

## Von Bargen chosen as new borough manager, OKs sand for water filters

By DAN RUDY  
*Sentinel writer*

The Wrangell Borough Assembly chose its new city manager on Tuesday, bringing to an end a search to replace recently

retired manager Jeff Jabusch.

Lisa Von Bargen, currently the community and economic development director for Valdez, was chosen for the position after meeting with residents and city staff last week. She has served in that capacity since 2001, and before that had served five years with the Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau as its director and tourism manager.

Continuing its conversation from the previous week (see Water story on Page 12), the Assembly approved a revised response plan to manage any future water shortages. Main differences was the response staging, which broke levels of urgency down into three levels. Fine thresholds were also established, with violations of a Stage II restriction earning a \$250 fine, and Stage III a \$500.

On enforcement, Assembly member Stephen Prysunka commented that it will be a group effort. "I think that's going to take the community and community workers. It's going to take everybody."

"I think we've got to start somewhere and this is a good start," Mayor David Jack said of the plan.

"I think there's going to be some tweaking. It's going to be a living document as we work on some things," Prysunka agreed.

The weightier question was how to proceed with the water treatment plant. The test on dredging the sand hadn't worked as hoped, Public Works director Amber Al-Haddad reported. Assembly members spent considerable time mulling over other options – some available, others hypothetical – but at length a decision had to be made.

"We're spending all this time talking about cleaning this old, nasty sand that we should have replaced 10 or 15 years ago," interjected Assembly member Julie Decker.

There were a number of unknowns to be considered in acquiring new sand, including to what extent it would improve production. Al-Haddad explained one of the first steps that would be needed in either case would be installation of an automatic self-cleaning roughing filter to reduce sediment making its way into the slow sand filtration units. In its assessment of the facility, CRW Engineering recommended the units over another alternative, cartridge filters.

"While there are some additional complexities with the self-cleaning filters, they think that's the way forward we should go," she said.

Given the potential costs of replacing the sand – upward of a million dollars – Assembly members did not take the decision lightly. Another question was the long-term problem of financing a new water plant, a three- to five-year scenario at best, and whether a cheaper method of getting by could be done in the meantime.

"If I knew that replacing that sand was going to eliminate the problem, I'd do that in a heartbeat," said Mark Mitchell.

"It did work at some level in the first place," said Stephen Prysunka. "Even if we have any kind of improvement that prevents us from having to throttle water from our (fish processing) plants this summer, that's a good thing."

At the end, Prysunka recommended they move forward with purchasing the sand required to fill at least one bay, and the recommended roughing filters. Assembly member Patty Gilbert moved to amend the motion to allow for funds to be drawn from unrestricted funds and the restricted reserve funds, which was unanimously approved.

The cost of both items has yet to be worked out, with an initial estimate of the roughing filter placed at around \$180,000.

Sitting in her first meeting as interim borough manager, Carol Rushmore advised against the decision, saying it could potentially jeopardize acquiring a favorable loan for a replacement plant.

"What we're trying to do before we make a huge investment is to try to figure out what to do affordably in the short term," she cautioned.

Other Assembly members felt there were more immediate concerns, such as water for residents and fish production.

"My biggest concern is the clock is ticking for another season," said Decker. "To me that's a reasonable investment. I know it can be sizable."

The vote was a 5-2 decision, with Mitchell and David Powell dissenting.

Al-Haddad will work on a quote with the engineers and silica distributor, and get approval for a sole-source procurement to minimize acquisition times. A plan to

Continued on page 11



SUBMITTED PHOTO

With coaches Bruce McQueen (seated) and Jamie Roberts (at right), Wrangell Swim Club concluded its first season at Ketchikan over the April 1 weekend. Swimmers making the meet were Jimmy Baggen, Paige Baggen, CeAirra Glaser, Trinity Glaser, Carter Hammer, Kayla Meissner, Hope Mikkelsen, Mercy Mikkelsen, Sophie O'Brien, Jack Roberts, Renee Roberts, Andrei Siekawitch, Nikolai Siekawitch, Rhiannon Wnezel, Kayla Young, Peyton Young and Sydnie Young.

### Wrangell swimmers end season with a splash

By DAN RUDY  
*Sentinel writer*

Wrangell's junior swimmers competed in their fourth competitive meet last week, traveling to Ketchikan for the annual Spring Splash.

Still in its first year, the Swim Club sent 17 swimmers to the three-day event, which took place over the April 1 weekend. The USA Swimming-sanctioned meet featured teams from Juneau, Petersburg, Ketchikan, Sitka and Craig, with around 100 participants in all.

Wrangell's group participated in 71 individual events, and coach Bruce McQueen reported every swimmer posted at least one personal best time. Between them, they brought back 51 ribbons, which go to the top eight in each event by age group and gender.

Kayla Meissner finished in first for the 10 and under 100-yard fly, as did Hope Mikkelsen in the girls 11-12 year old 1,650-yard freestyle. For the boys, Jack Roberts took first in the 11-12 500-yard freestyle.

Swimmers earned points for the team as well. Mikkelsen contributed the most to Wrangell with 40 earned in six events, followed close behind by Meissner with 37. Nikolai Siekawitch earned 35 points for the team. Swimmers Carter Hammer, Andrei Siekawitch and Rhiannon Wenzel also made the meet's "most improved" list, by besting a previous time in a single event by more than 20 percent.

The Ketchikan meet was also a chance to challenge the fledgling team's young swimmers. More advanced swimmers were encour-

aged to push themselves in longer, more arduous events. Younger swimmers also dove into competition, with the very newest having started only two months ago.

Recounting the weekend, McQueen said Spring Splash was run like a larger championship meet. Events in the morning were offered as preliminaries while finals were held later in the day. Eleven of the 12 Wrangell swimmers competing April 1 made it to their event finals.

All in all, McQueen said the weekend was a good one for the club, and wraps up its inaugural season. Wrangell Swim Club is the first competitive group Wrangell has had since the Stikine Sea Runners disbanded in 2003. Initially intending to attend one or two meets this year, its swimmers managed to qualify for additional region- and statewide meets held in December and earlier this spring.

The end of the regional competitions before the summer doesn't mean the group is done just yet, however. The club will continue practice through June, and at least four swimmers have made qualifying times allowing them to participate in Alaska's Junior Olympics later this month. Another will be competing in the state's Special Olympics Summer Games in June.

"Planning is already underway for next season, and the hope is that Wrangell Swim Club will be able to participate in at least one spring and another fall open meet, as well as support swimmers who qualify to swim at the regional and state level," McQueen reported.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

The Sentinel extends its best wishes to the persons listed on the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce Community Scholarship Birthday Calendar. **April 13:** Tenisha Nelson, Devan Harding; **April 14:** Jim Taylor, Kacie Galla. Anniversary: Rod and Jean Brown; **April 15:** Rachel Mason, Yvonne Powers, Dawn Davidson, Killian Booker Anniversary: Jamie and Kim Reading; **April 16:** Chole Edgley, Tegan Kuntz, Alexander Neyman; **April 17:** Alyssa Royster, Cheri Wickman, Jamie Deboer, Lily Stearns, Faye Kohrt; **April 18:** Byron Cady, Shauna Bushnell, Sue Nelson, Stella Feudner; **April 19:** Carmen Jimenez, Sidney Allen, Steve Wells; **April 20:** Kastle Powers, Odlie Meister, Kalin Kohrt  
 If you would like to add a birthday or anniversary at no charge please call the Sentinel at 874-2301.

## Senior Center Menu

### Thursday 13:

Fiesta pork chops, peas, carrot and raisin salad, herb biscuit

### Friday 14:

Chicken noodle soup, chef salad with egg and cheese, hot roll

### Monday 17:

Sloppy joe, peas and carrots, fruit slaw

### Tuesday 18:

Chicken cacciatore pasta, Brussels sprouts, tossed salad

### Wednesday 19:

Pork with sweet and sour sauce, steamed spinach, marinated zucchini, tomato salad

### Thursday 20:

Half cheese sandwich, kielbasa soup, tossed salad

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, April 15**  
 Matanuska 2:30 a.m.  
**Sunday, April 16**  
 Malaspina 4:45 p.m.  
**Tuesday, April 18**  
 Matanuska 9:15 a.m.  
**Friday, April 21**  
 Matanuska 11:30 p.m.  
**Sunday, April 23**  
 Malaspina 7:15 p.m.  
**Tuesday, April 25**  
 Matanuska 9:00 p.m.

#### Southbound

**Friday, April 14**  
 Matanuska 8:30 a.m.  
**Monday, April 17**  
 Matanuska 8:00 a.m.  
**Wednesday, April 19**  
 Malaspina 6:30 a.m.  
**Friday, April 21**  
 Matanuska 9:00 a.m.  
**Monday, April 24**  
 Matanuska 5:15 a.m.  
**Wednesday, April 26**  
 Malaspina 7:00 a.m.

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

## TIDES TABLE April 13 - April 20



High Tides				Low Tides			
AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
April 13: 2:47	16.9	3:20	15.3	8:53	-0.6	8:57	2.0
April 14: 3:15	16.3	3:53	14.5	9:25	-0.2	9:27	2.9
April 15: 3:44	15.6	4:29	13.6	9:58	0.4	10:00	3.7
April 16: 4:15	14.8	5:09	12.7	10:37	1.1	10:39	4.6
April 17: 4:51	13.9	6:01	11.9	11:21	1.8	11:28	5.4
April 18: 5:39	13.0	7:12	11.5	.....	.....	12:16	2.5
April 19: 6:50	12.3	8:33	11.8	0:31	6.0	1:23	2.9
April 20: 8:20	12.2	9:39	12.7	1:50	6.1	2:36	2.8

## Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

### Thursday, April 13

**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.  
**Wrangell Chautauqua:** TBA.

### Sunday, April 16

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

### Monday, April 17

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

### Tuesday, April 18

**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, April 19

**Gospel Meeting:** Gospel meeting with Lucas and Don at the Nolan Center Classroom. 7:00 p.m.  
 Is the attendance at your meeting or event low? Call Adrienne at the Sentinel to have it placed here.

## Continuing Events

**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.

### April 19, 1917:

Old Glory is now in evidence in Wrangell as never before. Almost every house has its flag. But there is one mammoth flag, which represents the town as a whole. It is 10x20 feet in size and was hoisted last Friday on Mount Dewey. A tall spruce tree was trimmed of its limbs, and Old Glory now waves proudly several hundred feet above the town. The flag was presented to the town by Blind Ton, an old Indian doctor, who, with his crippled wife, lives near the power plant. It was no small job to climb a large tree in the cold wind and convert it into a flagpole, and the party of young men who accomplished the difficult task surely deserves great praise.

### April 10, 1942:

Lew Williams, editor of the Wrangell Sentinel, was elected mayor of Wrangell at Tuesday's election. George Gunderson, Jorgen Ronning and Dr. E. J. Wheeler were elected to the town council. Dr. Wheeler had refused to run for mayor, but was drafted by the voters as a sticker candidate for councilman. A total of 211 votes were cast in the election.

**April 14, 1967:** Volunteer firemen Bob Smith and Dan Wickman left Tipton, Indiana April 1 with the new city fire truck and even with

large signs on the truck they created quite a furor in several small towns enroute home. They commented that Wisconsin was much like Alaska in friendliness and hospitality. In a small town in Montana they pulled up to a gas station and immediately three police cars, with wailing sirens converged upon them demanding to know where the fire was. "We don't know," they replied, "We're just on our way home to Wrangell, Alaska." The new John Bean truck has a Ford chassis, a 500 gallon tank and

equipment to pump 750 gallons a minute.

### April 16, 1992:

Barring breakage, on Easter Sunday the children of Wrangell will find out what 1,440 eggs look like. That's how many eggs the Elks have purchased for this year's Easter egg hunt for local children. The Easter Bunny has taken time out of his busy Easter schedule to make an appearance at the egg hunt, and will no doubt be bringing some candy.

## Wrangell Weather

Date	High	Low
April 2	42	35
April 3	48	37
April 4	53	39
April 5	48	37
April 6	50	37
April 7	53	37
April 8	48	41
April 9	55	37

## Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Daylight
April 13	5:55a	7:44p	13:58h
April 14	5:48a	7:50p	14:02h
April 15	5:45a	7:52p	14:07h
April 16	5:42a	7:54p	14:12h
April 17	5:40a	7:56p	14:16h
April 18	5:37a	7:59p	14:22h
April 19	5:35a	8:01p	14:22h
April 20	5:33a	8:03p	14:30h

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# Health Trust land swap explained in public meeting

By DAN RUDY  
Sentinel writer

Administrators for the Mental Health Trust Land Office last week finished off a series of meetings held to inform the public about an impending land exchange.

More than a decade in the making, the exchange in question would be between AMHT and the United States Forest Service, involving nearly 39,000 acres of woodlands scattered

across Southeast. The meetings coincide with bills submitted at the state and federal levels last month that would move the deal forward.

Trust deputy director Wyn Menefee and senior resource manager Paul Slenkamp finished their run through affected communities, Ketchikan, Sitka, Juneau, Klawock and Petersburg, finally ending with a meeting in Wrangell last Thursday.

"In general, they've been favorable to the exchange," Menefee said of people at the various meetings. In his presentation, Menefee explained AMHT is guided by four princi-

ples: maximizing long-term revenue and productivity, protecting its physical and monetary assets from devaluation, encouraging diversity of trust land use, and accountable management.

Those ends in mind, AMHT uses the revenue gained from timber, mineral and other ventures to go toward the state's mental health programming. The Trust itself does not pay for all services, but supplements the Health and Social Services budget and provides programming grants. Regionally, it has provided \$3 million in grants to efforts in Southeast Alaska since 2013.

The land exchange deal has been in the works since 2008, though the Petersburg component has been worked on since 2005. Menefee characterized the negotiations as "extensive" between AMHT and USFS, but also wider-ranging groups like the Tongass Futures Roundtable, dissolving in 2013, that had brought together representatives from industry, conservationists and government.

An agreement to initiate the swap was signed by both services in June 2015, which followed approximately eight years of negotiations that included input from a wide collection of communities, tribal organizations and environmental groups. Parcels to be transferred to the USFS in Wrangell would total 1,071 acres, including 308 acres of upland parallel to Zimovia Highway, between Heritage and Shoemaker Bay harbors; 63 acres of land near Shoemaker; and 700 acres around Pats Lake.

The exchange will involve 18,313 acres of AMHT-managed lands in all, for about 20,580 acres of "remote land" on Prince of Wales Island and at Shelter Cover from USFS. The deal will be an "equal value" exchange, to be undertaken in two stages. The areas being exchanged to AMHT have already been partially logged, are a mixture of old and young growth forest, and have some roads and infrastructure already in place.

One of the biggest changes to the plan since last year's draft was the substitution of No Name Bay on Kuiu Island for a 2,400-acre parcel near Sitka, Menefee explained. The Trust would maintain one island in the bay after the exchange, which could



ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF USFS

This map of the Wrangell area shows proposed lands for trade under the Alaska Mental Health Trust Act of 2017, currently under consideration in Congress. Four parcels of AMHT-administered land along Zimovia Highway would be part of a broader exchange with the Forest Service, effectively becoming part of the Tongass National Forest.

present opportunities for a future lodge or recreational cabin. This would factor into the aforementioned diversification of Trust land usage, he pointed out.

Put forward in the Alaska Legislature, the two state-level bills would take effect if the Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Exchange Act of 2017 was passed with similar terms by the 115th United States Congress and enacted. The exchange would proceed then if the heads of both resource management agencies approve the transfer on or before January 1, 2024.

Slenkamp explained AMHT would start designing land sales during the appraisal process that

would follow as soon as the legislation passes, as well as the harvest methodology. Under the arrangement those preliminary steps are to take no longer than two years after approval.

"The time clock is fast," said Menefee. "We're trying to expedite this as much as possible."

Currently an approximate value on the area's timber is not available. As the Forest Service cannot complete the exchange without an appraisal, AMHT will survey on the ground as it needs, particularly where adjacent to private properties. Land transferred to USFS would become part of the adjacent Tongass National Forest.

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**ANNUAL MEETING**  
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5:00 p.m.-Prime Rib

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**Police report**

**Monday, April 3**  
Agency Assist: Notification from FD.

**Tuesday, April 4**  
Report of Theft.  
Found Property.  
DVO: Person came into the station and spoke with officer.

**Wednesday, April 5**  
Pager Service.

**Thursday, April 6**  
Subpoena Service.  
Traffic: Verbal warning for driving ATV on roadway.

**Friday, April 7**  
Traffic Stop: Verbal warning given for driving habits.

**Saturday, April 8**  
Disabled Vehicle: Caller reported their vehicle broke down.  
Agency Assist: AST.  
Report of lost wallet.

**Sunday, April 9**  
Report of illegal dumping: Unfounded. Officer responded.  
Traffic Hazard: Vehicle partially in road. Vehicle has been moved.

There was one ambulance call and two dog complaints during this week.

# Dan's Dispatch

By Representative  
Dan Ortiz

As expected, it's been a challenging legislative session, and from here on, the budget will be the forefront of every discussion. Both the House and the Senate are creating Alaska's budget, but it's clear that the bodies have differing approaches.

Last week, I wrote a letter explaining the House approach to resolving Alaska's fiscal crisis. To recap, the House proposed budget is \$81.7 million in General Funds less than our current fiscal year. State agencies have been reduced by \$62 million. Despite these cuts, the



Dan Ortiz

House Majority Coalition, of which I am a part, is united in protecting vital services, like

education, Pioneer Homes, and the Alaska Marine Highway System. In regards to revenue, we are also working on polishing an oil tax credit reform bill and a modest school income tax bill.

The Senate unveiled their budget on Monday, April 3. Significant differences between the House and Senate operating budgets are education, senior services, and Alaska Marine Highway System funding.

Their education plan cuts \$69 million to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). This action doesn't solve our fiscal crisis, but merely passes the burden to our local municipalities. Wrangell schools would lose almost \$200,000.

The Senate budget reduces funding for Pioneer Homes by \$6.5 million or 12.7% in addition to reductions made over the last two years of \$3.3 million Unrestricted General Funds. Staff position eliminations would be inevitable, and with less staff, fewer beds would remain open. As beds remain unfilled, revenues associated with an individual's care – whether private insurance, individual assets, or Medicaid – will also diminish. The true reduction may be closer to \$9 million. Continuing to operate all six of our Pioneer Homes throughout Alaska would be nearly impossible.

The Alaska Marine Highway System lost funding under the Senate's budget: \$4.8 million in General Funds was cut. Of that, \$4 million is designated as one-time only money, which means that in FY19, the AMHS budget

would be \$8.8 million less than the current year (FY17).

We have two significantly different budget proposals before us. Let your voice be heard so that legislators will create a final budget that reflects Alaskans' priorities. My phone number is (907)-247-4672 and email is rep.dan.ortiz@akleg.gov.

## Death Notice

Joyce Bryner passed away on April 1, 2017, in Morgan Town West, Virginia. Obituary and service time will follow at a later date.

## PICK AN EGG SALE

### SATURDAY, APRIL 15TH

Each egg has a different discount price ranging from

**20, 15, 10, 5% off**

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TUES. – SAT. 11 A.M. – 5 P.M.

LOCATED IN THE SNO BUILDING, NEXT TO GCI



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

## The littlest library, give or take

Appearing at the roadside just alongside Case Avenue, an old drinks cooler from Zak's Cafe has been converted into a lending library. Passersby can help themselves to a new read, or leave a finished book behind for a new set of eyes to enjoy. Resident Aleisha Mollen got the idea from a friend, and used a template for the idea from FreeLittleLibrary.org to make it happen. "I've been wanting to do it for a while," she said. "Everybody needs books."

Happy 96th Birthday!  
**ANNIE ARMSTRONG**  
Love you!  
from  
Your Children  
Grandchildren &  
Great Grandchildren



## Happy 50th Anniversary Grandma Jean and Grandpa Rod!

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# Questions fielded, tempers flare during constituency visit



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

Alaska Rep. Don Young speaks with a group at the Petersburg Elks Lodge during a banquet held Monday evening. The 23-term member of Congress visited different sites around town and held a public Q&A session during a region-wide tour.

By DAN RUDY  
Sentinel writer

PETERSBURG – Petersburg was paid a visit by longstanding United States Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) on Monday, part of a wider tour of Southeast that includes Ketchikan and Juneau.

Extra chairs had to be brought into the Borough Assembly chambers to accommodate the audience, and people stood at the room's back and sides. Seated front and center, Young explained the session would be an informal way for people to give input and ask questions.

"I'm here primarily to hear what's on your mind and what you'd like to discuss," he told the group.

After introducing himself, a number of topics were touched on during the afternoon meeting. Various audience members thanked the representative for his advocacy for reinstating the "returning worker" visa exemption that was withdrawn this year, preserving essential air service, returning funding for public broadcasting and increased Coast Guard spending.

Thanking Young for not supporting a recently attempted repeal of the Affordable Care Act, one Petersburg business owner wanted an explanation. House Resolution 1628, the American Health Care Act, was put forward by Republicans late last month but failed to progress due to lack of support within the majority caucus.

"The reason I didn't vote for

it – people are funny," Young began. "We voted twelve times to repeal Obamacare when Obama was in office, knowing he wouldn't sign it.

"Of course (President Donald) Trump was elected and he would sign it. And then we didn't have the appropriate replacement for it, because what was proposed – Alaska got the worst end of it all – it was worse than Obamacare. And they wanted to rush it through, because they wanted to pass it on the day of the anniversary of the passage of Obamacare. There was no thought put into it, they didn't really communicate with anybody."

Young said that sort of input from medical providers and patients was being sought out now, and expected that by July 4 a more amenable alternative should be reaching the House floor. Still, he admitted the finished product would not reflect his preferred approach.

"What I wanted is to have a total repeal, a one-paragraph repeal of Obamacare. But it wouldn't go into effect until 2020. Which would require us to write a bill in three years," Young explained. "That would bring the opposite side to the table and we would come to the table because there will be chaos if it is extinguished."

Still on the topic, one resident prefaced her follow-up question with the admission that she is currently undergoing chemotherapy. Specifically, she wanted to know why Young would not support House Bill 676, a bill put forward by Michigan Democrat Rep. John Conyers Jr. in January that would extend health coverage under the federal Medicare program to all residents of the United States. The bill has since been referred to committee.

"I don't really understand why you wouldn't want to expand Medicare," she told him, given Young's stated support for lower health care and pharmaceutical costs.

"Because that would be universal, government-owned medicine," he responded. "If you want that, go to Canada. I don't believe in that. I still believe in the private sector, I still believe in the marketplace." While not willing to support HR 1628, Young remained adamant that a better alternative was being worked out in Congress.

In another question, a resident addressed the "elephant in

the room," as she put it, wanting to know why Young was pushing HR 232, a proposal which could transfer up to 2,000,000 acres of federal wilderness in the Tongass National Forest over to state management. Concerned about surrounding forest lands that could be affected by the transfer, earlier last week the Petersburg Assembly passed a resolution in opposition to the bill.

The questioner wanted to know what impact that would have on Secure Rural Schools money, a periodically reauthorized act through which the Forest Service disburses payments to states, primarily for education and roads. Since 2000, revenue sharing based on timber production was replaced with a guaranteed payment formula based in part on forested acreage.

In the 2015 fiscal year, Alaska received \$9.8 million for 22.1 million acres of national forest land, at about 45 cents per acre. On the local level, for 1.8 million acres of Tongass acreage in the Petersburg Borough area, it received \$577,742 or 32 cents per acre. Wrangell received \$922,952 for its 1.6 million acres, at around 58 cents an acre.

Young defended his bill, saying it would free up land for development, something which is limited in Southeast.

"The only land you have are the communities themselves, there are no other lands. There's no opportunity to do other types of resource development, and you have to have resource development. And in time you will need it," he said.

Young also made clear that where the transferrable acreage would come from has yet to be decided, and that if communities want to opt out that would be possible.

"If Petersburg doesn't want it I don't really care, you ain't gonna get it. You'll be cut out," he said.

One of the claims Young made of the bill was that a reduction in Tongass lands would not impact the share of monies allotted to states' municipalities.

"You're not going to lose your rural school monies, if there are any monies," he added. "When I say 'if,' I think we're still going to maintain that," meaning Congress. "It's based on the total forest not available, not just one specific area. You have 17 million acres,

Continued on page 6

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Abby Armstrong	Helen Decker	Sam Prysunka	Trent Stokes
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**STATE 2A BASKETBALL AWARDS:**  
BOYS BASKETBALL ALL-STATE 2ND TEAM: Trent Stokes  
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# Don Young

Continued from page 5

if you remove 2 million acres you're still going to get rural school money."

Questioned further on his math, Young appeared irritated, and further exchanges with the audience brought an end to the topic.

"If you lose any money from that selection, I won't run again," Young finally said. "That's how confident I am that you're not losing any money."

The Forest Service was unwilling to comment on proposed legislation, but the SRS Act state payment calculation uses multiple factors, which includes acres of federal land within an eligible county, the county's share of the state's average of the three highest 25-percent and safety net payments during fiscal year 1968 through fiscal year 1999, and an income adjustment based on the per capita personal income for each county.

It was not the only time the conversation turned argumentative. It grew from heated to combative at several points, with the congressman sparring with audience members over actions such as House Joint Resolution 69, dubbed the "airplane hunting" bill by critics. He introduced the bill in February, which would reverse a Department of the Interior rule finalized last year relating to federal oversight of non-subsistence takings in National Wildlife Refuges. The bill passed the Senate on March 21 and was signed into law by Trump on April 3.

Young said criticisms mischaracterized the reversal, which it would allow hunters



PHOTO BY JESSICA OWENS

## Last jam session

In white at left, "Helena Handbasket" shoulders past the Petersburg defenders, followed behind by teammates "Just Julie" from Juneau and "Kooks Deluxe." Playing in Petersburg Saturday, the Garnet Grit Betties had their last bout of the roller derby season, before heading into a summertime hiatus. The Ragnarök Rollers will go on to play at the state derby tournament in Wasilla on May 5.

to, among other things, shoot or trap wolves in their dens with cubs or use airplanes to scout for bears. He said these issues were overblown, and did not reflect best practices. He characterized the matter less as one of hunting ethics as one of state's rights.

"We put the law back into the state's hands," Young explained. "If you don't like the state doing it then stop the state from doing it."

The session did not go as smoothly as perhaps intended, with tempers flaring on both sides of the microphone. By the end of the hour, an attempt to revisit the HR 232 land transfer issue was first pointedly ignored by Young, then cut short when the questioner interrupted the congressman mid-response.

"You're never going to agree with me, I don't agree with you. Just leave then though. I'm

happy, you're unhappy, so I don't know what the problem is," Young told her.

Reminded by another audience member that the people in the room were still his constituents whether they agreed or not, he left off with a general

challenge: "You have an opportunity, every two years you've got an opportunity, whatever you want to do. And I'll beat you every time." The hour being about up, with some concluding remarks and words of thanks that ended the session.

## Parks survey to see what gets Wrangell out

By DAN RUDY  
Sentinel writer

A survey being put out by Wrangell's Parks Department will be digging into the community's recreational priorities in the coming years.

"With the current climate of our state economy and the increasing demand for our current facilities, we need to prioritize our tasks and goals," explained department director Kate Thomas.

She said a system-wide needs assessment would help the department focus in on what residents like – what parks they frequent, which trails they climb, the amenities they would like to see – beyond the programs and more easily gauged usage at the community center gym and pool. The aim is to get input from residents who might not be usual users of the department's assets, which go beyond parks and trails but include things like ballfields and the city shooting range.

"We're trying to target beyond that," said Thomas. A survey had been previously put out by the department back in October 2015, but had been more narrowly interested in feedback on the Tot Gym program. Thomas said the more wider ranged survey was a new approach for them.

At the community health fair on April 1, attendees browsing the Parks and Rec booth took part in a simple questionnaire, but could also make use of an interactive needs graph that let the department know what they would like to see more of. That addition followed the recommendation of the Park Board, whose member Alice Rooney at its last meeting had suggested the interactivity.

Thomas said the booth yielded a strong response. "There were quite a number of people that I've never seen before," she added, referring to gym and pool members. As of the beginning of April, she reported the community center having 284 members with accounts.

Since a fee schedule hike was instituted in September 2015, Thomas said membership has about stayed the same. Currently the department does not have attendance or usage figures available from before the rate schedule change.

"I can tell you that I've personally seen the attendance ebb and flow as it normally does," she said. The change in rates had been intended to bring Wrangell's fee structure more in line with regional standards, and to have Parks and Rec programs share a larger portion of their cost.

The discontinuation of a corporate rate discount – which had been scaled based on number of employees, disproportionately discounting memberships to the largest employers – seems not to have had much impact either, she said. Employers like Wrangell Medical Center, Bobs' IGA, SEARHC, Alaska Vistas, and Alaska Waters have continued to buy passes for their employees on their own, even without the discount.

"So we've still seen a number of businesses," Thomas pointed out.

In addition to the booth-based survey there is an online form people can fill out, hosted on do-it-yourself poll site SurveyMonkey.com. Wrangell Parks and Recreation's questionnaire can be found at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/KCK-DKZN](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KCK-DKZN).

"So far we've gotten 87 participants," Thomas said Friday.

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# Pink numbers expected up in 2017 forecast

By DAN RUDY  
Sentinel writer

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game released its forecast for commercial salmon harvests this year, projecting a strong run of pinks for Southeast in 2017.

If panning out as projected, the news should come as a relief to the region's fishermen after a disappointing 2016 harvest.

The report details last year's commercial salmon season, which had come in about 30 percent lower than forecast. Alaska fishermen caught 112,500,000 salmon in 2016, of which 52.9 million had been sockeye and 39 million coho.

ADF&G is anticipating an overall increase in commercial volume across the state this season, projecting 204 million salmon of all species to be harvested. Sockeye are expected to take a slight hit of 12 million over last year's harvest, while pink salmon may see 102.7 million more according to the forecast.

For Southeast, 55.7 million salmon are projected to return to the region. The majority of these are pink salmon, which at 43 million constitutes a little more than three-fourths the run. The next largest number is to be chum at 8.55 million, 85 percent of which may be through hatchery production. Coho follow at 2.8 million, and sockeye project-

ed at 1.3 million.

In 2016, numbers had come up short for the region, with pink salmon in particular a relative disappointment. Fishermen had brought in only 18.4 million of them, or about 72.8 million pounds. The purse seine harvest brought in the majority of pink salmon, or 15.4 million, 84 percent of the total harvest.

Historically-speaking, the 2016 pink salmon harvest fell below both the recent 10-year and all-time averages, and while considered the lowest even-year return since 2008 was the 37th largest harvest in 54 years.

Though only about half the number, chum brought in about as much poundage as the pinks in 2016. The harvest ranked the 18th best since statehood, though falling below the 10-year average of 10 million fish. In that view, it is important to note that hatchery production have made chum salmon more of a factor in the region's commercial fishery the past three decades, with the yearly average before 1984 only being 1.6 million.

The Region I cumulative commercial salmon harvest by all harvest categories, including hatchery cost recovery, was 31.7 million fish in 2016 (Table 4). Total common property commercial harvest was 26.3 million fish, 90% of total harvest after excluding private hatchery cost recovery, Annette Island

Reservation harvests, and miscellaneous harvests.

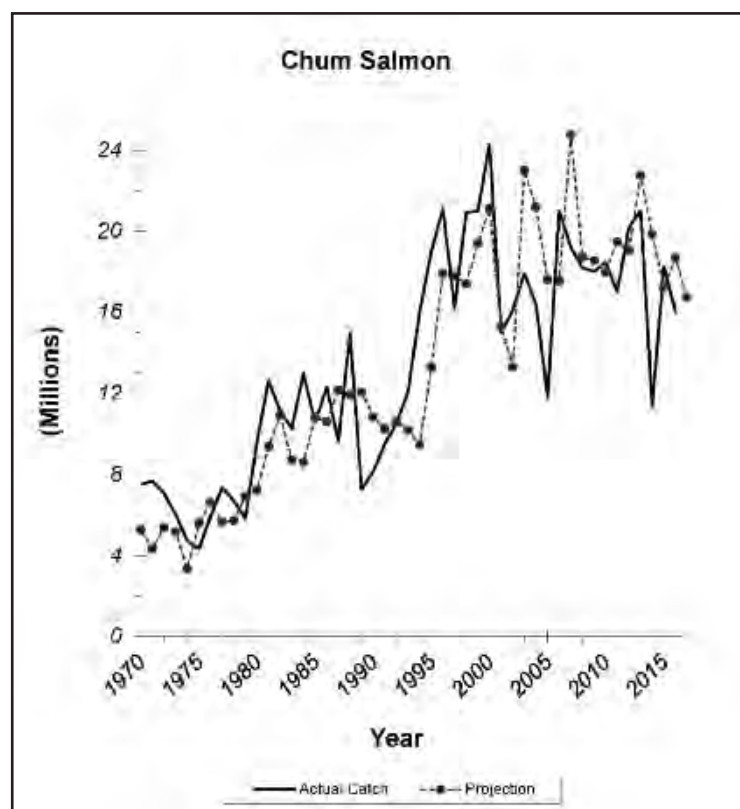
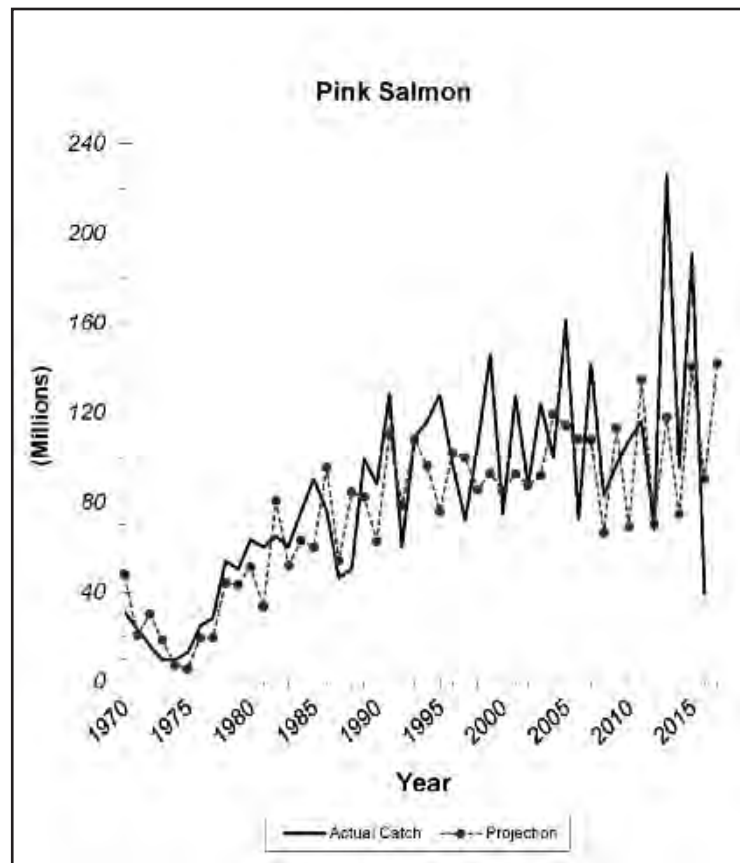
Though even-year runs tend to be stronger than odd-year returns, 2015 had been a particularly strong year. So comparatively, overall harvest in numbers of salmon in 2016 was only 63 percent that of the previous season. While coho salmon had been the only species to see a slight rise in harvest, pink salmon in particular had only been half what it had been in 2015, with chum only slightly better than three quarters.

Looking ahead, the lion's share of pink salmon this year is anticipated to be harvested in the Prince William Sound region, with around two-thirds of the 55.9 million hatchery-produced. In all, the Prince William pink share would make up constitutes about 40 percent of the state whole.

While the state's central waters – Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet and Bristol Bay – are projected to have an industrious season, western waters around Kodiak, Chignik, the North and South peninsulas and Aleutian Islands will be about as productive as Southeast, with a total of 52 million salmon projected.

Harvest forecasts were arrived at through quantitative projections based on a combination of collected spawning level data, sibling-age class returns, smolt outmigrations, and observed survival rates for hatchery releases. The report notes that catch levels are influenced by fishing effort, which is in turn driven in part by market conditions as well as the size of the run.

The full report can be accessed online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/SP17-08.pdf](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/SP17-08.pdf).



ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF ADFG

The above graphs illustrate the disparity between annual forecasted projections and the actual yearly catch for pink and chum salmon in the state of Alaska. The mainstay of Southeast's harvest, pink salmon returns came in considerably lower in 2015 and 2016 than forecast. On the other hand, the preceding two years saw returns much higher than predicted.

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## Collection drive focusing on e-waste this weekend

By DAN RUDY  
Sentinel writer

The environmental office of Wrangell Cooperative Association will be holding a collection drive for residents' unwanted electronics this weekend.

The drive involves the collection, transport and reclamation of an assortment of technological contraptions. It will be funded through an Indian Environmental General Assistance Program grant, a program run through the Environmental Protection Agency cooperatively with the Tribe.

"We will be collecting anything with a cord or a brain," explained Kim Wickman, Wrangell IGAP technician. "They can be fax machines, scanners, power cords, even your old microscopes."

This effort will help alleviate problems with proper disposal, largely a reflection of regional challenges.

According to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's Solid Waste Program, the state is the nation's largest, with 710,231 living on 366,000,000 acres of land. Over 72 percent of the state's residents live near Fairbanks, Anchorage or Juneau. The rest live scattered in rural communities, many of which are not connected by road.

Many reachable only by air or sea, rural communities tend to maintain their own municipal landfills due to transportation challenges. Other challenges such as limited space and chemicals containment are present. Wickman explained that with e-waste, components containing toxic elements such as mercury, cadmium and lead can be a problem.

"They tend to leach out, and end up in water sources," she said.

Sent down to Washington for processing, these can be removed and properly disposed of, while conductive elements such as silver and gold can be extracted and reused along with other salvageable components.

One thing the drive will not be trying to collect this weekend will be white goods, things like refrigerators, microwaves, and other similar household objects. "A lot of those do have a brain these days, they do have a cord, but that's not what we're really focusing on this weekend," Wickman said.

As e-waste can tend to be bulky, those unable to transport them on their own can call the WCA office during business hours on Friday at 874-4304. A truck will come round and move any items needed. Otherwise, goods can be brought to the WCA Carving Facility during the day on Saturday.



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# Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH  
Fisheries columnist

## Starting next year, Electronic Monitoring systems (EM) can officially replace human observers

Automation is coming to Alaska fishing boats in the form of cameras and sensors to track what's coming and going over the rails.

Starting next year, Electronic Monitoring systems (EM) can officially replace human observers as fishery data collectors on Alaska boats using longline and pot gear. Vessel operators who do not voluntarily switch to EMS remain subject to human observer coverage on randomly selected fishing trips.

The onboard observer requirement originally included vessels 59 feet and larger, but was restructured in 2013 to include boats down to 40 feet and, for the first time, was applied to the halibut fishery.

"Those smaller vessels have had a hard time accommodating human observers so we have been focused on that," said Bill Tweit, vice-chair of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council which oversees the program.

Smaller boats also had a hard time with sky-rocketing observer costs under the restructured program, which in some cases, went from less than \$300-\$400 per day to over \$1,000.

Starting in 2013, 15 pot cod boats aligned with the Homer-based North Pacific Fisherman's Association and Saltwater, Inc. of Anchorage to field test EM in the Gulf of Alaska.

"We saw EM as a tool that could address many of the issues we had with the observer program. It has moved at a glacial pace, but it is finally moving and much more needs to be done," said Malcolm Milne, NPFA president.

The EM systems were purchased with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and proved they could track and identify over 95 percent of species required for fishery management decisions.

"Overall, the reception of EM by participants in the pot cod fishery has been positive," said Abigail Turner-Frank, NPFA project coordinator. "Fishermen have expressed their enthusiasm about the potential cost effectiveness, not having to worry about an extra person onboard and the utility of the cameras showing hi-def deck views of their crew and gear while fishing."

Testing EM on longline vessels has been ongoing since 2011 via the Sitka-based Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association, in collaboration with NFWF, the Alaska Fisheries Science Center in

Seattle and Archipelago Marine of Canada. The trials showed the costs, including data analysis, were \$198 per day for six Sitka vessels and \$332 per day for Homer boats.

The EM system most often used costs about \$3,500 for hardware and installation, plus an additional \$1,000 a year for data transfer fees from Alaska to Seattle.

Nancy Munro, Saltwater president, suggests that the data review could be done in Alaska to "create a tighter feedback loop." She also strongly advocates that instead of losing their jobs, many fishery observers can be integrated into the EM program as data analysts to "keep their talent and experience in the fisheries." There are currently 458 fishery observers deployed in Alaska's fisheries.

The public has until May 22 to comment on the EM program to federal policy makers.

"We want to hear how well we did at tailoring this and secondly, we want to hear what their next priorities are," said Bill Tweit. Comment at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/>

**Spring fishing** – More Alaska fisheries get underway during the spring months while pollock, cod, ocean perch, rockfish, flounders and many more are ongoing throughout the Gulf and Bering Sea. Here are some highlights:

In Southeast Alaska, the roe herring fishery at Sitka Sound wrapped up on March 29 after seiners took the 14,600 ton quota after four openers in about one week.

The golden king crab fishery just wrapped up throughout the Panhandle with some of the lowest catches in 17 seasons. Pot pulls at Icy Strait and Northern Areas yielded just over half of the 20,000-pound limit for the two regions.

Lingcod opens in Southeast waters on May 16 for jig and troll gear with a 310,700 pound harvest limit.

At Prince William Sound an exclusive sablefish fishery kicks off on April 15 with a 117,000 pound quota. That same day, a trawl fishery begins for sidestripe shrimp in the Sound with a catch set at just under 113,000 pounds.

Kodiak's herring season begins on April 15, with a lower harvest this year of 1,645 tons. Managers said they expect an uptick in the herring stock of mostly small, three to five-year-old fish. Thus, the smaller quota.

Halibut catches are picking up slightly with over one mil-

lion pounds taken out of the 18 million pound catch limit. Landings are down 27 percent from the same time last year, while prices are up 10 percent in the \$6.50-\$7.00 range.

The Bering Sea snow crab fishery should wrap up its 19 million pound catch quota any day.

**Hope for climate change** – A new book that is part fast paced adventure, part philosophy and provides a road map to climate change 'hope spots' is drawing rave reviews.

"I am a firm believer that you have to find reasons for moving the needle, and being hopeful that you can still make a difference in this world," said Kate Troll of Juneau, the author of "The Great Unconformity: Reflections of Hope in an Imperiled World."

Troll draws on her 22 years of experience in climate and energy policy, elected office, coastal management and fisheries. As a former director of the Southeast Seiners Association and United Fishermen of Alaska, she was instrumental in getting 100 foot buffers along salmon streams in Southeast Alaska.

"That was a monumental step taken in an era of large scale clear cutting. Now we have those streams protected and it serves as a model for other areas. It's become the norm, and that's key to the sustainability of our fisheries."

"We have daunting challenges," she added. "Whoever reads the book, your eyes are going to be opened wide. But I want to arm you with hope and resilience for the future."

One way to seed "hope spots", she said, is "using our wallets" to support sustainable fisheries and other earth friendly causes. Another already is yielding big results.

"Capitalism has progressed in renewable energy and wind and solar are now cost competitive with fossil fuels and natural gas. We've reached what is called grid parity with a lot of renewable energies and that's an important development," she said.

Troll also documents how the "love of place" plays out in making major impacts in the crusade for sustainability.

"It's important to protect the right of regeneration of our species, salmon being one of those most iconic, and to talk about how we have done so in Alaska," she said.

What makes this book unique and fun to read is that Troll combines her messages with amazing adventures.

"I'm a firm believer that if I can tell some really entertaining stories, the messages stick a lot better," she said. "You're climbing Denali with me, we're running wild rivers, we're kayaking among whales, we're climbing Mount Kilimanjaro – I'm intent on entertaining the reader and taking you on a really good ride."

"The Great Unconformity" is available at Amazon and Barnes and Noble book stores. Troll will do a book signing at the UAA bookstore on April 24 from 5-7. Visit [www.katetroll.com](http://www.katetroll.com)

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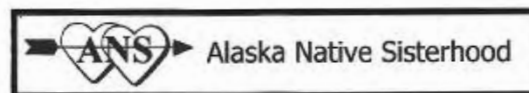
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# Net pen grounded for repairs near Sandy Beach in Petersburg

By **RON LOESCH**  
*Publisher*

**PETERSBURG** — Early Tuesday morning the Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association's floating net pens were being moved into position near the mouth of City Creek, when a structural failure took place. Employees had to move the pen into shallow water along the Sandy Beach tide flats to make repairs.

Crystal Lake Assistant Hatchery Manager Kevin Chase explained that a metal beam came loose and had to be reattached, forcing them to realign and re-bolt the listing structure before continuing.

By 8:30 a.m. the tide was turning and Chase predicted the pen frame would be floating within a couple of hours, allowing the move to continue.

The 40 ft. square galvanized steel frame is attached to blue foam filled polyethylene floats. The pen has steel walkways along the perimeter and when anchored, the frame supports nets that will contain 100,000 King Salmon smolts, which will be released in about a month. The walkways allow employees to feed the young Kings each day prior to their release.

Chase said the containment nets are 20 ft. below the surface inside the structure and a predator barrier net is in place around the outside of the pen. The out-

side net keeps sea lions and other predators away from the smolt.

The Kings will be making their return to City Creek next month explained Chase. This is the third year SSRAA has reared smolt in the pens, in hopes of creating annual runs of King Salmon up City Creek. The smolt imprint on the water coming from City Creek, insuring their return to the creek to spawn. The Kings are reared at the Crystal Lake Hatchery and are trucked to Petersburg, loaded on a boat and taken to the pens anchored in Frederick Sound, about three-miles from town.

Chase said they found a flasher and hooks used by Steve Burrell attached to one of their anchors while positioning the platform.



SENTINEL PHOTO

Kevin Chase, Assistant Hatchery Manager (left) and Stephan Smith, Fish Culturist, await Tuesday's incoming tide to float the net pen being positioned in Frederick Sound near City Creek close to Petersburg.

## 2017 Southeast Alaska troll chinook salmon quota

**SITKA** - The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced April 10 that under Chinook salmon management provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty the 2017 abundance index for Southeast Alaska has been calculated to be 1.27, which results in an all-gear harvest limit of 209,700 treaty Chinook (non-Alaska hatchery-produced Chinook). The preseason troll treaty harvest allocation for 2017 is 154,880 Chinook or 108,320 fish lower than the preseason limit available in 2016.

While there is no ceiling on the number of Chinook salmon harvested in the spring fisheries, the take of treaty Chinook salmon is limited according to guideline percentages of

the Alaska hatchery fish taken in each fishery. Spring fisheries are managed to limit the harvest of treaty Chinook; non-Alaska hatchery fish are counted towards the annual treaty harvest limit of Chinook salmon while most of the Alaska hatchery fish are not. Spring fisheries are also managed pursuant to the Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries (5 AAC 39.222) to achieve escapement goals and ensure sustained yield of Alaska's salmon stocks. Since spring fisheries will be in progress through June 30, preliminary harvest estimates for treaty Chinook in the spring fisheries will not be determined until late June.

The summer commercial troll quota is

calculated by subtracting the treaty Chinook salmon harvested in the winter and spring troll fisheries from the annual troll treaty allocation. The winter fishery is managed to not exceed the guideline harvest level of 45,000 treaty Chinook.

The summer fishery will be managed to harvest 70% of the remaining fish on the troll allocation in the first summer Chinook salmon opening in July, with the remainder available for harvest in a second opening, which typically takes place in August. The decision as to whether the first summer opening will be managed inseason rather than for a fixed number of days will be announced just prior to the July 1 opening.

## Comics

### Amber Waves



### R.F.D.



### Just Like Cats & Dogs



### Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

1		6			8			
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	5		8			2	3	

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

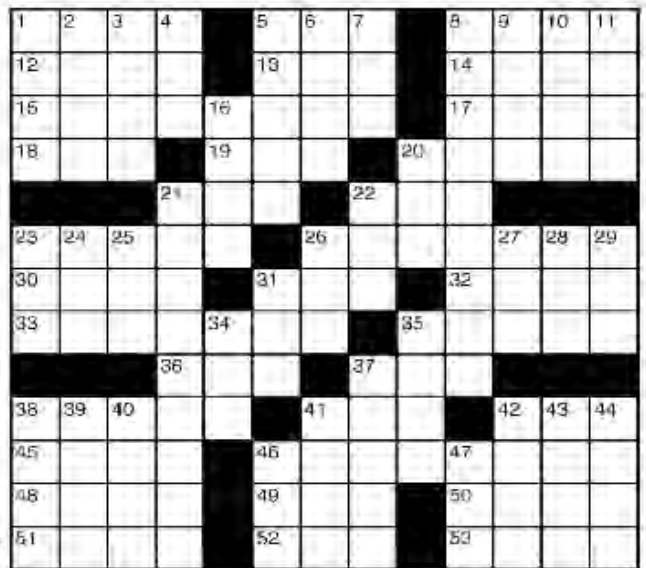
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
 ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Choir voice
- 5 Tackle the slopes
- 8 Mediocre
- 12 Prompted
- 13 Moray, for one
- 14 Helper
- 15 Chris Matthews' show
- 17 Shakespearean king
- 18 "Delicious!"
- 19 Rock band's need
- 20 Vertical
- 21 Saute
- 22 Peter Pan rival
- 23 Stereo setups
- 26 Resident
- 30 Lotion additive
- 31 Spicy
- 32 Green land
- 33 Kadiddle-hopper
- 35 Aquatic plant life
- 36 Female deer
- 37 Bouquets-to-order co.
- 38 High
- 41 Sticky stuff
- 42 Tier
- 45 Culture medium
- 46 Concealed trigger
- 48 Sandwich



- shop
- 49 That guy's
- 50 Admitting customers
- 51 Kennel
- 52 Choose
- 53 Sunrise direction
- weather
- 8 Diamond location
- 9 Stead
- 10 First man
- 11 KFC flavorer
- 16 Taverns
- 20 Cushion insert
- 21 Educational visit
- 22 Lustrous black
- 23 Owns
- 24 Sort
- 25 Enemy
- 26 Put on
- 27 Sharp turn
- 28 Historic period
- 29 Born
- 31 Weeding tool
- 34 Monkey (with)
- 35 On
- 37 Palm off (on)
- 38 "— and the Tramp"
- 39 Curved molding
- 40 Respond to gravity
- 41 Clench
- 42 Kelly of morning TV
- 43 Raw rocks
- 44 Took off
- 46 Nevertheless, for short
- 47 Travail

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Puzzle answers on page 10

# Birding festival takes off at month's end

By DAN RUDY  
Sentinel writer

The schedule of events for the 20th annual Stikine River Birding Festival has been put out.

Running from April 27 to 30 this year, the annual festival brings in ornithologists and bird fanciers from all over to appreciate the varied avian life living on and around the Stikine River.

Kicking off Thursday, April 27, people can brush up on their observation skills in a Birding 101 crash course, held at the Nolan Center at 6 p.m. An hour afterward, some short films on transboundary water issues will be hosted by Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, followed by a group discussion.

Early Friday, from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. biologists with the United States Forest Service will demonstrate bird banding and capture techniques for Wrangell schools. That evening at 6 p.m., a reception for the festival will be held at the Nolan Center, with artwork and photos entered into this year's contests on display. Entries need to be submitted by noon Thursday at the Nolan Center. Winners will be announced at the reception.

Following that, at 6:30 p.m. author Bob Armstrong will discuss his nature videos and how to better enjoy the outdoors. Attendees can learn how to take videos and photo stills of their own

using relatively inexpensive equipment and free software.

At 7:30 p.m., US Geological Survey scientist Dan Ruthrauff will talk about the hardy rock sandpipers, which winter in Alaska's Cook Inlet.

The next morning, local author and birder Bonnie Demerjian will lead a group on a morning bird walk at 7 a.m., complete with a continental breakfast at Muskeg Meadows Golf Course. An afternoon walk at Shoemaker Bay Park will focus on edible plants, led by botanist Joni Johnson.

From 10 a.m. to noon, the first Wrangell Community Market of the year will ply wares at the Nolan Center. A "fowl food" cookoff contest will also be featured at the market, with the public playing the role of judge. Also at the Nolan Center from 11 a.m. to noon, people are invited to bring their own hammers and put together bird houses for their home.

For those wishing to stretch their sea legs a bit, at 2 p.m. Breakaway Adventures will take people upriver for a tour of its birds and wildlife.

The evening rounds off with the annual Ducks Unlimited banquet, 6 p.m. at the Nolan Center. Those buying tickets by the 22nd will be entered into a special gun raffle. Call Keene Kohrt for details.

In its final day, at 7 through 9 a.m. on Sunday Gwen Bauss will demonstrate

using mist nets and bird banding at City Park. Folks can stop by at any time to watch and even help release a few birds after banding.

Finally at 3 p.m. in the Nolan Center, resident musicians will put on a tribute to the classics, playing a selection of Bach, Brahms, Mozart and Telemann.

Earlier this year the Wrangell festival

was acknowledged for its mindfulness and dedication to conservation ethics, winning the 2017 Mindful Birding Award from the Mindful Birding Project. The award comes with a \$500 grant, which was applied for by the city's Convention and Visitors Bureau.

For more information on the event and activities, check out the festival website at [www.stikinebirding.org](http://www.stikinebirding.org).

## Juneau approves another \$100,000 for cruise ship lawsuit

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) —The city of Juneau has decided to put up another \$100,000 to defend itself in a lawsuit brought by the cruise industry alleging it misused funds paid by cruise ship passengers.

The \$100,000 approved by the Juneau Assembly on Monday was drawn from the city's sales tax fund levied on merchants within the city. It is in addition to more than \$283,000 the city has already spent in legal fees in the case. Some of the funds have been covered by marine passenger fees.

The lawsuit filed by Cruise Lines International Association in April 2016 challenges the legality of Juneau's use of a \$5 per-passenger fee it collects from the nearly 1 million cruise ship passengers who visit annually. It claims the money was spent on projects that violate federal guidelines, including the development of a park featuring a life-sized whale sculpture a mile away from port.

Assembly members did not comment on the transfer of the funds Monday, KTOO-FM reported.

Their decision comes less than a month after the assembly voted 7-1 to exempt on board sales and services on cruise ships in port. The city Finance Department estimated the exemption would cost about \$100,000 annually.

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### King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	L	T	O	S	K	I	B	L	A	H	
C	U	E	D	E	E	L	A	I	D	E	
H	A	R	D	B	A	L	L	L	E	A	R
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Y	E	L	P	O	P	T	E	A	S	T	

### Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

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# Von Bargaen

Continued from page 1

remove and install the new would follow.

"We're going to plug ahead," she said. "It could be two to three months, best case scenario."

Also part of the discussion was Wrangell's water rates. Finance director Lee Burgess put together a cost analysis breaking down what different consumption levels cost consumers per gallon, compared to the cost to produce them. The break-even point for residential consumption, for instance, which is unmetered and charges a flat \$40.75 monthly rate, is at around 9,863 gallons of water. Less than that, and the city makes some amount of profit. Beyond that, and the city begins to lose money.

Commercial rates are metered, with the cost per user increasing incrementally beyond the \$26.76 monthly rate past the 5,000 gallon mark. Again, the city's break-even point is at around 9,737 gallons,

with any higher usage rates creating a loss to produce. Metered large commercial is even more skewed, with the \$401.67 monthly rate start to climb beyond a 500,000-gallon threshold. Well before that point the city's break-even is at 119,565 gallons.

Decker found the information surprising, and said it demonstrated that Wrangell's usage rates would need to be reconsidered.

"I think people need to realize that rates have got to go up. It's just a question of how much," she said. "All customers across the board are not paying enough to cover what it costs to produce water." But that item would be left for later discussions.

In other business, in her first report as interim city manager, Carol Rushmore had some good news about the state budget. Senate Bill 23, currently the preferred budget this session, preserved the \$5 million in the Department of Transportation's harbor facilities fund needed to renovate Shoemaker Bay Harbor. At a teleconferenced hearing early Tuesday, Rushmore and



DAN RUDY / WRANGELL SENTINEL

At right, Lisa Von Bargaen meets with residents during a planned meet and greet for manager candidates at the Stikine Inn on April 5. Von Bargaen was confirmed as Wrangell's newest manager in a late-night meeting of the Assembly on Tuesday.

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harbormaster Greg Meissner testified in favor of maintaining the funding, which would go to the top-queued Shoemaker project. She explained the state match will help leverage \$6.2 million of local funds to fund the harbor's replacement.

Assembly members passed on second reading a quartet of ordinances instituting an excise on cultivated cannabis, and updating municipal code to deal with marijuana within the borough. A public hearing portion was held before the meeting, though members of the public did not attend.

The Assembly had little more to say on the topic either, having discussed options pretty thoroughly at its March 28 meeting. The excise affixes an extra \$10 per ounce of cannabis raised in licensed operations in the borough. The ordinances also limited business hours for marijuana-related businesses to be prohibited between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 a.m., Monday through Sunday.

In between the public hearing segment and the meeting proper, Southeast Alaska Power Agency chief executive Trey Acteson updated the Assembly on the organization's doings. The joint-action hydroelectricity agency currently powers the communities of Wrangell, Ketchikan and Petersburg. Several sizable projects undertaken over the past year included raising the dam at the Swan Lake plant, installation of around 100 aluminum helicopter pads for maintenance along interconnecting transmission lines, and installation of a pair of new generators in Wrangell.

Looking ahead, Acteson explained SEAPA would be working with the Army Corps of Engineers to mitigate silting issues at Tyee Harbor. In the event cost-sharing on the part of the Corps is unavailable, he said another option may just be to move the whole dock beyond the river, which would eliminate the need to dredge periodically.

SEAPA will also be conducting review for addition of an additional turbine at Tyee Lake. The current dam structure has a slot available for a third turbine, which would increase by half the facility's peak output capabilities. It would also provide for a spare turbine, in the event of one of the other two failing.

"We'll look at a lot of the different attributes there. There are a few political asterisks there as well," said Acteson. With the review will come the opportunity to assess the price of a new turbine, which could be considerable.

The agency is also looking into the feasibility of further diversification, with opportunities for geothermal power at Bell Island, wind generation at South Mitkof, and some sites that may prove fruitful for tidal generation. Air source heat pumps, biomass, batteries, solar power and even electric vehicle penetration are also under consideration in the future.

## Seasonal bat survey being conducted in southeast Alaska

PETERSBURG, Alaska (AP) – A group of volunteers from five southeast Alaska communities is working to document bats as part of a program aimed at combating a deadly virus caused by the animals.

Volunteers from Petersburg, Juneau, Haines, Sitka and Wrangell are participating in this year's program, which is coordinated through the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Over the last three years, the program has helped gather data to prevent White Noise Syndrome. The fungal disease has killed off more than 7 million bats in the Lower 48 since it was discovered a decade ago.

The volunteers will be monitoring bat activity and recording bat calls while they conduct the driving surveys.

"When a bat comes it's really clear what it is," said Sunny Rice, one of the volunteers. "So then you've heard it and you keep driving around and you're sort of guessing, if you're familiar with where you are, 'Oh, I totally think there's going to be bats here or maybe there's going to be bats at this place where I go berry picking,' so it's like a treasure hunt kind of."

Southeast Alaska has five main bat species that mostly roost in trees during the summer and hibernate through the winter. The region's most common species is the Little Brown Bat.

From 2014 to 2016, volunteers also spotted California myotis, Keen's myotis and silver-haired bats, which are most common in Sitka. Just one hoary bat was found in the entire region and was spotted in Haines last year.

Scientists are using the information on Alaska's bat populations to learn more about White Noise Syndrome, which causes bats to wake early from hibernation and then starve from lack of food. The disease is concerning for scientists because bats in the region do not multiply quickly. The Little Brown Bat can live for over 30 years but the females only have one pup a year.

"And so we're racing against the clock," said Tory Rhoads, a scientist with the state, "to try and establish any information we can about bat populations in the event that White Nose Syndrome comes to Alaska."

Fish and Game has also extended its efforts beyond the region by partnering with British Columbia to educate the public about how bats can accidentally be moved from one location to another. Bats can end up on camping gear, in Christmas trees or on boats without people noticing as they travel.

"And it isn't too far of a stretch to say that if White Noise comes to Alaska it could very, very likely be by way of a stowaway bat on a ship somewhere," Rhoads said.

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# Assembly works to keep water flowing this summer

By DAN RUDY  
Sentinel writer

Ahead of the coming summer, the Borough Assembly held a special meeting on April 6 to get an update on the city's water situation.

Last summer Wrangell entered a state of emergency for a month, after Public Works reported its reserves of treated water were threateningly low. Once water is treated and filtered at the municipal plant, it is stored in two 424,000-gallon tanks before distribution. Due to the position of each tank's outflow about 130,000 gallons are considered unusable, effectively limiting overall capacity to 718,000 gallons.

Due to its filtration methods unsuitability to the local water supply, the plant has often struggled to meet peak demand during the summers. Generally the problem has been low water levels in its two feeder reservoirs, but in 2016 cumulative problems with the plant's four slow sand filters had caught up to the extent that production had been cut back significantly.

Silt and sediment build-up occurring in the filters is supposed to be dredged out in layers over time, with silica-based sand added to replace the lost layers. Balking at the cost of replacing the sand as needed – in the hundreds of thousands of dollars – the city instead found ways around the problem, and as such the filter system is almost unusable. In its 18 years of operation, the plant's sand has still never been changed out.

"We're not doing what we should be doing," Public Works director Amber Al-Haddad summed up to the Assembly in her report last week. "This sand should not be here."

In a financial summary, finance director Lee Burgess explained it would cost \$830,000 to get the new silica bought and delivered to the city dock, and another \$200,000 to replace the old material in the filters. The city's water fund only has about \$280,000 available to it currently, due to rolling costs related to new ozone generators the plant needed that were acquired last year.

While money from the general reserves fund could be tapped for the emergency appropriation, Burgess explained that could complicate an ongoing application with the Department of Agriculture for a loan to build a new water plant. The new treatment plant design would be based on a successful test of a dissolved air filtration sample plant conducted last summer, with the full facility estimated to cost around \$8.5 million.

This was about \$2.5 million more than expected last year, due to the need to construct a new building to house the facility. Included in the price were the additional inspections, contin-

gencies, and design costs involved in construction.

Tapping the general fund for the sand replacement project would raise questions, Burgess explained, and could shift more of the cost share of the larger plant replacement project onto the borough. Even if funds were "loaned" from the general fund, it could take a long time to repay. Burgess explained that a discussed increase in water rates by five percent would only yield \$25,000 per year for the city, taking two or more decades to repay a loan from the general fund for the sand.

"Boy, that's going to be a long haul," observed Assembly member Patty Gilbert.

Other less expensive work-arounds were discussed, such as altering the plant's roughing filters and cleaning the current sand as well as possible. But Assembly member David Powell questioned whether they were avoiding the obvious solution.

"We know it'll work if we replace the sand," he said. Regardless of the other loan process, he felt the time to act was now. "I read the same thing. To me this is basically an emergency."

A major factor is time. If ordered now, Al-Haddad said the sand may not be installed in time for the coming summer season, when seafood production and related activity steps up demand. But without it, it was highly uncertain how long production could keep up. Given increasing demand and the aging plant's diminishing efficiency, something would have to be done, she explained. Even building a new plant would not help in the meantime, with estimates for funding and construction suggesting a three- to five-year process.

That brought Powell back to the question of the new sand.

"If we replace this sand now, would it get us through the next five or seven years?" he asked the head of Public Works.

"I think it would get us

through," Al-Haddad replied.

With a regularly scheduled meeting planned for Tuesday, the Assembly agreed to mull the decision over the weekend while Al-Haddad determined whether an alternative work-around for the coming summer would be doable.

She will also bring back a revised water shortage management plan, based on feedback given on a draft during the meeting. The plan would set out a guided response for city staff based on water levels in the two treated reserve tanks, divided into four stages of urgency.

The plan was fairly comprehensive, not just listing the measures to gauge a shortage by but also recommended enforcement mechanisms and means for resolving disputes.

"I have a little concern that it's a little too detailed and long for enforcement," noted Assembly member Julie Decker.

"I think we can simplify things," agreed fellow member Mark Mitchell.

Decker also thought the second stage of response should have "more teeth," with an enforcement mechanism like fines formally written into the codified fine schedule. The important thing was to head off any shortage at the pass, ahead of emergency measures. "You don't want to be getting to that critical stage."

"I think that it absolutely has to have teeth," agreed Becky Rooney.

Mitchell was also concerned that the stage curtailing car and boat washing could be inimical to boatyard operations, as vessels need to be cleaned down after being pulled from the water before most work can be done.



PHOTO BY DAN RUDY

Water plant manager Wayne McHolland (at left) shows Aaron Bolton the roughing filters at Wrangell's treatment facility. The roughing filters are the preliminary stage of purification before water heads through slow sand filtration and chemical treatment.

He noted that seafood processors could still continue operations at Stage II, and felt it would be an unfair distinction to make.

"You can't favor one business over another," he said.

There is an exemption in the action plan which allows for industrial and commercial water customers to continue utilizing water for their business operation needs, in particular those at the port and harbor facilities and fueling stations. Under Stage II, all such uses would see a reduction by 25 percent. Further limitations on industrial and commercial would amplify under State III, when water levels have reached a severe shortage.

The fourth and final stage can be declared when water storage

tank levels fall below 10 feet for a period of three days. At this stage, with both tanks' actual capacities taken into consideration the city has only six feet of usable water in the tanks. At this point, all outdoor use of water is prohibited, and any customers found to have a leaky or damaged line can have their service shut off until repairs are made. Industrial and commercial water customers at this point would have water use reduced by 75 percent, while boat and harbor facilities would be discontinued until the situation improved.

The Assembly was expected to address and potentially adopt the revised plan at Tuesday's meeting. (See Assembly story on page 1.)


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