



PHOTO BY MARK C. ROBINSON / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Snow adds to Thanksgiving fun

Claire Rooney, 13, with a snowball at the ready, gives chase after Mariah Carney, 11, during the 14th annual Turkey Trot. Participants suited up on the snowy Thanksgiving Day morning at the Volunteer Park Trail behind Evergreen Elementary School. Costumes were encouraged, and many runners and walkers came in fun attire for the event.

Assembly begins rezone as WCA plans to build a new cultural center

By SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

The borough assembly has taken the first step toward assisting WCA's purchase of land just south of the Wrangell Medical Center, where the tribal council plans to build a cultural center.

Though Tribal Administrator Esther Aaltséen Reese said any ribbon-cutting ceremony would be at least a few years away, Borough Manager Mason Villarma said the borough and WCA hope to have the rezoning and borough land sale finalized by the end of the year.

The new cultural center will be built behind the WCA offices on Zimovia Highway, and Reese said the campus would provide classrooms for children and spaces for tribal elders to gather. She wants the center to be capable of hosting community events and a commercial kitchen will likely be included in any design. She also envisions a second story with apartments.

WCA also plans for the property to contain "a community garden, recycling station and a winding handicap-accessible path through the campus surrounded by important medicinal and edible plants."

Reese believes constructing the apartments atop the cultural center would not only make the project more viable, but it would help counter Wrangell's housing woes.

The assembly on Nov. 18 approved the first reading of an ordinance to rezone seven parcels to allow development of a community center. A public hearing and second reading of the zoning change from open space public to mixed-use is scheduled for the Dec. 17 assembly meeting.

The assembly also plans on finalizing the land

sale in that same meeting. One of the parcels is owned by the borough; the other six properties are owned by WCA, Tlingit and Haida Regional Housing Authority, SEARHC or private individuals.

The project is still in the ideas phase, and Reese said WCA will take everything into account before moving forward with any plans.

"We've talked about this over the years," she said. "We'll gather together all of our wish lists, and our architect can help us determine the size of the building."

The construction phase of the project could cost WCA around \$4 million, according to the tribal council's land purchase application to the borough. The price of the borough parcel will be determined by an appraisal.

Previously, the WCA carving shed on Front Street was able to provide ample space for community outreach programs and other events. However, since a totem-carving program now occupies the building (and since WCA plans on continuing its totem-carving endeavors), building a more all-encompassing culture center is a logical next step.

For funding, Reese said the project is largely dependent on grants. WCA plans on targeting funds from multiple sources, aiming to acquire federal money and large donations from individual donors. Reese described fundraising for the project as a "multi-pronged approach."

Though the project is far from finalized, Reese said that the prospect of it is building some fervor around town.

"Everyone we've talked with is extremely excited."

Testing underway of new Tlingit & Haida wireless internet service

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Tidal Network is operating in its test mode, with about a dozen Wrangell households trying out the new wireless internet service provided by the Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

Wrangell is the first location in Southeast to get the new service, which is funded by a federal grant for construction and later will be expanded across the region.

During the testing phase, technicians will be "breaking it

to fix it," looking to maximize the signals' range and finding the best system for managing the fiber optic and satellite services to the towers, explained Chris Cropley, Tidal Network director.

Tlingit & Haida has not yet set the customer rates for when the system opens to the general public. "The No. 1 barrier to (high-speed internet) access is price," Cropley said. "We want to make it as affordable as we can."

GCI's residential internet services in Wrangell start at \$90

a month; Alaska Power and Telephone's services can be less, though at somewhat slower speeds for the lower-cost plans.

"Before we start charging people, we want to work out all the bugs," Cropley said.

Unlike GCI and AP&T, which deliver services by fiber optic cable or wire to homes and businesses, the new Tlingit & Haida service will be wireless, similar to a cell signal. That means terrain and distance to a tower are important considerations.

Buildings and trees don't get in the way, but hillsides do, he said.

Currently, the Tidal Network has its equipment on two towers in Wrangell, leasing space from the private owners, with plans to build its own tower next year to cover more of the town.

The testing phase has been underway about a month, Cropley said Nov. 27. The service will be free for the test

households for up to six months, according to Tlingit & Haida's invitation to find a dozen willing participants.

Signals from the two towers — one on the hillside near the community's water reservoirs and one near Shoemaker Bay — can reach about two miles each, he said. The network has purchased property at about 3-Mile Zimovia Highway to erect its own tower, filling in the cov-

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Salvation Army depends on community for holiday help

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

After distributing over 120 Thanksgiving food baskets — 20 more than last year — The Salvation Army has shifted into Christmas gear to share even more food, plus presents for children.

"It's a shame that we have to do it," Salvation Army Capt. Chase Green said of the growing need for food assistance in town. But the community has responded with donations to fill the need, he said.

Plans for fundraising and community assistance this month include a dinner Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Stikine Inn; the annual Red Kettles donations campaign; "Angel Trees" to solicit gifts of toys for children; and, of course, sharing those toys and food boxes with families for Christmas

week.

The prime rib dinner — with some surf added to the turf, Green said — starts at 6 p.m. Friday. Tickets are \$60 each, with seating limited to 90 people.

"We still have tickets for sale," he said the day after Thanksgiving.

The evening will include a silent auction and live auction of donated items, which so far include a log cabin dollhouse, knitted clothing and Alaska Airlines tickets.

All of the money raised will go toward youth and family services, Green said.

Anyone interested in buying a ticket can go to the front desk at the Stikine Inn or call The Salvation Army at 907-874-3753.

Continued on page 4

Schools receive \$20,000 to fund new esports team

By SAM PAUSMAN
Senior Sentinel Reporter

Mikki Angerman just wants everyone to feel included. She isn't an esports fanatic. She doesn't even call herself a gamer. Instead, she's a special services educator who is passionate about promoting inclusion and acceptance.

"Our world right now needs empathy more than anything else," she said. Angerman wants the middle and high school esports team to be a conduit for just that.

She hosted preliminary and casual esports practices last spring, but after realizing what was needed to both expand the team and possibly compete against other schools, she opted to pursue outside grant funding ahead of the current school year.

She wrote a letter to the Wrangell Cooperative Association asking for their help. The tribal council agreed to pursue funding on her behalf and acquired a \$20,000 grant through Indian Health Services' Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative.

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Senior Center Menu

Thursday, Dec. 5

New England clam chowder, danish salad, half sandwich ham and tomato, fruit

Friday, Dec. 6

Ground beef Spanish rice, brussels sprouts, carrot raisin salad

Monday, Dec. 9

No meal service on Mondays

Tuesday, Dec. 10

Chinese fruited pork, oriental vegetables, cucumber salad, steamed rice

Wednesday, Dec. 11

Chicken sandwich with lettuce, pasta salad, fruit

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

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

Ferry Schedule

Northbound

Sunday, Dec. 15

Columbia, 10:45 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 22

Columbia, 4:45 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 29

Columbia, 9:30 p.m.

Sunday, Jan. 5

Columbia, 4:45 p.m.

Southbound

Wednesday, Dec. 18

Columbia, 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 25

Columbia, 7:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 1

Columbia, 7:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 8

Columbia, 6:30 a.m.

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

Tides

High Tides

Low Tides

	AM		PM		AM		PM	
	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft	Time	Ft
Dec. 4	02:45	13.5	02:06	16.0	07:57	4.8	08:44	-1.0
Dec. 5	03:26	13.3	02:48	15.4	08:41	5.0	09:28	-0.5
Dec. 6	04:13	13.2	03:38	14.6	09:36	5.2	10:18	0.1
Dec. 7	05:07	13.4	04:42	13.6	10:41	5.1	11:14	0.8
Dec. 8	06:08	13.9	06:02	12.9	11:55	4.6
Dec. 9	07:09	14.7	07:29	12.7	00:15	1.5	01:12	3.4
Dec. 10	08:07	15.8	08:45	13.2	01:18	2.1	02:25	1.7

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

Dec. 4, 1924

A second cold storage plant for Wrangell is scheduled to be in operation within three months after the beginning of the year. E. A. Albright, representing F. Klevenhusen, arrived in Wrangell on Tuesday evening for the purpose of putting the Columbia & Northern cold storage plant into shape to operate again after being shut down for six years. Mr. Albright is the engineer who constructed the Columbia & Northern plant at Wrangell more than 12 years ago. He will make a thorough inspection of the plant and dock and will make an estimate of the amount of lumber, piling and other

material necessary to put the plant in first-class shape.

Dec. 2, 1949

The first shipment of playground equipment arrived recently for the playground across the street from the City Hall. Installation will begin as soon as draining of the ground has been completed, Mrs. Joyce Hay, chairwoman of the playground committee, reported. It is hoped that this can be accomplished before a cold spell sets in and freezes the ground. "The genuine spirit of cooperation shown by the people of Wrangell through their financial contributions, as well as money raised by the

Civic Club playground committee, has made it possible for the attainment of the goal set to complete this project," Mrs. Hay said.

Dec. 4, 1974

Tapping of hydroelectric power resources by Petersburg and Wrangell "is the only way the two communities can exist," State Rep. Ernie Haugen told the Petersburg Rotary Club. Haugen said the two communities must press for development of the Thomas Bay hydroelectric project as the best answer to their electrical generating problems. "I am confident," Haugen told the group at their Wednesday

luncheon session at the Salvation Army hall, "that we'll see 75 cent (per gallon) oil before 1980." Wrangell relies solely on diesel-generating electric plants for its power. Development of power at Thomas Bay was proposed last year by Kaiser Engineers. A joint organization has been formed by Petersburg and Wrangell as an initial step.

Dec. 2, 1999

When we leave Wrangell, the closest big city we know is Seattle. But who would think this would be an average trip for some Wrangell High School students? In a different aspect of school-to-work, this is an opportunity for high school

seniors to travel out of state for some of the best postsecondary prep that the Wrangell School District offers. Every year, one college hosts the annual College Fair, where over 250 college and military booths offer a wide variety and extensive information for our youth. Students interact with representatives, attend workshops, visit job sites and get to have some fun while they enjoy their short vacation. This year our school sent 10 seniors and two chaperones. Both chaperones commented that the activities went well this year, saying the students were trustworthy and took the fair very seriously.



ALASKA AIRLINES CLUB 49 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

CHRISTMAS TREE LANE decorated trees are up for bid starting Thursday, Dec. 5, through 1 p.m. Dec 19 at the Nolan Center lobby. Half the proceeds go to the treemaker and the other half to Hospice of Wrangell. For more information, email rooney@aptalaska.net.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 5, in the elementary school gym. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. Stream online: <https://bit.ly/3G2ulZ8>.

SANTA CLAUS 4 to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 6, at the Nolan Center during Midnight Madness, with a break during the tree lighting ceremony. Kids will still be able to say hello and get their pictures taken.

TREE LIGHTING 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 6, downtown between the Elks Hall and LMN.

COMMUNITY MARKET from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 6, at the Nolan Center for Midnight Madness. Check out the locally grown and handcrafted items.

NOLAN CENTER THEATER "Gladiator II" rated R, 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7; 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8; 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9. The action adventure drama film runs 2 hours and 28 minutes; tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under age 12. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

WRANGELL COMMUNITY CHORALE Christmas concert 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8, at the Presbyterian Church.

MIDDLE and HIGH SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10, in the high school gym. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Stream online: <https://bit.ly/3G2ulZ8>.

WRANGELL MARINERS' MEMORIAL board members will be available to assist in completing applications to add names to the commemorative plaques from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 9 and 19, Jan. 2, 13, 22 and 31 at the Nolan Center. Applications are available online at wrangellmarinersmemorial.com. Donations and memberships are also accepted online.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY, children 12 and younger are welcome to the annual American Legion Auxiliary community children's Christmas party. The party (split into two sessions) will be Saturday, Dec. 14. For more information contact Marilyn Mork at 907-470-0085.

ADVENTURERS CLUB 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14, at the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Come learn about the Bible, pick up skills and earn badges. Register and learn more at <https://bit.ly/3TBw0fI>. A \$10 fee covers the school year.

"BABE" 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17, at the Nolan Center. The 1995 animal adventure, comedy, drama, family movie is free; presented by Island of Faith Lutheran Church as part of its retro-movie program. The concession stand will be open.

COMMUNITY PUPPET PLAY REHEARSALS 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays at The Salvation Army. Middle and high school age students are welcome to participate in a fun, low-stress, low-embarrassment form of theater. Learn the basics and build up to preparing a Christmas play for the community. Adults interested in helping call 907-874-3753.

CHILDREN'S CLASS 2:30 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays at the elementary school music room for kindergarten to fifth grade. The focus of the program is for spiritual growth to learn to apply virtues through stories, devotions, music, games and art. All are welcome. No charge. For more information call Kay Larson, 907-209-9117.

WRANGELL KIDS CLUB 2:30 to 5 p.m. Mondays at the community center for open gym, board games and coloring; 2:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesdays at the Irene Ingle Public Library for STEM activities and crafts. For ages 7 to 13 years old. Runs through Dec. 16. Free.

AA MEETINGS: North Star Group meets from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays, St. Philip's Episcopal Church.

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

- **WATER AEROBICS** noon to 1 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the swimming pool with volunteers Alice Rooney and Melody Hazel.
- **PICKLEBALL** 6 to 8 p.m. Mondays and Saturdays, noon to 2 p.m. Wednesdays at the community center gym. For ages 18 years old and up.
- **ZUMBA** 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the community center gym with Nene Wilson. For ages 16 years old and up.

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FREIGHT FOR LESS

Documentary program plants seed of inspiration, lifelong learning

By MARC LUTZ

For the Wrangell Sentinel

When See Stories brought its documentary filmmaking program to Wrangell two years ago, most of the students who participated hadn't picked up a camera outside of what was on their phones.

Now, Laura Davies, a teacher at Stikine Middle School, is carrying on what she and her students learned by creating Stikine Stories, producing more documentaries and podcasts. One of her former students who participated in the original program even plans to make filmmaking a career.

Alaska-based See Stories, a nonprofit organization focused on building inclusive communities through film and storytelling, began by focusing on youth education in Title I schools (lower-income communities) and Alaska Native communities nearly 10 years ago, said Seth Bader, the youth programs manager.

"Over its 10 years, See Stories and affiliated programming has been probably in upward of 50 rural communities around the state," he said. "Now, we've expanded in the last few years — and in the last couple years the growth has been exponential — into trying to support the mission through teachers. In the last couple years, we've probably been around close to 70 teachers that have taken See Stories' teacher professional development program."

Recently, See Stories completed a vetted curriculum with input from "culture bearers and teachers from around the state," Bader said. "The goal there has been to really get them trained on our curriculum so that they can implement programs at their school and through their communities."

That's exactly what has hap-

pened in Wrangell.

When the program came to town two years ago, students worked with Bader to create 10-minute documentaries. One focused on the history of an old timber mill, another looked at fishing, and still another, created by student Jackson Pearson, covered the tourism industry.

The foray into filming (more specifically, video recording) inspired Pearson to pursue a career in documentary filmmaking.

Thanks to Davies' fundraising efforts last year, she was able to form Stikine Stories, a club that is modeled after See Stories, and purchase video and editing equipment, giving middle school and high school students the opportunity to continue creating documentaries.

Although this year's club is still coming up with ideas, Pearson, now a sophomore at Wrangell High School, has already been conducting interviews for his project as an intern for See Stories. He was approached by Bader over the summer to see if he'd be interested in participating in the internship program. Bader said he was impressed with Pearson's natural filming abilities and interview skills.

Pearson accepted the internship without hesitation, having been inspired by the first experience.

"We did the workshop when I was in my eighth-grade year," he recalled. "I would say about halfway through, I already decided that that's what I want to do in the future as a full-time job because I love doing it so much."

He said he enjoys hearing the perspectives of other people and then being able to share those stories with others. "Without documentaries and stuff, you wouldn't be able to hear the untold stories of other people."

This year, as an intern, Pear-



PHOTO COURTESY LAURA DAVIES

Jackson Pearson, a high school sophomore, interviewed former Alaska Gov. Frank Murkowski for his documentary filmmaking internship project on the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

son is working on a project about the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). He's already interviewed former U.S. senator Frank Murkowski and a few other key players in the federal legislation.

See Stories was approached by Deborah Williams, now a lecturer at University of California, Santa Barbara, with a concern over how much students were learning about ANILCA by the time they graduated from high school in Alaska.

Williams, an attorney, lived and worked in Alaska for about 37 years. Along with a myriad of other roles, she was appointed in 1994 as special assistant for Alaska to the Secretary of the Interior. In that role, she advised the Secretary on the management of more than 220 million acres of national lands in the state. It tied in with ANILCA.

"She had noticed that students — especially students graduating high school — would graduate with a very rudimentary or sometimes non-existent understanding of ANILCA," Bader said. "I think there are a lot of reasons for that. One, ANILCA is just so complex, honestly."

Pearson and other interns will conduct interviews with officials, leaders and other community members throughout the state to produce a series of videos focused on the many aspects of ANILCA and how it affects the differing communities.

Along with her concerns, Bader said, Williams also brought funding for the project, contributed through the Audubon Society, "to just tell the story of ANILCA."

"The big goal is just being able to create a series of films and then, alongside that, some curriculum, so that teachers can have a freely accessible library of films and curriculum to teach their students about ANILCA," he said.

Pearson's angle on ANILCA will be how the law affects subsistence users.

Though the documentaries being considered by students in Stikine Stories aren't as complex as ANILCA, they will still tell the stories of the people who make Alaska work.

One such story would be produced by Kalee Herman, a junior, about oyster farming. She would focus on her family's operation, Canoe Lagoon Oysters, and how the oysters are grown,

how the family travels to the remote site, and how the mollusks are harvested. She said she would probably get a lot of drone shots, along with using one of the club's video cameras.

The equipment makes all the difference in the quality of the documentaries, Davies said, and along with the cameras and laptops they use, she said a grant from the Sealaska Heritage Institute will purchase four iPads with a drawing and animation app called Procreate that will allow the budding filmmakers to add animation and other graphics to their documentaries.

"We have all the equipment ... and so far, nothing has been broken or lost," Davies said. "Except the irresponsible cross-country coach left the yearbook camera in the van. That was me."

Silje Morse, a freshman, isn't quite sure what her next project is going to be after her previous video projects on the timber mill and her grandmother, but the creative process is part of what attracts her to filmmaking.

"It's fun to make raw footage. It's pretty satisfying to go from this raw, unfinished video, and then you can mold it and shape it into this polished film," she said. "It's just pretty fun to do."

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Trump is messing with Santa’s list-keeping authority

BY LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

No matter what President-elect Donald Trump may think about the far reach of his powers, only Santa is allowed to make the list of who is naughty or nice.

Yet just as Santa Claus is coming to town, so is Trump. And while I expect most people can live with whichever one of Santa’s lists they fall into for holiday gifts, I suggest they’d better not cry and better not pout about Trump’s lists — I doubt it would matter. He seems determined to serve a holiday feast covered in a thick sauce of sweet revenge.

The president-elect spent much of his campaign making lists — and announcing them on social media — of the people he would go after when he returns to the White House.

His naughty list includes former members of Congress, the current president and vice president of the United States, FBI officials, Justice Department attorneys, news organizations, nonprofits, political donors, election workers and many others.

All it took to make the list was an unkind word about Trump, taking a position opposite of his views, questioning any of his allegations, standing up to his bullying. So much for free speech without retribution. Guess I’d better rethink what I say about Santa Claus in public.

“Those involved in unscrupulous behavior will be sought out, caught and prosecuted at levels, unfortunately, never seen before in our country,” Trump posted on his Truth Social website in September. Unfortunate is right — though what’s unfortunate is that it could happen in this country as Trump works through his revenge list.

His nice list includes friends, supporters and relatives who are getting the fattest of holiday sugar plums this year. That includes Charles Kushner, the father-in-law of his daughter Ivanka Trump, who was named U.S. ambassador to France. It’s Trump’s second gift to Kushner: He pardoned the convicted felon on his way out of the White House four years ago. Even Santa can’t pull that kind of magic out of his bag.

And while it seems no federal agency is excused from the president-elect’s naughty list, the FBI appears to hold down the No. 1 spot, which is not a badge of honor under the new administration. Trump has long blamed the FBI for all sorts of nefarious things dating back to his first term. The head of the FBI, who was appointed by Trump in 2017, and his agents would be lucky if their gift were a lump of coal.

Instead, it looks like the White House is thinking of tar and feathers as a holiday gift.

The winning presidential candidate last week named a new head for the FBI, a first-term loyalist named Kash Patel, who a few months ago on a conservative talk radio show said he would shut down the bureau’s headquarters building in Washington, D.C., and then reopen it the next day “as a museum of the deep state.” He didn’t say whether he would charge admission to the museum.

Patel made no attempt to sugarcoat his threat against the news media in a 2023 podcast interview with Stephen K. Bannon, who was convicted of contempt of Congress but pardoned by Trump soon after he pardoned Kushner.

The FBI nominee threatened to go after journalists if appointed to a role in a Trump administration: “We’re going to come after you, whether it’s criminally or civilly — we’ll figure that out,” he said.

So, while Trump and his loyalists are figuring out how to punish people they don’t like, I wonder what more gifts they have in mind for friends on the nice list.

Biden wrong to pardon son

As if the American public needed another reason to be cynical about their elected leaders. As if people needed one more reminder that justice isn’t equal, or that politicians can go back on their pledges.

President Joe Biden on Sunday pardoned his son, Hunter Biden, wiping away federal criminal convictions on income tax and gun charges. That’s even though the president and his spokesperson said repeatedly this year that he would do no such thing.

Donald Trump’s multiple pardons of crooks, cheats and liars in the final weeks of his first presidential term — and his appointment of at least one of them to a high-profile job in his second term — does not excuse Biden’s pardon of his son. Instead, Biden’s pardon reminds the public that knowing the right people is the best way to avoid jail.

The actions of both men tell the public that jury verdicts and judicial decisions don’t mean the same thing to friends and relatives of presidents as they do for everyone else.

President Biden could have left office with dignity and a legacy of decades of public service. Pardoning his son means he will be remembered much the same as Trump: Playing favorites.

EDITORIAL

Alaska needs to replace the customers it loses

Sometimes, the best explanations are the simplest. Especially when it comes to economics.

The complicated way to describe the consequences of Alaska losing population, particularly working-age residents, is to explain that fewer people have moved north than have moved out of the state in each of the past 12 years. That net outmigration is making it hard for employers to fill jobs, which means reduced hours of operation, longer waits for services and less money in the economy.

The decline in working-age residents — ages 18 to 64 — is especially noticeable in vacant state jobs. Whether it’s state ferries lacking enough crew to operate a full schedule or essential government services delayed for lack of staff to handle the work, such as the monthslong delays in processing food stamp applications, the employee shortage affects most everyone.

Statewide, Alaska lost 30,000 working-age residents between 2013 and 2022, according to the Alaska Department of Labor. It’s a four-factor problem: People leaving Alaska; fewer babies born to people who stay; more residents retiring out of the workforce; and fewer people moving north.

The loss in Southeast is painful to count. The region has 5,600 fewer working-age residents this year than it had in 2010. That is a lot of economic loss.

All that adds up and makes sense, but maybe it’s too many numbers and too many pieces to make clear the problem.

Dan Robinson, the Department of Labor’s chief of analysis and research, explained it best in a presentation at the Resource Development Council annual conference in Anchorage last month. “Imagine yourself a store or a restaurant,” Robinson said, and your business needs to constantly attract new customers to replace the ones who stop coming. Failing to replace those lost customers is bad for business.

Alaska is failing to attract new customers to replace those it is losing.

No business can thrive with a shrinking customer base. And neither can the state.

“Something has changed about Alaska’s relative attractiveness,” Robinson said. “It’s likely complicated,” with no one answer as to why more people leave than move north.

What isn’t complicated is that elected officials and community leaders — starting with the governor and legislators — need to deal with the math. This isn’t about who can be the most pro-oil, pro-development, pro-business politician. None of that matters without workers to fill the jobs.

Alaskans need to look at why younger people are not moving to the state as much as they did in years past and address those needs, which include good schools, housing, child care, a strong university system, community services and the parks and recreation activities that younger families seek.

Make the state more attractive and they will come. And they will fill the jobs and start businesses. There is nothing more pro-development than that.

- Wrangell Sentinel

Salvation Army

Continued from page 1

The church’s Red Kettles campaign started in San Francisco in 1891, and though it does not have that long a history in Wrangell the money dropped in the kettles is essential to the organization’s year-round work, Green said. “This is the time of year where all of the money goes to support programs.”

The kettles will be at City Market and IGA until Christmas, except Sundays, he said.

Also between now and Christmas, The Salvation Army will be gathering toys

and food for distribution on Dec. 19 and 20. This year’s sign-up list for children’s toys has about 10 more families than last year.

The deadline has passed to sign up for Christmas toys and food, but Green said anyone who needs help can call The Salvation Army at 907-874-3753.

The organization’s food pantry will be open Christmas Eve.

Angel Trees will be up at Wells Fargo and First Bank, with hanging paper tags that provide information for peo-

ple who are willing to go shopping and donate toys. The tags do not have names but will say whether the child is a boy or a girl and provide their age, clothing sizes and holiday wish list.

Groups and businesses are invited to take several tags, Green said.

All gifts should be brought to the banks or The Salvation Army on Zimovia Highway by Dec. 15. No wrapping, please, Green said. “This way, we know what’s going into the baskets.”

Tree lighting, caroling and community market Friday

SENTINEL STAFF

‘Twas the weeks before Christmas and time for the annual tree lighting ceremony, set for 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 6, next to the Elks Hall. Caroling will begin at 5:30 p.m.

The annual chamber of commerce Midnight Madness sales event at downtown shops also will be held Friday evening, with hot cocoa and popcorn at the chamber’s downtown pavilion — and a chance to roast marshmallows — sponsored by the Wrangell Fire Department.

The community market is scheduled to run from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday at the Nolan Center, featuring Santa Claus jolly at the ready for photos with kids.

The market — and Santa — will take a short break for the tree lighting at 6 p.m.

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American Legion Auxiliary running Santa for Seniors again

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

There's still time for people to donate items for the American Legion Auxiliary's Santa for Seniors program

Gifts should be turned in by Dec. 16 for the annual sharing event, now in its fifth year.

Auxiliary volunteers will deliver the gifts to residents at the long-term care facility at Wrangell Medical Center, most of the residents at Senior Apartments, and the town's other older citizens who don't have any family or are shut in at home and unable to get out, said Marilyn Mork, who helps to organize the program.

"We want to help brighten the season for our local seniors," the Auxiliary says in its promotions for the event. "Please help

us be their Santa this year."

Gifts may be dropped off at Angerman's, City Market, First Bank, Ottesen's Ace Hardware, Sentry Hardware, Tongass Federal Credit Union, Wells Fargo or Wrangell IGA.

The Legion Auxiliary's suggestions include winter clothing such as slippers, socks, scarves, hats and gloves; large-print books and large-numbers clocks; Christmas candy; gift cards for groceries or hair salon; and lotions.

Volunteers will gift wrap and deliver the donated items in time for Christmas. Anyone with spare time to help wrap and deliver can call Mork at 907-470-0085. And anyone who knows a senior without family in town or is shut in can call Mork to get them added to the

delivery list.

People who would prefer to donate money rather than go shopping can send a check to the American Legion Auxiliary, PO Box 546, Wrangell 99929.

In addition to helping seniors, the organization is sponsoring its annual holiday party for children on Saturday, Dec. 14.

The event is in its 14th year.

Actually, there will be two parties, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, to accommodate all of the children, Mork said. She will send out invites, likely on social media, to let parents know when to bring their children to the American Legion Hall.

As of Nov. 29, almost 200 kids were signed up for the parties, she said, adding that organizers have close to an additional 40 gifts for kids who did not sign up in advance but are welcome to come to the Legion Hall.

The party is open to infants through kids 12 years old.

Hundreds in prize money at stake for best-decorated Christmas homes

BY SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

Maybe Clark Griswold would have been able to get those lights working a little quicker if he was motivated by the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce's hefty prize packages.

The chamber's annual Christmas home decorations contest begins soon, and if your home has the best decorations, you could win \$300. Second place will win \$200, and third place will win \$100. There will be \$50 prizes for two additional honorable mentions as well.

There is a separate category for businesses. The business with the best window decorations will win the chamber's silver membership package, which is valued at \$600 and consists of the basic membership perks as well as tech and software support, two tickets to the annual dinner, a small poster at chamber events and an ad in the king salmon fishing derby booklet.

If you want to compete for this year's home or business sweepstakes, call Tracey Martin, the chamber's executive director, at 907-874-3901 and tell her you want to enter the contest, or text 907-305-0685.

Decorations for the house competition need to be ready to go by Dec. 20 and business decora-

tions need to be completed by Dec. 13.

Wrangell Real Estate is sponsoring the home decorations contest, donating the prize money.

One change this year is the voting system for the business competition. Martin, in an effort to garner some community involvement, is opening up the vote to the public — kind of. It's a pay-to-play system where votes can be purchased for a dollar. She said the voting will be a fundraiser for the chamber, and there is no limit to the number of votes any individual may purchase. And yes, you can vote for the same business twice.

The public vote will take place between Dec. 14 and Dec. 20, Martin said, adding that she will release more voting details this week.

For the house side of the decorations competition, the chamber is partnering with the senior center. Martin envisions the senior center van driving older folks to all the decorated homes to judge the best ones. Unlike the business competition, the voting for the home competition will take place on a single night (Dec. 20).

"People can decorate their house with lights any way they want," she said.

Homes will only be judged against other homes and businesses only against other businesses.

Tidal Network

Continued from page 1

erage gap between the two existing towers.

The equipment and tower are on order and probably will be installed in the spring, Cropley said. "It depends on how bad the winter is."

Transmissions to and from

the towers will be carried by a mix of fiber optic cables and low-orbit satellites, which the Tidal Network is adjusting to find what combination works best.

Residential and commercial customers will need an antenna to receive and transmit the

wireless signal to and from the towers. It looks like "a stack of dinner plates," Cropley said, adding that Tlingit & Haida will provide and install the units on the outside of the building as part of its services.

The sites under testing operate at 4G speeds but all new tower units will provide faster 5G signals, he said.

The launch date for the general public will depend on the testing work, but the plan is for the first half of 2025.

"We've learned so much from Wrangell," Cropley said of the testing mode and towers. Tlingit & Haida has learned it is better to buy property and build its own towers than to lease space on commercial towers, he said.

The Tidal Network is "actively working" to start service in Petersburg and Sitka after Wrangell, and is trying to get started in Haines and on Prince of Wales Island.

The equipment and construction costs are covered by a \$50 million federal grant in 2022 that is part of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. In total, Tidal Network plans to put up more than 20 towers in Southeast communities where internet access is labeled as underserved or unserved.

Though the wireless technology is the same as what people use for their cell phones, and people can use the Tidal Network for Wi-Fi calling with their phones, Tlingit & Haida is not in the phone business and people will still need a cell phone provider to make calls.



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New Southeast representative prepares to start legislative job

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

Jeremy Bynum is transitioning from being a member of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly to his new job as state representative for Ketchikan, Metlakatla, Wrangell and Coffman Cove.

He has a lot to do in the seven weeks before he is sworn in as a member of the state House when the Legislature convenes in Juneau on Jan. 21.

He is looking for housing and for office staff; there will be orientation and training sessions for new lawmakers; there are legislative rules and procedures to learn; and issues to consider for possible legislation he might sponsor.

Orientation sessions start Dec. 16-18 in Anchorage, he said.

Bynum resigned from the borough assembly and attended his last meeting on Monday, Dec. 2. The Republican easily outpolled his two opponents in the Nov. 5 election to fill the seat vacated by the retirement of Rep. Dan Ortiz, who cited health reasons for his decision not to seek reelection to a sixth term.

As of last weekend, the freshman House lawmaker was undecided whether he would join the Democrat-led bipartisan coalition that holds a slim majority of 21 of 40 House members, or stick with the 19



Rep.-elect Jeremy Bynum

remaining Republicans who are trying to pry away a couple members so that they can form a controlling majority coalition.

"It's a long time between now and Juneau," Bynum said in an interview on Nov. 30, adding, "21 is a hard number to hold."

The political party or bipartisan coalition representing a majority of the House gets to choose the speaker and other lead-

ership positions, including committee chairs, and decide generally which bills will come to the floor for a vote by the full membership.

Bynum would like to get a seat on the finance committee, which writes the budget, though it is uncommon for a freshman to get assigned to the most powerful committee in the House — and most every legislator wants a seat on the 11-member committee.

If not finance, he said "resources (committee) wouldn't be a terrible place to land." Other preferred options, he said, would be the transportation committee, which oversees the state ferry system, or the rules committee, which determines which bills go to the floor for a vote.

Many of the finance committee's budget-writing decisions are determined by oil prices, which provide the second-largest source of general fund revenue for the state, behind the annual draw on Permanent Fund investment earnings.

With oil prices about \$10 a barrel below the level in May, when the Legislature finished its budget work for the year, the 2025 session could find lawmakers struggling to fulfill spending requests.

"I am under no illusion that oil prices will be better than they were last year," Bynum said.

While he is preparing for the move from Ketchikan and learning the details of the legislative process, he also is considering what issues he will want to focus on in Juneau and what bills he may want to introduce for legislative consideration.

He is considering a bill that would deny the Permanent Fund dividend to any Alaska with an outstanding warrant for their arrest. State law already denies the annual dividend to anyone in state custody on a felony charge or their third misdemeanor. Bynum is thinking about proposing a bill to add arrest warrants to the list.

As of Nov. 30, the Alaska State Troopers listed almost 6,500 outstanding warrants on their list.

The threat of losing their dividend might encourage people to report to law enforcement, Bynum said. "I think that would be a good incentive for people to clear their warrants."

Bynum also is considering introducing legislation that would add another multiplier to the state funding formula for public schools to pay out more money to districts that offer career-track vocational education programs.

The amount of state funding to local districts is an annual debate in the Legislature.

School district returns unused electric bus grant money to EPA

By SAM PAUSMAN
Sentinel senior reporter

The Wrangell school district will not purchase an electric school bus this year.

Business Manager Kristy Andrew informed the Environmental Protection Agency that the district would return the \$370,000 federal grant it received in 2023. After the school board voted down the purchase on Sept. 9, the district had until Nov. 22 to inform the EPA of its decision, which it did ahead of the extended deadline.

This concludes a four-month long saga in which the school board initially expressed optimism about the bus purchase before flipping on the decision in its 3-2 September vote.

Part of the reason to turn down the EPA grant — which could only be used to purchase an electric bus —

was because the funding would only cover a portion of the total expense.

The school district initially estimated that a bus would cost \$423,000, meaning it would need to dip into its reserve fund to cover the \$53,000 difference between the grant and the price tag.

Board members and community members expressed concerns about the bus's ability (or inability) to handle Alaska winters and the potential out-of-state shipping expenses required if the bus battery ever needed maintenance.

Additionally, the district would have needed to construct a shelter to house the bus. Maintenance Director Kevin McCallister said this would cost anywhere between \$58,000 and \$93,000. Going through with the electric bus purchase would have forced the district to

spend anywhere between \$111,000 and \$146,000 from its dwindling reserves. As the Sentinel reported on Nov. 27, the reserve fund is expected to run dry within two years if state and borough funding levels remain the same.

Unlike some grants which are structured as a reimbursement, the EPA had already sent the school district the funding. Superintendent Bill Burr said this was in case the schools needed to make a deposit to order a bus.

"That money was sitting in a separate account," Burr said. "I sent Kristy (Andrew) a message saying that it should be sent back ... and Kristy informed the EPA."

The school district has a multi-year contract with Taylor Transportation to provide pupil transportation services. Taylor uses a traditional diesel-fuel bus.

Esports

Continued from page 1

As for equipment, Angerman admits she only has "what our hive could scrape together."

For context, to be a legal esports school team in Alaska, you need at least six gaming PCs. Instead, the students have three computers (laptops hooked up to monitors from the school), a Wii she brought from her house and an Xbox that one student brings from home.

She said she often hosts Wii Sports tournaments by connecting the Wii console to the projection screen in her classroom. Notably, Wii Sports lets up to four players play simultaneously, making it an ideal option when trying to get 15 students involved and actively playing games.

Currently, some kids play with LEGOs when they're waiting their turn for the consoles and computers. Angerman plans on using the grant funding to alleviate this issue. She wants to increase access to games, controllers, keyboards, mice and monitors. Her long-term goal is to acquire the six PCs needed for the team to become competition eligible.

Angerman hopes the expansion of the esports team, which is open to all secondary school students, will work to eliminate the

stigma against esports.

"Our community is very into hunting and fishing and being outside — which I love," she said, "but there are some kids who are not going to fit into that mold. I want to be able to have things in a small community like this that can speak to more kids."

She said esports are a great avenue for students who don't participate in other sports to experience the competition on which they might otherwise miss out.

"Some kids can't compete in, say, traditional sports," she said, "but they can compete and participate with something like gaming in a group where they feel accepted and are seen as an equal."

Currently, the team practices after school on Mondays and Fridays, though she said the kids are always begging her to in-

crease the number of practices.

"I'm going to try and do it Monday, Wednesday, Thursday so I can give them another day. I think those kids just need that group," she said.

The secondary school esports

team is open to any student. There are no tryouts, and anyone interested in joining is encouraged to reach out to Angerman. The team's games are currently funded by donations. The grant will help, but in the meantime,

community members with video games to spare are also encouraged to reach out.

"It's just an atmosphere where we help each other," she said. "We have fun, and the kids can do something different."

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WRANGELL SENTINEL

Borough awards job to construct 300 feet of floats for Meyers Chuck

BY LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

It took three rounds of bidding but the borough is on its way to installing a new, 300-foot-long float system at Meyers Chuck.

The assembly last month awarded a \$445,000 contract to Bellingham Marine Industries for the Washington state contractor to construct the 10-foot-wide wooden-decked floats, gangway and connection to the existing seaplane float in Meyers Chuck.

The work includes building and shipping everything to Wrangell, where the 50-foot-long sections will be stored at the Marine Service Center until a separate contract is issued next year to haul the floats to Meyers Chuck, sink new pilings and attach the floats to the pilings, explained Mike Howell, the borough's senior project director.

The new float sections should arrive in Wrangell in the spring, with the on-site construction work bid in the spring and the project wrapped up by late summer or fall, he said.

Bellingham Marine Industries was the lowest of four bids for the floats construction, with the others ranging up to \$748,888. All of the bidders were Washington state contractors.

The entire project — building and installing the floats — will be covered by a \$1.092 million state grant which requires matching funds from the borough. The borough will draw on its Port and Harbors fund for its share.

Earlier attempts to contract out the floats failed when no one bid in the first round in August and a bid protest scuttled the second round.

Though the borough had considered building a 400-foot-long float, it scaled back the size to reduce costs. The existing float system is 400 feet long but is in poor condition. The floats are almost 60 years old, attached to steel pilings almost 40 years old.

Meyers Chuck, about 50 miles south of Wrangell, has about two dozen year-round residents and is a popular stopover for summer boaters touring Southeast. It became part of the Wrangell borough in 2008. The state turned over the dock to the borough in 2014.

Alaska minimum wage goes up Jan. 1 and again on July 1

BY YERETH ROSEN
Alaska Beacon

Alaska's minimum wage workers will get a tiny bump in pay starting on Jan. 1 before a larger increase becomes effective six months later.

The state's minimum wage will increase by 18 cents to \$11.91 an hour at the start of the new year, the result of a ballot measure passed 10 years ago, the Alaska Department of Labor said on Nov. 21.

The bigger increase will be on July 1, when the minimum wage is set to rise to \$13 an hour, the result of a ballot measure approved by voters in November. The minimum wage is set to increase again in 2026 to \$14 an hour, to \$15 an hour in 2027 and in subsequent years, increase to adjust for inflation.

The 2014 ballot initiative also included an inflation adjuster. The upcoming 18-cent-an-hour increase was calculated according to that adjuster, the department said. The calculation used the consumer price index for the Anchorage metropolitan area, which increased by 1.5% in 2023, the department said.

Alaska's minimum wage also applies, indirectly, to salaried employees, under state law. The relevant statute requires salaried employees to be paid at least twice the amount that minimum-wage workers would earn for a full workweek. Starting Jan. 1, that minimum pay for salaried workers will rise from \$938.40 to \$952.80 for a 40-hour workweek, the department said. That works out to \$23.82 an hour, or \$49,545 for a 52-week work year.

This year's Ballot Measure 1, in addition to increasing the minimum wage, mandates a system of paid sick leave, with leave days to be accrued over time by workers, and bars employers from requiring employees to attend political or religious meetings unrelated to their job duties.

Supporters of this year's ballot measure said the wage increases and other benefits were overdue in Alaska and would benefit the economy.

Even at the \$13-an-hour rate to start on July 1, Alaska will continue to have the lowest minimum wage of all U.S. West Coast states, according to statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Opponents, including trade groups representing restaurant and bar owners, tourism companies and oil field service companies, campaigned against the ballot measure, arguing that it would harm businesses.

The Alaska Beacon is an independent, donor-funded news organization. Alaskabeacon.com.



The looks of concentration

Sawyer Scheib opted for an unconventional "granny shot" approach to the annual Elks Hoop Shoot on Saturday, Nov. 30. Competitors were divided into boys and girls categories that were further split by age. The winners were: Gretchen Powell, Tegan Kuntz, Kaiya Brevick, Sasha Loftus, Jude Johnson and Connor Blake.



PHOTOS BY SAM PAUSMAN

Griffey Angerman aims the basketball in the Elks Hoop Shoot on Nov. 30. Not only was his holiday sweater one of the more festive outfits at the competition, but he — and the rest of the participants — got to go home with a new basketball.

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WRANGELL SENTINEL

Annual chronic disease report shows unhealthy numbers in Alaska

BY YERETH ROSEN
Alaska Beacon

Seven out of 10 Alaska adults are overweight or obese, and large percentages of adults in the state have chronic conditions like high blood pressure and high cholesterol that are linked to the leading causes of death, according to a report by the state Department of Health.

The 2024 Alaska Chronic Disease Facts summary, published by the department's Division of Public Health, also showed that 33% of high school students were overweight or obese.

Large percentages of adults and teenagers are sedentary, according to the report. Among adults, 22% engaged in no regular physical activity, and among high school students, 82% failed to have the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity, the report said.

The report is based mostly on statistics from 2022, a year in which COVID-19 was the fourth-leading cause of death, after cancer, heart disease and unintentional injuries.

The annual chronic disease report does not show trends.

"It's really meant as a snapshot," said Andrea Fenaughty, a department public health scientist. Additionally, the report is meant to educate the public, she said. "Sometimes people don't really know what chronic disease is, so it's a way of getting that message out."

Along with obesity, common chronic conditions in Alaska listed in the report include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, arthritis and asthma. Chronic diseases to which they are linked — diseases that last for long periods — include heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and liver disease.

In all, seven of the top 10 causes of death in Alaska are linked to chronic conditions, Fenaughty said.

While cancer is Alaska's leading cause of death, large percentages of Alaskans have missed the recommended screenings to detect the disease and treat it early.

Among women aged 40 and older, 40% had failed to get a mammogram in the prior two years. Among adults aged 50 to 75, 44% had failed to get recommended colorectal cancer screenings.

Cancer causes about a fifth of Alaska's deaths, the report said. The most common causes of cancer deaths in Alaska as of 2022 were lung cancer, colorectal cancer, pancreatic cancer and prostate cancer, the report said. The most commonly diagnosed cancers in Alaska, as of 2020, were breast cancer, lung cancer, prostate cancer and colorectal cancer, the report said. Those four cancers represent about half of Alaska's cancer cases, the report said.

Most of the statistics are similar to those in the chronic disease report issued by the division last year, which reflected data from 2021 and earlier.

However, there were a few signs of improvement.

Among high school students, the report said 17% regularly use electronic cigarettes, also known as vapes, down from 26% in the previous report. Among adults without diabetes, 27% had not gotten the recommended blood-sugar tests within the prior three years, as recommended. That is significantly lower than the 54% who had missed those recommended tests in 2020.

The report concludes with some recommendations, including for individuals to make lifestyle changes to ward off the chronic conditions linked to

poor health and fatal diseases. To help people do that, the Division of Public Health has a program, Fresh Start, that provides guidance and coaching.

Reflecting Alaska's aging population, a new part of the Fresh Start program concerns dementia, Fenaughty said.

"Right now, it's largely focused on awareness of dementia and the fact that there are really lots of things you could do to reduce your chances of getting dementia. People don't often think of it as being preventable," she said.

Additionally, the Division of

Public Health has a Play Every Day program that encourages fitness and healthy habits among youth.

The report also recommends some community actions and policies to help people pursue healthier lifestyles and habits. In sum, said the report: "Make the healthy choice the easier choice." Examples of helpful policies listed by the report are tobacco-free workplaces, easier access to safe places to walk and otherwise exercise, good physical education programs at schools and disease-prevention programs at workplaces.

Reducing chronic health problems through public policy is a long-term effort, Fenaughty said. She pointed to decades of tobacco-cessation policies that led to current smoking rates being much lower than they were in the past.

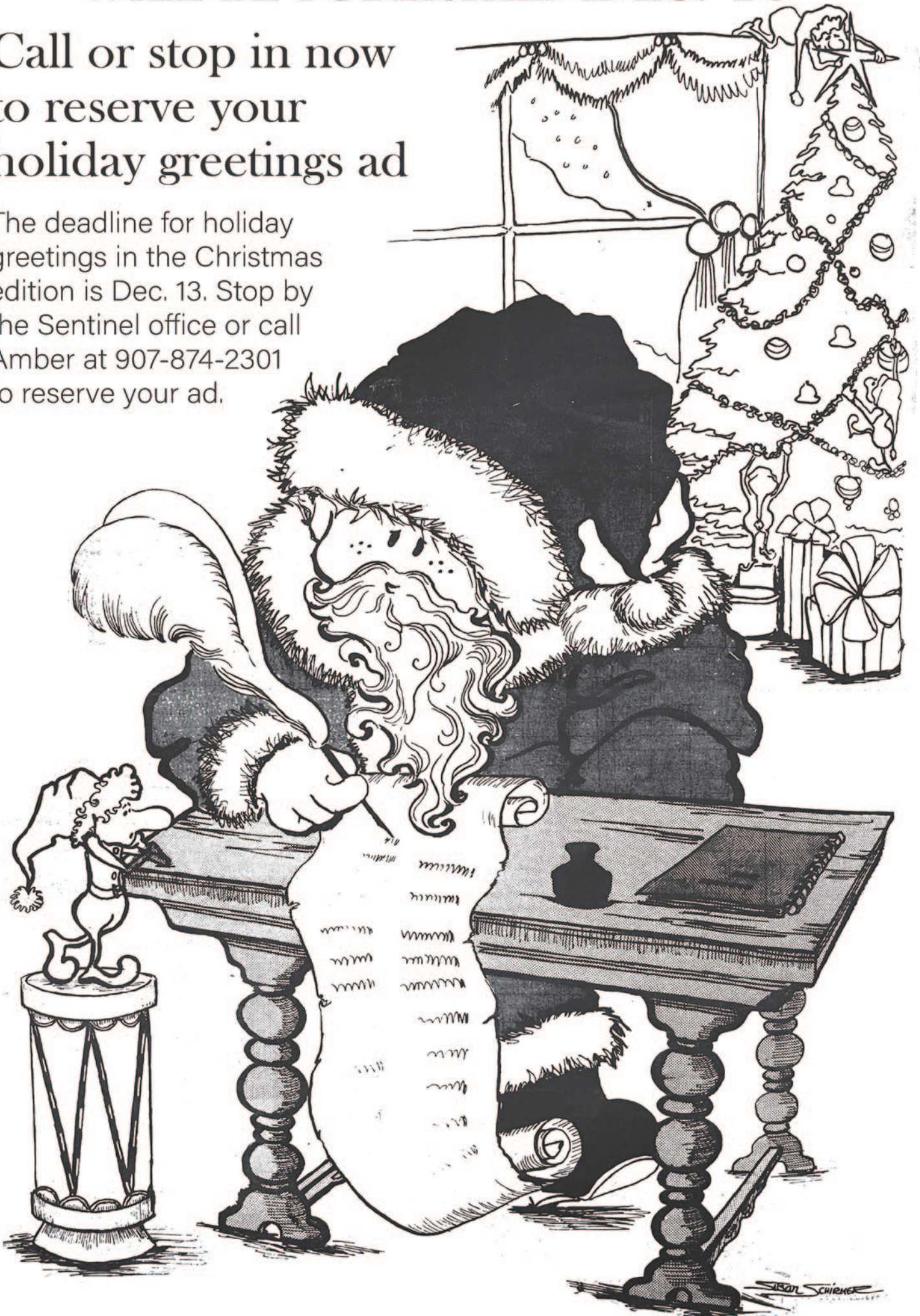
"It did take a couple of decades, and something like that involves all kinds of people at the community level, at the statewide level, all different partners," she said.

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Haines custom guitar maker strikes a cord with experience

BY LEX TREINEN

Chilkat Valley News, Haines

"The only thing that exists is that edge and the wood that it's moving through," Haines luthier Rob Goldberg said as he worked with a chisel, carving the braces that will hold a guitar's sound boards together.

"You can't be thinking about what you're going to have for dinner or thinking about your girlfriend or thinking about anything else."

He speaks from decades of experience, building world-class custom instruments at his Mud Bay workshop, several miles south of downtown Haines.

That attention to detail and artistry has brought Goldberg praise from musicians around the country who have had the chance to strum one of the 65 guitars he's produced in his career. He learned the craft in Massachusetts, operated his own shop in the 1970s, and then took a hiatus until 2008 after he settled in Haines.

Now, guitar making — along with painting — are his main crafts, despite the challenges of doing it from the isolated town. He works late into the night from his modest shop covered with tools and mementos from his decades of practicing the art.

"He is the official mad scientist — you look that up in the dictionary and that's Rob," said Richard Gilewitz, a Chicago-based fingerpicker who plays a Goldberg guitar. "He looks like a character out of Lord of the Rings."

The instruments sell at a starting price of \$6,000 — not cheap, but affordable compared to other custom guitars, Goldberg said. And each of them is a work of art customized for the person playing it.

He will talk to musicians sometimes for hours to figure out everything from the ideal shape of the guitar to make it ergonomic, the type of wood so that its characteristics match their style, and the motifs on the elaborate inlays of glass or abalone.

"Based on what people are getting for custom-made guitars, his are a bargain," said Tony Tengs, a musician who grew up in Haines. "He puts a

lot of soul into them and he's an artist."

Musicians like Tengs say Goldberg's guitars sound better than even top-notch, brand-name guitars like Taylor and Martin.

Goldberg said that's largely because of the care he takes carving the bracing. Instead of flat, straight pieces of wood that hold the top of a guitar like two-by-fours, Goldberg carves the bracing into elegant curves thicker where the tension is highest and lighter where the strings aren't pulling against the soundboard. That saves weight and allows the instruments to sing.

"The lighter you can make the bracing the more it will sing, but too light and strings will pull it apart," he said. "There's a lot of art and craft that goes into sculpting these."

Wood used for the soundboards and bodies of the guitar can also have a big impact on the sound.

In 2010, Goldberg saw the need for a resonant guitar to match Haines musician Burl Sheldon's deep, strong voice. He settled on a large-bodied guitar he designed with a custom template with a Sitka spruce soundboard, a strong and stable wood that could take Sheldon's physically powerful playing style.

"The back and sides are Cocobolo, a rosewood that reflects back all the high harmonics. The rosewood sounds really crisp and clean," said Goldberg.

For a newcomer to guitar like Juneau musician Marian Call, Goldberg chose a more forgiving curly maple.

For Call's guitar, he added several other touches. Call had mentioned the discomfort from playing guitars. "She said, 'Every guitar I've ever held feels like a bad bra. It just cuts into my side.' And I said, oh, I can take care of that," said Goldberg.

His solution was a bevel on the back edge of the guitar, which will hopefully solve the problem.

Goldberg also puts days into the inlays and aesthetics of the guitar. For Call, he chose a sea-green ginkgo leaf Art Deco design he found online bordered



PHOTO BY LEX TREINEN / CHILKAT VALLEY NEWS

Haines Luthier Rob Goldberg lacquers a guitar he made.

in copper. The rosette around the sound hole has 124 pieces — four pieces for each leaf. There are other lines of alternating black and white wood pressed around the sound hole too.

"You just have to have a lot of patience to carry through something like that," he said.

For Call, who grew up in the Pacific Northwest collecting abalone and sea glass, he decided to add one more custom touch: a pale green lacquering over the back and sides to harken back to her oceanside upbringing.

"It just sort of matches her personality too," he said.

A guitar he designed for Washington-based musician Tracy Spring has silvery form-line figures that dance up and down the neck from the first fret to the last. The design caught the attention of guitar builders from around the country at an annual guitar-making festival she and Goldberg attended, Spring said.

"He said he was gonna blind

the first two rows of the audience," said Spring.

Hanging from the wall of Goldberg's shop are two unfinished sound boards with intricate inlays and jarring cracks down the middle. They're casualties from the ever-changing humidity, which presents one of the biggest challenges to his operation.

A hygrometer hangs near the entrance of the shop. He regularly looks up at it to make sure it's sitting somewhere between 30% and 40% humidity. A dehumidifier hums behind him.

In October, when the temperature drops, the humidity can drop suddenly from near 100% to 10%. If Goldberg's not there at that moment of that transition to turn off the dehumidifier and plug in the humidifier, his months of work could be lost.

"I've ended up making new soundboards on a couple guitars because they've cracked," he said. "It's really frustrating."

There's also the issue of get-

ting the guitars out of town. Goldberg is ultra-particular about his packing, first placing it in a fiberglass case he orders from Amazon. He puts the case in a box with padding, and puts that inside a bike box before shipping.

There are some advantages of working in Haines — namely the wood. Upstairs above his shop he has hundreds of soundboards made from the hefty Sitka spruce logs he's shipped in from Hoonah and Thorne Bay.

He cuts the spruce into wedges that he saws into thin sheets before letting them dry.

Building a guitar can take upward of 200 hours, so the hundreds of soundboards are far too many for Goldberg to use in his own lifetime. He said he sells the soundboards to guitar makers around the country.

Guitar making holds a special place in his heart. "Paintings are nice to look at. But I've never seen one that could get a room full of people up and dancing."

Dunleavy says he is not leaving his job for Trump appointment

BY MARK SABBATINI

Juneau Empire

Gov. Mike Dunleavy said he isn't planning to take a job with President-elect Donald Trump's administration at the start of his second presidential term in January.

Dunleavy, in the middle of his second term as governor, was mentioned by political observers and in media reports in the days after the Nov. 5 election as a candidate to lead the Department of Interior. When Trump selected North Dakota's governor for the job, Dunleavy was listed by some as a possible Cabinet member for the departments of energy or education.

But the governor, during an appearance Nov. 25 on a conservative talk radio show hosted by Anchorage businessman and political strategist Mike Porcaro, said he intends to finish out his second term that ends in 2026. Alaska's Constitution limits governors to two consecutive four-year terms.

"I know there has been some talk, but the president and I have not had a discussion about a job," Dunleavy said. "I really enjoy the job I have, and I

look forward to helping Alaskans over the next two years."

Dunleavy had been discussing a job with members of Trump's transition team, according to a Nov. 11 report by the political news website NOTUS that cited three anonymous sources "familiar with the conversations."

Dunleavy fueled intense speculation about that possibility the next day with a social media announcement that he and Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom would make a joint announcement that evening, but then the governor canceled the announcement 90 minutes later.

Dunleavy did not address the canceled announcement during his appearance on Porcaro's radio show and spokespeople for the governor have said they do not know what he planned to announce.

Dunleavy has enthusiastically endorsed Trump's intent to expand oil drilling in Alaska and other natural resource extraction projects, and Trump has praised Dunleavy during their joint appearances.

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907-874-2301

Alaska lost 5,000 more residents in 2023 than it gained in new residents

By ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS AND WRANGELL SENTINEL

Alaska is losing its residents to Texas, Oregon, Washington state and Florida.

That's according to 2023 American Community Survey results, an annual demographics survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau.

From 2022 to 2023, Alaska lost more residents than it gained, continuing a trend that has existed since 2012.

Though Alaska has long led the nation in annual population

turnover — typically, about 45,000 people moved both into and out of the state annually, said Alaska Department of Labor demographer Eric Sandberg — “what has changed is that the number leaving is now consistently higher than the number coming in.”

About 35,800 residents left the state between 2022 and 2023, while only about 30,676 arrived, data shows.

In-migration, new residents moving north, has fallen short of out-migration, Alaskans leav-

ing the state, every year since 2012, Dan Robinson, the department's chief of analysis and research, said at a resource industry conference earlier this month in Anchorage.

“Imagine yourself a store or a restaurant,” Robinson said, needing to constantly attract new customers to replace the ones who stop coming. Failing

to replace lost customers is bad for business.

“Something has changed about Alaska's relative attractiveness,” he said.

“It's likely complicated,” with no one answer as to why more people leave than move to the state. A shortage of affordable housing and child care services are an issue, but that's

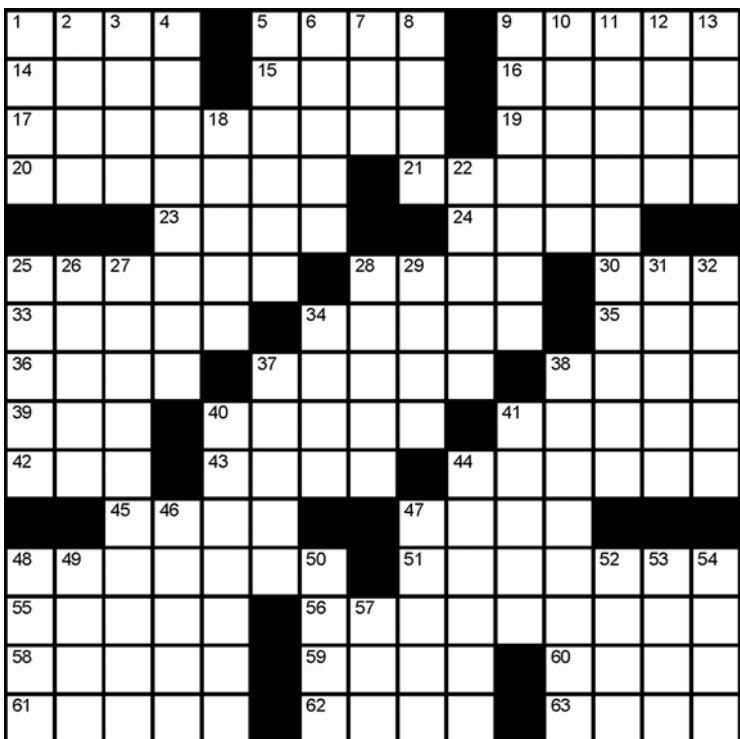
true around the country, not just in Alaska, Robinson said.

Where the net loss of residents really creates problems is in the shortage of working-age residents, the economist said. That pushes employers to bring in more workers from out of state, particularly for low-wage industries like tourism and

Continued on page 11

Crossword

Answers on page 12



CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Butter units
- 5 Au naturel
- 9 Sea state 5
- 14 Brusque
- 15 "... --- slayeth the silly one" (Book of Job)
- 16 Crackshot Oakley
- 17 Speech of violent denunciation
- 19 Bequeath
- 20 Least happy
- 21 Linked
- 23 Egyptian sacred bird
- 24 Jaunty rhythm
- 25 What's coming down the pike
- 28 Conniption
- 30 Winter time in Halifax
- 33 Turned Samoa upside down to find a terrorist
- 34 Not very enthusiastic
- 35 Cost-of-living indicator
- 36 Hindrances
- 37 AI ---, baseball's "Hebrew Hammer"
- 38 Zachary Taylor was one
- 39 Cowpoke's sweetheart
- 40 Not so many
- 41 Chessman
- 42 Shout to a matador
- 43 Foam at the mouth
- 44 Cowcatcher
- 45 Cool, sartorially
- 47 Scrabble piece
- 48 Signs up
- 51 Under close scrutiny
- 55 Idiots
- 56 State with a pelican flag
- 58 Be relaxed
- 59 Fine, black or liberal, maybe
- 60 Federal anti-discrimination agency
- 61 Deathly pale
- 62 Synchronize
- 63 Compos mentis

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Mount for electronic components
- 2 Experienced by migraine sufferers
- 3 Stepped
- 4 Play grounds
- 5 Scottish legend
- 6 Single things
- 7 Movie medium
- 8 Onlookera
- 9 Came from behind
- 10 "Paper Moon" Oscar winner
- 11 Loose
- 12 "Out with it!"
- 13 Observe
- 18 "Black Widow" lead --- Winger
- 22 The --- Marbles, from the Parthenon
- 25 Do without
- 26 Customary
- 27 Crumb catcher
- 28 Put back to zero,
- for example
- 29 Impressionist
- 31 Extra interest
- 32 Possessor of "fearful symmetry" (Blake)
- 34 Hall, crier, car or house, perhaps
- 37 Give feedback
- 38 Erie wins scramble for beverage producers
- 40 Shiver of excitement
- 41 Raw hides
- 44 Polish off, or polish?
- 46 Depend
- 47 Talks up
- 48 Scat queen
- 49 Those opposed
- 50 Taking all the tricks
- 52 UN body promoting peaceful nuclear power
- 53 In a little while
- 54 Spike
- 57 Such as cinnabar

Police report

Monday, Nov. 25
Theft.

Tuesday, Nov. 26
Agency assist: Museum.
Domestic violence: Assault.
Debris in the roadway.
Parking complaint.
Agency assist: Hoonah Police Department.
Traffic stop.

Wednesday, Nov. 27
Dog at large.
Gas leak.

Thursday, Nov. 28
Motor vehicle accident.
Dog at large.
Stranded motorist.
Agency assist: Line crew.

Friday, Nov. 29
Traffic stop.
Traffic stop: Citation issued for no proof of insurance.

Saturday, Nov. 30
Parking violations.
Found property.
Inmate check-in.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for equipment.
Traffic stop: Verbal warning for no headlights.

Sunday, Dec. 1
Nothing to report.

There were six ambulance calls during this reporting period.

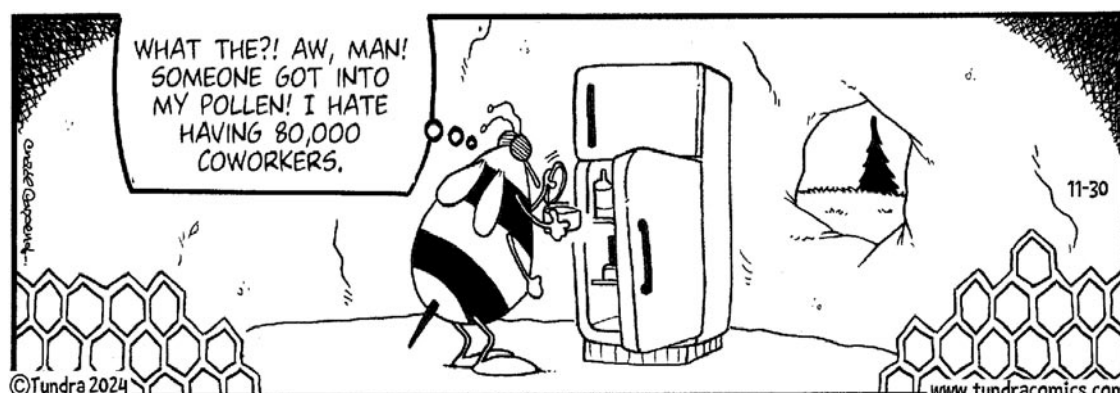
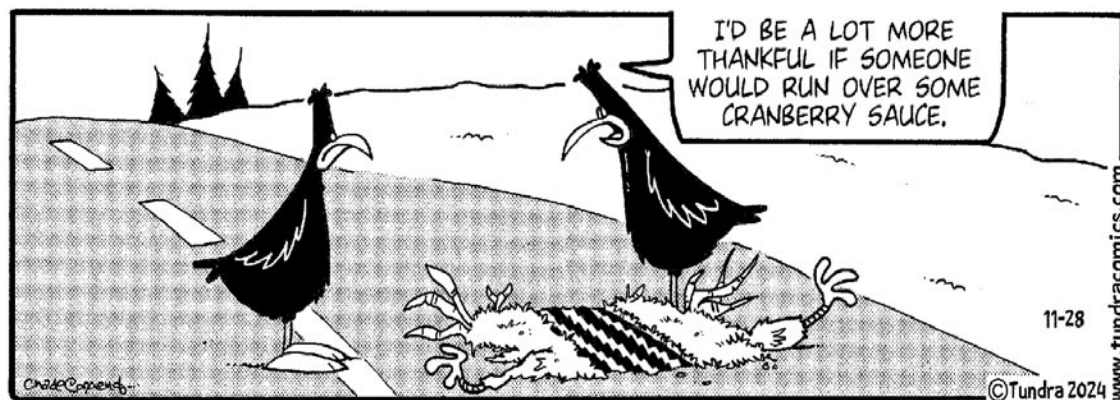
Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



Population loss

Continued from page 10

seafood processing.

An annual report on the Southeast Alaska economy noted that the region has 5,600 fewer working-age residents than it did in 2010, even though the population has held steady.

Last year, those leaving Alaska flocked in highest numbers to Texas, which claimed roughly 4,688 Alaska residents in 2023, according to the data. Next, Oregon took about 3,236 residents, Washington absorbed 3,098, and the furthest state from Alaska — Florida — claimed 2,280 of its former residents.

The “why” is pretty simple, according to state demographer Sandberg. There are fewer young people coming to the state, and those who are already here — a rapidly aging population — are leaving for things like retirement.

Fewer job opportunities and an overall economic downturn, beginning with a statewide recession in the late 2010s, has kept what was once a dependable population boom of adults in their 20s and 30s at a decline, Sandberg said.

From 2015 to 2020, Alaska lost about 700 more people in their early 20s every year than it gained, according to Sandberg’s research.

“There’s generally been a pattern that we attract young people and older people leave more often than come,” Sandberg said. “(A) high baby boomer population ... has lifted up that number of people leaving, just by how many boomers we have approaching retirement age.”

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL PUBLIC HEARING PUBLIC NOTICE

During the Regular Assembly Meeting of Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024, starting at 6 p.m. in the Wrangell Borough Assembly Chambers at 205 Brueger Street, Wrangell, Alaska, there will be a PUBLIC HEARING on the following item(s):

- a. **ORDINANCE No. 1068** of the Assembly of the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, Amending Chapter 5.08 – Sales Tax and Section 5.08.060 – Sales Tax-Free Day(s), of the Wrangell Municipal Code.
- b. **ORDINANCE No. 1069** of the Assembly of the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, Adding Chapter 20.26, Zimovia Highway Mixed-Use District (ZMU) and Amending Several Sections in Title 20 – Zoning, to Add and Reference Zimovia Highway Mixed-Use to the Wrangell Municipal Code.
- c. **ORDINANCE No. 1070** of the Assembly of the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, Amending the Zoning Map to Effect a Change to several lots of the Torgransen Subdivisions from Single-Family Residential to Zimovia Highway Mixed-Use and Lot C of the Health Care Subdivision from open space to Zimovia Highway Mixed-Use.
- d. Request from Wrangell Cooperative Association (WCA) to purchase a portion of Borough-owned property described as Lot C of the Healthcare Subdivision, Plat 2010-4, Parcel No. 02-035-310 (Wood Street), adjacent to WCA Lot A-1A and Lot A
- e. Request from Bruce Smith to purchase a portion of Borough-owned property described as a portion of Lot C of the Healthcare Subdivision, Plat 2010-4, Parcel No. 02-035-310 (Wood Street)
Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska

Publish Dec. 4, 2024

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL PUBLIC NOTICE INDUSTRIAL PARK LOTS Borough-Owned Property for Sale

In conformance with WMC 16.12 and approved by Resolution No. 10-24-1885, the Borough is offering for sale, the Borough-Owned Property, listed below, on the Public Surplus Website: <https://www.publicsurplus.com/sms/wrangell,ak/list/current?orgid=933515>

Property Descriptions:	Starting Bid:
LOT 5a, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (25,491 sq. ft.)	\$51,000
LOT 7, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 8, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (21,435 sq. ft.)	\$50,900
LOT 9, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (25,849 sq. ft.)	\$51,700
LOT 10, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 11, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 12, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400
LOT 13, BLOCK 66, INDUSTRIAL REPLAT (16,500 sq. ft.)	\$31,400

The property shall be available for bidding on the Public Surplus Site for not less than 50 days, specifically from Oct. 25 through Dec. 13, 2024, ADT at 2 p.m.

Bidders’ registration and fee required in advance of the online auction on the Public Surplus Website.

Visit the Borough Website at: <https://www.wrangell.com/community/public-surplus> for the terms and conditions and specifics of the auction/sale of the property.

Publish Oct. 30, Nov. 13 and Dec. 4, 2024

Coast Guard suspends search for survivors of capsized fishing boat

By ZAZ HOLLANDER
Anchorage Daily News

The U.S. Coast Guard on Monday morning suspended the search for survivors from a Sitka-based commercial fishing boat that capsized early Sunday morning with five people aboard.

The Coast Guard said the search for the 52-foot seiner Wind Walker continued for nearly 24 hours and covered more than 108 square nautical miles.

The boat’s crew issued a mayday call at 12:07 a.m. Sunday “reporting they were overturning,” the Coast Guard said. Watchstanders in Juneau received no additional response, but the boat’s emergency beacon signal broadcast a location near Point Couverden in Icy Strait, southwest of Juneau.

On Sunday, the Coast Guard said searchers had located seven cold-water immersion suits and two strobe lights but no signs of any of the people aboard the vessel. A Jayhawk helicopter from Sitka and a 45-foot response boat from Juneau searched the area on Sunday, the Coast Guard said.

Officials said in a statement midday Monday that the search was suspended pending any new information.

“We stand in sorrow and solidarity with the friends and family of the people we were not able to find over the past 24 hours,” Chief Warrant Officer James Koon, a search and rescue mission coordinator at Coast Guard Sector Southeast Alaska, said in the statement.

State officials said the Alaska Marine Highway System ferry Hubbard, carrying more than 100 passengers, diverted Sunday to the fishing boat’s last known location. The ferry was making the run from Tenakee

Springs, Angoon and Kake back to Juneau when the call came, according to Sam Dapcevich, a state transportation department spokesman.

“They heard a brief emergency mayday call from the Wind Walker that the boat was capsizing and they were attempting to get into a life raft,” he said. “No further transmissions were heard.”

Tamara Jack, a passenger on the ferry, said the captain announced the vessel was diverting to the mayday call just after leaving Tenakee Springs. The passengers all gathered together, Jack said in a message. “Even if we didn’t know everyone, we formed a circle, held hands and prayed.”

Many passengers stood at the ice-coated windows keeping an eye out, she said.

Jack, who was coming from Kake, said the ferry’s crew took turns standing watch outside due to the rough weather as the boat’s horn blared.

The ferry’s captain described 50-knot winds out of the north, driving snow, freezing spray and 6- to 8-foot waves, Dapcevich said. “The captain told me it was almost zero visibility.”

He said the Hubbard could see the Wind Walker’s location on a vessel-tracking system, but lost that signal at 12:18 a.m. — just over 10 minutes after the initial mayday call. They notified the Coast Guard of the position.

The ferry got to the area and started a grid search at about 1 a.m. under Coast Guard coordination, Dapcevich said.

The Hubbard stayed in position until it was released at 10 a.m., he said, adding that the ferry captain praised the crew’s professionalism in difficult conditions.

CLASSIFIED

HELP WANTED

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

LOOKING FOR

Wrangell Public Schools is looking for a volunteer crossing guard at the elementary school from 7:40 to 8 a.m. Even one or two days a week will help. Call Kendra at 907-874-2321 if interested.

FREE

Free 4-drawer metal filing cabinet in fair condition. 28” deep, 15” wide and 52” tall. Stop by the Sentinel to pick up.

FREE ADS

Do you have something to sell? Having a garage sale?

Looking to buy something? Classified ads for individuals and community groups are free in the Sentinel. Contact Amber at 907-874-2301 or email wrgsent@gmail.com.

LETTERS WANTED

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

CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL PUBLIC NOTICE

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

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

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

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

Publish Dec. 4, 2024

Salmon return to Pacific Northwest rivers a month after dams taken out

BY HALLIE GOLDEN
Associated Press

A giant female chinook salmon flips on her side in the shallow water and wriggles wildly, using her tail to carve out a nest in the riverbed as her body glistens in the sunlight. In another late-October moment, males butt into each other as they jockey for a good position to fertilize eggs.

These are scenes tribes have dreamed of seeing for decades as they fought to bring down four hydroelectric dams blocking passage for struggling salmon along more than 400 miles of the Klamath River and its tributaries along the Oregon-California border.

Now, less than a month after those dams came down in the largest dam removal project in U.S. history, salmon are once more returning to spawn in cool creeks that have been cut off to them for generations. Video shot by the Yurok Tribe show that hundreds of salmon have made it to tributaries between the former Iron Gate and Copco dams, a hopeful sign for the newly freed waterway.

"Seeing salmon spawning above the former dams fills my heart," said Joseph L. James, chairman of the Yurok Tribe. "Our salmon are coming home. Klamath Basin tribes fought for decades to make this day a reality because our future generations deserve to inherit a healthier river from the headwaters to the sea."

The Klamath River flows from its headwaters in southern Oregon and across the mountainous forests of northern California before it reaches the Pacific Ocean.

The completion of the hydroelectric dam removal project on Oct. 2 marked a major victory for local tribes. Through protests, testimony and lawsuits, the tribes showcased the environmental devastation caused by the dams, especially to salmon, which were cut off from their historic habitat and dying in alarming numbers because of poor water quality.

There have been lower concentrations of harmful algae blooms since the dam removal, Toz Soto, fisheries program manager with the Karuk Tribe, said during a press conference after the dams came down. In October, the water temperature during the day was an average of 14 degrees Fahrenheit cooler compared to the same month over the past nine years, according to the Klamath River Renewal Corp., the nonprofit entity created to oversee the project.

"All in all, the fish that came up this year were really healthy," Soto said. "I didn't see fish with bacterial infections and things like that, so water temperature's already having an impact on the fishes' health."

The number of salmon that have quickly made it into previously inaccessible tributaries has also been encouraging. Experts have counted 42 redds, or salmon egg nests, and have tallied as many as 115 chinook salmon in one day in Spencer Creek, which is above the former J.C. Boyle dam, the furthest upstream of the four removed dams, said Mark Hereford with

the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

"They're showing us where the good habitat is; they're showing us where there's a lack of habitat," said Barry McCovey Jr., director of the Yurok Tribal Fisheries department. "We can use these fish to inform us as river managers, as scientists, where restoration needs to take place."

Power company PacifiCorp built the dams to generate elec-

tricity between 1918 and 1962. But the structures halted the natural flow of the waterway that was once known as the third-largest salmon-producing river on the West Coast. They disrupted the life cycle of the region's salmon, which spend most of their life in the Pacific Ocean but return to the chilly mountain streams to lay eggs.

At the same time, the dams only produced a fraction of Paci-

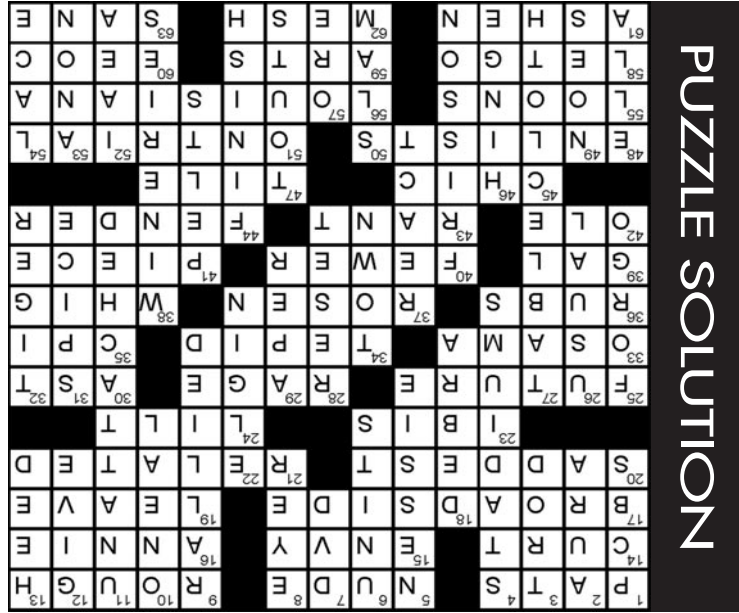
fiCorp's energy at full capacity, enough to power about 70,000 homes. They also didn't provide irrigation, drinking water or flood control, according to Klamath River Renewal Corp.

McCovey said the return of so many salmon happened faster than he had expected and makes him hopeful for the future of the

river.

"Out of all the milestones that we've had, this one to me is the most significant," he said. "It feels like catharsis. It feels like the right path."

Associated Press reporter Sophie Austin contributed to this report.



CITY and BOROUGH OF WRANGELL INVITATION TO BID

Notice is hereby given that the City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska, will receive sealed proposals for Professional Services – NG911 System Addressing Identification project.

Contract Documents are available in electronic format and can be downloaded from the City and Borough of Wrangell website (www.wrangell.com) under the Bids and RFPs section. All communications related to this work, prior to opening Bids, shall be directed to the following: Kate Thomas, Economic Development Director, Telephone (907) 874-2381. Sealed proposals will be received by the City and Borough of Wrangell, Post Office Box 531, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, or located at the Borough Clerk's Office, 205 Brueger Street, Wrangell, Alaska 99929, or Email clerk@wrangell.com, until 2:30 p.m. prevailing time on Dec. 18, 2024, and publicly opened and read at that time.

Mason Villarma, Borough Manager
City and Borough of Wrangell

Publish Dec. 4, 2024



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