

Boat yard picking up, picking out centenarian vessel



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

Levi Dow, Steve Thomassen Sr. and Tanner Thomassen get ready to undertake some annual upkeep on the *Baltic*, a fishing vessel first launched in 1917. The senior Thomassen has been fishing on it for about half its life in the water.

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

The sounds of a couple dozen projects can be heard coming from Wrangell's Marine Service Center, as commercial fishermen, pleasure boaters and other mariners finish work ahead of the busy summer season.

Activity at the yard has heightened over the past six weeks, harbor master Greg Meissner reported, following a steady but comparatively slower winter. The uptick is normal, however, with a little fewer than half of the boats lifted at the yard through the year moved during this final fiscal quarter.

"We're about 12 boats up from where we were last year," he said. The 2016 fiscal year had ended with 285 boats lifted, and Meissner hopes to hit the 300 mark before the year ends in July.

One of the noticeable shifts over the year has been an increase in larger vessels, made possible with the addition of a new, 300 tonne lift in 2014. Moving the larger vessels can take more time – several smaller fishing vessels can be moved in a similar timeframe to some of the heftier tugs – leading to lower overall figures and revenues for the city-managed yard. But that is balanced out by business to the yard's contractors, which usually see significantly larger scale jobs as a result.

"We're happy to see that," said Meissner. "Getting big ones on the ground is a good thing."

On Monday one of the oldest boats lifted by the yard was put on chocks. The 52-foot fishing boat *Baltic* was first launched in 1917. Owner Steve Thomassen Sr. has been at its helm for about half of its century on the water.

The original owner had it constructed for \$6,500, or about \$135,000 today when accounting for inflation. "They paid for it the first year," Thomassen said.

Following civil use during the Second World War, Thomassen explained his grandfather purchased the boat. "When he died he willed it to all of us boys – there were four of us boys – and our mom and dad," he recalled. Eventually he bought out his brothers' interest in the vessel, paying \$35,000 for *Baltic*.

"There used to be four of us that worked on here," pursuing crab, cod and various other fisheries. With a pair of hands on hand now, Thomassen gets about five or six days a year with it now, for halibut fishing.

Maintaining a century-old vessel is no inexpensive feat, and *Baltic* is kept in the solid condition it is after hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of investment over the years. Thomassen said expertise and facilities also deserve much of the credit.

When he first bought the boat, he would sometimes do repairs himself on the grid. "Once I just about lost it on the grid," he recalled. "She shifted on me and fell away from

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Senior projects giving back to community in different ways

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Senior students at Wrangell High School presented their end-of-year projects for parents, faculty and other passersby last week at the school gym.

Twenty-four members of this year's graduating class worked on a variety of assignments to meet their core requirements. School activities director Bill Bradley explained the projects are self-driven, and encourage students to give back to the community as best they can. Projects are at least 25 hours each, which can be difficult to arrange when fitting them in with other priorities.

"With their busy schedule, getting something in like this is difficult, so it makes it that much more valuable," he said. "It's a long process for the kids. They have to start this early."

This year's class covered a good assortment of projects. Bradley mentioned Sam Prysunka's project, for instance, which could potentially save lives.

The student applied for grant funding through the Stikine Sportsmen to acquire a radio repeater, which he assembled and will install upriver before the summer. Prysunka explained the device will improve radio connectivity for the fire department and emergency services from the hot tubs down, and will double as an

"This is a program that has been engrained in the community a long time, and this is a great program. Each one of these kids, the majority of them came up with their own ideas. This is a way for kids to show what they can give back to the community."

-Bill Bradley
School activities director

emergency radio on site.

The repeater will be named after Mike Hay, a supporter of the project who passed away last month. He had given Prysunka permission to install the device up at his cabin. "I'm sad that he couldn't make it to see the repeater go up, but I'm glad he was able to know it was being dedicated in his honor," Prysunka said.



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

Wrangell seniors Sam Armstrong, Garrett Miller and Dawson Miller display part of their graduation project, one of the three benches they fabricated for the future mariners memorial overlooking Heritage Harbor.

Prysunka got help understanding and assembling the device from Chief Tim Bunn of WVFD, who had also provided guidance on the project.

Bradley explained the senior projects were a good way for students to connect like that with local residents and profes-

sionals, getting some first-hand experience in the life of the community as well.

"This is a program that has been engrained in the community a long time, and this is a great program," he said.

Continued on page 12

Birthdays & Anniversaries



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

May 18: Mena Feudner, Jacob Cox, Toby McCandless. **May 19:** Laven Ritchie, Michelle Peterson, Rhea Bowman, Sheila Wickman, Jacob Werner, Kolin Wallace. **Anniversary:** Michael and Patricia Morgan, Jeff and Danielle Smith. **May 20:** Christina Taylor, Jerry Bakeberg, Dawn Davis, Bill Bushnell, Aiela Kuzma, Ray Francois. **Anniversary:** Gene and Maggie Fennimore, Frank and Vivian Grossardt. **May 21:** Trevor Kagee. **Anniversary:** Don and Betsy McConachie. **May 22:** Dante Nesbitt, Angie Mork, Charley Young, Jim Abbott. **Anniversary:** Nate and Alicia Stearns, Warren and Chloe Edgley. **May 23:** Nicole Hammer, Lori Baremore, Teri Moody, Dennis Pavlina, Mia Wiederspohn. **May 24:** Jana Barlow, Yvonne Reeve, Bucky BJORGE, Caity Galla, Lillian Smith, Brandon Ellsworth, Jordan Glass. **Anniversary:** Lorne and Stephanie Cook. **May 25:** Scott Thomas, Chelsea Schoonover, Guy Young, Richard Crockett. **Anniversary:** Jake and Alesha Jabusch. *If you would like to add a birthday or anniversary at no charge please call the Sentinel at 874-2301.*

Senior Center Menu

Thursday, May 18:

Sweet and Sour Chicken with rice, carrots, broccoli and cauliflower toss.

Friday, May 19:

Summer Garden soup and half a tuna salad sandwich, cottage cheese and tomato salad.

Monday, May 22:

Half a grilled cheese sandwich and chicken noodle soup, peach salad.

Tuesday, May 23:

Hamburger on bun, lettuce, tomato, cantaloupe slice, oven fries, peach salad.

Wednesday, May 24:

Turkey with noodles, mixed vegetables, cabbage, pear, raisin salad.

Thursday, May 25:

Beef Stroganoff, noodles, green beans, cabbage slaw.

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

Milk, tea and coffee will be served with meals.

FERRY SCHEDULE

Departures

Northbound

Saturday, May 20:

Matanuska, 9:30 am

Tuesday, May 23:

Matanuska, 6:30 pm

Saturday, May 27:

Matanuska, 10:30 am

Sunday, May 28:

Malaspina, 4:00 pm

Tuesday, May 30:

Matanuska, 6:30 pm

Southbound

Thursday, May 18:

Matanuska, 11:30 pm

Sunday, May 21:

Malaspina, 4:45 pm

Monday, May 22:

Matanuska, 5:30 am

Wednesday, May 24:

Malaspina, 5:45 am

Friday, May 26:

Matanuska, 1:45 am

Arrival times may vary. Call 874-2021 for verification or call 874-3711 for recorded information.



TIDES TABLE May 18 - May 25

High Tides				Low Tides			
AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
May 18:	6:08 12.7	7:42 12.7	0:05 5.6	12:40 2.0			
May 19:	7:29 12.3	8:46 13.5	1:16 5.5	1:43 2.3			
May 20:	8:51 12.6	9:41 14.6	2:31 4.6	2:48 2.2			
May 21:	10:00 13.4	10:29 15.9	3:40 3.2	3:50 1.9			
May 22:	10:59 14.4	11:15 17.2	4:40 1.3	4:47 1.4			
May 23:	11:53 15.5	11:59 18.4	5:32 -0.6	5:38 1.0			
May 24:	12:44 16.3	6:20 -2.4	6:25 0.7			
May 25:	0:43 19.3	1:33 16.8	7:06 -3.6	7:10 0.7			

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

Thursday, May 18

Story Time: 10 a.m. Public Library. Join us for stories, crafts and snacks.

SAIL Class: 10 a.m. Senior Apartments Atrium. Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) free class is a strength, balance and fitness class for adults 65+. For more info call 874-3375.

Healthy Eating Demo on Healthy Food Preparation: 11:30 a.m. Senior Apartments Atrium. Free class. Learn how easy it is to prepare healthy and delicious food. Samples will be available. For more info call 874-3375.

Yoga: 5:30 p.m. AICS Medical Clinic. Yoga for everybody, please come and join.

Sunday, May 21

Gospel Meeting: Gospel Meeting with Lucas and Don in the Nolan Center classroom. 6:00 p.m.

Singspiration: hosted by St. Rose Catholic Church at 6:30 p.m. Great music, followed by fellowship and refreshments. Everyone welcome.

Monday, May 22

Yoga: 5:30 p.m. AICS Medical Clinic. Yoga for everybody, please come and join.

Meet the Author "West of the North" 6-8 pm at the Irene Ingle Public Library

Tuesday, May 23

SAIL Class: 10 a.m. Senior Apartments Atrium. Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) free class is a strength, balance and fitness class for adults.

Wednesday, May 24

Pioneers of Alaska Women's Igloo #15: 6:00 pm, Last Meeting of the Summer.

Gospel Meeting: Gospel meeting with Lucas and Don at the Nolan Center Classroom. 7:00p.m

Continuing Events

Is the attendance at your meeting or event low? Call Adrienne at the Sentinel to have it placed here.

PARKS & REC ACTIVITIES: Lap Swim: M, W, F 6:00-7:30 a.m. & 5:00-6:00 p.m., M-F 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., S 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; **Arthritis Foundation Exercise Class:** at the Pool: M, W, F, 9:00-10:00 a.m.; **Water Aerobics:** M, W, F 10:00-11:00 a.m.; **Family Swim:** F 6:00-7:00 p.m.; **General Swim:** M & W 6:00-7:00 p.m., F 7:00-8:00 p.m., S 1:00-2:00 p.m.; **Weight Room:** M-TH 6:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 3:30-7:30 p.m., F 6:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 3:30-8:30 p.m., S 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. **Extra 2 Lane Lap Swim:** M-W-F 10:00-11:00 a.m.

OTHER MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES/EVENTS:

AA Meetings: Tu. 7 p.m., Toss Off Th. 7 p.m., Smoked Fish F 8 p.m., Step Study Sat. 7 p.m. at the Episcopal gChurch Parish Hall, Study Materials provided. Wed. M & M 12 p.m. at the Catholic Parish Hall, use back entrance.

NA Meeting: Wednesday, We Do Recover, 8 p.m. at the Episcopal Church Parish Hall.

Bridge Social: F, 1 p.m. at th Island of Faith Lutheran Church 874-3440, 874-3507.

Salvation Army Food Bank: Tuesday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. For information or questions please call Major Michael Bates at 874-3753.

The Way We Were

In the Sentinel 100, 75, 50 and 25 years ago.

May 31, 1917: The Memorial Day observance in Wrangell yesterday far surpassed that of any previous year. The people themselves were surprised at the success of the observance. The parade formed in front of the Redman's hall and marched to the dock where the school children strewed flowers on the water in honor of the sailors dead, after which taps were sounded. The procession then marched to the rink where Memorial services were held. The attendance was good, there being between four and five hundred persons present.

May 29, 1942: Ten Wrangell high school seniors have tucked away their diplomas, admired their graduation gifts and the last bell has rung and only Custodian Dar Smith stands lonely sentinel at the school grounds this week. In other words, school is out and teachers and students turn to thoughts of summer. Supt. George Fabricius probably will stay home and do a little fishing. Miss Harriett Caldwell left this week to attend Columbia University in New York. Miss Genevieve Maybery left to return to her home in Milton, Freewater, Oregon, where she will work on the local paper.

May 19, 1967: Andy Mather, pioneer Wrangellite, is putting the finishing touches on the famous Bear Totems that were formerly on Front Street in front of the former Bear Totem Curio Store. The totems were moved to the present site at the Wrangell Museum after the 1952 fire. The new approach to the building that the Wrangell

Women's Civic Club and Library Association Inc. has leased and is being renovated to its original lines, and will house the Museum and Tourist Information Center in addition to the library and mortuary.

May 28, 1992: On communities that are dependant on their highways, holiday weekends are especially busy times and there is generally a lot more police activity on the roads, including spot safety inspections. Just because Wrangell's main thoroughfare is the Pacific Ocean is no reason why things shouldn't be the same here. At least that may have been what some thought when they saw

the Coast Guard boat CG 41326 patrolling Zimovia Strait over the Memorial Day weekend. Promoting boating safety during the King Salmon Derby was one of the key reasons for the Coast Guard's recent appearance. But Bosun Mate Chief Joseph Isenhour, explained that the primary reason for the visit was to draw attention to Wrangell's Coast Guard Auxiliary. He explained that Wrangell's closest contact with the Coast Guard is the patrol boat out of Petersburg, which is not always in the area. Therefore, the local Coast Guard auxiliary has become very important to the community.



Wrangell Weather

Date	High	Low
May 9:	57	44
May 10:	59	44
May 11:	58	43
May 12:	69	27
May 13:	74	32
May 14:	74	33
May 15:	78	34



Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Daylight
May 18:	4:32am	8:58pm	16:26h
May 19:	4:30am	9:00pm	16:30h
May 20:	4:28am	9:01pm	16:33h
May 21:	4:26am	9:03pm	16:37h
May 22:	4:25am	9:05pm	16:40h
May 23:	4:23am	9:07pm	16:44h
May 24:	4:22am	9:08pm	16:46h
May 25:	4:20am	9:10pm	16:50h

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City capital requests top \$1.4M

By **DAN RUDY**
Sentinel writer

Wrangell's Assembly mulled over a sizable list of capital priorities for the coming fiscal year Monday.

There were 103 items on the list, which finance director Lee Burgess ranked from critical to moderate necessity.

He recommended 20 of these requests be funded, 13 coming from the city's General Fund in the amount of \$594,000. Topping the list was an addressable fire alarm replacement for the Public Safety Building, as well as new heating system piping, roof repair and considerable siding repair. Together these four items would amount to \$335,000.

Another four of these recommended items deal with the public pool, which also involves roof repair due to its similarity to the PSB, as well as replacement pool lighting, a new hot water tank, and pneumatic controls. These amount to \$160,500.

The remaining appropriations Burgess recommended from the General Fund were \$60,000 for a new mechanic's service truck, 10 sets of turnout gear for Wrangell Volunteer Fire Department and scuba harness replacements.

The request was only a fraction of the items departments requested from the fund, which in all totaled \$4.9M. Grant assistance could be applied to some items,

such as with the fire alarm system, which could bring the total amount drawn from the General Fund to around \$450,000, which would surprisingly still see a surplus from last year.

"We ended the 2016 fiscal year with a pretty significant General Fund surplus," Burgess explained.

Several capital items budgeted for the year failed to come to pass, most significantly an appropriation for courthouse renovations where bids were rejected for being too high. So even with the added allocation from the fund, Burgess projected it would still pencil out with a surplus.

Seven other items on the capital request list would come from departmental enterprise funds. For example, \$170,000 was requested for electrical utilities, to complete the Church Street and Cow Alley rebuilds. (see Utilities story)

Ongoing sewer line and pump station repair projects would see another \$200,000 pulled from that fund, as would another \$200,000 requested for replacement of the sanitation department's excavator. The excavator – which enables the movement of garbage collected at the city's waste transfer facility – was one of only two items given "critical" priority. The other was replacement of the roughing filter at the water treatment facility, for which \$180,000 was requested. In all, \$810,000 was requested from enterprise funds.

A full draft budget for the coming year, which starts July 1, should be available to review within the next week or so, Burgess told the Assembly. Some things to expect will be a slight increase in revenue sharing from the state, from \$379,000 to \$408,000. Depending on survey results, Wrangell could requalify for Community Development Block Grant Funding of up to

\$850,000 per year. Public employees' health premium costs also dropped by close to eight percent, thanks to higher employee wellness program participation.

There will be some unknowns to consider with the coming year as well, with Wrangell Police Department potentially looking at new recruitment, following turnover of two officers in recent years and possible leave of another. While those positions could be looked at for cuts, Burgess advised Assembly members to consider scheduling and patrol commitments that would be affected, as well as the cost of overtime and on-call pay.

WVFD also needs to replace two, and possibly three of its pumper trucks. One in particular was built in 1984, and Chief Tim Bunnus recommended its replacement. The cost of a new vehicle though would be daunting, at about \$300,000. A fund has been recently set aside to begin saving for one, but Burgess informed Assembly members no direction

has been given yet to start diverting monies toward it.

Also in a grim situation, the city cemetery needs to be expanded. Clerk Kim Lane explained there are only about 20 plots left, and one spot on the columbarium's memorial wall.

"I think it's crucial that we look at a cemetery expansion," she commented.

The sooner the better – she explained grounds prepared for such use need to be allowed to settle for some time before burials can commence. A request for \$50,000 to plan and design a layout for an expansion was made, but not recommended by the finance department.

Other departmental expenses will be looked at in greater depth once a budget is drafted, with a workshop scheduled ahead of the May 30 meeting at 6 p.m. In addition to already looking at various rate adjustments, Burgess recommended the Assembly consider undertaking a wage and benefits study across the board.

Police report

Monday, May 8

- Civil Issue.
- Courtesy Transport.

Tuesday, May 9

- Vacation check requested.
- Agency Assist: NOAA seized salmon delivered to Senior Center.
- Unlock Vehicle.
- Report of Harassment.

Wednesday, May 10

- MVA: Officer responded to accident.
- Trespass: Warning given.
- Traffic Stop: Verbal warning for driving habits.

Thursday, May 11

- MVA: 911 Officer responded to car in ditch.
- Controlled Burn: Caller having controlled burn at their residence.
- Citation issued to Kathaleen Blackburn, 44, for speeding.

Friday, May 12

- Unsecured premises.
- Drug Paraphernalia found and brought in.
- Traffic Stop: Verbal Warning for registration.

Saturday, May 13

- Civil Issue.
- Agency Assist: Call care alarm.

Sunday, May 14

- Nothing to Report.

There were four ambulance calls this week.

Correction

In last week's issue, it was mistakenly conveyed that Charley Seddon's queen booth would sell breakfast every morning during the competition. Baked goods may be sold most Sundays.



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Elementary school principal heading north

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

The school district has begun advertising for a new principal at Evergreen Elementary School, after its board accepted the resignation of current principal Deidre Jensen on Monday.

Once the school year ends, Jensen said she will be heading north this summer with her husband, Joel.

"We're heading to Deering, Alaska," she explained. There, Jensen will be a principal and special education instructor for the Northwest Arctic School District. Two of the Jensens' children have already graduated,

while arrangements are being made for a third to remain and finish up.

After receiving her administrative degree at the University of Alaska Southeast, Jensen took on the Wrangell position in January 2014, coming from the Prince of Wales School District where she was a teacher.

During her time here, she feels she has seen positive progress among Evergreen's students. In particular, behaviors have improved as a climate of cooperation was fostered through different means. For example, assembly sessions for them held every Friday helped focus students and

set affirmative goals for the week. "Teaching kids what you want to accomplish," Jensen explained. "I think that has had a huge impact overall."

The change was noticeable among staff and faculty too, she said, resulting in a more collegial climate.

"There's been some really good things, and some really challenging things," Jensen said of her time here. "And challenging isn't always bad."

She admitted the move had not been her first choice, and that she had hoped to stay on in Wrangell. A renewed contract had not been put forward by the district, though

after the April 24 meeting School Board president Georgianna Buhler explained she was not at liberty to discuss the decision, citing policy on discussing personnel matters.

Several members of the public had voiced concern over Jensen's departure, both at last month's meeting and during Monday's. In addition to the loss of a well-liked administrator, concerns were expressed about faculty turnover and enrollment trends, according to several people attending that meeting.

Looking forward, Jensen said she will miss the district, and in particular her students.

"That's the hardest part, the kids, when I think about leaving," she said Monday. For the future, Jensen said she intends to take additional university courses in order to get her superintendent endorsement, possibly later this year.

In its job announcement, the school district intends for a new principal to commence duties by July 1.

Wrangell resident brings home 14 shooting awards

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

A Wrangell competitive shooter bested his own performance last year at the 26th annual Western National Shoot from February 28 to March 6.

At the 2016 event, resident Don Roher took five different awards – a personal best – but this time around very nearly trebled that performance.

"It was truly an amazing year," he commented afterward.

Hosted by the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility outside of Phoenix, Arizona, the competition is touted as one of the world's largest for muzzle-loaded shooting. The site itself is the largest public operated shooting center in the country, at around 1,650 acres. It draws shootists from all over, competing in several different skill categories. His third time competing at that level, Roher noted this year that it was the weather posing the greatest challenges throughout the tournament.

"It just rained horribly. None of us could shoot," he said of the first day. The following day was a little better, raining a bit but with high winds.

"We may as well go shoot,"

Roher recalled saying. "All of us are going to be shooting in the same wind."

Participants come down as teams representing their state. The team Alaska sent out this year was nearly double the size of last year's, with seven shooters participating. They assisted each other during the competition, helping each other to load and clear the occasional jams during timed competition.

Despite the weather, their teamwork and individual skills paid off. At the awards banquet, Roher said it was a red-letter year for the team. "Alaska really cleaned house."

"It was one award after another, it was just incredible," he continued. "After the third or fourth award, the secretary who's handing the awards to the national president whispered something to him, and then he says, 'Don, you may as well move your chair right up here next to me.'"

Fifty-five medals were picked up by the group in all, with Pat Reed of Wasilla earning 18. Roher

won 14 awards himself, using six different pistols. As with last year, at least one of his weapons was acquired for the occasion, in this case an 1851 Colt Navy revolver, "which was a little bit lighter than the 1860" model, he noted.

A comprehensive list of placements and categories will be available in the upcoming June issue of the NMLRA newsletter.

Roher was accompanied by his wife, Bonnie. The couple developed their interest in black-powder firearms after picking up a pair of such rifles in 1978. Compared to other weaponry, Roher found himself drawn to the loading and firing processes, the history behind them and the shooting community.

The weather at this year's competition was not without its benefits, making friends of the competitors. "The rain kept us all pinned into a small group, so that helped as well," Roher said. In the process he made a few new friendships over the weeklong competition.

Roher is also continuing work

on a book about black powder revolvers. Containing about eight chapters at the moment, the book will outline some of the different models of historical firearms, how to safely load and fire them, and some key points to maintaining and repairing the weapons.

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Sunday School 9:45 a.m. 874-2244

St. Rose of Lima, Catholic Church
Sunday Masses 11:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
Enrichment in Faith- All are welcome, 10:00 a.m.
874-3771 or 305-0654

St. Philip's Episcopal Church
Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m., Church School 10:00 a.m.
874-3047 or 874-4480

First Presbyterian
Worship Service 11 a.m., 874-3534

The Salvation Army
Sunday Worship, 11 a.m., Sunday School 10 a.m.,
874-3753

Island of Faith Lutheran Church-ELCA
Worship Service 9:30 a.m. followed by fellowship,
Faith Walking Saturday 10 a.m., 874-2743

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Priesthood Relief Society & Primary at noon.;
Sunday School 11 a.m.; Sacrament 10 a.m.,
874-3976 or 3778

Wrangell Community Church of God
Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Worship, 11 a.m.; 874-3964

Bible Baptist Church
Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.;
Sunday Worship, 11 a.m. & 6 p.m., 874-2069

Wrangell Seventh-day Adventist Church
Saturday Worship, 11 a.m.;
Young People & Adult Study, 9:30 a.m., 874-3039

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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 Monday at 5 PM for Thursday publication.

Letters are run on a space available basis.

P.O. Box 798 205 Front Street,
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PHONE: 874-2301 FAX: 874-2303
EMAIL: wrgsent@gmail.com



POSTED FUEL PRICES

WRANGELL

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Petersburg Motors: \$3.55

Unleaded gas prices posted
Tuesday, May 16

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WML&P power pole replacement work continues

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

The next step in a five-year utility improvement process is wrapping up on Church Street.

Work on Church Street's power infrastructure is about one-third of the way through, Wrangell Municipal Light and Power superintendent Clay Hammer reported. "It's the tough third," Hammer added, serving the library and post office, as well as feeding much of the residences up the hill from them.

Over the weekend the city collaborated with telecoms provider GCI to reroute the last of its cables on the street underground. The weighty cables have built up on power poles over the years, contributing to overburdening. City staff excavated the sections ahead of time, allowing for the private company to make a quick reinstallation.

"They knocked it out in a couple of hours," Hammer said of the GCI crew.

The old pole in the center of the sidewalk near Rooney's Roost will also be removed, allowing freer access on the pavement. Asphalt and concrete work was expected to be done there shortly, bringing the first phase of Church Street improvements to an end.

"We can finally close the door on that section," said Hammer.

Initially work was intended to continue along the street as far as radio station KSTK, but a review of the infrastructure along Cow Alley showed that was in "poor enough" condition to bump up in priority. Some pole replacements and reconfigurations are already prepared along the route, and temporary fiberglass arms are bearing some of the alley's load.

Hammer expects that project to be complete by the end of July, though the department will have to work around a smaller crew. Vacations and pauses for monthly meter readings saps on

staff during the summers, typically.

Another thing to consider is increased summertime demand as seafood processors ramp up production at their plants. Hammer explained his department tries to schedule around that time, which with wintertime demands means it has only a couple of windows really in which to work each year. That doesn't mean crews have to wait idle, however.

"We can do a lot of the prep work ahead of it," he said.

Work replacing the poles on the latest section of Church Street began last fall, and is one of the fixes prescribed in a five-year plan prepared for the city by Electric Power Systems in 2015. The report found most of the borough's utility poles have reached or surpassed their life expectancy and recommended phased replacement. Half are more than 40 years old, with an additional 30 percent of poles over 30 years old.

A plan acting on this assessment put forward by WMLP was approved by the Borough Assembly in March last year.

"Currently it is going very, very well," said Hammer.

Costs estimated by the assessment were in the millions of dollars, with sectioned phasing meant to make projects more fiscally manageable. Hammer noted that actual implementation of some of the fixes has brought down some costs significantly.

Identified as another need by the plan, over the summer work replacing the H-structure connecting Wrangell's grid with Southeast Alaska Power Agency's transmission lines was completed, with costs to replace the unit obtained from SEAPA.

Future projects will include finishing Church Street's pole replacement, resiting poles along Case Avenue, then updating the infrastructure from the Zimovia Highway substation to

2017 King Salmon Derby Ladder (after fish weighed in: 5-15-17)				
	Name:	Weight:	Location:	Date:
1.	Randy Easterly	35.7	Babbler	5-15-17
2.	Jim Holder	27.4	Mill Creek	5-13-17
3.	Mike Ottesen	23.9	Babbler	5-13-17
4.	Chris McMurren	23.2	Babbler	5-13-17
5.	Monte Lingbloom	23.1	Sunrise	5-14-17
6.	Bonnie Ritchie	22.6	Babbler	5-15-17
7.	Hank Voltz	21.8	Mud Bay	5-13-17
8.	Stephanie McIntyre	21.4	Babbler	5-13-17
9.	Chad Ritchie	20.2	Babbler	5-15-17
10.	Celcee Churchill	19.1	Babbler	5-13-17

And they're off!

Jim Holder holds up the 27.4 pound king salmon he caught near Mill Creek on Saturday, the biggest fish weighed in during the 2017 King Salmon Derby's opener. A 35.7 pound specimen caught by Randy Easterly on Monday was the new leader on the ladder, but there are plenty more fish waiting to be caught over the next month.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Bennett Street.

Most expensive, at the end of the list of infrastructural priorities by 2022 is additional generation capacity. The EPS study anticipated an additional 2.5 to 3.5 megawatts of backup generation capacity will be needed to support demand, due to increases in energy usage since 2005.

"There's been growing winter load of late," Hammer explained.

Colder than any over the past five years, the latest winter was a good indicator for the depart-

ment of what seasonable loads can look like. Wrangell's power generation could still keep up with that demand, he said, in large part because of significant transitions back to diesel heat by the high school and Nolan Center.

"We just don't have a lot of wiggle room there," Hammer observed.

A new generator wouldn't come cheap; a 3 MW standby generator could cost between \$2.2 million and \$2.7 million, though comparable diesel gen-

erators do occasionally show up on the market for considerably less.

As the project continues, Hammer expressed his appreciation for residents' patience. A number of planned outages have been undertaken during the course of the work, which at times can be inconvenient. Looking ahead though, he pointed out the project will hopefully prevent unplanned outages, which can be longer lasting and even less convenient.



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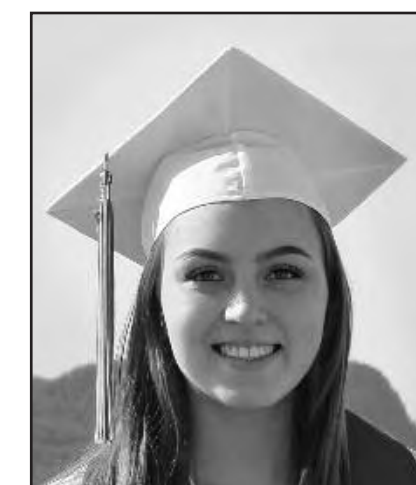
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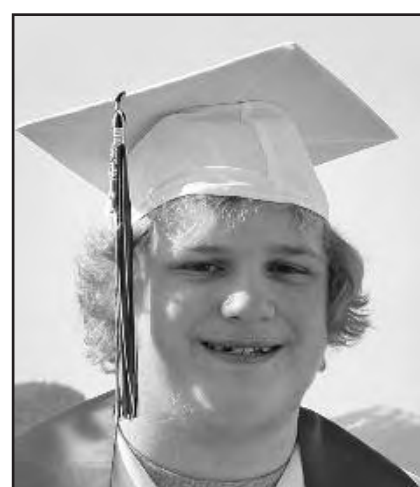
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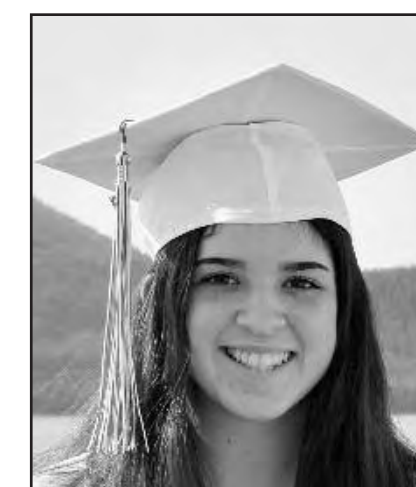
DORA VOLTZ



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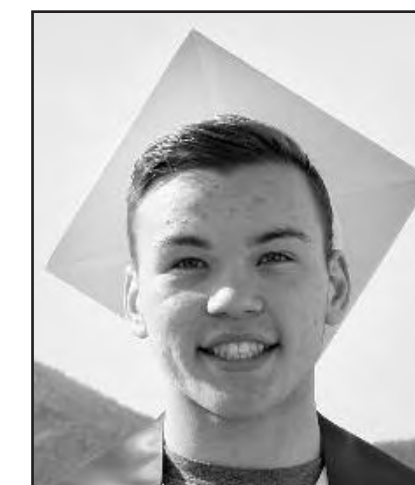
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Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH
Fisheries columnist

Alaska's seafood output increased slightly and dollar values held steady

The U.S. seafood industry's contribution to the nation's economy sank a bit, while Alaska's output increased slightly and dollar values held steady.

An eagerly anticipated annual report released last week by NOAA Fisheries measures the economic impacts of U.S. commercial and recreational fisheries. It highlights values, jobs, and sales for 2015, along with a 10 year snapshot of comparisons. A second report provides the status of U.S. fish stocks for 2016.

The Fisheries Economics Report shows that including imports, U.S. commercial fishing and the seafood industry generated \$144 billion in sales in 2015, a six percent decline from the previous year, and supported 1.2 million jobs, a 15 percent decline.

"However, it's important to consider these figures are still above the five-year average. In fact, 2015 represents the second highest level during that period," Alan Risenhoover, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs said at a May 9 press teleconference.

For Alaska, commercial fishermen in 2015 landed more than 6 billion pounds of fish and shellfish, a six percent increase from 2014, while the value of the catch held steady at nearly \$1.7 billion.

Fishing and processing in Alaska generated \$4.4 billion in sales in 2015 and 53,400 jobs, of which 38,000 were fishermen.

Other highlights:

Pollock accounted for 54 percent of the total Alaska harvest volume.

Alaska crab values totaled \$284 million, the highest level since 1999. Halibut received the highest dock price at \$4.85 per pound in 2015; herring fetched the lowest price, averaging just one penny a pound.

Alaska pollock (\$509 million), salmon (\$413 million), and crab (\$284 million) dominated landings revenue.

Recreational fishing in Alaska put 5,407 people to work and salt water anglers spent about \$470 million for fishing trips and equipment. A total of 309,000 anglers fished in Alaska in 2015, an eight percent increase, and spent approximately 975,000 days on the water, a two percent increase from the previous year.

Halibut (691,000 fish), coho salmon (578,000 fish), and various rockfish (475,000 fish) were the most frequently caught fish by Alaska anglers.

Stock status - Fishery managers continued to notch successes in protecting and rebuilding the 474 fish stocks they oversee. According to the Status of U.S. Fisheries report for 2016, over 90 percent are not subject to *overfishing*, which is defined as catch rates being too high.

For Alaska, blue king crab at the Pribilof Islands is the only stock listed as *overfished*, meaning a population is too low, whether because of fishing or other causes, such as environmental changes.

When asked how the role of climate change is affecting NOAA's healthy resource projections, Risenhoover said that warming waters and off kilter ocean chemistry can affect fish stocks in a number of ways.

"It may change the abundance, the how and where they reproduce and how successful they are at reproducing. It also changes where they live," he explained. "We see some stocks perhaps moving north to colder waters or offshore for deeper, cooler waters. The management councils and the agency are trying to plan ahead on how to best manage those stocks as they move, and also increasing the science associated with our stock assessments."

Tanner retakes - Surveys in June could set the stage for fishermen to once again drop pots for Tanner crab at Prince William Sound.

Earlier this year the state Board of Fisheries okayed a

new harvest strategy that sets crab abundance thresholds for opening a fishery, based on estimates that will come from trawl surveys next month.

Up to 14 million pounds of bairdi Tanners were produced at Prince William Sound in the early 1970s. Then, as with other parts of the Central Gulf, the numbers steadily dwindled. No fishery has occurred in the Sound since 1995. More recently, while crab numbers continue to appear low, a good pulse of recruits has shown up in surveys and subsistence pots.

Should a Tanner fishery occur, the shell size of the legal male "keepers" has been reduced from 5.3 inches to 5 inches.

"We have a terminal molt condition situation in both Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound where male crabs are not reaching legal harvest size. They reach a maximum size and stop growing," said Jan Rumble, groundfish and shellfish manager at Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game in Homer.

Rumble cautioned that the summer survey to determine the fate of the Tanner crab fishery could be tanked depending on the outcome of the state budget.

Similarly, reopening the Tanner crab fishery in the Bering Sea is the focus of a special May meeting where the Fish Board, managers and uni-

versity biologists also will focus on the harvest rules.

The fishery produced the Bering Sea's biggest crab catch in 2015 at 20 million pounds, but was abruptly closed last year when surveys showed low numbers of females. Bairdi Tanner crab, the larger cousin of snow crab, is the only fishery that uses a female-only indicator for stock abundance. The closure caused a loss of \$50 million to the crabbers, and pulled the plug on expanding purchases by Joe's Crab Shack and Red Lobster.

The crab fleets believe lots of Tanners are out there based on their pot pulls, but that the crabs are just not showing up in the surveys.

"It's a challenge when you have a fishery like this where the survey is done with a trawl and it's a pot fishery. It's difficult to know what the female population is because the gear is rigged to select for larger male crab on the bottom," said Tyson Fick, director of the trade group Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers. "We want to think about alternatives to a single open/close threshold, like the on and off switch where it went from almost 20 million pounds to zero."

It's important to update and verify the best available science, Fick said, adding, "We really value and appreciate the opportunity to discuss this."

The crab meeting is set

for May 17-18 at the Anchorage Sheraton.

Seafood delivered - Local catches of halibut and spot shrimp are new additions to the Catch of the Season program, along with salmon jerky bites by the Hoonah Tribe's Dear North Salmon Company.

It's part of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council's ongoing and expanding "Caught for Alaskans by Alaskans" campaign that delivers boxes of fresh/frozen seafood to customers in Anchorage, Homer, Fairbanks, and most recently, Seward. "It lets buyers know that their dollars are supporting community-based fishermen, and they learn the who, what, where, when, and why of that specific seafood. And all profits go back into marine conservation efforts," said David Fleming, AMCC seafood sales manager in Anchorage.

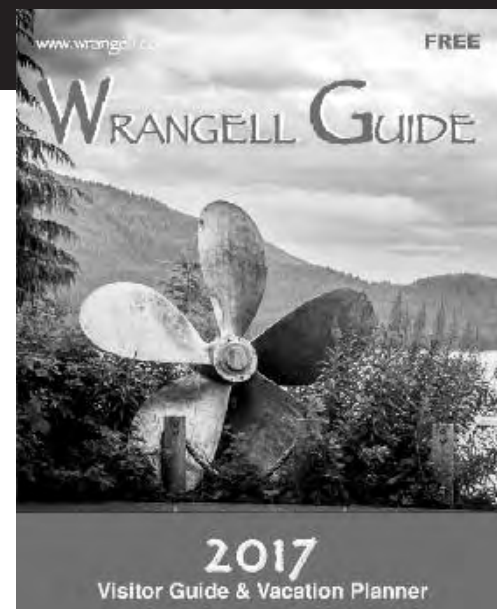
Find poundages, pricing, pick-up locations and ordering info at seafood@akmarine.org. Deadline to order is May 19.

Top fish job - Chris Oliver, longtime executive director of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has accepted the top job of Assistant Administrator of National Marine Fisheries Service. Oliver received unprecedented support from across the nation. His tentative start date is June 19 after the appointment is approved by the White House

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Wrangell Tribe hires new tourism coordinator

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Wrangell Cooperative Association has created a new position for tourism development, hiring Rachel Moreno for the job.

The move is one intended to better coordinate the Tribe's participation in the visitor industry, a growing segment of the economy regionally despite declines in other sectors. According to state labor statistics, tourism accounted for nine percent of all employment earnings in Southeast for 2015. The sector made up about 17 percent of all jobs, and is currently the fastest-growing. About 500 average annual jobs were added last year, and a total of 1,500 have been added since 2010.

Starting with a general call to artists at the WCA Cultural Center next week, Moreno has a busy schedule ahead of her.

"I'll oversee the dance show at Chief Shakes House," she explained, "and get the gift shop at the Cultural Center operating, work with artists to keep consignment art coming into that gift shop, work with the cruise lines and their representatives to book groups of

visitors into the dance shows, and just supervise the tourism staff."

Moreno has been a board vice president and regional representative for the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association. She has worked five seasons as a tour operator for Sitka Tribal Tours, was on the Sitka Tribal Council for eight years, and has served on the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium board for four years in all. She has also worked in a number of capacities as an art retailer, business owner and shop manager, and is the cultural activities coordinator for Mt. Edgecumbe High School.

Returning to Wrangell, Moreno has family ties to the island, and her great-grandparents Chester and Annie Worthington lived here. "This is part of my dream to help the Wrangell Tribe. I have very fond memories of being a little girl here, and those memories involve Shakes Island," she recounted. "I'm starting to come back to what I remember Wrangell to be. I love Wrangell."

She explained the community has a number of promising opportunities in the tourism

sector.

"Wrangell has a different kind of cruise ship population than Sitka," for one. "I think it's a huge benefit. The smaller ships typically have passengers who, yes they pay more money for those cruises, but they get experiences that are not run of the mill, typical, kind of commercial. With Wrangell you get Wrangell."

This opens up possibilities for different, more authentic experiences. Extended stay visitors and small group travelers in particular increasingly seek out more meaningful trips.

"The visitor can have any number of cuisines on their ship, but it's not the same. They want to know what we eat, how we eat it, how we cook it, how we caught it," she said. "It's changing. They don't just want a coffee cup and t-shirt to say 'oh yeah, I've been there, done that.' They want to go home with someone's name, where they met them, what they were able to learn from them, and what they can share about the culture."

What Moreno would like to organize is an experience that provides some of that, something that people can take at

least half a day or more to partake in. This can include workshops such as drum or paddle making, which present opportunities for sharing Tlingit and Haida culture as well as instruction in the art itself. Besides more than simply economic benefits, she explained a more robust tourism sector benefits the Tribe in other, more enduring ways.

"Visitors always ask me 'what is your tribe doing to revitalize your culture and language?' Believe it or not, it's through tourism. When we can take school children, bring them to dance practice, they learn the songs, they learn the dances, and they learn to make regalia – that's a big part of our identity and culture. And that gets perpetuated through tourism."

The call to artists will be from 6 to 8 p.m. on May 25. Light refreshments will be served, and Moreno explained the session will be "to talk about marketing, production of goods, how to price their products, and the importance of keeping a steady supply coming to the gift shop."

Tribal tourism is not a new concept in itself, but it can be

new to individual communities. Retailing and the demands of maintaining a business can also be challenging for artists.

"A lot of times they don't have anywhere to display their work," she said. "They'll make it, but marketing it themselves and displaying it is hard to do, especially in a small town."

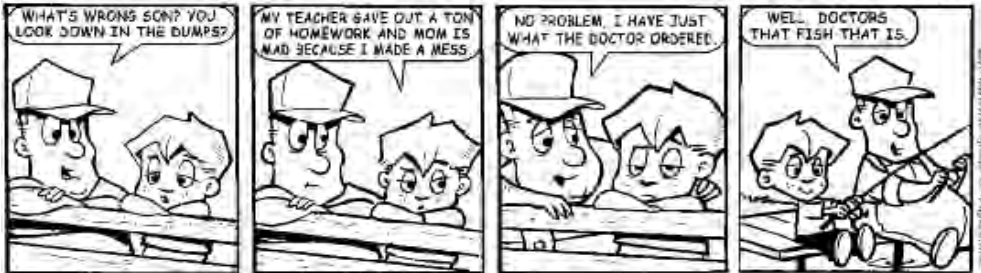
When the carving facility was first built in 2014, a gift shop showcasing local Native artworks was to be opened at its front end. The storefront has remained dormant in the years since, but Moreno intends to have it ready for business for the coming tour season.

"I hope to have the gift shop open in a month and stocked with locally made artwork. We're going to have to also sell hoodies and coffee cups and highly consumable items just to keep cash flowing. But I have faith that we'll be able to draw in a lot of local artists who want to commit to the gift shop, and have their work displayed," she said.

Additionally, Moreno wants to improve visitors' experience navigating town. She would like to improve signage for starters, and already has an artist working on some new wooden signage.

Comics

Amber Waves



R.F.D.



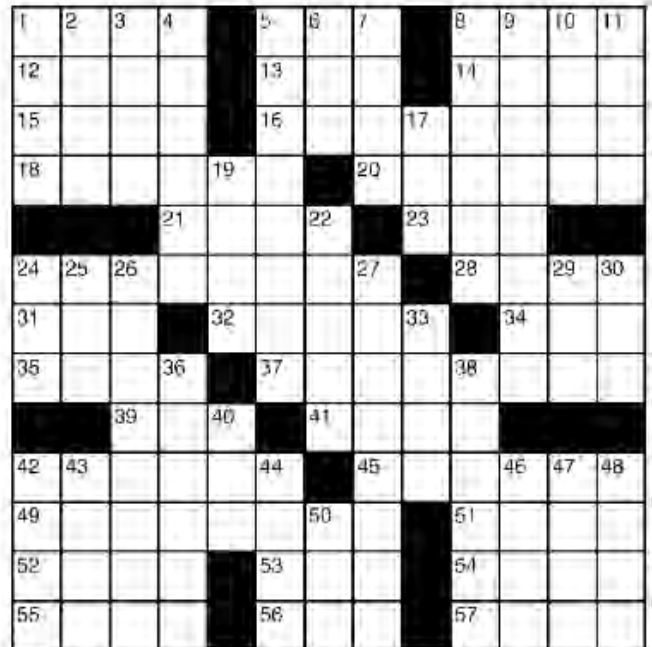
Just Like Cats & Dogs



King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Listen to
- 5 Aries symbol
- 8 Clenched hand
- 12 Part of the foot
- 13 Clean air org.
- 14 Division word
- 15 Stead
- 16 One walking proudly
- 18 Mathematician famed for his "last theorem"
- 20 Lacking vigor
- 21 Pesky kid
- 23 "— Town"
- 24 Criminal in tent?
- 28 Jump
- 31 Huge star
- 32 Mideast nation
- 34 Hot tub
- 35 Candle string
- 37 Go everywhere, as spilled liquid
- 39 Mouth part
- 41 Droplet of sorrow
- 42 Sun-dried brick structures
- 45 Beast
- 49 Furry Pacific denizen
- 51 Corpse



- 52 Sorts
- 53 Nightfall, in verse
- 54 Lotion additive
- 55 Carp or cod
- 56 "— Doubtfire"
- 57 Not as much
- 8 Irregular
- 9 Account extra
- 10 Don't delete
- 11 Ripped
- 17 Venusian vessel?
- 19 Bohemian
- 22 Dangle a car rot
- 24 Away from NNE
- 25 On the — vive
- 26 Removes the cover
- 27 Brushes up on
- 29 Gorilla
- 30 Standard
- 33 Indian flat bread
- 36 Put the — on (stop)
- 38 Clan-related
- 40 Household pooch, e.g.
- 42 "Yeah, right!"
- 43 Sandwich shop
- 44 Goblet feature
- 46 Double agent
- 47 Commotions
- 48 Caustic solutions
- 50 Always, to a bard

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row, across, each column down and each small 3x3 box contain all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Puzzle answers on page 10

ANSEP receives \$3M science foundation grant

The National Science Foundation announced this week the Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program (ANSEP) will be receiving a \$3,000,000 research grant through the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation program. Receiving \$600,000 a year over the next five years, ANSEP will use the funding to conduct research aimed at better understanding the barriers to broadening participation in the STEM workforce. The grant will also fund a programmatic expansion across all three University of Alaska campuses. The goal is to increase the number of students who earn a baccalaureate degree in a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) field and become part of a related workforce.

ANSEP is part of the University of Alaska system. Its aim is to effect systemic change in the hiring patterns of Alaska Natives in science, technology, engineering and mathematics career fields by placing its stu-

dents on a path to leadership. The program plans to place one ANSEP STEM Teacher in every Alaska village by 2025. ANSEP's success in creating change in hiring patterns is evident at its own university, where ANSEP alumni and co-investigators for the NSF grant application, Michele Yatchmeneff and Matt Calhoun, became the first tenure-track Alaska Native engineering professors in University of Alaska's history.

"In Alaska, we are up against an enormous challenge when it comes to transitioning students from high school into college, but ANSEP has found a way to do that, even for students coming to the university from rural villages," said Yatchmeneff, who grew up in False Pass and King Cove.

From Middle School Academy, the first component in ANSEP's longitudinal model, all the way through the doctorate level, ANSEP has more than 2,000 students in its pipeline. These students hail from more than 100 communities across

Alaska, including everywhere from the smallest villages to the state's largest city of Anchorage.

"ANSEP has proven that when the right people have access to the right resources,

Alaska Native students can break down barriers and become valuable leaders in our workforce," said Calhoun, who still works closely with ANSEP and mentors students in addition to being a professor at

University of Alaska Anchorage College of Engineering.

To learn more about ANSEP and how it is effecting positive change in Alaska's education system and workforce, visit www.ANSEP.net.

Third ambulatory air service comes to SE Alaska

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) – A third air ambulance will be servicing a southeastern Alaska community.

Juneau patients got a third option for their medical evacuation needs in early May, the Juneau Empire reported (<http://bit.ly/2qjDGUS>). LifeMed Alaska joins Airlift Northwest and Guardian as an air ambulance service in the area, a frequent stop for tourists.

LifeMed Alaska has two Lear jets based in Juneau that can carry two patients each. Their medical team is experienced in pediatric, obstetric and neonatal care as well as adult care.

LifeMed Alaska is the preferred provider for Aetna and Premera.

The nonprofit was formed in 2008 after a merger between two corporations owned by Providence Health and Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp. LifeMed Alaska has other bases in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Bethel, Palmer, Soldotna and Dutch Harbor.

As a nonprofit, LifeMed Alaska will offer yearly membership at \$49, said company director of clinical services Ted Galbraith.

"We have a mandate to transport all Alaskans," he said. "We don't have to make a profit, we're owned by a nonprofit."

Galbraith said the company also has a charity care plan for those without a membership or a health care plan.

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Request for Proposals

Wrangell Cooperative Association Transportation (WCAT), a federally recognized tribe, is soliciting proposals and rate information from experienced professionals to provide services for the architectural design of the renovation of a recently-purchased duplex into office space. The firm will also provide an associated cost to construct estimate for the architectural design, with line items, including labor, equipment and materials. For more information and to request a copy of the RFP, please contact Bill Willard at 104 Lynch St. C-1, Wrangell AK 99929, call (907) 874-3077, or email wwillard@wca-t.com and esthera@wca-t.com. Office hours: 8 a.m.- 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please leave a message if calling after hours. Deadline: 5:00 p.m. (AKST), Tuesday, May 30, 2017.

Publish: May 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2017

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA, FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT WRANGELL; In the Matter of the Estate of Clifford Orlando White; Case No. 1WR-17-09 PR. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that DIANE E. LIGHTNER has been appointed personal representative of the above-named estate. All persons having claims against the deceased are required to present their claims within four months after the date of the first publication of this notice or the claims will be forever barred. Claims must either be presented to Diane Lightner P.O. Box 861, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, or filed with the Clerk of Court, Box 869, Wrangell, Alaska 99929-0869.

Publish: May 18, 25 and June 1, 2017

WRANGELL MUNICIPAL LIGHT AND POWER NOTICE

Wrangell Municipal Light and Power would like to remind everyone that an electrical permit is required before doing any electrical work within the City and Borough of Wrangell.

Wrangell Municipal Code 15.12.040 states that no electrical equipment shall be installed within or on any building, structure or premise, public or privately owned, nor shall any alteration or addition be made in any such existing facilities without first securing a permit from the office of the electrical superintendent.

WML&P would also like to remind everyone that per Alaska Statute all wiring must be done by a licensed contractor working under a valid administrator's license. Minor exceptions are allowed for persons working on their own residence provided that residence is owned by and the primary occupancy of the person doing the work and no commercial enterprise is being conducted on the premise.

Anyone having questions is encouraged to contact Wrangell Municipal Light and Power at 907-874-3602.

Publish: May 18, 2017

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Erin Samuel Rausch Van Houten has been appointed Personal Representative of the Estate of Pamela Fay Van Houten. All persons having claims against the deceased are required to present their claims within four months after the date of the first publication of this Notice or said claims will be forever barred. Claims must be either presented to the personal representative, c/o Law Office of Lisa A. Mariotti, 222 Seward Street, Suite 209, Juneau, Alaska 99801, or filed with the Superior Court for the State of Alaska, Juneau, Alaska 1JU-17-00175PR.

Publish: May 18, 25 and June 1, 2017

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

H	E	A	R	R	A	M	F	I	S	T	
A	R	C	H	E	F	A	I	N	T	O	
L	I	E	U	S	T	R	U	T	T	E	R
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B	R	A	T	O	U	R					
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A	D	O	B	E	S	A	N	I	M	A	L
S	E	A	O	T	T	E	R	B	O	D	Y
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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

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National Guard closing down Wrangell armory

By DAN RUDY
Sentinel writer

Troops were in town recently, decommissioning Wrangell's National Guard armory on Bennett Street.

Lt. Colonel Candis Olmstead of the state Army National Guard Public Affairs Office confirmed last week five soldiers from the 38th Troop Command, 297th Regional Support Group and Joint Forces Headquarters were in Wrangell on April 24 and 25. Additionally, on May 2 personnel from the Guard's facilities and maintenance office were in town.

Their purpose entailed the collection of materiel and disposing of unnecessary furniture and items. Once that work is completed, Olmstead explained the building will be turned back over to the city, which has been leasing the property to the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

The armory was built in 1982. Most recently it has been assigned to the 297th Military Police Company, 3rd Detachment, to which two residents had belonged. Since last year no personnel have been assigned to the facility, a decision to divest the armory was reached.

"This occurrence is happening nationwide," Olmstead explained. The goal is to reduce costs for seldom or unused facilities, which have ongoing maintenance needs and expenses.

The armories are ostensibly in place to provide Guardsmen with quick deployment readiness. However, whether the nearest armory is local or more regionally sited, personnel will still maintain the same mission.

"Whether they're in Wrangell or somewhere else, their purpose is a federal mission," said Olmstead.

The closures are in large part related to cuts to state agency budgets. Since 2013, the Alaska DMVA has had to reduce its budget by 40 percent, down to \$15.6M this fiscal year. In Alaska more than 60 armories are being divested for this reason, though the action only affects those with five or fewer Guardsmen attached to them.

These cuts go beyond trimming facilities, and have included a reduction of personnel statewide by 20 percent. Veterans services have also been impacted, with the Office

Boat yard

Continued from page 1

the piling. I put a tourniquet on it and pulled her back into the piling."

More often, Thomassen would pull his boat yard at Olaf Hansen's shop, and Arthur Svendsen was his go-to contractor.

"Any time this boat comes out, he was the only one that worked on it," he said.

Since the new boatyard was constructed, new lifts and new shipwrights have taken on the task of maintaining Baltic.

"The last big job that I had was Dan (Thompson) and Tyler (Thompson)," Thomassen said, pointing out the craftsmanship. "They put in a new bow stem, a new forward deck. They did excellent work."

Chuck Jenkins did additional work on the deck, trim and mast, and Arthur's successor Dave Svendsen continues the family relationship with Thomassen's boat.

"But they all do excellent work. I don't want to leave any of these shipwrights out," Thomassen added. Every year he hauls out his boat, if not for major work then to repaint it and replace the zincs.

"If it wasn't for that boatyard this thing wouldn't be in as good shape as it is. This is a lifesaver, this boatyard," he said. "The guys that work here,

haul me out and stuff, they're excellent. They take good care of me, and they like the boat."

Meissner expects the Baltic may be the oldest boat Wrangell's yard has so far pulled, but that might soon pass to the *Bee*, a 60-foot tug launched in 1901. The boat could be hauled out in the near future for its own ongoing maintenance.

As for the yard itself, over the past year water access has finally been extended to three current contractor lots, and the line stubbed for a fourth potentially. A request has been put in to extend water utilities to a pair of buildings over on the yard's eastern end, though logistical and funding considerations in excavating the nearby line beneath Front Street could put that project off.

Meissner said his department is also trying to get foot and vehicle traffic through the yard under control, specifically for those simply passing through or sight-seeing. In November the Port Commission voted to make the yard a restricted access facility, due to safety concerns related to passing traffic.

A fixed route for the summer has been drawn up for a pair of tour operators who have been running buses through the yard, limiting their access to certain parts of the yard. After September though, visitors may expect to see signage at the various gates admonishing them to keep out.

of Management and Budget officers have remained static the reporting the number of service past few years despite continued growth to the state's veteran population.

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Senior

Continued from page 1

“Each one of these kids, the majority of them came up with their own ideas. This is a way for kids to show what they can give back to the community.”

Sam Armstrong, Dawson Miller and Garrett Miller worked together to fabricate three benches that will be placed at the future mariners memorial at Heritage Harbor. The long-lasting seats will be built from a combination of aluminum and synthetics, which the students designed, welded and fitted themselves.

One of the benches will be dedicated to Garrett’s father, Ryan Miller, who had been killed in a fishing accident. It will accompany the memorial’s planned wall, which remembers other local mariners and fishermen.

“It means a lot to us,” Armstrong commented. “We’re all fishermen, we’re all fabricators, we’re all welders, and so this was right up our alley. We like this project a lot because it’s something we can come back to in years and show our kids.”

For his project, Joe Hommel used the popular sandbox building game Minecraft to teach elementary school students about history. For Hommel, the combination seemed like a perfect fit.

“I know kids these days play a lot of video games. And my cousins talk to me about their games and all the storyline that goes with it, stuff I can’t even remember. They retain all of that. So if you’re able to teach them with a video game that they want to play and want to learn, it’s very interactive and it’s very objective, but it’s very fun in general,” he explained.

The focus was on colonial Jamestown in Virginia, England’s first permanent settlement in the New World. Hommel explained he had come up with the idea a year ago, inspired by enduring memories of a poster next to his desk in middle school history filled with Jamestown facts. The setting seemed perfect for his planned curriculum. “Jamestown is a nice, simple world that you can build around,” he said.

Though a simple concept, Hommel said he put lots of detail into the project, building a little world he could demonstrate for a younger audience. Students could explore the program on their own devices, and were walked through the settlement’s history.

His first attempt at teaching, Hommel recalled it was a difficult process getting the kids’ attention at first, but he soon got the knack for it. “As soon as Pocahontas was mentioned the kids got all excited. ‘Pocahontas was real?’” they asked.

Exploring this Minecraft settlement, the students also had the opportunity to build some of their own additions. Working in the same virtual environment, Hommel noted the project was

also an exercise in teamwork.

“I was very pleased to see in the end, after an hour and a half of doing that, none of the other buildings were destroyed,” he said. He tested the group afterward, and they seemed to retain a good amount of the colony’s history. “It was pretty cool,” he said.

For those who watched Wolves basketball games online this year, they have student Chris Howard to thank. His project entailed setting up cameras and coordinating broadcasts through the school team’s season.

“I’m interested in computers, so it was a good project for me,” he said.

It was not especially difficult to set up, but Howard said at one point they had to run a telephone wire to the office from the control booth, as well as set up iPad cameras aimed at each basket. It was a little tricky trying to sync up the iPads, he said, as the cameras have a five-second delay. But in the end it was worth it. During Wednesday’s presentations Howard said a number of people expressed their appreciation, able to stay connected with local activities using new technology.

“Someone came up to me and said they watched a game down in Seattle,” he said.

Tarren Legg-Privett and Dora Voltz worked together on this year’s phase of the new greenhouse, being put together for the E.A.T.S. gardening program outside of Evergreen Elementary. The two added to the framing put together by the construction class last year, getting it ready for the eventual addition of paneling.

“We went through and put rafters on,” Legg-Privett explained. “Hopefully it’ll be operational by next fall.”

“Our parents and Drew Larrabee, our shop teacher, helped us out,” added Voltz. “Drew came up with the design.”

Alex Angerman and Karl Torgramsen also made constructive use of their project. The two teamed up with Parks and Rec to design a mural for the community center outdoor stairwell. They got together with the Summer Rec program and enlisted the artistic skills of younger students, producing colorful salmon for the wall.

“Sixty-two fish altogether,” Torgramsen said. Because the work was done by elementary students, he pointed out that as they progress through school they will have that connection with the wall as time passes, knowing they were a part of that design.

“It was offered through the school,” he said of the project. “Alex and I thought it was a beautiful thing to give back to the community in this way.”

“Summer Rec. is an enrichment program, so as we were having them paint the salmon we were teaching them the parts of the salmon and the roles of the salmon,” Angerman added.

“It actually turned out to be a really fun and educational project,”

Also busy with paints, Nicholas Cole helped decorate the interior of St. Rose of Lima Catholic Parish, which was recently renovated. He was given the idea from parishioner Anne Morrison, and applied gold trim around the walls’ decorative molding. The job takes much attention to detail and is time consuming, but Cole listened to music all the while as he worked through it. Putting in 25 hours so far, he still has a bit more work to do, applying gold around the church’s Stations of the Cross.

Hailie Davis helped raise money for Hannah’s Place, a Wrangell nonprofit which offers assistance to expectant mothers and families.

“I selected this project because I feel it is very beneficial to the community,” Davis explained. The facility hosts a variety of programs and runs a discounted store, and she felt it could use a hand. To that end Davis put together a rummage sale and silent auction, and held a tea party to help promote their business.

She also helped around the place, with housekeeping and other chores. In all she put in 84.5 hours and raised around \$1,500.

Projects also supported a

number of school and extracurricular sporting programs. Kaylauna Churchill set up a running club for her high school classmates, once the cross-country season ended last fall.

“I chose the running club because cross-country season had ended and I wanted to keep our runners in shape for next year,” she explained. The school lacks a springtime track and field program, and the club could potentially spur the right interest to undertake one in future years.

Cary Emmens is currently coaching a tee-ball team for his project, the Falcons. Though he has played baseball for about a dozen years, and helped out with the summer program last year, this is the first time he has ever coached, and while enjoying the experience, he said there were some challenges to overcome.

“They like to play in the dirt a lot, so you’ve got to keep your eye on them,” Emmens said.

Sig Decker was an assistant coach this year for the peewee wrestling team, helping Parks and Rec and coach Jeff Rooney.

“I did this project because of how much of an impact wrestling has had on me as a person, and the confidence you build, and the independence

you get from going out and competing,” he explained. “You also get the team building aspect as well,” whether training together or through sparring.

Helped by high school teammates, he helped the young wrestlers undergo conditioning, taught them new moves and prepared them for tournament competition. The team participated in one of two planned tourneys this year, against Petersburg.

“We took a lot of medals away from Petersburg,” he said. Decker came out of the experience with a better appreciation for how important volunteers are to the program. He added that he learned if you set a high standard for kids, they will step up to meet that.

Alyssa Martin helped Bradley during the Tom Simms Invitational, a wrestling tournament drawing teams from around the region. Martin helped put together welcome signs, convey students, and fill out brackets for the championship.

Josephine Lewis also helped with a big event, assisting Southeast Beasts put on their annual Alaska Day 5K and half-marathon last fall. She helped put together posters and mark out the running route, and assisted with sign in among other things.

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