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WRANGELL SENTINEL

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Wrangell loses as Windstar Cruises cancels summer sailings

By ANDREW CZERNEK
Special to the Sentinel
And the Associated Press

Cruise ship companies serving Southeast Alaska are taking reservations for the summer season after losing all of last year to the pandemic — but not all cruise lines will return this year.

Windstar Cruises, which brought a 208-passenger ship to Wrangell about 10 times in 2019, had originally planned its first 2021 cruise out of Vancouver on May 20, an 11-day voyage scheduled to stop in Wrangell, Ketchikan, Juneau and Haines. The sailings would have continued throughout the summer with a larger ship than 2019, carrying 312 passengers.

Instead, U.S. Centers for Disease Control restrictions limiting cruises to no more than seven days has caused the company to cancel its entire 2021 Alaska season, a company spokesperson in Seattle said Tuesday.

Windstar is taking bookings for 2022, however.

In 2020, Wrangell originally expected cruise ships to make 94 visits, with a carrying capacity of more than 17,000 passengers between the last week of May and Oct. 1. Statewide, Alaska anticipated 1.4 million visitors on cruise ships, up slightly from the year before. The COVID-19 pandemic and CDC orders halted all of the industry's 2020 summer season.

No other cruise lines have yet announced complete cancella-

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PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT / WRANGELL SENTINEL

Stay longer next time

The Kennicott on Jan. 8 was the first state ferry to call on Wrangell in more than two months, and after a brief early morning unloading and loading it sailed away for Ketchikan. "Wrangell had one ferry in November, no ferry in December, and is scheduled to have only one ferry in January," Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga said. "This is an unacceptable level of service." Von Barga said the state is making decisions about ferry service "in a vacuum without consideration of the impacts on communities." She referred to a survey the borough conducted in October, asking businesses about the challenges they face during currently tough economic conditions. The lack of ferry service was among the top five challenges, she said. "Ferry service is a very important issue for the borough and is one this year's top legislative priorities that will be addressed in lobbying efforts with the state administration and Legislature," Von Barga said. The next ferry to visit Wrangell is not scheduled until Feb. 14.

Governor makes dividends key element of legislative session

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The Legislature is set to convene next week in Juneau, with the Permanent Fund dividend perhaps the biggest issue lawmakers will confront.

Gov. Mike Dunleavy wants the state to pay individual Alaskans \$1,900 this spring, a cash supplement to last year's dividend intended to help boost the pandemic-weakened economy.

The governor also wants to take more

money out of the Permanent Fund earnings reserve to pay a \$3,000-plus dividend this fall, calculated on a 40-year-old formula the Legislature has not followed since 2015 when a majority of lawmakers decided the state could not afford large PFDs, school funding and all the other public services included in the state budget.

The dividend has averaged \$1,264 per Alaskan the past five years.

The extra spring dividend and the

large fall payment will require legislative approval to withdraw an additional \$3.2 billion from the Permanent Fund, almost 5% of its \$70 billion market value as of the most recent financial statement Nov. 30.

That would be in addition to the \$3 billion withdrawn in Fiscal Year 2021 and \$3 billion withdrawal anticipated for Fiscal Year 2022 just to cover routine state spending.

All expenditures from the fund are subject to legislative appropriation.

The amount of the dividend, both in the short term and long term, and the need for a sustainable fiscal plan for the state "certainly will be the main focus of the session," Ketchikan Rep. Dan Ortiz said Monday.

Though many Alaskans certainly could use the extra money, said Ortiz, who also represents Wrangell, the question is what the state treasury can afford and the trade-offs in funding for other services.

"To the extent that it's part of figuring out the state's whole fiscal future," yes, the dividend debate will be the big issue this session, said Juneau Sen. Jesse Kiehl.

"A key piece of my proposal is the economic recovery payment," Dunleavy said of the spring supplemental PFD. "This would provide Alaskans with \$1,900, driving \$1.2 billion into the economy. Alaskans and the private sector need assistance now. Businesses that have been devastated, and Alaskans that are suffering, will benefit from immediate action by the Legislature placing money into the people's hands by March," the governor said.

For 2022 and beyond, Dunleavy proposes a 50-50 split between dividends and public services of whatever is withdrawn

Continued on page 12

Wrangell assembly extends emergency declaration

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell Borough Assembly unanimously voted Tuesday evening to extend the borough's COVID-19 emergency declaration through March to ensure the community remains eligible for any financial assistance. The assembly also voted to extend its resolution allowing the suspension of in-person assembly meetings until it can make accommodations for social distancing.

The assembly declaration retroac-

tively extends through March an emergency ordinance that had expired Dec. 31, which was a continuation of a similar emergency declaration of last March that expired in October.

"In order to ensure the CBW (City and Borough of Wrangell) is able to qualify for all federal and state disaster resources; because COVID-19 remains a threat to the community; and because the pandemic has entered a new phase with the distribution of vaccines, (the) Administration is requesting extension of the emergency declaration through

March 31, 2021," said the backup material for Tuesday's assembly meeting.

Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga said the declaration is largely to ensure Wrangell remains eligible for any potential funding.

If an opportunity for money to respond to the pandemic comes up and requires the community to have an emergency declaration, the manager said the administration wants to have one in place just in case.

The latest declaration extension

Continued on page 2

Assembly

Continued from page 1

would have no impact on business operations in town, Von Bargen said at the assembly meeting.

The intent is to make sure the community can capture the maximum potential funding that may be available in the future, she said. Mayor Steve Prysunka shared Von Bargen's viewpoint, adding his concern that Wrangell could potentially miss out on money if it did not have a declaration in place.

The latest disaster ordinance keeps all but one of the original provisions in place, according to the supporting material presented to the assembly. A provision granting the mayor and borough manager the authority to enact emergency orders was removed. In its place is a new

provision that gives the borough manager the authority to enact borough-only policies "to protect operational integrity and/or employee and customer health and safety."

The proposed extension was not popular among some community members who spoke at Tuesday's meeting.

Mike Lockabey and Don McConachie both said they saw no reason for the emergency declaration to continue. Wrangell has handled the pandemic comparatively well, they said, and letting the emergency declaration expire would be an important first step back to normalcy.

Assembly Member David Powell said he could not see any way that the extension would hurt the community. He also said a lot of concerns among the

public could be avoided if people remembered they are free to reach out to the city if they have questions or want clarification on something the assembly was considering. Other assembly members concurred.

The assembly also approved of an extension of a resolution allowing for the suspension of in-person assembly meetings during the pandemic. The as-

sembly has been meeting via Zoom while in-person sessions have been suspended.

It was originally planned to let the suspension expire at the end of December, so staff could purchase and test equipment for in-person meetings at the Nolan Center, which would provide adequate space to safely meet in one room.

However, according to the

agenda packet, the Nolan Center will be undergoing flooring renovations through January and possibly into February. Borough Clerk Kim Lane said the city would like more time to make sure the equipment they were purchasing would be ready to go.

"We're not quite ready to move to the Nolan Center for in-person meetings," she said.

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

WRANGELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD will hold its next regular meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 18 via Zoom. A work session will precede the meeting beginning at 6 p.m. The purpose of the work session is to conduct the school board's self-evaluation. To listen to the meeting, join at: <https://zoom.us/j/95156962954?pwd=Y2pPbHF3MIRtUGY4V0VhWUZadm9CQT09>, meeting ID 951 5696 2954, passcode: 446998. Community members are encouraged to turn in their comments by emailing them to: kpowell@wpsd.us. If you prefer to sign up under guests to be heard, email Kim Powell before 3:30 p.m. the day of the meeting. The agenda for the school board meeting will be available online four days before the meeting at <https://www.boarddocs.com/ak/wrangell/Board.nsf>. The public is encouraged to attend.

WRANGELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS will hold a town hall meeting regarding the Fiscal Year 2022 budget beginning at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting is to share information and collect input on next year's school budget. If you would like to speak at the meeting, contact Kim Powell at 874-2347 or kpowell@wpsd.us no later than 3:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The community is encouraged to attend. To join the Zoom meeting, sign on at <https://zoom.us/j/96395543782?pwd=ZWJFR21Ha2Vwb2xIUDBMWUhrMGFpdz09>, meeting ID 963 9554 3782, passcode: 211908.

Is the attendance at your meeting or event low? Send information for Roundup to wrgsent@gmail.com or call 874-2301.

Continuing Events

AA Meetings: North Star Group Meeting Tuesdays and Fridays 7 - 8 p.m at St. Philips Episcopal Church.

The Way We Were

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

Jan. 13, 1921

Richard Suratt, who went to New York City some time ago to oversee the coloring of the films he had sent in from here, returned to Wrangell on the steamer Seattle on Friday. Mr. Suratt reports that the great Metropolis is very quiet at this present time.

Jan. 11, 1946

Opening of the Mildred Pierce Shoppe, a ladies' and children's apparel and men's and boys' clothing shop, is announced this week by Mrs. Mildred Pierce and her son, Bob Ferguson, owners. The store, formerly the Wee Moderns Shop, owned by Mrs. Harold Maki, is already open for business and Mr. Ferguson is leaving this week to go south on a buying trip. Mrs. Pierce formerly operated a dressmaking business here and is well known for her fine work. She has had a wide experience in the dressmaking and tailoring business, having been employed in that line for many years in leading shops in the south. Present location of the shoppe will be enlarged to accommodate the added stock which Mrs. Pierce and Mr. Ferguson expect to carry.

Jan. 14, 1971

Lt. Gary Souders of the Salvation Army is some kind of man. He's working 40 hours a week at Alaska Airlines, hefting

baggage on and off Gooses and Otters. The money he earns goes into the Salvation Army operation here. "I have to do it," explained Souders, who has been in Wrangell since January 1970, and has gained the praise of his superiors for a good job, especially among youth. "We don't get enough donations to operate otherwise," he said of his contribution.

Jan. 18, 1996

The purchase of the Wrangell Sentinel by former owner Larry Persily is complete and Mike Hinman, a University of Alaska Anchorage journalism student, has been hired as a temporary reporter of the Sentinel. The sale of the

Sentinel was approved Jan. 15 by a U.S. Bankruptcy Court judge in Boise, Idaho. Persily had been leasing the newspaper since Dec. 15, pending final court approval of the sale. The Sentinel continued to publish while tangled up in bankruptcy, which started when owners Alvin Bunch and Ann Kirkwood filed for liquidation after they had tried to operate the Sentinel from their new home in Idaho. Seanne Saunders, a former Sentinel employee, has signed on to keep the office open, handling billing, subscription, advertising and printing orders. Bunch and Kirkwood had owned the paper since fall 1984.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Thursday, Jan. 14: Antionette Hastings, Mercedes Angerman, Victoria Southland; *Anniversary:* Einar and Carol Haaseth.

Friday, Jan. 15: Ava Hay.

Saturday, Jan. 16: Josh Toombs and Austin O'Brien.

Sunday, Jan. 17: Kyle Davidson, Tracy Allen, F. Iver Nore and Ryan Hayes.

Monday, Jan. 18: Elizabeth Castle and Hunter Wilson; *Anniversary:* Ronan and Mary Rooney.

Tuesday, Jan. 19: Tom Nore, Jim Rinehart, Megan Powell, Ken Davidson Sr. and Terri Stark; *Anniversaries:* Chris and Dixie Booker, Steve and Helen Keller.

Wednesday, Jan. 20: Shelby Eyre, Syler Webster and Pam Wiederspohn.

Thursday, Jan. 21: James Stough Jr., Joshua Davidson and Jessica Rice.

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

Senior Center Meals Menu Delivery Only

No Available Menu Until further notice.

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

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

FERRY

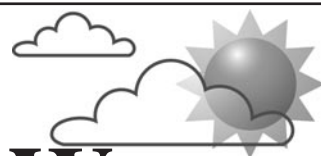
January Sailings No Ferries Scheduled

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



TIDES January 14 - January 20

	High Tides		Low Tides					
	AM Time	PM Time	AM Ft	PM Ft	AM Time	PM Time	Ft	
Jan. 14	01:43	15.8	01:24	18.3	07:11	2.7	07:51	-2.9
Jan. 15	02:25	15.8	02:07	17.5	07:55	2.8	08:30	-2.1
Jan. 16	03:04	15.5	02:49	16.4	08:38	3.1	09:07	-1.0
Jan. 17	03:43	15.1	03:30	15.1	09:21	3.4	09:44	0.2
Jan. 18	04:22	14.6	04:13	13.7	10:07	3.8	10:21	1.5
Jan. 19	05:02	14.2	05:04	12.4	10:57	4.1	11:02	2.8
Jan. 20	05:49	13.8	06:09	11.3	11:54	4.2	11:48	3.9



Wrangell Weather

Date	High	Low
Jan. 4	45	37
Jan. 5	44	37
Jan. 6	41	37
Jan. 7	45	40
Jan. 8	50	37
Jan. 9	46	39
Jan. 10	45	41
Jan. 11	42	39



Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Hours
Jan. 14	8:13a	3:44p	07:33h
Jan. 15	8:12a	3:46p	07:36h
Jan. 16	8:11a	3:47p	07:39h
Jan. 17	8:10a	3:49p	07:43h
Jan. 18	8:08a	3:51p	07:47h
Jan. 19	8:07a	3:53p	07:49h
Jan. 20	8:06a	3:55p	07:53h
Jan. 21	8:04a	3:58p	07:57h



PHOTO COURTESY OF DALE PARKINSON

A truck was pulled out of Heritage Harbor on Saturday afternoon, after the driver apparently hit the wrong pedal and the vehicle headed down the embankment into the water. Witnesses to the accident helped the driver escape from the truck.

Driver escapes after truck falls into Heritage Harbor

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

A few minutes before 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9, an 87-year-old driver pressed the gas pedal instead of the brake on his truck and launched from the parking lot into the water of Heritage Harbor. The driver was helped from the truck and did not appear seriously in-

jured, said Police Chief Tom Radke.

The chief said it was his understanding that the driver hit the wrong pedal. A medical incident may have led to the accident, but Radke said the exact cause was uncertain.

The vehicle pushed through a barrier of boulders between the parking lot and the harbor, and tumbled down the bank into the water.

Radke said that James Nelson, of the U.S. Forest Service, and Chris Guggenbickler were nearby and able to help the driver escape the truck before it completely submerged. The man was taken to Wrangell Medical Center. Bruce Smith

was at the harbor when the accident happened and said he called 911, while also helping the driver escape the truck.

"He just drove right over, I couldn't believe what I was seeing," Smith said, adding he was surprised the truck floated above water for so long, giving them time to help the driver escape before the vehicle sank.

The truck was pulled from the harbor later that afternoon.

The Wrangell Medical Center could not comment on the man's condition or release his name, but Radke said it was his understanding he had been released and was doing OK.

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PLEASE CALL 907- 463-6147

TO REGISTER FOR EITHER SERIES.

This program is made possible by a grant from the Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services Through Southeast Senior Services, a division of Catholic Community Service

COVID-19 Vaccination Update



Keeping you and your families safe during the COVID-19 pandemic is our top priority.

We want you to know that SEARHC is working closely with our state's leaders and public health officials to secure COVID-19 vaccines for every person in Southeast Alaska. Vaccinating everyone will take time and be dependent on vaccine availability.

The COVID-19 vaccines are being distributed based on sequencing guidelines developed by state, national and global vaccination specialists and approved by SEARHC's medical directors. For more information on sequencing, visit covid19.searhc.org.



People interested in receiving the vaccines are strongly encouraged to sign up online.

Please watch for announcements on the availability of vaccine and the current sequence designation. Announcements will be updated weekly.

SEARHC | healthy is here.

Domestic violence shelter seeks board candidates

Sentinel staff

The Women in Safe Homes (WISH) domestic violence shelter in Ketchikan serves Wrangell families too, and its board seat designated for a Wrangell member will be up at the nonprofit organization's annual meeting in February.

Kay Larson has served two terms representing Wrangell on the WISH board, and she is asking if anyone else in the community would want to serve in the seat.

WISH has operated a 24-hour shelter for domestic violence victims and their families since 1980, said WISH Executive Director Angel Moran, serving the communities of Ketchikan, Wrangell, Prince of Wales Island and Metlakatla. There are usually one or two Wrangell residents at the shelter every quarter, she said.

The 32-bed shelter is operating at about half-capacity under COVID-19 distancing protocols.

In addition to the shelter, WISH provides training at schools and family coaching, Moran said. The organization runs mostly on federal and state money, with some funding from the city of Ketchikan and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

WISH is currently working with the city of Ketchikan to renovate a former state facility as a new home for the shelter. The current facility is old and not accessible for people with disabilities. The renovated building will solve those deficiencies, Moran said.

Anyone interested in the Wrangell board seat can go to the website for more information www.wishak.org, or call 907-228-4099.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

It's up to Congress to do better

By LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

It was depressingly sad to watch the scenes in the Capitol last week as destructive rioters took over the historic building, furious at the outcome of the presidential election.

I have been in the Capitol, as have many Alaskans — for meetings and on tours — and have enjoyed the annual Memorial Day and Fourth of July concerts on the Capitol lawn. I have stood and watched orderly protests, and felt good that the building is so accessible to the public. The Capitol is a monument to laws, not lawlessness. It should be a source of pride, not anger.

Sadly, that changed on Jan. 6. The world changed for five families who lost loved ones in the melee. The safety for members of Congress changed as they ran for cover.

Now the job for Americans is to ensure it is a temporary change.

President Donald Trump is scheduled to leave office on Jan. 20. What he does and what happens to him should not determine the future of the United States. The test will be whether Democrats and Republicans in Congress can remember why they are there: To improve the lives of people, not promote their own reelections.

Political partisanship, grandstanding and irresponsible accusations have dominated Congress in recent years, fueled by egos, elections and the ease at which anyone can post most anything regardless of accuracy on social media. But there is hope.

Less than 48 hours after the Capitol was cleared, Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski started the discussion. She held a phone meeting with "a bipartisan group of colleagues that are really con-

cerned about where we are, and how we move forward," she said in a Jan. 8 interview with the Anchorage Daily News.

"I think I am including myself as part of a group of members that wants to work to try to bring things together in the Senate and wants to try to get some business done," she said. "This is going to be a (Biden) administration where I'm going to be disagreeing with where they're taking us on a lot of issues and policy, but I would like to think that we're never going to question their fidelity to the oath of office," said Murkowski, who is starting her 19th year in the U.S. Senate.

The Alaskan was the first senator in her party to question Trump's fidelity to the oath of office so much that she called for him last week to resign. "I want him out. He has caused enough damage," Murkowski said in that same interview.

Working together to repair the damage of last week — and all the damage of recent years — is the job of 535 senators and House members, especially those who still support Trump and dislike President-elect Joe Biden. There is too much that needs to be done to help rescue Americans from the economic damage of the pandemic. There are too many global issues that need attention, starting with Russian hacking of U.S. government agency computers.

There was too much animosity in the Capitol, even before the protestors stormed the building. Members of Congress need to learn how to govern and compromise without name calling and without throwing more mud than you could knock off a Wrangell boot in the fall.

It's good to hear Murkowski speak up. Her colleagues need to join her.

Editorial

Tell the whole truth

To help gain support for his proposal to pay Alaskans \$5,000 in Permanent Fund dividends this year, Gov. Mike Dunleavy cites numbers that the Alaska Permanent Fund gained \$10 billion on its investments March 31 through Nov. 30, 2020. The state can afford the extra spending, he says.

That's not entirely accurate. It's misleading.

Before the fund gained \$10 billion in eight months, it lost \$7 billion in the first three months of the year.

But the governor is not talking about those money-losing months. It's like telling your partner you won \$1,000 at the slots and it's OK to spend the money, without fessing up and admitting you lost \$700 at the start of the night.

Permanent Fund earnings change daily. Investment returns have been good in recent months, but there is no guarantee it will continue. Maybe, maybe not. Writing future checks on last month's bank balance is risky.

The governor is correct: Many Alaskans need the additional PFD money. Stores, service businesses, households have all been hit hard by loss of work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The state's economy is weakened, not just by the health-mandated protocols but by low fish prices, low oil prices, and depressingly low numbers of visitors last year.

As much as Alaskans may need and want the extra-large dividends proposed by the governor, there is a cost to withdrawing a combined \$3.2 billion additional from the Permanent Fund this calendar year to cover those payments.

Actually, there are two costs:

The Legislature has limited the annual draws the past few years to 5% of the fund's market value. The economic rule being that over time the fund will earn more than 5% a year and will continue to grow. The governor's plan would take an additional 5% from the fund to pay the extra PFDs. Overdrawing the savings account could mean there would not be enough left to pay for public services and dividends if the fund suffers a miserable year like it did in Fiscal Year 2009, when the account lost \$6 billion during the nation's fiscal crisis.

And spending more of the Permanent Fund this year means there will be less in the account to generate earnings for years long into the future. Taking out an extra \$3.2 billion for dividends this year would reduce by \$200 million the annual 5% draw in Fiscal Year 2030. We would be spending our future.

The truthful and responsible answer is an affordable dividend this year that does not weaken the state's earnings potential for years to come.

— The Wrangell Sentinel

Basketball season opens Jan. 30



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/
WRANGELL SENTINEL
Jason Hay attempting a layup at Monday's practice.

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell Wolves high school boys basketball team is tentatively scheduled to open the season in Metlakatla on Jan. 30, followed by their home opener against Craig on Feb. 6, according to the latest schedule provided by Activities Director Trisa Rooney.

The schedule is still tentative, Rooney said in a Jan. 8 email, particularly the games against Metlakatla and later Haines. The district will announce when it has the final schedule.

After two bye weeks for rest and practice, Wrangell will travel to Petersburg for games Feb. 27, followed by a home game against Haines on March 6.

Southeast regional semi-finals and finals are scheduled March 20 and 27, respectively, according to the tentative schedule. The state tournament is scheduled April 3.

Practices for the Wolves

began on Jan. 11. The Lady Wolves, the girls basketball team, is still being organized. Coach Christy Good said she would have more information regarding the girls' season in the near future.

POLICY FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- 400 words or less with consent of publisher.
- Typed or clearly written
- Letters must be signed
- Longer letters can be published as a paid ad
- The Sentinel reserves the right to edit any submissions.

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PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL
Brett Abrahamson going in for a layup at the Wolves' first practice of the season on Monday.

Wolves gearing up for new season

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

While the season's schedule is still tentative amid the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Wrangell Wolves are preparing for a new season of basketball. This will be Coach Cody Angerman's fourth season leading the high school boys team.

The upcoming season will be unique in a variety of ways, he said, but his goals for the team are the same as always.

"I have this same kind of mentality coming into every season," he said. "I just want to make sure that we're the best team possible when it comes tournament time. If you can be the best team possible then, that's your best chance of winning, really."

Angerman said there are several challenges facing the Wolves this season. For one thing, several players graduated at the end of last season and would not

be returning. However, he pointed out that the team would have five or six returning players with experience.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also created a unique situation for the team. Angerman said the Wolves would be following several safety precautions to protect themselves, others, and the basketball season in general.

Players will be wearing masks at all times when they are not playing, he said. Before coming into the court at all, they will also have their temperature taken and checked for any symptoms of COVID-19. This will all be documented, he said.

Angerman said he is taking these precautions seriously, as normal life has already been disrupted by the pandemic and he wants to make sure that his team can still enjoy a basketball season. The team is going to take the season one day at a time, he said.

"For the sake of those guys that have been putting in the time and putting in the work, we just want to make sure that

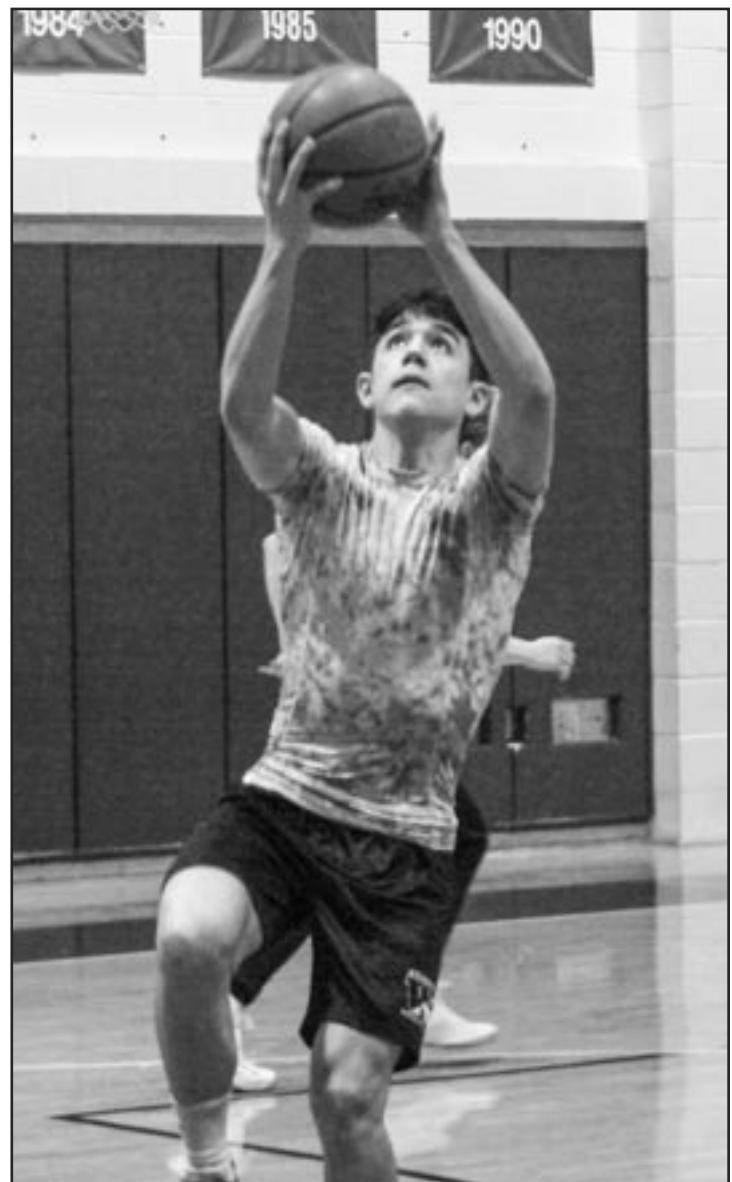


PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Ryan Rooney takes a shot during the Wrangell Wolves' first practice.

Wrangell Medical Center Opening in February 2021



SEARHC is committed to providing high-quality healthcare for our friends and neighbors in Wrangell by offering improved and expanding services in a brand-new facility.

The new facility will include all services all under one roof:

- Clinic services including primary care for all ages
- Hospital including acute and swing bed care
- Emergency Department
- Long-Term Care including private rooms and larger spaces for lounge, dining room and spa
- Pharmacy
- Rehabilitation services including physical, occupational and speech therapies
- Lab
- Chemotherapy
- Radiology, including new equipment:
 - CT scan
 - X-Ray
 - 3D mammography

New address

232 Wood Street,
 Wrangell, AK 99929

Phone number

907.874.7000



we can somehow get some games in," Angerman said.

"What I've been telling them is I'll do whatever it takes to make sure that happens for them, and that we just have to do all the right things accordingly, and follow all the mandates and protocols to make sure and ensure that we can at least play some games."

Practices for the Wolves begins on Jan. 11, Angerman said. According to a schedule provided by WHS Activities Director Trisa Rooney, their first games are tentatively scheduled for Jan. 30 against Metlakatla. Angerman said that they were planning some games against Petersburg to start the season on Jan. 15, but these were pushed back to later in the season.

The Lady Wolves, the girls basketball team, is still being organized. Coach Christy Good said she would have more information on the team in the near future.

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Year in review

Part 2, July to December

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

July

July 2: With recent national attention on racial bias and police brutality, the community met via web conference June 29 for an evening town hall meeting to discuss policing practices in Wrangell. The meeting provided an opportunity for residents to ask questions of Chief Tom Radke and to share their opinions on the Wrangell Police Department. Those who spoke in the meeting, by and large, expressed support for the police and their current practices.

July 9: The cities of Wrangell, Petersburg and Ketchikan suffered a power outage early morning July 4. Rod Rhoades, light and power director for Wrangell, said that the outage hit Wrangell at 3:05 a.m., but started in Ketchikan. Rhoades said that Wrangell switched over to diesel power at approximately 4 a.m., and hydroelectric power was fully restored by 7 a.m.

July 16: The City and Borough of Wrangell will begin rolling out a series of programs of economic relief for businesses, nonprofits and residents who have been hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic. The city has designated up to \$915,000 of federal CARES Act funds received from the state for the assistance programs, intended to provide economic relief.

July 23: The Wrangell Public School District held a virtual town hall meeting July 16, with school officials answering submitted questions from families regarding the SMART Start reopening plan for the upcoming school year. The nearly two-hour meeting at one point had 72 participants. Although a plan for how the school district will operate under COVID-19 restrictions in the fall hasn't been finalized yet, a draft of the document is being written with input from the borough Emergency Operations Center and the public.

July 30: Four people died in a car crash late Monday night or early Tuesday morning on Mitkof Island when their SUV drove off the roadway near the 27-mile marker of Mitkof Highway. Two of the passengers were Wrangell citizens: Sigurd Decker, 21, and Helen Decker, 19. Another passenger was identified as 29-year-old Ian Martin, of

Petersburg. The fourth passenger was Dennis Lord, 37, of New York.

August

Aug. 6: The deaths last week of Wrangell residents Sigurd and Helen Decker shook the community, which has come together in a variety of ways to express their grief and support for the Decker family. A GoFundMe page was put together by the United Fishermen of Alaska to raise money in their memory. As of Aug. 4, \$161,273 had been raised. Wrangell resident Lucy Robinson also organized a Meal Train for Gig and Julie Decker, Sig and Helen's parents. Wrangell residents Addy Esco and Laurie Hagelmen stationed themselves at the middle school for several afternoons in a row to make themselves available for anyone who needed someone to talk to or a shoulder to cry on. A Gathering of the Fleet was held the evening of July 29. Approximately 50 vessels congregated off of City Dock in memory of Sig and Helen, who were active members of the fishing community. They were joined by many members of the public who stood on the dock itself. The Mariners' Memorial lighthouse was lit for the very first time in honor of Sig and Helen, too, the evening of July 29. The community gathered on Aug. 1 for a celebration of life. Following the service, everyone was invited to City Park for a potluck lunch where people could share food and stories of the siblings.

Aug. 13: About this time a century ago, eight members of the U.S. Army Air Service reached an important milestone of a long journey. Using DH-4 biplanes, flown as bombers during World War I, several members of Black Wolf Squadron were attempting something never done before: To fly from New York City to Nome. Their planes were among the first ever seen in Alaska skies. The round trip was 9,000 miles and 112 hours of flying. On their way north 100 years ago this week, Wrangell was their first stop within Alaska.

Aug. 20: During their Aug. 17 meeting, the Wrangell School Board adopted a mandate requiring face masks be worn on district property.

Aug. 27: The Wrangell Borough Assembly on Aug. 25 decided to rescind its contri-

bution of \$250,000 in CARES Act funding to the school district. The decision follows recent concerns from the school board, and the public, after a recent shopping trip by the schools superintendent and some staff members to Juneau. According to Superintendent Debbe Lancaster, in a special school board meeting, the trip was to purchase supplies for reopening schools amid COVID-19 mitigation measures. The trip cost \$5,788, she said. Of that, \$1,332 would be CARES Act expenses. The discussion continued for some time, but the assembly voted to rescind the \$250,000 in funding and decided they would revisit the topic at a later date, providing CARES Act funding to the school district with stricter parameters in place.

September

Sept. 3: The Wrangell School Board held a special meeting to review updated SMART Start plans for the upcoming school year. With the first day of school scheduled for Sept. 8, and the district planning for in-person classes, the SMART Start plans are meant to act as a guide for how schools will respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the "medium-risk" level the schools will open at, staff and students will be required to wear face masks, non-instructional gathering of more than 20 people are discouraged, and social distancing will be in place, among numerous other guidelines.

Sept. 10: The Wrangell Public School District opened its new year with in-person classes. The final decision between in-person and online classes was made Sept. 3. The first day of school Sept. 8 proceeded

smoothly, Superintendent Debbe Lancaster said. Students were asked screening questions before getting on their bus or entering the schools themselves, she said, and everyone was wearing masks and sanitizing their hands.

Sept. 17: The Wrangell School Board held a special meeting Sept. 9 to issue a formal reprimand and improvement plan for the superintendent. This was in response to the superintendent and other district staff taking an unexpected shopping trip to Juneau to purchase COVID-19 mitigation supplies without board approval and in violation of a district travel ban. The improvement plan stated that Lancaster must receive authorization for any travel, all future communications with borough officials and the media will only be made after consultation with the board, and outlined several other guidelines.

Sept. 24: During the Sept. 22 meeting of the borough assembly, Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga announced that the city has recently been advised by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that they have exceeded the allowable lim-



SENTINEL FILE PHOTO

Elias Decker heading for the finish line, Wrangell's first-place finisher in the boys cross country race.



SENTINEL FILE PHOTO

Drone footage of the Gathering of the Fleet on July 29, in memory of Sig and Helen Decker.



SENTINEL FILE PHOTO

Lynsie Morelli with a moose bagged on Kuui Island on Oct. 8.

its of HAA5 in Wrangell's drinking water source. Von Barga explained that HAA5, or haloacetic acids, is a result of chlorine mixing with organic compounds in the water.

October

Oct. 1: Wrangell Parks and Recreation on Sept. 22 announced a new photo contest for the public. The "Pups in Parks" contest will give Wrangell dog owners a chance to go

enjoy the great outdoors with their canines, and take a few pictures while they're out. There will even be a chance for their dogs to be featured in a new Parks and Recreation calendar.

Oct. 8: Applications for Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets are now open, according to Lt. Jon Tollerud of the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army and the Wrangell Ministerial Association are partnering to provide the baskets for Wrangell families in need of assistance during the holiday season, he said. The application process is simple. There is only one form to fill out, he said.

Oct. 15: The Wrangell Borough Assembly held a special meeting Oct. 8 to certify the final election results from Oct. 6. Following a canvass board meeting to review preliminary election results, it was determined that a total of 483 ballots were cast and counted this election cycle, 419 on election day and 64 absentee. Steve Prysunka was reelected mayor for another two-year term. Anne Morrison and Ryan Howe were reelected to the assembly for three-year terms. Terry Courson was elected to a one-year unexpired term on the assembly. Gary Morrison was reelected to the port commission for three years. Laura Ballou was elected to the school board for three years. Wrangell voters also decided in favor of Proposition One, which would remove Wrangell from the Inter-Island Ferry Authority.



SENTINEL FILE PHOTO

Carter and Emily Cummings, in their "Five Nights at Freddy's" themed costumes.

Oct. 22: Moose season came to a close on Oct. 15. Final harvest numbers came in on Oct. 20, according to Hilary Wood with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Petersburg office. This season saw 115 moose harvested within Permit Hunt Area No. RM038. There were two bagged on Wrangell Island, both legal.

Oct. 29: The Wrangell Borough Assembly held a workshop Oct. 20 to discuss the water treatment plant improvement project. This has been an ongoing project for some time now, and the workshop was to make sure new assembly members were up to speed on the current situation, and to share opinions on how it is going so far.

November

Nov. 5: A member of Wrangell's Emergency Operations Center recently received threats on social media, according to city officials. The threats were made Oct. 29, according to Police Chief Tom Radke. An investigation was conducted into the situation and all the parties involved were contacted and interviewed, he said. Police closed the investigation without filing any charges.

Nov. 12: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has released preliminary data on state salmon harvests for 2020. Information for Southeast Alaska shows that only half as many fish were hauled in this year compared to last year. 2020 data shows that 14,301,964 salmon were harvested this year, totaling a little over 74 million pounds. The estimated ex vessel value for the 2020 harvest is about \$50 million. This is a major decrease from 2019 numbers, reported at about 32 million fish, 163 million pounds, and almost \$102 million in ex vessel value.

Nov. 19: Results are in from the Wrangell Cooperative Association's recent election. According to the WCA, there were 83 ballots cast, six absentee ballots, three questioned ballots and two invalidated ballots. The new members of the council are Frank Churchill Jr. (68 votes), DJ McConachie (61 votes), Ed Rilatos (59 votes), and Lovey Brock (50 votes). They have all been elected to the council for two-year terms. All winners but Rilatos were incumbents.

Nov. 26: The Wrangell Salvation Army passed out the Wrangell Ministerial Association's Thanksgiving baskets Nov. 20. Lt. Jon Tollerud, with the Salvation Army, said 138 people signed up for baskets, but they were "not turning away anyone who asks." They had enough food to supply 400 Thanksgiving meals in all, he said, just in case. He also pointed out their COVID safety plan, having people drive up to Harbor Light Assembly of God while volun-

teers would put together the baskets for them.

December

Dec. 3: Former Wrangell Sentinel owner Larry Persily has agreed to buy the weekly newspaper from Petersburg couple Ron and Anne Loesch, who have owned it for 17 years. Depending on the schedule for the closing agreement and transition details, Persily will take over Jan. 1 or Feb. 1.

Dec. 10: During their meeting Dec. 8, the Wrangell Borough Assembly was scheduled to consider an extension of the city's mask mandate. However, the item was pulled from the agenda during the meeting. The assembly adopted the mask mandate in November, requiring people in Wrangell to wear face masks or other face coverings while out in public. Assembly Member Patty Gilbert made a motion to amend the meeting's agenda by pulling the item from consideration. This motion was made, according to city officials, because the city was not seeing support for keeping the mandate at the state level. Mayor Steve Prysunka said that part of the reason for the emergency order in the first place was because of Gov. Mike Dunleavy's "pressing of the big buzzer" back in November warning about an increase in cases, and a desire for people to take action to try and stall the rise. After that, he said, the governor was largely silent on the matter.

Dec. 17: Delayed by bad weather, Wrangell's annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony finally took place Dec. 11. The tree, put up by the Municipal Light & Power department, was decorated with ornaments made by students at Evergreen Elementary School.

Dec. 24: There were no sled dogs, and Nome is far away from Wrangell, but last week's delivery of COVID-19 Pfizer vaccines was still very Alaskan. Wrangell received its first batch of vaccines for the virus Dec. 16. The medicine was flown in from Sitka on a floatplane. Steve Kamm, with Sea Wind Aviation, landed at the harbor a little after noon with two boxes of vaccines. They were delivered to SEARHC staff Aaron Angerman and Kathy Jo Blackburn. Angerman did not say how many vaccines were delivered, but did say that vaccinations were scheduled to start immediately upon delivery.

Dec. 31: Construction of the new Wrangell Medical Center, ongoing since a groundbreaking ceremony in May 2019, is nearing completion. According to a Dec. 22 press release from the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, the project has reached 95% completion.



SENTINEL FILE PHOTO

A group of about 50 people on June 28 walked in support of the Wrangell Police Department. The group walked, or rode motorcycles, from City Dock up to the Public Safety Building. Many carried signs in support of the WPD, and police in general. As the march took place amid the COVID-19 pandemic, many participants wore face coverings and everyone was encouraged to socially distance. Holding signs and a flag poster (left to right): Shaylynn, Charlie and Tyla Nelson, leading the parade.

Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH
Fisheries columnist

Study will look at salmon's magnetic personality

Is it a coincidence that one of the world's largest mineral deposits is located near the world's largest sockeye salmon spawning grounds at Bristol Bay? And if the Pebble Mine removed the bulk of those deep deposits that are part of the world's magnetic field, could it disrupt the ability of salmon to find their way home?

A study, funded by Arron Kallenberg of Homer, founder/CEO of Wild Alaskan Co. and a third-generation Bristol Bay fisherman, aims to find out.

"It's not even been 10 years since we've discovered that salmon, sea turtles and other marine species are using the Earth's magnetic field as a way to know where they are and to make important navigation decisions. But what is the magnetic environment that they need to thrive, and what might humans be doing that might keep them from thriving," said Nathan Putman, a senior scientist at Texas-based LGL Ecological Research Associates and an expert on animals' use of magnetic fields in migration who is leading the study.

"The salmon at Bristol Bay are tuned into thousands of years of experience," Putman said. "Might removing magnetic minerals alter the magnetic landscape they have experienced, and to what extent?"

The combinations of magnetic field strength and angles give the salmon a sense of where they are, he explained.

For instance, if a fish has left its river and finds itself in a stronger magnetic field than when it departed, it's got a good chance of being farther north of the river. And if it finds itself in a weaker magnetic field, it has a good chance of being farther south. It can use that information to decide which way it should go, depending on whether it's heading out to its foraging grounds, or if it's matured and it's time to head back home."

Putman's earlier studies on pinks revealed that salmon have multi-purpose navigational tools.

"The handy thing about the

magnetic field is that it's both a compass and a map. A compass by itself only gives you a direction. The Earth's magnetic field gives you that direction, but for salmon it also gives a sense of where in the Bering Sea or the Gulf of Alaska they are. It's sort of part compass, part GPS," he said.

Putman said it is easy to manipulate magnetic environments in the lab.

"We call them magnetic displacement experiments," he said. "The salmon seem to know how to orient their movements when they grow up in a pristine magnetic rearing environment. But if you

add something as simple as a nearby iron pipe, it distorts the field. Then you have the same family of fish, the same setup, the same sort of behavioral assays and they don't appear capable of using the magnetic field to make navigation decisions."

For the Bristol Bay project Putman is using a high-resolution magnetic model for 304,000 latitude/longitude points over the past 20 years, looking at the impact of mining activity on fluctuations in local geomagnetic fields. By comparing the rate of change in the geomagnetic field near mining sites to baseline background variability, he can

identify potential man-made impacts of mineral extraction on field variations.

"I think it really does put some burden back on us as humans to ask how we are altering the magnetic environment around salmon, whether it's from mineral extraction or electric cables running across or through streams. How might we be presenting salmon or other species with challenges from how we're manipulating their habitats. That's where we're going with this project."

Putman's results should be known by this summer when the sockeye run is returning to Bristol Bay.

Fishing facts

Want to know where most fishermen live in Alaska? Or where most Alaska fishing boats are home ported?

United Fishermen of Alaska has just released its updated Fishing Facts for every region of Alaska, plus the West Coast. The facts are updated through 2018, the most complete year available.

At a glance, they show that nearly 8,700 permit holders fished in 2018, or which 6,055 were Alaska residents. Over 21,341 crew licenses were purchased, split almost evenly between residents and

Continued on page 9

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Fish Factor

Continued from page 8

non-residents. Almost 150 Wrangell permit holders fished in 2018, pulling in \$12 million worth of seafood.

Homer is home to 615 fishing boats and nearly 20% of its population fishes, earning \$69 million at the docks in 2018.

A total of 636 vessels call Kodiak Island home with 1,074 resident fishermen, or 17.3% of the population, who earned \$105 million. Kodiak lays claim to 15 processing facilities, from small ones to majors.

At Petersburg, nearly 24% of the population fishes for a living on 620 home-ported boats. Their income was pegged at \$50.5 million.

The Fishing Facts include regional fishing, processing jobs and wages, fishery tax revenues and legislative districts.

Federal assistance

Fishermen have until Jan. 15 to apply for federal funds to take the sting out of market hits from trade tariffs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will distribute \$530 million to fishermen nationwide based on their catches in 2019 for 19

species under the Seafood Trade Relief Program (STRP).

Damages to fishermen are calculated as the difference with trade tariffs and the baseline without it. For cod, that adds up to an extra 14 cents a pound. Salmon fishermen get an extra 19 cents per pound.

Other Alaska species include Dungeness crab, king crab, snow crab and Tanners, geoduck clams, sablefish, herring, pollock, flounders, mackerel, perch and turbot.

Fisherman must fill out a 2020 Seafood Trade Relief Program (STRP) Application, found at www.farmers.gov and at USDA Farm Service Agencies.

Halibut numbers soon

Halibut catch limits for 2021 will be revealed Jan. 29, the last day of the International Pacific Halibut Meetings that will convene virtually starting on Jan. 25.

A preliminary review of the 2020 fishery shows a total catch for the U.S. and British Columbia at 35.7 million pounds, down 11% from 2019. Sixty-three percent was taken in commercial fisheries (22.3 million pounds). Alaska fishermen took nearly 16 million pounds, 7% below the catch limit.

Recreational fisheries took 17% (6 million pounds); 3% went to both subsistence and surveys/research (one million pounds each).

Over 5 million pounds of halibut was taken as bycatch in other fisheries.

Homer got the biggest chunk of the Pacific halibut landings at 18% (3 million pounds), followed by Dutch Harbor and Kodiak. Juneau at 1.3 million pounds narrowly outpaced Sitka for commercial halibut landings.

City returns mayoral recall application

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The city received an application to recall Mayor Steve Prysunka early this week from a group unhappy with Wrangell's face mask requirement. But the filing was premature, said Borough Clerk Kim Lane, who returned the application. State law says a recall application may not be filed during the office holder's first 120 days on the job. That date will not come until early February for the mayor.

Lane said the city has its own statute, as well, which copies the 120 days from the state.

Don McConachie, one of the people involved in the application, said he thought he had passed the legal requirement, but must have counted the days wrong. He said he would refile after 120 days are up. The mayor's election was certified Oct. 8. The 120 days will be up in early February.

"It wasn't [just] me, it was a group of people who filed," McConachie said Tuesday. "I turned in the paperwork. ... We are just at the beginning of the process."

In addition to waiting 120 days, a recall application needs 10 signatures to start the process. Supporters would then need to gather signatures from at least 25% of voters

who participated in the last election. As 483 people cast ballots in Wrangell's October 2020 election, organizers would need 121 valid signatures on their petition to force a vote on the recall.

A statement on the grounds for the recall, provided by McConachie, lists a number of grievances. Last November the borough assembly imposed a mask mandate. This restricted the public's freedoms, the statement says. The assembly also imposed fines on those who did not comply, another grievance cited by the recall organizers.

Furthermore, the statement claims that the meeting where the assembly adopted the mandate was held in violation of local law, which requires a 48-hour notice for a special emergency meeting, as well as several state statutes.

"The city throughout this pandemic has repeatedly acted in violation of state emergency law by imposing untimely quarantines and closures and has restricted public access and public comment in addition to the above violations," the statement reads.

"There's really nothing to comment on until I see what they're saying," Mayor Prysunka said in a phone call Tuesday. "Until it's filed, it's tough to comment."

AK Airlines bans travelers who harassed crew

SEATTLE (AP) - Alaska Airlines has banned more than a dozen passengers from all future travel with the company after they refused to wear masks and caused chaos during a flight from the nation's capital to Seattle.

The airline said the 14 passengers were rowdy and argumentative on a Jan. 7 flight from Dulles International Airport, outside Washington, D.C., to Seattle. The flight departed the suburban-Virginia airport the day after pro-Trump rioters stormed and damaged the U.S. Capitol.

"Last night, a number of

passengers onboard Alaska Airlines Flight 1085 from Washington Dulles to Seattle were non-mask compliant, rowdy, argumentative and harassed our crew members," airline spokesman Ray Lane wrote in an email Jan. 8 to The Seattle Times.

"Their behavior was unacceptable. We apologize to our other guests who were made uncomfortable on the flight," he said. The 14 passengers were all placed on Alaska's ban list.

In total, Alaska Airlines has now banned 302 people for violating its mask policy.

Rural deliveries pose challenge for Alaska COVID vaccinators

ANCHORAGE (AP) - The usual transportation difficulties in rural Alaska have presented unique obstacles for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, officials said.

Dozens of remote villages lack hospitals and road connections, while ultracold freezers required for storage of specific varieties of the vaccine are essentially nonexistent, Alaska Public Media reported.

Tribal health care providers responded by mobilizing a massive effort delivering thousands of doses to remote areas.

Providers airlifted vaccine to villages using a fleet of chartered planes, while the medicine also was delivered over choppy seas on a water taxi.

Some clinicians were shuttled around villages on sleds pulled behind snowmachines. The effort was reminiscent of the so-called Serum Run that delivered diphtheria treatment to Nome a century earlier.

"We have these deep stories of Alaska adventure that are related to public health," said Tom Hennessy, a University of Alaska Anchorage infectious disease epidemiologist. "And here's another one playing out right before our eyes."

Dr. Ellen Hodges encountered the unforeseen difficulty of Alaska being too cold in some places to vaccinate frontline health care workers.

"It became immediately apparent that the vaccine was going to freeze in the metal part of the needle," said Hodges, who contended with sub-zero temperatures on a remote Southwest Alaska airport tarmac.

Hodges kept doses tucked in her shirt until they were injected.

"Once we got that sorted out, it was pretty great," Hodges said. "A lot of us felt the importance of it — of making sure we could get our health aides protected against this horrible, unpredictable disease."

Curt Jackson used his aluminum landing craft to ferry nurses and a load of vaccine to the village of Seldovia on the Kenai Peninsula, through heavy seas in Kachemak Bay.

"It was definitely kind of creeping along on eggshells as we're slamming through these waves, trying to be as careful as possible, knowing there's this super special cargo on board," Jackson said. "I'm not going to lie — I got choked up realizing this was like this first little step toward victory."

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some — especially older adults and people with existing health problems — it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

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SEARHC offers CNA training program in Wrangell

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium will host a training program for certified nursing assistants in Wrangell, starting next week. While the program has existed in Wrangell in the past, it is still a relatively new program under SEARHC leadership. This will be the third CNA training program offered by the Wrangell Medical Center.

Issabella Crowley was one of six people who completed the first SEARHC CNA program in Wrangell in 2019. She has worked as a CNA with the hospital for a year and a half now, calling it an excellent opportunity and encouraging anyone interested in a career in medicine to look into it.

"I think the CNA class is a great opportunity for people to start a career, especially if they want to make a difference in people's lives," Crowley said. "This job helped determine a bigger career for me, it helped me decide to go

into nursing as a full-time job. I highly recommend being a CNA with SEARHC, we have a great team here at WMC and anyone would be lucky to be a part of that."

As a CNA, Crowley said her day-to-day job involves helping nurses "wherever they need help." She is there to make sure that they have what they need to do their job, as well as to see patients are taken care of and their needs are met.

The CNA program consists of five weeks of classroom instruction, plus 48 hours of clinical training under the guidance of RN Katrina Ottesen, according to a Jan. 5 SEARHC press release, preparing for state certification. According to the press release, participants will receive paid training time and an opportunity for employment with the Wrangell Medical Center upon certification. Those interested should apply online by Friday, Jan. 15, at www.searhc.org/careers. Classes will begin Jan. 19.

Police report

Monday, Jan. 4
Agency assist: Harbor Department.

Agency assist: Panic alarm.

Threats.
Criminal mischief: Domestic violence.

Citizen assist: Dog tags.
Citizen assist: Assistance with vehicle.

Agency assist: Public Works.

Tuesday, Jan. 5
Summons service.
Theft.

Summons service.
Illegal parking.
Letter for removal from licensed premises.

Agency assist: Wastewater treatment.

Wednesday, Jan. 6
Agency assist: Petersburg Police Department.

Agency assist: Public works.

Thursday, Jan. 7
Agency assist: Hoonah Police Department.

Citizen assist: Vehicle unlock.

Friday, Jan. 8
Agency assist: Fire Department.

Parking complaint.: Vehicle will be moved.

Saturday, Jan. 9
Bar fight.
Safekeeping.

Noise complaint.
Unattended death.

Agency assist: Hoonah Police Department.
Warrant arrest.

Sunday, Jan. 10
Noise complaint.

During this reporting period there were six EMT assists, nine traffic stops, three reports of littering and two welfare checks.

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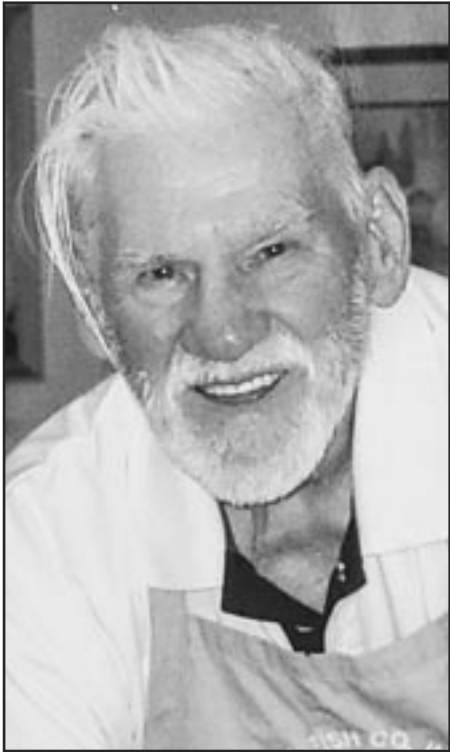


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Obituaries: Former Wrangell resident ‘Puzzy’ Holland dies at 101



Gerald G. “Puzzy” Holland

Gerald G. “Puzzy” Holland, 101, passed away Dec. 20, 2020, at home, surrounded by loved ones, in Salem, Oregon.

He was born in Calumet, Michigan, in October 1919. He was the fifth of nine children born to Anna and Paul Holland. The family resettled in Rock Island, Illinois, in the 1930s, where he met and married Rosemary Normoyle in 1942. They built a home on a little farm and raised six children, near dozens of relatives in the area.

Puzzy served in the Seabees in the U.S. Navy during World War II from 1942-45. He became skilled in refrigeration, and after returning from the war he became a machinist at Bendix and the Rock Island Arsenal. In 1967, the family moved to Ewa Beach, Hawaii, and he worked at Pearl Harbor as a machinist.

He was always extremely active and adventurous, taking up his most loved hobby, sailing on his 32-foot sloop. He seemed to try out everything, hang gliding, scuba diving, snorkeling, racquetball,

tennis, bike touring, extreme kite flying, and pottery.

In 1987, Rosemary passed away, and in 1989 Puzzy married Barbara Webb. There seemed to be no slowing down though as he jumped right into the role of raising Barbara’s two young daughters, Emma and Jane Endicott.

After 15 years in Fairbanks, the family moved to Wrangell in 1994, where Puzzy’s daughter, Wendy Olson, and husband Mark, had just become the pastors of the Presbyterian Church. Though it was intended to be a short-term move, they fell in love with the community and the community fell in love with them. Here he enjoyed sailing, fishing, pottery, woodworking and poker games at “Puzzy’s Poker Palace.”

In 2003, he moved to Salem, Oregon. Even throughout his 90s, he remained strong and active: cutting, hauling and splitting trees for firewood and lumber, building furniture, more pottery, camping, traveling and gardening.

His hallmark above all though was his capacity to love beyond measure. He was always on hand to help family and friends with projects, lend his amazing wisdom, and make everyone feel special and loved “very much.” He loved being with his people and especially the little ones. “We will forever remember him, as loving us, and living to the fullest,” his family and friends wrote.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara, son Jerry Holland (Connie), daughters Linda Buscher (Harry), Kristene Short (Diki), son Jon Holland (Dora), daughters Laurie Holland-Klein (Martin), Wendy Olson (Mark), Emma Endicott, Jane Endicott (Brian Graybeal); 22 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren; and 22 spouses of children and grandchildren, and one living sister, Laura Coyle.

A small, local family memorial was celebrated in his backyard. A larger service will be postponed until travel becomes safe again. A longer obituary is at legacy.com.

Suzanne Maryella Grant Leverett dies at 80

Former Wrangell resident Suzanne Maryella Grant Leverett died Dec. 22, 2020, in Gig Harbor, Washington. She was born Oct. 28, 1940, in Wrangell, to Neil and Lillian Grant, a pioneer Wrangell family. She graduated Wrangell High School in 1958.

“Suzanne Leverett, loving mother, grandmother and friend passed away in the company of loved ones at the age of 80 after a long battle with cancer,” her family

wrote. She met her husband, John, at Western Washington University, where she received her teaching degree. They married in 1962 and settled in Gig Harbor, where they raised their four sons.

“Suzanne was a true mama bear, fiercely loyal to her family, generous, strong and kind,” her family wrote. “She played an integral role in raising her grandchildren and could always be counted on

to dish out endless love, hugs and ice cream. She was the life of the party, pulling everyone on to the dance floor for a good time. Suzanne also enjoyed traveling, and had some of her most memorable moments on the island of Maui with her beloved John, family and friends.”

She was preceded in death by her parents, Neil and Lillian; her husband, John; and granddaughters Caroline and Emma Grace. She is survived by her sons Neil

(Janet), Victor (Stephanie), John (Stacy), and Vince (Jody); her grandchildren Bri, Taylor, Kristi, Addison, Kylie, Hutton, Allie, Emily, Kendal, Boone, Molly and Gabby; and her great-grandchildren Halle and Dawson.

No memorial events are currently scheduled. “To offer your sympathy during this difficult time, you can have memorial trees planted on a national forest in memory of your loved one.”

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Cruise cancelled

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tions of their summer 2021 season, though several have announced delays in the start of their sailings or shorter voyages.

Seabourn has shortened its season but still plans 18 seven-day Alaska sailings, shortening the length of the cruise to meet current CDC guidelines. The first Seabourn Odyssey cruise will leave Vancouver on May 28 and the ship's final trip of the season will leave Juneau on Sept. 10.

The Odyssey, which holds 468 passengers, plans to stop in Wrangell on two southbound trips from Juneau, the first on June 6 and then again on Sept. 12. It will spend the day in port each time.

Holland America and

Princess Cruises have postponed the start of their 2021 cruise seasons to Alaska, in response to health guidelines imposed for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Princess on Jan. 6 canceled six Alaska trips scheduled through May 14. Holland America canceled sailings on three Alaska-bound ships through the first week of June and on three others through mid-May.

Carnival Cruise Line, which owns Princess and Holland America, announced Jan. 6 it was suspending all sailings until at least April 30.

Princess and Holland America said in statements that health rules imposed by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and "uncertainty

around travel restrictions" prompted the cancellations.

The CDC warns against sailing on cruise ships with its highest risk rating, but will give local ports the authority this year to approve COVID-19 mitigation plans drawn up by individual cruise lines before they unload passengers.

Other cruise lines have also pulled back as well this year. Celebrity Cruise Lines was expected to announce similar postponements.

None of those larger cruise ship operators are scheduled to send their ships to Wrangell this summer. The community's schedule includes ships that can accommodate dozens or hundreds of passengers, not the

largest cruise liners that can carry thousands of travelers.

Among the smaller ships on Wrangell's port-of-call schedule this summer is National Geographic Expedition's Sea Lion, which still plans to run six-day cruises in Southeast, starting in late May. The ship holds 62 passengers and is scheduled to make its stop in Wrangell on May 25; then again on May 29; four times in June; and then again twice in July and August.

The start of the cruise season also may be determined by Canadian government decisions. On Monday, the Canadian government announced that the border will remain closed until at least Feb. 21. The country has banned cruise ships until Feb. 28.

While the CDC has lifted its total no-sail order from last March, ships bound for Alaska must contend with Canadian restrictions when they are registered outside the United States. Federal law requires foreign-flagged ships sailing between U.S. ports to stop at a foreign port. For Alaska cruises, a Canadian stop satisfies the requirement, but only if the border is open.

The CDC's current conditional sailing order allows a resumption of service based on a number of requirements. They include:

- Testing passengers and crew for COVID-19 and screening for symptoms or known exposure to people who are infected. Testing must be done at departure and on arrival at the

final destination.

- Procedures must be in place for social distancing onboard.

- Procedures must be in place for quarantining passengers who fall ill. Medical care agreements also need be in place with onshore hospitals for evacuations of ill passengers or crew.

The CDC is also requiring cruise operators to perform a simulated trip with volunteers to test boarding at terminals, social distancing for onboard activities, and management of sick passengers or crew. Following the simulation, a ship can receive a conditional sailing certificate that will allow cruises to start.

In Alaska, the state is talking about a working group "to address health and safety protocols for the cruise ship industry to make sure that we can actually ... get people to come to Alaska how to enjoy it safely to make sure that we have a successful cruise ship season," Alaska Health and Social Services Commissioner Adam Crum reported during a Jan. 5 online town hall meeting called by the governor's office to discuss COVID issues.

"We're patiently hoping to see some movement there," Skagway Mayor Andrew Cremata said during the town hall, as reported by Haines-Skagway public radio station KHNS. Skagway is dependent on cruise ship travelers for most of its economy.

The Department of Health and Social Services said Jan. 7 it had not yet formed the cruise travel working group.

Dividends

Continued from page 1

from the Permanent Fund each year. He is asking legislators to put the question before voters in an advisory ballot in a special election this spring, followed by a constitutional amendment on the November 2022 general election to lock it in.

A simple majority of legislators is required to call a special election, but a two-thirds majority of both the House and Senate is needed to put a constitutional amendment before the voters.

Though lawmakers agree the Permanent Fund should be protected, there is no clear majority in the Legislature in support of putting the dividend in the constitution.

If the governor's proposed 50-50 split goes forward, the PFD would be about \$2,400 in 2022.

Dunleavy's plan for a total of \$5,000 in dividends to Alaskans this year "certainly complicates the goal of having a sustainable, long-term fiscal plan," Ortiz said. What goes out in PFDs is not available for schools or other public services.

The Legislature in 2018 passed a law limiting annual withdrawals from the Permanent Fund earnings reserve for dividends and the state budget to no more than 5% of the fund's market value averaged over the past five years. The idea is that the fund will earn, on average, more than 5% a year on its investments, according to Permanent Fund Corp. financial projections. Withdrawing 5% while earning more than that will allow the fund to continue to grow.

The corporation estimates the fund will grow \$10 billion, to \$80 billion, by the end of Fiscal Year 2030, if the Legislature adheres to the 5% annual withdrawal limit.

In advocating for additional PFD payouts this year, Dunleavy has told Alaskans that the Permanent Fund earned \$10 billion on its investments between the end of March and the start of December 2020.

"The question, can we afford this? The answer is yes," the governor said in a video released by his office in December.

However, the governor's video and other statements fail to acknowledge that before it earned \$10 billion in eight months, the Permanent Fund lost \$7 billion in the first three months of the year.

"(The) Legislature must weigh desire for stimulus against long-term cost," Alexei Painter, a fiscal analyst with the Legislative Finance Division, testified before the House Finance Committee on Jan. 8. "If the Legislature overdraws" the Permanent Fund without taking steps to balance the budget, the spending could rapidly replete the fund's earnings reserve, Painter said. "Each year we delay resolving the long-term deficit digs the hole deeper."

The state has run deficits more than half the past 30 years, essentially draining its most accessible savings account, the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund, before turning to Permanent Fund earnings a few years ago to balance the budget and continue the annual PFDs.

Dunleavy's 10-year plan for the budget, assuming his 50-50 split between dividends and public services, shows a wide \$1.2 billion gap in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget, which he said would be filled by "other revenue sources." He has provided no information on what "other sources" might include.

However, the governor is asking legislators to place a constitutional amendment on the 2022 ballot that would prohibit any new taxes without a vote of the public, effectively delaying that option of "other revenue sources."

A constitutional block on new taxes without a statewide vote of Alaskans would create a problem for balancing the budget in Fiscal Year 2023, Painter told House members. "Other revenue" for Fiscal Year 2023 "would need to be authorized this year, since it takes time to set up new taxes," he said.

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