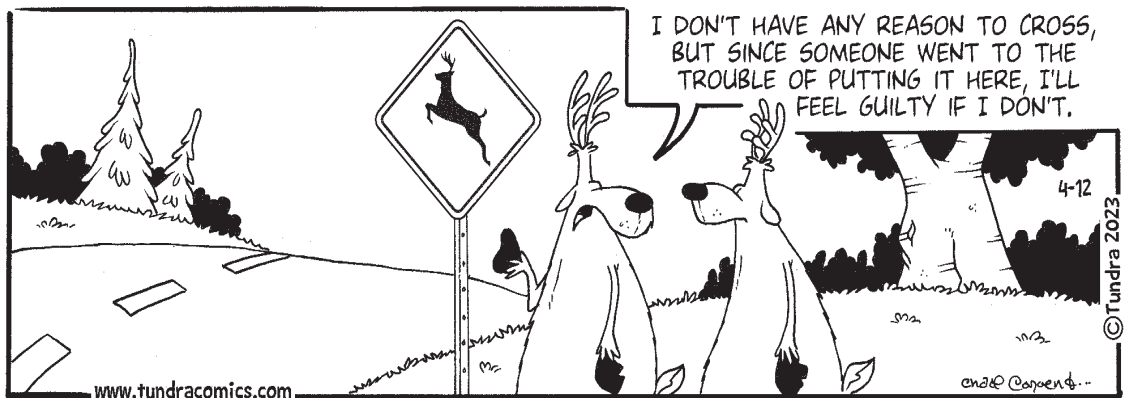
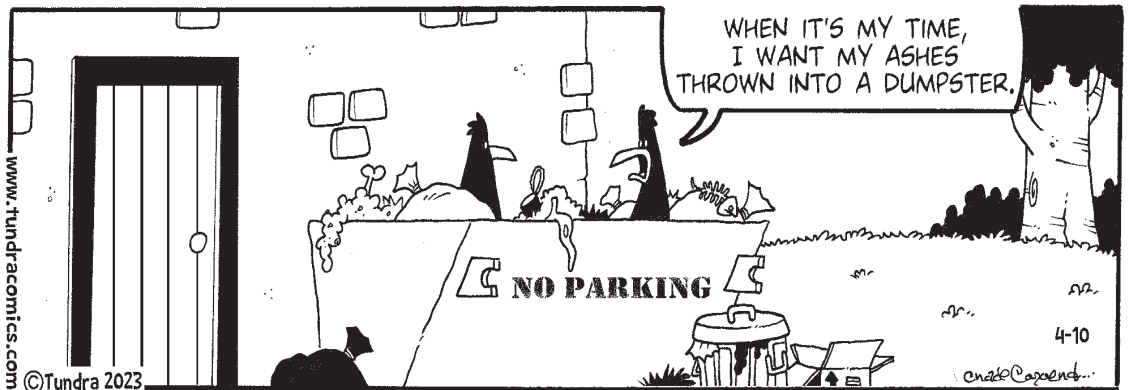
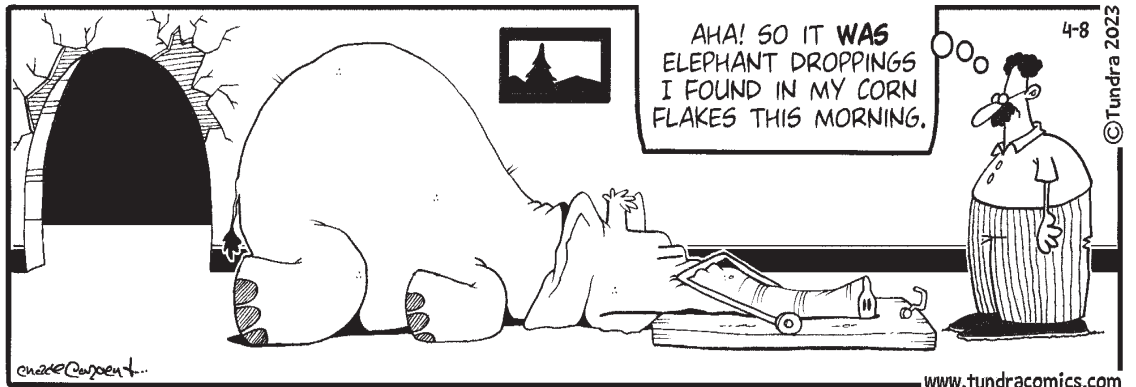
Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION SOUTHEAST AREA OFFICE

DRAFT FOREST LAND USE PLAN

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry (DOF) gives formal notice per AS 38.05.945 that the Division 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 for the commercial timber sale: Edna Bay Parlay Timber Sale (SSE-1342-2).

This timber sale is located on Koscisko Island, centered approximately two miles west of the City of Edna Bay. The legal description of the sale area is within Sections 31 and 32 of Township 68 South, Range 76 East, and Sections 1 and 2 of Township 69 South, Range 76 East, all in Copper River Meridian. Access to the sale area is by a log transfer facility in Section 34 and from existing road systems.

The harvest units total approximately 336 acres and contain approximately 8,400 MBF of timber. This volume will be sold under provisions of AS 38.05.115 or AS 38.05.120, in the form of one or multiple sales.

The FLUP is intended to provide the best available information regarding the proposed timber harvest on 336 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. This FLUP does not determine whether or not to access and sell timber within the timber sale area, nor the method of sale. Those decisions have been made previously in the March 9, 2017, Best Interest Finding and are not appealable under this FLUP.

The public is invited to comment on the FLUP. Comments can be submitted by mail or by email using the contact information listed below. Comments must be received at the Division of Forestry office no later than **May 1, 2023**, in order to be considered in the adopted FLUP. To be eligible to appeal the adopted FLUP a person must have provided written comment by **May 1, 2023**.

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: dnr.dof.sse@alaska.gov

Copies of the FLUP are available for review at the division's Area Office, the division's website along with the community libraries in Craig, Edna Bay, Thorne Bay and Ketchikan and at the State Online Public Notice System at <http://notice.alaska.gov/210506>.

The State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry complies with Title II of the American 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 April 5 and 12, 2023

North Slope oil

Continued from page 9

Most heavy construction on the North Slope takes place in winter, when the tundra can be traveling on ice roads. ConocoPhillips said it expects to work only from April 4 to about April 25, depending on weather.

In a 44-page order, Gleason wrote that environmental groups failed to demonstrate that those three weeks of work would cause irreparable harm to the environment.

She wrote that the court has received "numerous declarations" discussing the environmental harm that could be caused if oil is produced from Willow, "but regardless of the validity of these concerns, they are not rel-

evant to the court's consideration of the current motions because the planned winter 2023 construction activities do not include the extraction of any oil and gas."

She said blasting at the proposed gravel quarry was unlikely to harm residents of Nuiqsut, the closest town to the site, and that subsistence hunters were unlikely to be harmed by construction this winter.

When considering whether construction is in the public interest, Gleason said she gave "considerable weight" to the Alaska Legislature's unanimous vote in support of the project.

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HELP WANTED

Wrangell Public Schools is accepting applications for the following positions for the 2023-2024 school year:

- **Activities Director:** The Activities Director organizes and administers the district's program of interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities including the development and support of school "spirit." This is a contracted position with the district. The successful applicant should expect to work some evenings and weekends to support the activities program as needed and is expected to travel to regional events and meetings. The position requires strong leadership skills and the ability to carry out the rules and regulations set by the Alaska School Activities Association and the district. The contract duration is from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

We are also accepting applications for the following extracurricular positions for the 2023-2024 school year:

- **Baseball Head Coach and Assistant Coach**
- **Basketball, Boys Assistant Coach**
- **Class Advisers:**

- **Freshmen Class**
- **Sophomore Class**
- **Senior Class Co-adviser**
- **Cross Country Running Head Coach**
- **Softball Head and Assistant Coach**
- **Volleyball Head and Assistant Coach**
- **Elementary Student Council Adviser**

For more information and a detailed job description, please contact the District Office at 907-874-2347. These positions are open until filled. It is Wrangell Public School District policy to not discriminate based on age, race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

HELP WANTED

Johnson's Building Supply is hiring for a yardman/customer service position. Responsibilities include retail sales, computer knowledge, receiving freight, stocking inventory, truck loading/unloading, deliveries and friendly customer service. Work schedule is Tuesday-Saturday. Must have a valid Alaska driver's license, forklift experience

is beneficial (will train), some heavy lifting, prior construction knowledge is favorable, pay doe. Pick up an application at Johnson's Building Supply.

FREE PAPERS

Stop by the Sentinel to pick some up.

FREE ADS

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



Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) is looking for a Part-Time Maintenance Laborer position (20 hours a week). Work involves basic knowledge of heating, mechanic, carpentry, plumbing and other finish work. Minimum Qualifications: high school diploma or equivalent. One year of experience in the care and maintenance of buildings, grounds and equipment of experience or training. Must provide valid Alaska driver's licenses and who proof of driving record in good standing from DMV. This is a union position with an hourly rate of \$20.15. A complete job description and online application may be obtained from the website at ahfc.us/about-us/jobs.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mark Galla is making application for a new Common Carrier License-Seasonal Alaska Statute 04.11.180 liquor license doing business as Alaska Peak and Sea's located at Alaska Peak and Sea's (dispensing on jet boat tours in the proximity of Wrangell).

Interested persons should submit written comment to their local governing body, the applicant, and to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board at 550 West 7th Ave., Suite 1600, Anchorage AK 99501, or alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov

Publish April 5, 12 and 19, 2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

Hungry Beaver, Inc., dba Marine Liquor Store located at 640 Shakes Street, Wrangell, is applying for transfer of a Package Store AS 04.11.150 liquor license to Hungry Beaver Pizza LLC.

Interested persons should submit written comment to their local governing body, the applicant, and to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board at 550 West 7th Ave., Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501, or alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov.

Publish March 29 April 5 and 12, 2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

James Leslie II is making application for a new Common Carrier License-Seasonal Alaska Statute 04.11.180 liquor license doing business as Alaska Waters, Inc. located at Alaskan Waters (dispensing on jet boat tours in the proximity of Wrangell).

Interested persons should submit written comment to their local governing body, the applicant, and to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board at 550 West 7th Ave., Suite 1600, Anchorage AK 99501, or alcohol.licensing@alaska.gov

Publish April 5, 12 and 19, 2023

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the City and Borough of Wrangell Code, Sec. 3.04.080, notice is hereby given that the regular assembly meetings of the assembly shall be held on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month and shall begin at 6 p.m.

If any such Tuesday shall fall on a legal holiday as defined by the laws of the State of Alaska, the meetings scheduled for that day shall be held at the same hour on the next succeeding day which is not a holiday. Separate notice for the regular assembly meetings shall not be required. There will be no regular meetings the second Tuesday in July and August and fourth Tuesday in December.

If a work session is scheduled preceding the regular assembly meeting, publication shall be made on the website and posted at City Hall and the post office that the regular assembly meeting shall begin at 7 p.m.

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

Publish April 12, 2023

THANK YOU

I want to give a special thank you to Dawn Angerman and everyone else at the Elks Lodge for the ham donations to Wrangell

veterans. Thank you for honoring us who served in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Bill Donovan

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CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL NOTICE OF JOB OPENING Construction and Facilities Manager

The City and Borough of Wrangell is seeking candidates for the position of Construction and Facilities Manager. This position will remain open until filled.

The Construction and Facilities Manager position is responsible for performing complex professional field and administrative work in the investigation, inspection, maintenance and construction of projects related to public buildings and capital improvements for all Borough infrastructure. The position provides support to staff, stakeholders and the public to resolve problems and ensure successful project completion. The position supervises maintenance staff and acts as project manager providing professional and responsible liaison activities as a representative of the Borough's interests with businesses, other governmental agencies, contractors and individual citizens. The position assists in administering the Building Code Division.

The position will appeal to a candidate who has the proven ability to effectively manage and multi-task all facets of planning, pre-construction and construction for multiple jobsites and projects. Successful candidates will have experience that demonstrates working knowledge of building systems and field construction and who has strong writing and organizational skills and an aptitude for solving problems autonomously and efficiently.

This is a permanent salaried exempt position with all City and Borough benefits, paid at a Grade 24 monthly salary ranging from \$5,358.06 to \$6,760.52.

The full job description, qualifications/requirements, and job application can be obtained on the borough website at <https://www.wrangell.com/jobs>. Applicants are required to submit their cover letter, resume and application to City Hall, 205 Brueger Street (P.O. Box 531), Wrangell, AK 99929, or via email at rmarshall@wrangell.com.

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

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

Publish April 5 and 12, 2023

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL JOB ADVERTISEMENT Temporary Workers Harbor Department

The City and Borough of Wrangell will accept applications from which to hire Temporary Laborers for the Harbor Department. Employees will be selected from applications in the pool at the time employees are needed throughout the year. There are multiple immediate openings. You must have a valid Alaska Driver's License, or a valid out-of-state Driver's License with the ability to obtain an Alaska License within 6 months.

This position will require someone with experience in carpentry and the ability to work independently in a marine environment. Work may include but will not be limited to replacement of bull rails, fascia boards, decking, plumbing, pile hoops and concrete patching. Duties will also include painting, pressure washing, cutting brush and grass, and working in the boatyard and office. Boatyard duties will include carrying blocking, boat stands, and various types of cleanup. Must be able to lift and carry 50 pounds. Successful applicant must be able to work in all weather conditions and weekends.

Applications and job descriptions may be obtained and returned to Wrangell City Hall, 205 Brueger Street (PO Box 531), Wrangell, AK 99929 or via email to rmarshall@wrangell.com. Pay for this position starts at \$17.05 per hour DOE.

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

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

Publish March 29, April 5 and 12, 2023

Skateboard postage stamps deliver Indigenous art

By TERRY TANG
Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) - Years ago, skateboarding was branded as a hobby for rebels or stoners in city streets, schoolyards and back alleys. Those days are long gone.

Skateboarding, which has Native Hawaiian roots connected to surfing, no longer is on the fringes. It became an Olympic sport in 2020. There are numerous amateur and professional skateboarding competitions in the U.S. And on March 24, the U.S. Postal Service issued stamps that laud the sport — and what Indigenous groups have brought to the skating culture.

Di'Orr Greenwood, 27, an artist born and raised on the Navajo Nation in Arizona whose work is featured on the new stamps, said it's a long way from when she was a kid and people always kicked her out of certain spots just for skating.

"Now it's like being accepted on a global scale," Greenwood said. "There's so many skateboarders I know that are extremely proud of it."

The postal agency ceremoniously unveiled the "Art of the Skateboard" stamps in a Phoenix skate park as a skateboarding competition was going on nearby.

The stamps feature skateboard artists from around the country, including Greenwood and Crystal Worl, who is Tlingit Athabascan from Juneau. William James Taylor Jr., an artist from Virginia, and Federico "MasPaz" Frum, a Colombian-born muralist in Washington, D.C., round out the quartet of featured artists. Everyone but

Taylor was in attendance.

"Maybe I'll get a letter in the mail that someone sent me with my stamp on it," said Worl, 35. "I think that's when it will really hit home with the excitement of that."

The artists see the stamp as a small canvas, a functional art piece that will be seen across the U.S. and beyond.

Antonio Alcalá, USPS art director, led the search for artists to paint skate decks for the project. After settling on a final design, each artist received a skateboard from Alcalá to work on. He then photographed the maple skate decks and incorporated them into an illustration of a young person holding up a skateboard for display. The person is seen in muted colors to draw attention to the skate deck.

Alcalá used social media to seek out artists who, besides being talented, were knowledgeable about skateboarding culture. Worl was already on his radar because her brother, Rico, designed the Raven Story postage stamp in 2021, which honored a central figure in Indigenous stories along the coast in the Pacific Northwest.

The Worl siblings run an online shop called Trickster Company with fashions, home goods and other merchandise with Indigenous and modern twists. For her skate deck, Crystal Worl paid homage to her clan and her love of the water with a Sockeye salmon against a blue and indigo background.

She was careful about choosing what to highlight.

"There are certain designs, patterns and stories that belong to



AP PHOTO/DAMIAN DOVARGANES

Expert skateboarder Di'Orr Greenwood, an artist born and raised in the Navajo Nation in Arizona and whose work is featured on new U.S. stamps, rides her skateboard in the Venice Beach neighborhood in Los Angeles on March 20. The U.S. Postal Service has released four "Art of the Skateboard" stamps, including one by Juneau artist Crystal Worl.

certain clans and you have to have permission even as an Indigenous person to share certain stories or designs," Worl said.

The only times Navajo culture has been featured in stamps is with rugs or necklaces. Greenwood, who tried out for the U.S. Women's Olympic skateboarding team, knew immediately she wanted to incorporate her heritage in a modern way. Her nods to the Navajo culture include a turquoise inlay and a depiction of eagle feathers, which are used to give blessings.

"I was born and raised with my great-grandmother, who looked at a stamp kind of like how a young kid would look at an iPhone 13," Greenwood said. "She entrusted

every important news and every important document and everything to a stamp to send it and trust that it got there."

Skateboarding has become a staple across Indian Country. In Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs will reopen a refurbished skate park March 29 thanks to a partnership with pro skateboarder Tony Hawk's nonprofit, The Skatepark Project. Skateboarders on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation in eastern Arizona recently got funding from there, too. A skate park opened in August on the Hopi reservation. Youth-organized competitions take place on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

The four skateboards designed by the artists will eventually be transferred to the Smithsonian National Postal Museum, said Jonathan Castillo, USPS spokesperson.

The stamps, which will have a printing of 18 million, will be available at post offices and on the USPS website.

For the artists, being part of a project that feels low-tech in this age of social media is exciting. "It's like the physical thing is special because you go out of your way to go to the post office, buy the stamps and write something," Worl said.

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PUZZLE SOLUTION

Coalition gives up on lawsuit against dams on last Atlantic salmon rivers

By PATRICK WHITTLE
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — A coalition of environmental groups said April 3 it is withdrawing a lawsuit against a renewable energy giant that it has accused of jeopardizing the last remaining wild Atlantic salmon in the U.S.

The groups sued Brookfield Renewable, claiming the company kills salmon on the Kenne-

bec River with its dams. Atlantic salmon only return to a handful of U.S. rivers, all in Maine, and they are protected under the Endangered Species Act.

The conservationists were dealt a setback last month when the federal government ruled the salmon can coexist with hydroelectric dams on the Kennebec, as long as improvements are eventually made to allow salmon to pass through the

dams more easily.

The coalition said April 3 that the federal government's recent ruling in Brookfield's favor "undermined the premise of our lawsuit," and they had little choice but to withdraw it. The groups previously claimed Brookfield's dams violated the Endangered Species Act.

The conservation groups say they can still shut down the dams by focusing on upcoming federal relicensing applications by Brookfield Renewable.

"We can accept nothing less than a solution that will save Atlantic salmon from extinction and restore other sea-run fish that cannot reach their spawning habitat," the groups said in a statement.

The groups involved in the lawsuit were Atlantic Salmon Federation, Conservation Law Foundation, Maine Rivers and Natural Resources Council of Maine. Conservation groups have long advocated for removing dams from Maine rivers to aid salmon spawning.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has said it plans to oversee a monitoring program to make sure the Kennebec River dams allow more fish to pass through the dams.

The company is seeking to relicense one of its dams and amend the licenses for three others.

Wild Atlantic salmon populations in U.S. rivers have plummeted because of overfishing and habitat loss. The fish are grown in aquaculture farms off the coast of Maine and Washington state, though some of that fish farming has been curtailed due to concerns of disease and environmental degradation that could harm wild populations.

CITY MARKET INC

To our valued customers,
Due to the increase in cost, we can no longer offer unlimited free delivery to everyone. To still provide our delivery services, we will be implementing the following changes:

- All customers** who shop in-store and require a delivery, with purchases under \$75, will have a \$5 surcharge added at the time of checkout.
- All Call-in orders** will be charged a \$7.50 surcharge for orders under \$75. The charge will be applied to each delivery completed. If a customer calls to add to an existing order, if it has not been delivered, no additional charge will be applied.

***ALL ORDERS OVER \$75, REGARDLESS OF IN-STORE OR CALL-IN, WILL NOT BE CHARGED A DELIVERY FEE!**

- All seniors (65+)** will be exempt from any surcharge but will be limited to one call-in order per day.
- All deliveries to Housing** will be part of the last run made by our driver.
- These policies will take effect on **May 1, 2023**. During this time, we ask all seniors to double check with the front office by stopping by or calling, to verify you will not be required to pay the fee.
- The surcharge will not apply to **Business, School** or **fly-out** orders.

We thank you for your patronage with us, here, at City Market. Please feel free to speak to our store Director, Kristina Decker or Assistant Director, Matthew Strickland should you have any questions or concerns.

From all of us here at City Market, have a great day!
907-874-3333 Facebook@City Market, Inc.