



Wrangell, Alaska
April 30, 2020

WRANGELL SENTINEL

Volume 118, Number 18

Oldest Continuously Published Newspaper in Alaska

8 Pages

\$1.50

Local author releases new book, "Silty Water People"

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

Local writer Vivian Faith Prescott recently announced the publication of her newest book, *Silty Water People*. The book is a collection of some of her oldest poems, she said, and is a look at "the effects of assimilation" on Wrangell families and the community as a whole. The poems range from the serious, to the humorous, to the intimate. The ideas of identity and culture have always fascinated her, Prescott said. She holds a doctorate in cross cultural studies. *Silty Water People*, she said, is meant to be a reflection of life in Wrangell.

"Silty Water People is unique because it's intimate," Prescott wrote in an email to the Sentinel. "It's more autobiographical than some of my other work but at the same time I use mythology and magic realism so a reader should not assume the 'I' in a poem is the author because it's more complex than that. This collection has what are called 'persona' poems and uses various 'speakers.'"

Among the several works in this book, Prescott wanted to highlight one in particular. "The Basket that Holds Us"

was a special poem commissioned by the Alaska Native Sisterhood, for their 100 year anniversary in 2012. The poem was performed by Prescott's daughter Nikka Mork, she said, during the ANS' 100-year convention held in Wrangell. The work covers the beginnings of the ANS, and Prescott added that her poem has also been permanently archived with the organization.

The poems in *Silty Water People* have been in the works for about 10 years now, she said. Prescott began revising them in 2009 as part of her master's program at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She was writing about the complexities of raising multicultural children in Wrangell, and was also looking at Wrangell itself as a unique character.

"My whole thesis, the poems and the craft essay, is called 'In the Curve of my Hip: Forming Cultural Identity Among the Bitter Water People, Shtax'héen Kwáan,'" Prescott wrote. "I changed the book's title to Silty Water People, which is a different translation of the word Shtax'héen Kwáan."

With the publication of *Silty Water People*, Prescott is now

the author of eight books. She mentioned that another work, a chapbook of poems about the impacts of climate change, is due for publication this fall. She has also recently signed a contract for a non-fiction "foodoir," a combination of a cookbook and memoir, scheduled for publication in 2022. In other career news, Prescott received recognition from the Alaska Press Club this year, taking first place in culture reporting for her column "Planet Alaska: Encounters with a Giant Pacific octopus."

Silty Water People is available for purchase from Cirque Press via Amazon, though Prescott said it might take a while to receive the book with the current COVID-19 pandemic going on. Local stores will be carrying her book in the near future. Prescott added that she has some copies on hand for purchase, if anybody wants to reach out to her directly.

"I want to encourage Wrangellites to practice their art, to write, to draw, to photograph, build, paint, sew, to make videos, to act," Prescott wrote. "I've seen locals making humorous videos, posts on Facebook about taking up baking, trying to homeschool,



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIVIAN FAITH PRESCOTT

Vivian Faith Prescott holding a copy of her newest book, Silty Water People.

home exercise routines, attempting gardening, being an essential worker, caring for elders and more. These times have been trying and this virus isn't going away anytime in the near future. Someday I envision Wrangellites getting together at the Nolan Center to

process and share what we went through together, so be thinking about that. I envision songs, skits, photographs, carvings, whatever, on the subject of resilience and how Wrangellites dealt with the pandemic, both the good and the bad."

Uncertainties across industries as Wrangell economy works through pandemic

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

With Health Mandate 16, part of Governor Mike Dunleavy's plan to reopen Alaska's economy safely during the COVID-19 pandemic, communities

across the state are considering what the near future may look like. Revenues have fallen for the city and businesses have had to get creative to stay open. While there is optimism to be found amongst some business owners, uncer-

tainties loom for the economy in general.

Alan Cummings, of All In Charters and Grand View B&B, said that they are looking at a rough season. He did not have exact numbers, but estimated about 60 to 70 percent of their expected customers this year have cancelled. Some are still holding out for August, however. Cummings said that state guidelines for putting together hazard mitigation plans and getting them approved have been confusing and frustrating, as well. He also mentioned that he's done work in the oil field, but with recent falls in oil prices that industry is not looking optimistic, either. Despite all this, though, Cummings said he believes they will get through this rough season, and the entire country will come together stronger.

"It's going to be difficult, it's going to be a tough year," Cummings said. "But we'll get through it."

Becky Rooney, of Rooney's Roost Bed and Breakfast, said that she has not had very many cancellations so far, but attributes that to a lack of bookings over previous months. Her biggest booking time is in February and March, she said, but it has been a strange year and she has not gotten very many. She has rescheduled three bookings for next summer, she said, but this summer is looking to be fairly quiet. Rooney was optimistic, though, saying she was just going to take it one day at a time, and

spend this summer enjoying the local community and worry less about tourists.

"This summer will kind of be about being in Wrangell," she said.

Among some of the guidelines in Mandate 16, restaurants are now allowed to reopen for sit-in dining. However, this is not an option some restaurants in Wrangell are considering right now. Katherine George-Byrd, of Zak's Cafe, said that the mandate only allows restaurants to seat 25 percent of their maximum capacity at a time. In the case of their restaurant, that would only be six people at a time. It is not worth it to reopen for sit-in customers right now, she said. Zak's has not been doing as well as they normally do, she said, but they are doing alright with their current model of to-go only meals.

Josh Young, of J&W's, said that the first few weeks of the pandemic were challenging. He did not want to close, however, as he considers providing good food to the community an important service. He wanted to assure the public that he and his staff were doing everything they could to make sure their ingredients were safe, and that they were doing their part to protect the community. They're continuously sanitizing, he said, and they have been primarily taking orders over the phone. They switched to to-go only orders, Young added. He has checked in on his

Continued on page 8



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Springtime for Wrangell

The Wrangell log, out at City Park, got spruced up a bit over the weekend. Groundswell, the local flower shop, put together the floral arrangement for public enjoyment. Mya DeLong, of Groundswell, said on Facebook that the arrangement was made up of about five dozen roses and carnations, plus locally foraged greenery.

Economic recovery task force meets to discuss business needs, state mandates

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Reopen Wrangell Task Force, made up of several representatives across the community, met last Monday afternoon to discuss ways to assist Wrangell's economy through the COVID-19 pandemic. The task force recently sent out a survey to local businesses to see what their needs are. The survey became available Friday, April 24. Kate Thomas, with the Wrangell Parks and Recreation department, said they have received 27 responses. Two of them were test runs from city officials, she said, but the bulk of them came in on Friday and Monday. Many of the responses came from lodging and

overnight stay businesses, she said. They have also gotten responses from retail and "nonessential public facing" businesses. There were also a few responses from businesses regarding intrastate travel and personal care services.

"I will create a PDF copy of the responses and itemize them by the individual business responses, so you can get a pulse on where folks are at, specific to their realm," Thomas said. "Of those 27 or 25 businesses, 16 of those businesses closed due to COVID and 11 remained open with modified operations."

One thing that Thomas said was interesting from the survey, is that seven businesses plan to reopen in the near future, 11 do

not have such plans, and seven more businesses are tentatively planning to reopen soon. Some businesses are just not choosing to reopen, she said, and for whatever reasons they have are choosing to wait and see what happens in the near future.

"That's kind of the general sentiment of the tourism business, as well," added Caitlin Cardinell. "Things generally don't fire up until mid to late May anyways and, at least to speak for my operators they don't see a point for reopening now or within the next couple of months."

The task force also discussed the recent Health Mandate 16, the first phase of the state plan to reopen Alaska's economy. Jamie Roberts said that people can likely expect increasing amounts of time between different phases of the reopening plan, as the state reacts to how communities handle each previous phase of reopening. Some towns are not really planning to reopen, she also said. Roberts said that Juneau has asked their businesses to voluntarily stay closed for the short term, until the assembly decides what local restrictions they want to put in

place. It is kind of a wait and watch the numbers game, she said, to see when the next phases of reopening should begin.

"This is going to get really muddy," Roberts said. "We're not going to be able to see the true effects of a phase one opening if we're not opening."

During the meeting, the task force also discussed PPE needs for businesses, such as masks, gloves, and disinfectant, and also discussed businesses putting up signage encouraging customers to socially distance and wear face masks.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Thursday, April 30: Chris Booker, James McCloskey, Danika Smalley. **Friday, May 1:** Gavin Hamley, Jonna Kautz, Jeff Smith, Brad Fitzgerald, Lotus Booth, *Anniversary:* Austin & Diane O'Brien. **Saturday, May 2:** Colleen Hought, Dena McChargue, William Helgeson. **Sunday, May 3:** Lenora Moore, Heather Johnson, Brandon Kenfield, Lauren Taylor-Gillen, Steve Keller. **Monday, May 4:** Harley Anderson, Nonay Young, Phebe Garcia, Zachary Atkins, Dewyo Young. **Tuesday, May 5:** Yenell Cummings, James George. **Wednesday, May 6:** Kathy Appleman, Maylee Haggard, Kaylyn Easterly, Anita Paulsen, *Anniversary:* Mitch & Emilie Turner; Joshua & Dacie Gustafson. **Thursday, May 7:** John Byrd, Kelly Westerland, Halee Mathis, Andrea Wilborn, Kim Reading, Kayleigh Reading.

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

Senior Center Meals Menu Delivery Only

Thursday, April 30

Sloppy Joes, Texas Slaw, Potato Salad.

Friday, May 1

Chicken Adobo, Broccoli, Danish Salad, Rice.

Monday, May 4

Turkey, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Peas, Spinach Salad.

Tuesday, May 5

Stuffed Beef Roll, Brussel Sprouts, Apricot Salad, Rice.

Wednesday, May 6

Baked White Fish, Beets, Tossed Salad, Rice.

Thursday, May 7

Crispy Chicken, Steamed Spinach, Fruit Slaw, Potatoes.

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

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

FERRY

April & May Sailings CANCELLED

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



TIDES April 23-April 30

High Tides

Low Tides

| | AM | | PM | | AM | | PM | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| | Time | Ft | Time | Ft | Time | Ft | Time | Ft |
| April 30 | 06:02 | 13.5 | 07:58 | 12.2 | ... | ... | 12:53 | 1.5 |
| May 1 | 07:34 | 13.1 | 09:11 | 13.2 | 01:16 | 5.9 | 02:07 | 1.5 |
| May 2 | 09:04 | 13.6 | 10:09 | 14.7 | 02:43 | 5.1 | 03:19 | 1.2 |
| May 3 | 10:16 | 14.6 | 10:58 | 16.3 | 04:01 | 3.3 | 04:23 | 0.6 |
| May 4 | 11:17 | 15.8 | 11:43 | 17.8 | 05:03 | 1.2 | 05:18 | 0.0 |
| May 5 | ... | ... | 12:11 | 16.8 | 05:55 | -0.9 | 06:06 | -0.4 |
| May 6 | 00:26 | 18.9 | 01:02 | 17.3 | 06:42 | -2.6 | 06:50 | -0.3 |
| May 7 | 01:08 | 19.6 | 01:51 | 17.4 | 07:27 | -3.7 | 07:32 | 0.1 |

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

April 29, 1920

Daniel Baker, the affable young traveling representative of the Western Dry Goods company, was a pleasant caller at the Sentinel Office yesterday. Mr. Baker does not, of course, ever expect to sell the Sentinel any dry goods (regardless of how much we may need them,) but he has to come down Front street as far as Captain Jinks store anyway. Then after he has sold Jinks a bill of goods he comes across the street and lets the Sentinel force enjoy the sunshine of his smiling countenance. Baker is no pessimist, and we surely like him, but he is rather peculiar in his tastes. Yesterday he took a snapshot of Jinks, and then when he was over our way seemed to have forgotten that he had a kodak with him.

April 27, 1945

Boy scouts from Wrangell will leave in May for a camping trip to Annette Island, sponsored by the Ketchikan Scout troop for troops of Southeastern Alaska. The arrangements are being handled here by a committee of Elks, including F. G. Hanford, chairman, Dick Moore and Olaf Hansen. Camp Annette is situated on Annette Island Army base, but well separated from the present base. The camping period will be for ten days, May 26 to June 4. A meeting is to be held Monday night at the Fire Hall with the local committee and scouts attending to make plans for the trip. Parents interested in Scout work are cordially invited to attend.

April 30, 1970

You are anchored up for the evening in some secluded cove miles from Wrangell, or just trolling along the shoreline of an unnamed island without another boat or man in sight. Suddenly your solitude is broken by the buzzing of a motor. A light float plane swoops down, circles your boat, then disappears over the hill or down the channel. No, it's not some hotshot flyboy trying to be funny, it's just Chuck Traylor or one of his Stikine Air Service planes checking to see if you are okay as he goes by to a logging camp or on a charter flight. It gives you a secure feeling and makes life seem just a bit better.

April 27, 1995

Beta Sigma Phi in Wrangell and around the world gather Sunday to celebrate Founder's Day, a traditional celebration that will this year honor the 64th year of the largest women's social, service and cultural organization of the world. There are now 250,000 members active in chapters in 20 countries

throughout the world. Founder's Day celebration for this area will be Saturday at the Wrangell Elks Lodge. The anniversary will be observed by XiPhi chapter, which meets the first Saturday of each month. Some local Beta Sigma Phi projects include Teddy Bear program, Mother/Daughter Tea and Little League.

WHS/SMS School Lunches: General Guidelines



- Order your school lunch online as usual through the WPSD School Website at wpsd.us
- Orders are due online by 8:30 AM.

The following guidelines are for the pick up of lunches:

Mondays-City Market:

- Lunch pickup after 12:00 PM from the deli area
- Provide name to server

Tuesdays and Thursdays-I&W's

- Lunch pickup at high school main doors off Reid St. after 12:00 PM

Wednesdays and Fridays-Wrangell IGA

- Students may pick their lunches up after 12:00 PM from the deli area
- Students then proceed to the office to provide their name so they may mark your name off the list

Should you have difficulties in carrying out any of these directions please email kreeves@wpsd.us or mpowell@wpsd.us or call the appropriate number below.

SMS Office at 874-3393 or WHS Office at 874-3395

Students, please continue to monitor your school Gmail account and parents monitor your personal email accounts for pertinent information regarding school updates, academics and other school information.

Wrangell Weather

| Date | High | Low |
|---------|------|-----|
| Apr. 20 | 49 | 45 |
| Apr. 21 | 48 | 43 |
| Apr. 22 | 50 | 44 |
| Apr. 23 | 49 | 43 |
| Apr. 24 | 49 | 42 |
| Apr. 25 | 50 | 43 |
| Apr. 26 | 50 | 43 |
| Apr. 27 | 48 | 43 |

Daylight Hours

| Date | Sunrise | Sunset | Daylight |
|---------|---------|--------|----------|
| Apr. 30 | 5:06a | 8:25p | 15:19h |
| May. 1 | 5:04a | 8:27p | 15:23h |
| May. 2 | 5:02a | 8:29p | 15:27h |
| May. 3 | 5:00a | 8:31p | 15:31h |
| May. 4 | 4:57a | 8:33p | 15:36h |
| May. 5 | 4:55a | 8:35p | 15:40h |
| May. 6 | 4:53a | 8:37p | 15:44h |
| May. 7 | 4:51a | 8:39p | 15:48h |

School district working to keep kids fed through end of the school year

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

This has been a unique school year in Wrangell. With the COVID-19 pandemic, not only was the basketball season cut short, but districts across the state have closed their doors. The Wrangell School District is no different, having closed down the schools to protect staff and students from the virus. While the buildings are not in use currently, the district is still providing education remotely, through online classrooms. Not only that, but the district is working to make sure students are still

getting meals.

"We currently have 25 students requesting school lunches every day," Superintendent Lancaster wrote in an email to the Sentinel. "Information about the option for school lunch is put in the bulletin and sent out to parents every Monday."

Lancaster said that, to receive lunches for the week, parents need to sign up with the schools by 2 p.m. on Sunday. Their orders are submitted to local vendors, and are then picked up from said vendors around noon on the same day. For example, Lancaster

provided, J&W's makes lunches for the students, which the schools will add some healthy snacks to from their own food supplies. Megan Powell, with Wrangell High School, said that the district works with J&W's, City Market, and Wrangell IGA to supply meals.

"Staff picks up the lunches for all students," Lancaster wrote. "Middle and high school students pick up their lunches from 12 to 1 each day and all elementary lunches are delivered in our people mover by our paraprofessional staff."

There is a fee for the lunches

or it is the student's normal rate that they were approved for on a free and reduced lunch application from the beginning of the school year. Lancaster explained that the district's lunch program is not federally funded, so money for it comes out of their own general fund. The projected budget for this school year is

\$49,491, she said.

"Parents have to sign up by Sunday at 2 in order for their student to receive lunch for the week," Lancaster wrote. "If for some reason they did not get signed up for lunch then they can call and be added to the list. They will start receiving lunches the next day."

Police report

April 20

Parking Complaint.
Vehicle Fire.
Agency Assist: Hospital.
Welfare Check.

April 21

Violation of Condition of Release.
Summons Service.
Agency Assist: Ambulance.
Animal Complaint.
Agency Assist: Harbor Master.
Agency Assist: Fire Department.
Gunshot.
Noise Complaint.
Domestic Disturbance.

April 22

Noise Complaint.
Disturbance.
Hit & Run.

April 23

Subpoena Service.
Agency Assist: Fire Department.
Deer Poaching: Unfounded.

April 25

Theft.
Agency Assist: Hoonah P.D.
Agency Assist: Ambulance.
Subpoena Service.
Gun Shots.
Fire Alarm.

April 26

Theft.
Burning Complaint.
Agency Assist: Ambulance.

During this reporting period there were nine Agency Assist calls to the Airport including 2 on April 24.



Respond your way to the 2020 Census.

By April 1, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. You have three easy options to respond: online, by phone, or by mail.

For more information, visit:
2020CENSUS.GOV

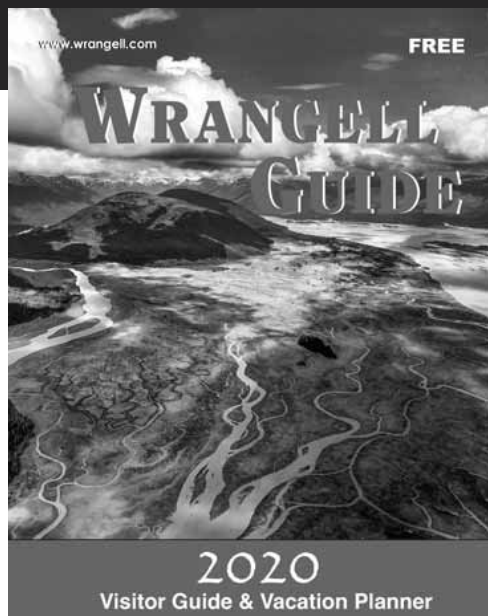
Shape
your future
START HERE >

United States*
Census
2020

The 2020 Visitor Guide is now available

for distribution to

- ferries,
- airlines,
- visitor centers &
- business locations in Wrangell and surrounding area.



Call to pick up your supply

P.O. Box 798 • Wrangell, AK 99929
874-2301 • wrgsent@gmail.com

WRANGELL SENTINEL

CITY MARKET & SENTRY HARDWARE

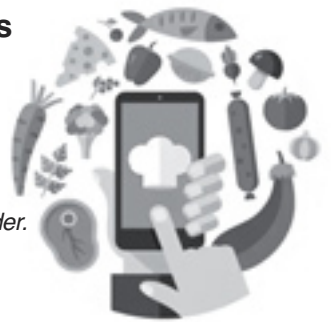
As we adjust to new realities, we are instituting the following changes effective immediately

We encourage customers to send us their orders

by email, fax or drop off orders in a box sitting at the front door. Please include your name, phone number, payment method and place to be delivered on your order.

E: cmarketaccounts@gci.net
Ph: 874-3333
Fax: 874-3296

We can call you when the order is ready and we will bring the order to your car to minimize social interaction.



Sentry Hardware Store New Hours:

Mon-Sat 10a-6p • Sun. 10a-3pm • Ph: 874-3336

Senior Shopping time: Tuesday & THURSDAY: 8A-10A

If you are not with a senior, we will take your order at the door & shop it for you and bring it out to your car.



Our regular ads have been suspended.

Once we receive information what has shipped, we will make an in-house ad to post on Facebook and have flyers on our check stands.

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

After again hearing that the economic health of our community is a second priority, I feel compelled to offer a few facts that we all live with and could live with for some time. As reopening occurs and business and fisheries get going they will be burdened with still more regulation, more forms, more signing that we will obey the rules. State and now probably increased local government regulation will be required.

As we go down this road here are a few local facts to consider. Our city manager reported last quarter sales tax revenue is down 50%, and this is an early quarter. The summer quarters are going to be impacted by probably much reduced fishery prices, an almost total loss of cruise ship tourism, a hamstrung charter and marine transportation fleet. Our workers, captains and crews will be required to spend more time tracking this disease. What this means is : The sales tax revenue for FY 2019 in Wrangell was \$2,600,000, at 7% tax, this

translates to \$37,000,000 in taxable sales occurring in Wrangell in a year, not including above cap revenue also lost. Working through it, that means being 50% down that our community businesses will lose \$18,500,000 in taxable sales this year, or if they were open 25 days per month the loss number would be \$61,666 per day. This simple computation shows we have and are facing very serious economic trouble if excessive restriction continues.

I do not see enough attention from our leadership concerning this looming economic disaster. Recently one of our leaders expressed that the city will be 'OK' because disaster funds are forthcoming from the state of Alaska, that is true. The disaster relief scheduled will be about a million more than normal sales tax revenue. I am glad that "THE CITY" will be OK. That they will meet payroll, insurance cost, fund retirements and most other expenses.

What concerns me is that no mention was made of the \$18.5+ million in revenue that will not flow

through and to the businesses and citizens of this town. We all need to make our living, our expenses, loan payments, mortgage and rent payments, pay our employees and provide for our families and households.

Although important, it's not just about making sure the city government survives. If our leadership has any advice on how we will be able to meet our obligations with a 50% reduction in revenue I would at least like them to share those with us. If they see it. With all respect to our volunteer leadership, government spending will not replace the private sector economy, I hope it never does. Pick up your heads, look down the road and deal with the whole problem, not only the safety and government survival but community health and overall well being also.

We have all been diligent and lucky, our citizens deserve much credit for this too. It's time to reopen as best we can let our citizens go back to work.

Mike Lockabey

To the Editor:

I don't often praise someone for doing a job they are paid for, however, these are certainly different days any of our generation have seen. I am writing to say "Thank you" to Ethel Lane, the manager of the Wrangell Senior Apartments as she has risen with the spirit of caring and sharing during our crisis. She has made the people at the Senior Apts. feel as connected and comfortable as possible in this hard time as well as coordinating with our charitable community members to donate face masks, treats, flowers and dinners. She also is working with the Senior Center to deliver lunches to the tenants to reduce exposure and has made every tenant a personal face mask. During hospital stays she works with hospital staff so tenants can get things from their apartments that are needed. I know Ethel is not the only hero in Wrangell right now but she is the Wrangell Senior Apartment's hero and on the behalf of the Wrangell Senior Board of Directors we say "Thank you."

Board President Bill Privett

Dan's Dispatch

By Representative Dan Ortiz

This past weekend, I hosted a Facebook Live event to catch up with District 36 while still social distancing. I was happy to see a lot of participation; there were great questions and comments! Thank you to everyone who listened in and offered insights.

I'd like to reiterate some of the bigger topics we touched during that forty-minute conversation. As the summer season begins, the visitor industry has been on the forefront of people's minds. Cruise ship stops will be down by over 50%, and most cruise ship schedules (which are subject to change) for large ships doesn't truly start until July while smaller ships are expected in late May or early June. Guidelines for charter fishing opera-

tors have been established too via state mandate. What's an update on the ferries? The Kennicott will return to Bellingham no earlier than June 25th. Prince Rupert facility upgrades are halted indefinitely because of our border travel restrictions. Increased ferry service is one of my top priorities, and although the Legislature passed an increased AMHS budget, Governor Dunleavy vetoed a large portion of those funds.

On a bright note, about \$5 million in federal emergency relief funds will go to our ferry system. Our fishing industry will also look a little different this year in light of the virus. Within the CARES Act, \$100 million in stimulus funding is designated for the Alaska Fisheries Industry. We want to get our fishing industry up and running as safely as possible.

Safety measures and precautions are being worked out through regional groups and state and local governments. State mandates change frequently, and the Governor and Dr. Zink publicly address them every evening at 5pm. I encourage you to follow the media coverage as much as you can, and you can also ask my office if you have any questions.

It is likely the Legislature will reconvene sometime in the next month to address COVID-19 Federal Funding distribution, which will affect many of the topics above. I will keep you updated as I know more. Hopefully we will have another Facebook Live conversation soon. And as always, you can reach me through email at Rep.Dan.Ortiz@AKLeg.gov or call my office at 907-247-4672.

Reflections

In the past few months, many of us, believers and non-believers, have asked the question, 'Where is God in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic?' When we are challenged with an individual, family, community, nation and or world situation that causes us to feel powerless, confused, afraid, sad, and/or angry, perhaps we need to look beyond the question, "Where is God in this?" At this point, many of us in the Christian community are reflecting on what Jesus might do in our current situation.

Jesus of Nazareth was born into a world of illness where the flu, a bad cold, an infected wound or an abscessed tooth could kill. The 'solution' for leprosy was social isolation and forced quarantine. Regardless, it is likely that Jesus would try to lead us to be hopeful and see this as an opportunity to be amazed, be grateful and be empathetic. We can all join in being

amazed, regardless of faith or spirituality, as we witness our health care workers, EMTs and hospital staff rising above fear, risking their lives to save an unknown brother or sister. Beyond amazing, is their willingness to go on day after day not only in the practice of care but also as they support the dying in place of family not able to be present. The commitment beyond self is huge. When New York put out a plea for health care workers from around the nation, 90,000 practitioners responded. There is hope in humanity.

We can be so thankful that our current coalition of state and local leaders, hired staff and volunteers have been tireless in threading their way through the unknown to develop policies and response plans to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and respond to active cases. All has not been perfect or convenient. However, who could expect a clear path in

building a response to a highly contagious, lethal disease of unknown origin and pathology. Our state and local leaders have been patient in the face of criticism, diligent in the face of scarcity and brave in the face of the unknown.

Once again, we are given hope in humanity. Finally, this pandemic has made us much more aware of the opportunity and given us the time to literally "practice" empathy and caring for others. In addition to helping others, researchers suggest this is a good way to fight our own very real and prevalent feelings of isolation and despair. Key are social distancing, wearing a mask in public and washing and wiping.

We can take action by checking on neighbors beyond family and your own social/spiritual circle, helping children with school work, supporting local businesses by buying a gift certificate to use at a later time, de-

vising ways to show gratitude to people whose job makes them vulnerable (grocery store employees, bank tellers, hospital staff, etc.), supporting the Salvation Army, Senior Center, St. Francis Animal Rescue and/or other stressed non-profit organizations and devis-

ing our own methods of showing gratitude and caring. Being a part of giving hope in humanity strengthens us as individuals, a community and a nation.

**Joan Sargent
Island of Faith Lutheran
Church Wrangell Ministerial
Association**



Katie Eddy
P-W Insurance
220 Front St., Wrangell, AK 99929
inquiry@p-wins.com

I can help you make sure your coverage is up-to-date. Call me today.
907-874-2359



Insurance subject to availability and qualifications. Allstate Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Allstate Fire and Casualty Insurance Company, Northbrook, Illinois © 2012 Allstate Insurance

Oldest continuously published paper in Alaska



ESTABLISHED NOVEMBER 20, 1902

Published Weekly By: Pilot Publishing, Inc.

207 North Nordic Dr. , PO Box 930 • Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Phone 907-772-9393 • Fax 907-772-4871

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

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The Wrangell Sentinel (USPS - 626480) is published every Thursday. Periodicals mail postage paid at Wrangell, Alaska 99929. Offices at 205 Front St., Wrangell, Alaska 99929; phone 907-874-2301; Fax 907-874-2303; email wrgsent@gmail.com; website: www.wrangellsentinel.com

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Subscription Rates

Single Copy.....\$1.50
Local.....\$46
Other Alaska.....\$62
2nd class/Lower 48 & HI.....\$70
First Class.....\$102

Rushmore answers census questions, encourages responses

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

April 1 was Census Day, but Carol Rushmore wanted to remind everyone that responses can still be turned in until the end of July. Rushmore, Wrangell's economic development director and head of the local census committee, wanted to clear up a few questions she had re-

ceived from the public regarding the census, and to encourage further turnout.

One of the most common questions she has heard about the census was about when people can expect to receive physical packets, she said. Rushmore explained that people were being hired to hand-deliver census packets in communities that do not have direct-to-home mailing. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, she said that this has been put on hold in Wrangell. She said that these physical packets will likely be delivered sometime in the future, but she currently does not know when. Rushmore also added that several local organizations were planning to hold open houses prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to help people fill

out the census, including the library, the Salvation Army, and the Wrangell Cooperative Association. This is something they will reconsider after the pandemic has hopefully passed later in the summer, she said.

While physical packets are not coming immediately, Rushmore said that people can still respond to the census online, at www.census.gov. Respondents do not need a special ID number to respond online, which would have been part of the packets, she said. Instead, people can put down their address online, or simply just describe where they live.

Another question about the census regards the head of household. For a home to be considered a "native household," Rushmore ex-

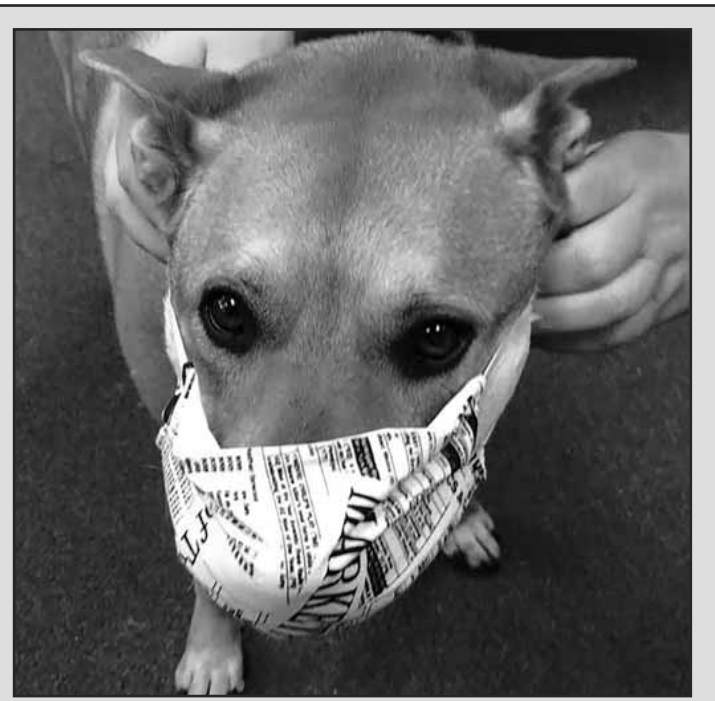


PHOTO BY TRISHA SCHWARTZ/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Face Mask

Office dog Sky tries on a face mask, with the help of Sentinel reporter Caleb Vierkant. Wearing face masks out in public is an important part of keeping the community safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Homemade face masks, like the one seen in the photo, do not guarantee protection from COVID-19, but can help prevent it being spread to others. Sky reports that while masks may be uncomfortable and inconvenient (it's very hard to play fetch with a mask on) they are still important for public health.

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plained, an adult Alaskan Native must be listed as the head of the household in the census. This is especially important in households with native and non-native family members, she said. Native households are important for the local tribe to have an accurate count of native residents, which in turn impacts the amount of money they can receive.

Aside from it being important for proper population counts and to determine how to allocate funding at a federal level, Rushmore added that it is important to respond to the census to win an informal contest between Southeast communities. Rain Coast Data has been tracking the amount of responses to the census across many Southeast towns, and providing weekly updates to the "Southeast Alaska Census Race." As of April 23, the Wrangell borough is in sixth place with a response rate of 14.1 percent. Petersburg is trailing behind in seventh place with a response rate of 13.9 percent. Wrangell has been ahead of Petersburg every week since the "race" started, Rushmore said, so more people need to respond to the census if they want to see this trend continue.

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Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH
Fisheries columnist

Alaska's COVID prevention guidelines; Fish Board brouhaha; Trolling lawsuit

Strict new rules are now in place for Alaska fishermen and their vessels to protect against and prevent the spread of COVID-19 during the 2020 salmon season.

Effective April 24, Governor Dunleavy provided 11 pages of mandates that specifically apply to those who have not "agreed to operate under a fleet-wide plan submitted by a company, association or entity" representing them.

Among other things, each independent skipper must sign a "Health Mandate Acknowledgement Form" prior to going fishing. They are required to maintain a written or time-stamped electronic log acknowledging that they will comply with the mandates, along with a clear description of which protective plan they are enforcing on their vessel. Skippers also must certify that crew members have been screened upon arrival and that they have completed self-quarantines.

Prior to accepting any fish or making any payment to a vessel, a tender or processor must receive a signed copy of the vessel's Acknowledgement Form. It only needs to be done once during the season, but all parties must retain a signed copy until the end of the year.

Crew members and captains flying to Bristol Bay and other Alaska regions will undergo verbal and physical screenings upon arrival. They must wear masks while traveling on commercial or chartered aircraft, at air terminals, and go directly to where they will quarantine for two weeks and have their temperatures checked twice a day.

Crew members are allowed to quarantine onboard a vessel and participate in fishing as long as they restrict contact with other boats and people on

shore as much as possible.

To protect communities, the mandates stipulate that crew can only leave the vessel for essential purposes.

If a fisherman becomes sick, they will be required to isolate themselves on the boat. If they are unable to do so, the entire vessel will be under isolation.

There are many other requirements which the state will re-evaluate by May 30.

Meanwhile, to further explain the mandates and answer questions, United Fishermen of Alaska is holding a free webinar on Wednesday, April 29 at 10am. Participants include Tom Koloski and Charles Pelton with Alaska Unified Command; Jason Wiard, environmental health officer with the Division of Environmental Conservation; and John Moller, Governor Dunleavy's commercial fisheries policy advisor.

Registration is required. See the new fishing rules and sign on for the free webinar at www.ufafish.org

Fish Board brouhaha - The board that oversees management of Alaska's subsistence, commercial, sport and personal use fisheries will include all but one inlanders if Governor Dunleavy has his way. Many Alaskans fear the surprising appointees may not be vetted by an absent legislature and the public will be left out of the process.

On April 1, Dunleavy made two appointments to the Board of Fisheries (BOF): Abe Williams, an Anchorage-based Bristol Bay fisherman and director of regional affairs for the Pebble Mine; and McKenzie Mitchell, a self-claimed hunting/fishing guide and small plane enthusiast from Fairbanks.

Others on the seven member board hail from those same communities, along with Wasilla, Willow and Eagle River. Only John Jensen of Petersburg represents a coastal region.

Katherine Carscallen, director of Fishermen for Bristol Bay said she thought naming Williams to the BOF was an April Fool's joke.

"Yes, he's a fisherman but he has been advocating on behalf of the Pebble Mine for a decade and to give him that platform while we know this mining company is pushing hard to get a permit and an investor in the coming year - it seems really inappropriate in my mind," she told KTUU.

Williams would replace Fritz Johnson of Dillingham. Carscallen's said her biggest concern is that the new appointees will begin participating in the BOF process this fall with no formal confirmation by Alaska legislators.

"Under a normal process it goes through a vigorous vetting process. The governor will forward names and the legislature will take public testimony and consider the appointment. Because of the COVID situation, the legislature has closed up shop and we're kind of skipping that step," Carscallen said.

The confirmations must take place before the legislature convenes in late January. A house bill (HB309) temporarily extends the time for them to meet and confirm appointments to state boards and commissions prior to the session. Plans are underway to reconvene in early May, potentially by videoconference, to approve plans for spending \$1.25 billion in federal aid but it's not known if confirmation hearings will be included.

Regardless, Representative Louise Stutes (R-Kodiak) is determined to make it happen.

"There's hope and intent on behalf of the legislature to have the committee hearings and allow the public to weigh in. It's imperative, especially when you look at the nominees on the fish board, public input is critical," she said, adding that she will convene a virtual meeting if necessary.

Stutes has been openly critical of what she perceives as an anti-commercial bias on the Fish Board that she claims is led by the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game commissioner.

"There needs to be a fair process and it appears to me clearly the Board of Fish is getting stacked. And I base that on my personal conversations and interactions with some of the board members," she said.

Stutes added she also is concerned about Alaska policy makers being stacked with Pebble Mine advocates.

"It's concerning to me that our commissioner of the Dept. of Environmental Conservation is an ex-Pebble guy (Jason Brune, former head of Pebble's public affairs and government relations), and now we've got a Board of Fish nominee that's a Pebble guy? I mean, come on," she said.

Williams, who was born in Naknek, was one of six fishermen who in 2019 sued the fishermen-funded Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association for using part of the 1% tax paid by its 1,650 members to oppose the Pebble Mine. The lawsuit, funded by Pebble, was dismissed by an Anchorage judge.

Little information is available for McKenzie Mitchell, who would replace Reed Moriskey of Fairbanks on the

BOF, and contact attempts were unsuccessful.

She is listed as adjunct faculty in "sport and recreation business" at the University of Alaska/Fairbanks School of Management. The Wilderness Beach Lodge on Kodiak Island says Mitchell "has fished with several remote lodges over the years and was looking to upgrade her captains license so joined our team. She goes to school in Fairbanks in the fall/winter where her and her boyfriend reside and enjoy flying their small planes into remote hunting/camping sites."

WA lawsuit targets trollers -

Nearly 1,600 trollers who fish for king salmon in Southeast Alaska could be beached this summer over a lawsuit to protect killer whales - in Puget Sound, Washington.

On April 16 the Wild Fish Conservancy filed an injunction against NOAA Fisheries to block the summer Chinook salmon season set to open July 1 until the lawsuit is resolved.

KCAW in Sitka reported the Conservancy claims NOAA has failed to allow enough king salmon to return to Puget Sound to feed endangered resident killer whales. Their lawsuit says that 97% of the kings caught in Southeast's troll fishery are from British Columbia, Washington and Oregon. Alaska data show catches range from 30-80 percent, depending on the year.

Amy Daugherty, director of the Alaska Trollers Association (ATA), said her group is in shock and has intervened in the lawsuit.

"Our fishery is the backbone of Southeast Alaska economically," she said. "We are 85% resident, small family busi-

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Baseball season coming soon, says little league president

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

It is springtime in Wrangell. Birds are returning for the warmer weather, fishing season is gearing up, and under normal circumstances little league season would be kicking off right about now. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, little league has been temporarily put on hold. There is no cause for concern though, according to Briana Schilling, as she promises Wrangell kids will get to play

baseball in the near future.

Schilling, Wrangell's little league president, said that little league organizations everywhere have been told to not open their seasons for the time being. Little League International, which according to their website operates over 6,500 programs worldwide, has put a suspension on all league activities until May 11. Schilling said that they are counting down the days until then, and are starting to put together plans for what this up-



SENTINEL ARCHIVE

Members of the Cubs, one of Wrangell's little league teams last season. League President Briana Schilling promised that Wrangell would have a baseball season this year, starting in the near future. Pictured here (left to right, top row): Dayne Pritchett, Della Churchill, Vanessa Johnson, Aubrey Wynne, Addy Andrews, Kody Barnes, Katelynn Gillen, Clara Waddington, Ian Maleski, Ben Houser, and Keaton Gadd.

Fish Factor

Continued from page 6

nesses. We have challenges, which are the markets in this day and age, but we have to fish, even under the reduced allowances of the last treaty agreement."

The lawsuit hits at a time when salmon fishermen are facing ruined markets from COVID-19 impacts. Wild Fish Conservancy spokesman Kurt Beardslee said that makes it a good time to call off fishing.

"If there were ever a time to do it, this may be the time also for fishermen. I know many of the processing plants are reducing their productivity. Some aren't even working because of covid. We have to change the cycle, and this year is as good as any, if not better," he said.

Beardslee added that the injunction doesn't mean Alaska trollers are solely to blame for the decline of the Puget Sound killer whales, whose numbers are now down to 72. Rather, he said it's an effort to force NOAA Fisheries to comply with the terms of the Endangered Species Act.

Daugherty pointed out that the lawsuit affects more than the commercial troll fleet.

"This legal matter is broader than just trolling," she said. "I believe that all salmon fishermen, and anyone who bycatches salmon, are at risk, including sport fishermen. They need to realize that this is a pretty broad net in the lawsuit itself."

Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang said the department is "exploring our options to intervene in the case."

coming season will look like.

There is no set-in-stone start date for this year's baseball season, she said, but it will be in the near future. Some people may be concerned about the health of players and coaches this season, with the pandemic, but Schilling said they are planning to put several precautions in place. Aside from following all state and local guidelines regarding social distancing, she said that they plan to set up hand washing stations out at the fields, and will be disinfecting all equip-

ment and the dugouts regularly. She also said that they will likely not run a concession stand this season. They normally purchase snacks from Costco to fill up the concession stand, but that has proved challenging with the virus. Schilling also said the community might be looking at a shorter season this spring, but this has not been determined for sure yet. It can be difficult to stretch a season into July, but she said they are still considering all their options for the upcoming season.

Last year's season saw about 60 kids participate, not counting the T-ball teams. Schilling said that parents can register their kids to play online at www.littleleague.org, on the Wrangell Little League Facebook page, or by contacting her directly at (907) 874-2855. With the late start and a potentially shorter than normal season, Schilling said that there are no fees this year.

"I hope that kids and parents are getting out there and throwing the ball around," she said.

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Industries

Continued from page 1

employees regularly to make sure they are all feeling healthy, as well. All in all, Young said he just wants to know he is doing everything he can to mitigate the risk of the virus spreading to Wrangell.

The restaurant also closed their small dine-in room, and Young said there are no plans to reopen it any time soon. In fact, he is considering making the closure permanent. He is thinking about the feasibility of turning J&W's into a to-go only restaurant moving forward, and possibly adding a drive through, but these plans are not set in stone.

One restaurant that is going back to sit-in dining is the Marine Bar. The bar, which also serves pizza, began letting customers back in this past weekend. Before then they were doing take-out orders, too.

"I just can't wait to get back to normal," said Patty Kautz, of the Marine Bar.

The fishing industry, and other industries tied to it, are also facing some uncertainties. Wrangell's Economic Development Director Rushmore pointed out that Trident Seafoods, one of Wrangell's two seafood processors, was already planning to stay closed this season due to low predictions for fish returns. That loss of workers and purchases will have an impact on the local economy, she said. There are

also questions of how strong fish returns will actually be this year, as well as how fishermen intend to stay healthy and resupply themselves with the pandemic going on.

Fisherman Mike Lockabey said that things are not looking good this season, from his perspective. New state mandates have added pages upon pages of guidelines commercial fishermen now have to follow to operate in Alaskan waters, he said, and that prices for various catches are not looking promising. Because of the pandemic, he gave as an example, there is a backlog of crab sitting in freezers waiting to be used, because restaurants and other customers do not have a need to buy them right now. This could have a negative effect on the Southeast Alaskan crab season. On top of that, processors will be incurring extra costs this season, which will bite into the revenues fishermen can expect.

"I'm looking at it being 35 to 50 percent down this year," Lockabey said.

Lockabey also added he was concerned about additional restrictions the city might try to put in place. Up until these most recent mandates, he said, cities could not pass local restrictions that exceeded what the state laid out. Now, however, local communities could be free to do that. He said that he worries the city will try to restrict the fishing industry to

the point it is practically shut down, and that it might happen in other fisheries across the state.

Rushmore said that the city is facing several uncertainties economically. The pandemic is going to have an impact on Wrangell's economy, but she said that it is too early to know what that impact is going to be.

"So much depends on the environment we find ourselves in, and which is changing daily," Rushmore wrote in an email to the Sentinel. "There already has been and will be a loss in revenue stream not only to the City, but also to the businesses which then multiplies through the community. From Job loss, loss in individual spending and sales to businesses, loss in sales tax revenue, loss in the revenue to businesses from visitors, loss in the Transient Tax (bed tax) used for visitor marketing - the trickle down effect is enormous."

Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga went into a little more detail on the revenues the city expects to be impacted. Wrangell sees about \$2.8 million in sales taxes annually, she said, and the city could see a 50 percent drop in that area. The city also sees about \$60,000 from the transient bed tax. A decrease is likely but Von Barga said she was not sure how much. The city is also expecting a 50 to 75 percent decrease

in CPV funds, normally about \$50,000 a year from the tax on cruise ship passengers. Von Barga also added that city-run facilities like the Nolan Center and the Parks and Rec Department are going to see significant decreases in revenue due to being closed during the pandemic. The Nolan Center usually brings in about \$250,000 a year, and parks and rec brings in about \$700,000 a year.

"Originally it was reported to Alaska municipalities that funding from the cares act would be available for use to replace lost revenue, like sales tax," Von Barga wrote in an email. "That is not the case. It may not be used for lost revenue replacement. We are waiting for guidance from OMB on what the money can be used for under the heading of COVID-19 response."

Rushmore pointed out that the visitor industry could potentially see some big impacts from COVID-19. Before the pandemic, this year was lining up to be very strong for tourism, both from cruise ships and air travel. She said that several questions remain unanswered, that will determine how major the impacts will be, such as will people feel safe enough to travel, and can travel even resume in June or July? Rushmore added that the convention and visitor bureau was recommending budgeting for a 35 percent drop in tran-

sient tax revenue this year.

"I don't know how that will actually come out in the budget as they are still working on that," Rushmore said.

Von Barga said that she believes Wrangell is faring a bit better than other communities in Southeast Alaska, economically speaking, as Wrangell does not rely on the cruise industry as heavily as others. As the borough is in the middle of its budget season, she added that they are reviewing every position that opens up to decide if it is necessary to fill, and that budget cuts are being made wherever possible.

"We delayed the Borough's budget work sessions because of COVID-19," Von Barga wrote. "We will begin those meetings with the Assembly soon and priorities will be discussed. However, it is a concerning time for municipalities in Alaska. We are facing significant shortfalls in revenue due to COVID-19. The Governor vetoed school bond debt reimbursement and funding that would have made annual community assistance revenue sharing fully funded. Those are significant hits to our local budget. Additionally, the State is in an unprecedented budget situation with a barrel of oil valued in the negative. This likely means more cuts to come in future years. We will need to be very cautious about spending now and in the near future at least."



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