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Governor, lawmakers agree to use federal aid to boost ferry system

By SENTINEL STAFF

Nearly \$77 million in federal pandemic relief funds would be used to cover the state contribution to the Alaska Marine Highway System operating budget through Dec. 31, 2022, bringing more certainty to scheduling the vessels, under a deal worked out between the governor and legislators.

The money would come from the transportation section of a \$900 billion relief bill passed by Congress in December. The governor announced the funding plan while in Ketchikan last Thursday.

The federal money, when added to anticipated revenues from passenger and vehicle fares, would bring the ferry system budget closer to what legislators approved last year before the governor vetoed millions from the spending plan for the current fiscal year.

That would likely allow the system to add some port calls next winter.

State funding is usually appropriated one year at a time, with the fiscal year starting July 1. Extending the appropriation to 18 months would help with ferry operations, "so that it's not up and down one year to the next," Gov. Mike Dunleavy told re-

porters in Ketchikan.

In particular, the advance funding would allow the Alaska Marine Highway to know further in advance the level of service it can afford, making it easier to release schedules sooner, said Ketchikan Rep. Dan Ortiz, who also represents Wrangell.

Earlier release of the schedule, with the certainty of 18 months of funding, should help boost ridership, Ortiz said.

"It does solve the problem of how the system has been hurt by not being able to put out a schedule with any sort of long-term range to it," he said.

"What we've been told from the Alaska Marine Highway is that when they have an early schedule, they get about a 5% boost in sales, so that's good," said Sitka Sen. Bert Stedman, who accompanied Dunleavy to Ketchikan. The senator's district includes Wrangell.

After this year's 18-month appropriation, Dunleavy proposes syncing the ferry system budget with the calendar year rather than the July 1 fiscal year used by state government. Moving to a calendar year would help with scheduling further in advance, he said.

"The next big issues," Ortiz

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PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

Never miss a sunny day

Alyssa Coleman enjoys her Monday afternoon with a book outside City Hall. Wrangell reached a sunny 61 degrees on Monday, far from the record of 72 but still several degrees above average for the day. Sadly, the good weather did not last, with rain Tuesday and rain mostly forecast through Monday.

Trident will not reopen this summer, cites low chum numbers

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

Trident Seafoods has notified city officials the company will not reopen its Wrangell plant this summer.

Plant manager Nick Ohmer called on Tuesday with the expected news, Borough Manager Lisa Von Barga told the assembly at its evening meeting.

"I had a conversation with him about what it would take to get the

plant back open here in Wrangell," Von Barga said. Ohmer responded that the seafood processor would need "to see somewhere between 40% and 50% more fish chums than were projected to return to Southeast Alaska" for the plant to open.

Predictions of weak salmon returns drove Trident's decision to temporarily shutter its Wrangell plant last year after buying the operation about 10 years

ago.

"Since Trident acquired the Wrangell facility, we've ran it in good times and bad, but predictions for the coming season of low abundance for both pink and chum salmon in Southeast Alaska led us to the extremely difficult decision to not operate the plant," a company spokeswoman said in March 2020.

Trident, with processing plants in

Ketchikan and Petersburg, ran tenders last year to buy fish to haul to its other plants.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game pre-season predictions for this year forecast Southeast pink salmon returns at the low end of average.

The department's forecast for chum returns is better than last year, though the 2020 commercial harvest was less than half of the 10-year average in Southeast and Yakutat.

Trident's decision will leave Sea Level Seafoods alone on the waterfront again this year. The company plans to open Saturday, after deciding to skip the early part of the halibut season.

"The primary reason for opening later is, historically, when we open earlier we're pretty slow," said David Brindle, Alaska operations manager for Pacific Seafood, which owns Sea Level.

Commercial halibut fishing opened March 7 in Southeast.

Without an operating processor in town to buy their early catch, Wrangell fishermen have had to sell elsewhere, hurting the local economy as well as the level of trust with the processors, some fishermen said.

Matanuska breakdown fourth since February

By LARRY PERSILY
Sentinel writer

The 58-year-old Matanuska has been at the dock in Ketchikan since Sunday morning, waiting for repairs, and is not expected to return to service until Saturday.

It is the ship's fourth mechanical breakdown since February, stranding passengers and imposing costs and delays on travelers with few options.

"The Matanuska is still in Ketchikan awaiting parts for repair of the starboard engine," the Alaska Marine Highway System reported in a website posting Tuesday afternoon. "It is anticipated the vessel will get underway northbound Saturday afternoon."

The state said it would publish an updated schedule

sometime Wednesday.

The 408-foot-long mainline ferry, the only ship scheduled to call on Wrangell all summer, pulled into Ketchikan early Sunday morning on its northbound run out of Bellingham, Washington. Its next stop was planned for Wrangell.

The community is scheduled to see the Matanuska once a week northbound and once southbound through September — both stops were canceled this week.

"It's so unreliable now," Wrangell Mayor Stephen Prysunka said Tuesday.

The Matanuska was first delayed on Sunday after two crew members tested positive for COVID-19. It was sim-

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Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Thursday, April 29: Kyle William Hommel, Noah Emily Speers.

Friday, April 30: Chris Booker, James McCloskey, Danika Rae Smalley.

Saturday, May 1: Lotus Booth, Brad Fitzgerald, Gavin Hamley, Jonna Kautz, Jeff Smith; Anniversary: Austin and Diane O'Brien.

Sunday, May 2: William Helgeson, Ariyah Howell, Dena McChargue.

Monday, May 3: Lauren Taylor-Gillen, Heather Johnson, Steve Keller, Brandon Kenfield.

Tuesday, May 4: Harley Ann Anderson, Phebe Garcia, Dewyo Young, Nonay Young.

Wednesday, May 5: Yenell Cummings, James George.

Thursday, May 6: Kathy Appleman, Kaylyn Easterly, Maylee Haggard; Anniversary: Joshua and Dacee Gustafson, Mitch and Emilie Turner.

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

Friday, April 30

Chicken adobo, broccoli, salad, rice

Monday, May 3

Turkey, peas, salad

Tuesday, May 4

Beef roll, Brussels sprouts, rice

Wednesday, May 5

Baked fish, beets, salad, rice pilaf

Thursday, May 6

Chicken, spinach, fruit slaw, red potatoes

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

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

Ferry Schedule

Northbound

Friday, May 7

Matanuska, 6:45 p.m.

Friday, May 14

Matanuska, 4:45 p.m.

Friday, May 21

Matanuska, 5:45 p.m.

Friday, May 28

Matanuska, 3:45 p.m.

Friday, June 4

Matanuska, 5:45 p.m.

Southbound

Monday, May 10

Matanuska, 7:15 a.m.

Monday, May 17

Matanuska, 6 a.m.

Monday, May 24

Matanuska, 5:45 a.m.

Monday, May 31

Matanuska, 6:30 a.m.

Monday, June 7

Matanuska, 6:30 a.m.

All times listed are scheduled departure times.

Call the terminal at 874-2021 for information or call 874-3711 or 800-642-0066 for recorded information.



TIDES

April 29-May 5

	High Tides		Low Tides		AM Time	PM Time	Ft	Ft
	AM Time	PM Time	AM Time	PM Time				
April 29	02:43	03:37	19.5	16.3	09:07	09:09	-3.9	1.7
April 30	03:26	04:28	18.7	15.2	09:54	09:56	-3.1	3.0
May 1	04:12	05:25	17.5	14.0	10:47	10:50	-1.8	4.2
May 2	05:06	06:34	16.0	13.1	11:46	11:56	-0.3	5.3
May 3	06:13	07:54	14.4	12.8	...	12:55	...	1.0
May 4	07:40	09:09	13.3	13.3	01:20	02:12	5.9	1.8
May 5	09:06	10:08	13.2	14.2	02:56	03:27	5.4	2.0

Wrangell Roundup: Special Events

WRANGELL CHAMBER is seeking nominations for: Chamber Business of the Year, Citizen of the Year, Educator of the Year, Youth Leader of the Year (18 years of age or younger). Submit nominations at: <https://www.wrangellchamber.org/nomination-form2.html>. Deadline is this Friday. Contact Stephanie at 874-3901.

WRANGELL CHAMBER is looking for event and 4th of July committee volunteers. And if you are planning a food or game booth for the 4th of July, contact the chamber to secure a booth spot. Contact Stephanie at the chamber if you are interested in becoming a volunteer or to secure a booth spot. Email stephanie@wrangellchamber.com, call 874-3901, or stop by the chamber office.

WRANGELL SCHOOL BOARD will hold a special meeting at 6:30 p.m. this Thursday via Zoom. The agenda is personnel matters. Join the meeting at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84752465606?pwd=QkpXY3lsOHh3TlV0b0dNbU5tej5QT09>. The meeting ID is 847 5246 5606; the passcode is 469014.

WRANGELL LITTLE LEAGUE still needs volunteer coaches, umpires, scorekeepers and concession workers. Contact league president Briana Schilling at 874-2855 or 907-305-0282, or email briana2013@hotmail.com, or contact player agent Kaelene Harrison, 874-2737 or 808-265-4482, or email kaeleneh@gmail.com.

SEARHC is sponsoring Move for a Cause in May: Hike, bike, walk, run. This month-long program is designed to enhance your fitness level while raising money for the Southeast Alaska Food Bank and CoastAlaska public radio. Participation is free, open to all ages and fitness levels, and begins this Saturday. For more information or to register go to <https://searhc.org/moveforacause/> or call Tami Meissner 874-5139.

NOLAN CENTER THEATER presents "Mortal Kombat," rated R, at 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under age 12 to the action, adventure, fantasy film, one hour and 50 minutes long. The concessions will be open. Masks are required (and will be provided) as you enter the building. You may remove your mask while eating. Please wash your hands or use the hand sanitizer provided, and stay six feet apart in the lobby as well as theater seating. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

Want more attendance at your meeting or event? Send information for Roundup to wrgsent@gmail.com or call 874-2301. Or go to the Sentinel website, click on the Calendar tab, and submit your entry online.

Continuing Events

PARKS and RECREATION www.wrangellrec.com

Pool activities by appointment and reduced capacity, locker rooms are not available:

Arthritis class, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m., Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Lap swim, 6 - 7:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Lap/tot swim, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., weekdays, 5:15 - 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday, and 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday

Open swim, 5:30 - 7 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday; 6:30 - 8 p.m. Friday; 1 - 2 p.m. Saturday

Swim Club, 3:15 - 5:15 p.m., weekdays

Water aerobics class, 10 - 11 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Weight room available by appointment and at reduced capacity:

6 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 6 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 -

8:30 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Saturday

AA Meetings: North Star Group meets from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays at St. Philips Episcopal Church.

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

April 28, 1921

Four mining load claims located on Zarembo Island, about 20 miles from Wrangell, were recorded at the courthouse this week. The claims are designated as Zarembo load claims Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and are located on the northeasterly corner of the island about one mile up the creek from the water. There is an excellent harbor less than two miles from where the claims are located, and the big steamers pass within sight of the property on their regular course. The locators are Messrs. Ed Cox, Tom W. Baker, E. Sholin and W.P. Shotridge. Cox and Baker are both known to a number of citizens of Wrangell who hope that they have struck something good. There is talk of several prospecting parties starting out from Wrangell for Zarembo in a few days.

April 26, 1946

The paramount subject discussed at the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce meeting Thursday noon was the serious food shortage in town, due to the shipping tie-up caused by a union strike. It was brought out by Leo McCormack, operator of McCormack Dock Co., that there had been no boats carrying foods to Wrangell in 25 days. A motion was proposed

by Don House to wire Alaska Delegate to Congress Bob Bartlett to contact the head of the federal War Shipping Administration to get a boat to Wrangell immediately. That motion was carried, and Bill Eastaugh, chairman of the transportation committee, was instructed to send the wire, but after it was learned that the steamer North Sea will leave Seattle on May 2, stopping here with food supplies, the wire was not deemed necessary.

April 29, 1971

State and federal representatives were in Wrangell on Tuesday, touring possible locations for a second boat harbor in town. Don Statter, director of the state harbors division, said Wrangell "stands a good chance" of having a new harbor project underway within three years, with federal and state financing. Statter said Wrangell has an official U.S. Coast Guard listing of 745 boats, while the city is able to provide only 200 moorage spaces. He said a second harbor is necessary because there is little room for expansion of the existing harbor. Possible second harbor sites include Cemetery Point and a location near the Wrangell Institute, among others.

April 25, 1996

Surplus books from the Wrangell High School library are on their way to the Africa nation of Zimbabwe. Honor Society Students packed the books in cardboard boxes, piled them in the back of a pickup truck, and then transferred them to a storage container donated by Boyer Barge Co. for the trip south on their longer journey to Africa. School librarian Bonnie Demerjian said a group in Seattle will forward the books on to Africa.



Daylight Hours

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Hours
April 29	5:07a	8:27p	15:29h
April 30	5:04a	8:29p	15:33h
May 1	5:02a	8:31p	15:37h
May 2	5:00a	8:33p	15:42h
May 3	4:58a	8:36p	15:46h
May 4	4:55a	8:38p	15:50h
May 5	4:53a	8:40p	15:54h

Legislature, governor focus on spending federal pandemic aid

By SENTINEL STAFF AND THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Legislators will focus the next few weeks on how to spend \$1.02 billion in federal pandemic relief destined for the state treasury, with last week's opening acts of the fiscal play showing somewhat different budgetary scripts from the House majority coalition and the governor.

Both proposals would direct money to construction projects, the tourism industry and repairing Alaska's damaged economy, though at differing funding levels. The House plan also would direct funds to communities worst hit by the pandemic.

And while House leadership has proposed appropriating about 70% of the federal funds in this year's budget, and saving the rest for next year, Gov. Mike Dunleavy's plan also would stretch out the spending but does not specify how much should be held back for next year.

Senate President Peter Micciche said his colleagues would prefer to hold back half the money for next year, when available state funds to balance the budget will be just as tight.

The federal legislation gives state and local governments until December 2024 to spend the funds.

The House Finance Committee is scheduled to work all this week on the state operating budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1.

Legislators face a May 19 constitutional deadline to adjourn unless they can round up enough votes to extend their work or the governor calls them into special session.

Lawmakers are waiting on official federal guidance to explain more precisely how the money can be spent — which may not come before May 10 — putting Alaska in a bit of a calendar squeeze to finish their budget decisions.

The House majority plan for the federal aid, unveiled last Friday, proposes to spend about

\$700 million this session from the \$1.02 billion. Much of that money would be used to replace state dollars in the budget, freeing up state general fund money to pay for a \$230 million capital budget — used to fund construction and renovation projects — which would be Alaska's largest budget works budget in years.

The proposal allocates \$80 million of the state's federal funding for municipal governments. That would be in addition to the \$230 million in direct federal aid going to Alaska communities under the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan signed into law last month.

Local school districts are in line to receive their own federal assistance under a \$358 million education allocation going to the state.

An additional \$400 million-plus is coming to Alaska for housing assistance, COVID-19 response efforts, public health programs, child care, university aid and other programs targeted in the federal legislation.

The provision in the House plan to divert \$80 million of the state allocation to municipalities is in response to communities, particularly in Southeast, hit hard by the loss of tourists. Local officials have told lawmakers that the separate federal allocation for their cities and boroughs is not sufficient to cover the loss of tax revenues to their municipal budgets, and they have asked the state to share its money to make up the difference.

Wrangell expects to receive about \$500,000 as its share of the direct federal aid to municipalities, with the school district estimating it will get about \$700,000.

The House plan also proposes \$30 million for nonprofit organizations, \$30 million in grants to small businesses, \$20 million for local economic development organizations to promote tourism and \$10 million for a marketing effort managed by the Alaska Travel Industry Association.

And by using the federal dollars to replace state dollars in the budget, the House majority proposal would set aside \$175 million for a larger Permanent Fund dividend than the state treasury could otherwise afford this year.

The plan must be approved by the Senate and the governor before becoming law, and Dun-



PHOTO BY CALEB VIERKANT/ WRANGELL SENTINEL

While many of the volunteers at last Saturday's Community Cleanup filled bags with bottles, pieces of foam and other trash, AJ Roundtree (left) and Cyrus Yoder found a discarded tire, rolling it across the parking lot between the elementary school and basketball court to a collection point.

Cleanup volunteers fill 10 dumpsters

By SENTINEL STAFF

About 70 people came out for Saturday's Wrangell Community Cleanup, about 10 more than usual, said organizer Valerie Massie.

There was no cleanup in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the annual event was brought back this spring, sending volunteers around the city to pick up trash.

Massie said participants filled 146 bags with trash in a half-day of work, enough for 10 full dumpsters and four truckloads of large items like metal and mattresses.

Organizer Kim Wickman said there was

not one particular kind of trash found more often than others, but common items included bottles and Styrofoam.

Participants were rewarded for their work with bag lunches, which Wickman said were donated by several businesses around town, and a raffle for \$5 cash prizes. Each bag of trash brought in was worth one ticket. Massie said they gave away \$310 in the raffle.

"It really was one of the most successful cleanups we have had," she said.

The event was sponsored by the Wrangell Cooperative Association.

leavy could veto elements of the plan.

The governor's own plan for spending the federal aid, unveiled a week before the House majority plan, would direct \$150 million for Alaska tourism, calling it a "revitalization" effort; \$325 million in assistance to businesses and organizations hit by pandemic restrictions, calling it "economic recovery and innovation;" and \$325 million for construction projects, including water, sewer and broadband projects.

Meanwhile, other issues many lawmakers saw heading into this year's session as critical to address — such as Alaska's long-running budget deficit and a new formula for calculating the annual Permanent Fund dividend — have been overshadowed by the large amount of federal money coming to the state.

Though some lawmakers previously said the influx of federal aid should not be seen as an excuse to delay tough decisions to protect the state's financial future, there is no work nearing completion in the House or Senate on any tax or other significant revenue legislation.

Lawmakers continue talking about changing the 40-year-old formula to calculate the dividend, but they lack consensus on how or what to change.

Much of the discussion in the final weeks will focus on how to spend the federal aid.

Anchorage Rep. Sara Rasmussen, a member of the House Finance Committee, said the Legislature wants more control over how the state spends the federal dollars. Lawmakers last year, rushing to finish their work early amid escalating COVID-19 concerns, essentially rubber-stamped

plans offered by the Dunleavy administration.

Micciche and House Speaker Louise Stutes, who met with Dunleavy on April 20, said there is a general agreement that the federal money will not be used to permanently increase the size of the budget.

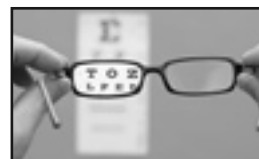
In recent years, debate over the size of the dividend has been a dominant issue as lawmakers have relied heavily on Permanent Fund earnings — long used only to pay dividends — to also fund public services amid low oil revenue.

Micciche said the federal aid has taken away some momentum from efforts to seek a long-term solution to the state's fiscal dilemmas. "I mean, politicians, fundamentally, if you can avoid the tough decisions, that's what many people want to do," he said.

Correction

Due to an editor's error, the Sentinel misspelled Issabella Crowley's name in the credit line for the northern lights photo on Page 12 of the April 22 newspaper.

WRANGELL EYE CARE PRISM OPTICAL OF ALASKA



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Ferry funding

Continued from page 1

said, are adding crew quarters to the 300-passenger sister ships Tazlina and Hubbard, so that the unused ships, each less than 2 years old, can get to work and make longer runs, and then replacing the 57-year-old Tustemena. After that, "the next step is a new mainline ferry," to replace the 58-year-old Matanuska or 48-year-old Columbia, he said.

The governor for the first time expressed his support for steering \$15 million in federal highway dollars toward crew quarters for one of the unused

ferries, according to public radio station KRBD in Ketchikan, which covered the governor's visit.

The infusion of federal pandemic relief dollars seems to have at least temporarily eased the tension between lawmakers who support the marine highway and the governor, who has cut the system's budget and vetoed legislative attempts to restore funding since taking office almost 30 months ago.

Legislators are working on the budget in the final weeks of the session, as they face a constitutional adjournment deadline of May 19.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Lack of fiscal plan adds to Alaska's struggles

By LARRY PERSILY
Publisher

"Confidence in an economy matters," Dan Robinson, research chief at the state Department of Labor, told the House Ways and Means Committee earlier this month. "There is an economic cost of not solving these problems."

He was talking with legislators about the state's job loss, population loss, economic loss and inability to agree on a fiscal plan to pay for public services long term. For most of the past 30 years, Alaska has taken from savings, prayed for high oil prices and rejoiced at any federal aid coming our way.

That's not a plan, that's a dream, punctuated by fits of panic and luck.

The lack of a balanced budget with recurring revenues, the lack of political leadership to accept taxes as a reasonable way to pay for public services, the uncertainty over Alaska's economic future — be it oil, tourism, mining or who knows what else — creates investment uncertainty. Which leads to job loss. Which further weakens the economy and adds to uncertainty.

"When you're in full retreat ... that becomes self-fulfilling," committee member Rep. Andy Josephson said of the job losses and population decline.

Robinson shared a lot of numbers with the committee, showing that Alaska has lost population, that more people have moved out of the state than moved in every year since 2013, that Alaska ranked last or close to last in job growth categories compared to other states for 2014-2019.

"No state has lost more as a percentage of their population than Alaska has," Robinson said.

Alaska ranked 48th among the states with our 2.6% overall job loss and the same 48th place finish with a 2.5% job loss in the private sector 2014-2019. No worry, we were No. 1, or more accurately, No. 50 with a 12.1% job loss in state government, and dead last in state university employment with an 18.8% decline in jobs.

Of course, some would cheer at the large reduction in state and university jobs, but those lost wages, lost households and lost students hurt the economy the same as private-sector jobs that disappear.

Job opportunities are a big factor in motivating people to move, and Alaska has not excelled at that in a long time. Committee Chair Rep. Ivy Spohnholz, in noting the outmigration from Alaska, said there are not a lot of people who want to move here.

The prognosis? Federal pandemic aid aside, Alaskans need to craft and accept a sustainable, long-term fiscal plan to pay for public services and build investor confidence in our state. We've known it for decades, but we avoid it because the choices are unpleasant, including personal taxes and smaller Permanent Fund dividends.

"All of our possible choices have pros and cons, and from an economic perspective, none will be cost-free," Robinson told the committee. "But until we make those decisions, our economy will struggle."

OPINION

Southeast cities should band together to operate ferries

By FRANK MURKOWSKI

I saw a falling star last night and it reminded me of our Alaska Marine Highway System. Both are in a free fall.

We cannot do much about the star, but maybe we can rescue our ferry system.

We cannot continue to serve coastal communities with an ever-increasing subsidy. Significant fare increases have caused a substantial decline in ridership, fewer sailings and fewer ships operating. More than half of the fleet is laid up.

Rather than elaborate as to the failures of past and current administrations and the lack of timely decisions, while yet another consultant is hired or another advisory committee is established, it is my intent to urge Southeast to reflect on the harsh reality of doing nothing.

The mainliners will be scrapped and the Malaspina may be a reef. The Taku was sold for \$171,000, yet it was

able to sail to India. The two fast ferries sold for \$5 million each cost almost \$60 million to build. The road ahead is about to come to a dead-end unless we work together on a solution.

Hopefully, my proposal can be a start.

My proposal is going to require money, coordination and cooperation among Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, Juneau, Haines and Skagway. The first step is to ascertain just how important the ferry system is to each community. What does it mean to the local economy and how much does it depend on the ferry system? What kind of a future would the community have without the ferries? Does the community believe that a new Southeast marine highway authority could be formed with each of the seven communities participating?

Here's how it might work:

The authority could lease three vessels from the state. Each community would hold an equity ownership in the authority, with the larger communities having a larger percentage.

The authority would also take over the terminals and operate a centralized reservation system. The mainline vessels would operate with departures in season twice a week from Prince Rupert, British Columbia and Bellingham, Washington. This would provide a service for visitors and Alaskans throughout the state, sufficient to accommodate campers, trucks, trailers and automobiles.

Recognizing that the proposal's success is dependent on adequate funding, a type of revenue bonding might be crafted. I have contacted bonding underwriters, and they suggest the initial offering might be for a term of three

EDITORIAL

Spend federal aid to do the most good

With more than \$1 billion in federal pandemic aid heading to the state treasury, Gov. Mike Dunleavy and Alaska's 60 legislators are busy figuring out the best way to spend the money. Our elected leaders need to stick with spending decisions that will do the most long-term good for communities, resisting the temptation of politically popular cash payouts to individuals.

It's disturbing to hear talk among some elected officials in the Capitol that the federal money could be used — in a roundabout way — to squeeze out a larger Permanent Fund dividend this year.

By appropriating the one-time federal money to cover state spending on public services, the state dollars that would have gone to pay for those services could be used instead to ensure Alaskans receive a larger dividend this year than the treasury could otherwise afford.

There are problems with that PFD-focused attitude:

It is contrary to the spirit of the federal legislation, which is to help repair and rebuild the economic damage caused by the pandemic. COVID-19 and its financial hit to Alaskans is not to blame for the state treasury's inability to pay a large PFD. The culprit is Alaskans' refusal to accept the reality that we have overspent, overpromised, undertaxed and failed for years to accept the mathematical truth: We are running out of oil money.

Giving bigger dividends to Alaskans misses the fact that many, perhaps most Alaskans are no worse off financially than they were a year ago before COVID-19 made face masks as common as rubber boots. Handing out more money to people who don't need it ignores more pressing needs statewide.

Such as the needs in Wrangell.

It will cost an estimated \$13 million to repair/rebuild the public safety building.

A long-term fix of Wrangell's water reservoir system could cost \$50 million.

The town lost its state fisheries officer and its Office of Children's Services social worker to irresponsible budget cuts — and maybe we can get them back.

And wouldn't additional state ferry service help the community?

The best use of the federal money, and the wisest use of the state money it will free up, are services that will benefit the community for the long term. Not a few hundred dollars additional in one year's PFD.

— The Wrangell Sentinel

years.

Each of the communities would guarantee a portion of the revenue bond equal to their equity ownership of the authority. The bonds might be sold to the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority or the Alaska Permanent Fund. Repayment would come from ferry revenue and community bed tax and sales tax receipts.

The state would continue to fund a portion of the system's expense based on a per-mile fee. A new labor contract would have to be negotiated.

The extent of the subsidy can only be estimated. Subsidies are a reality to virtually all forms of transportation. Even

Alaska Airlines receives a federal subsidy for service to Cordova, Yakutat, Petersburg and Wrangell.

I have outlined this draft proposal in hopes it will stimulate dialogue that will help rejuvenate Southeast by providing reliable marine highway access.

I am aware that the effort may have to overcome difficult hurdles, but I'm reminded of an old political saying: "The best government is the one closest to home. And my favorite: "Alaskans are hardy because we have to be."

Frank Murkowski served as governor of Alaska 2002-2006, and as U.S. senator for Alaska 1981-2002.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF JACK CARNEY

Liana Carney pins an opponent in the first round at last Friday's tournament in Ketchikan. She was one of six Wrangell High School wrestlers to claim a regional championship in their weight division.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JACK CARNEY

Wolves wrestler Ethan Blatchley attempts to pin Jonas Baekkelund of Petersburg High School at last Friday's regional tournament in Ketchikan. Blatchley took second place in the 171 weight division.

Wolves bring home six regional wrestling titles

By CALEB VIERKANT
Sentinel writer

The Wrangell Wolves wrestling team continued its strong season last weekend with several wrestlers taking first place in Southeast regionals and then making a solid showing the next day at the Bill Weiss Tournament, also in Ketchikan.

Several wrestlers also claimed high state rankings.

"Really happy about the weekend, it was genuinely a good time," Assistant Coach Jack Carney said.

Six Wrangell wrestlers took first place in their respective weight divisions: Liana Carney, Jamie Early, Mia Wiederspohn, Ryan Rooney, Rowen Wiederspohn and Jake Eastaugh. Collectively, the Wolves took second place in regionals on Friday, behind Mt. Edgecumbe High School.

Among just the Division 2A schools that competed, Wrangell took first place.

Following regionals, Wrangell stayed in Ketchikan for the Bill Weiss Tournament. Weiss was the sports editor for the Ketchikan Daily News, and donated a lot of time to wrestling. After retiring, he continued to help with wrestling events. This tournament is named in his honor.

The Wolves took third place Saturday, with a collective 158 points. Mt. Edgecumbe and Ketchikan High School took first and second place, respectively. Within their own weight divisions, Wrangell had four first place winners: Carney, Early, Mia Wiederspohn and Rowen Wiederspohn.

Rooney was ranked first in the 160 division, and Eastaugh was first in the 215 division, according to Coach Carney's postings on the Wolves Facebook page of the team's state rankings. Rowen Wiederspohn was ranked third in the 189 division. James Shilts was ranked fifth in the 145 division. Randy Churchill was ranked sixth in the 160 division.

In the girls' divisions, Wrangell also had several high state rankings. Carney was ranked second in the 145 division, and Early was ranked third. Lillian Younce was ranked third in the 160 division.

"Most of the team is ranked top six," Carney said.

The coach also said Rooney and Carney were voted "outstanding wrestlers" by all the coaches at regionals. It was a vote of confidence in both, as it is uncommon for the outstanding male and female wrestler to come from one team, he said.

Carney also mentioned that Mia and Rowen Wiederspohn made the fastest pins of regionals, combined going through six matches in less than four minutes.

The entire team showed their skills last week and all did very well, the coach said. "They all did their part. ... I'm, just really proud of how focused they were and how disciplined they were."

With regionals out of the way, the Wolves have about a month to rest and prepare for the state tournament May 21-22, with the site still to be determined.

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Wrangell Parks & Recreation

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House approves early school funding; Senate action uncertain

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS AND SENTINEL STAFF

The Alaska House of Representatives has passed a bill intended to prevent teacher layoffs the next two years with early appropriation of state funding to local school operating budgets.

Though helpful in its intent to provide funding certainty to school districts, it does not solve the budget problems of districts, such as Wrangell, that have seen steep enrollment drops during the pandemic. State funding for local schools is based on their annual student count.

In previous years, late budget action by the Legislature has forced some school districts to build their spending plans based on worst-case scenarios, which caused temporary teacher layoffs.

While many of those teachers were eventually rehired, the layoffs made some reconsider their jobs, increasing teacher turnover and hurting student performance, the Anchorage Daily News reported.

The House action is aimed at providing guaranteed school funding ahead of time so districts can adopt their budget with actual financial information.

Lawmakers passed the education bill April 22, moving to lock in state funding through the 2022-2023 school year. It passed with a vote of 26-14.

"A delayed education budget can be harmful to our school districts, which need to finalize their local district budget earlier in the year," Ketchikan Rep. Dan Ortiz said.

"Without knowing how much money will be appropriated by the Legislature, districts are forced to draft multiple budgets, anticipate low amounts, and sometimes issue pink slips to teachers," he said.

"It has been a rollercoaster year for our school districts, which have faced immense uncertainty. The legislature can provide a little extra stability to our schools, teachers and students by passing an early education budget."

Several Republican lawmakers joined with the Democrat and Independent-led House majority coalition to approve the measure.

While some local school districts must approve their budgets by mid-May, lawmakers do not expect to finish work on the state budget until May 19, the last day of the legislative session.

The education bill now moves to the Senate, where the initial response from leaders was unenthusiastic. Senate President Peter Micciche, of Soldotna, and Senate Finance Committee Co-chairman Bert Stedman, of Sitka, said in separate interviews with the Anchorage Daily News that federal pandemic aid for schools means immediate legislative action is not needed.

In the House, Rep. Ben Carpenter, a member of the Finance Committee, said it wasn't wise to budget in advance for the next school year because finances could change significantly.

Other Republicans such as state Rep. Mike Cronk supported the House two-year funding bill. He is a former teacher and school board member.

"I saw way too many of our good teachers leave," Cronk said. "When you're in a small community, that is very hard to get — having the consistency of teachers that actually want to stay and live there."

Wrangell competes for mileage against Petersburg and Juneau

By SENTINEL STAFF

Wrangell, Petersburg and Juneau residents are competing to see who can walk, hike or run the farthest — without ever leaving town.

"Bragging rights will go to the community that walks/hikes/runs the most miles (average miles per person)," the Wrangell Parks and Recreation website says.

Juneau Parks and Recreation, which started Walk Southeast last year to keep people active during the pandemic, invited Wrangell and Petersburg to join up this year, giving the event a friendly competitive allure and to get more people moving during the summer.

The program is simple: Register online, track the miles, and the more miles a participant logs in, the more chances they have to win prizes, including 25,000 Alaska Airlines miles.

Wrangell businesses also are donating prizes, said Lucy Robinson, the borough's parks and recreation coordinator.

Registration is now open and is free; the miles count starting May 1; and counting stops Sept. 1, Robinson said.

"Which community can you walk, hike or run to by Sept. 1, without even leaving Wrangell? You could try for Haines, at 275 miles, or perhaps Port Protection at 57 miles," the department website says.

"Your mileage tracker will provide distances for all the communities/locations. You'll also be able to earn extra 'tickets' by reaching specific communities," with the tickets good for Wrangell prize drawings, the website explains.

Registration will close May 14, Robinson said. Everyone who signs up will receive a mileage tracker they can download or print out to keep track of their distances.

To register or for more information, go to the Parks and Recreation website at www.wrangellrec.com, or call Robinson at 874-2444.

Police updating roadkill charity list

By SENTINEL STAFF

With warmer weather, the Wrangell Police Department is expecting roadkill to increase. With that, they are hoping to update their charity list for recovering and sharing the deer meat.

Chief Tom Radke said the department's list currently has less than 10 names, and anybody interested in being added to the list just has to give them a call. When there is a report of roadkill with salvageable meat, he said the department will start calling names on the list to see if anybody wants it. The list helps keep the roads clean, while making sure good meat does not go to waste.

Counts of roadkill typically rise and fall with the seasons, Radke said, usually picking up in the spring and summer. If someone on the list doesn't answer their phone, the department will move to the next name on the list. They cannot hold on to the roadkill, Radke said, so whoever says they can take the meat first gets it.

"Please keep in mind these calls can sometimes be during the early hours of morning," the chief said in a Facebook posting.

The Wrangell Police Department can be reached at 874-3304.

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Anti-mask state senator takes to the highway after airline ban

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
AND SENTINEL STAFF

Alaska Airlines has banned an anti-mask state senator for refusing to follow federal law and airline policy requiring face masks.

"We have notified Senator Lora Reinbold that she is not permitted to fly with us for her continued refusal to comply with employee instruction regarding the current mask policy," spokesman Tim Thompson said in a prepared statement Saturday, adding that the suspension was effective immediately.

Reinbold, an Eagle River Republican in her ninth year as a state legislator, is one of more than 500 people banned by Alaska Airlines for refusing to wear a face mask while flying.

Unable to fly back to Juneau for the Senate session scheduled for Monday morning, Reinbold drove last weekend from Eagle River to Haines, where she boarded a state ferry to Juneau.

Last week, Reinbold was recorded in the Juneau airport arguing with Alaska Airlines staff about mask policies as she readied to board a flight to Anchorage.

A video posted to social media appears to show airline staff telling Reinbold her mask must cover her nose and mouth.

Reinbold said she had been inquiring about a "mask exemption with up-tight employees at the counter."

She was allowed to board the flight to Anchorage.

It was at least her second run-in with airline employees over face mask requirements. Last year, she referred to Alaska Airlines staff as "mask bullies" after being asked by flight attendants to wear a mask. After the highly publicized incident, she reportedly sent a cake to some flight attendants bearing the inscription: "I'm sorry if I offended you."

Reinbold has been a vocal opponent of COVID-19 mitigation measures and has repeatedly objected to the airline's mask policy, which was enacted before the federal government's mandate this year, and also has objected to face masks, COVID-19 testing and screening protocols at the Capitol in Juneau.

Thompson said the length of Reinbold's ban from the airline will be determined by a review.



AP PHOTO/BECKY BOHRER

State Sen. Lora Reinbold was at her desk in the Senate on Monday after returning from Anchorage to Juneau by highway and state ferry via Haines. Alaska Airlines had said she was not permitted to fly on the carrier for what the airline said was her "continued refusal to comply with employee instruction regarding the current mask policy."

Alaska Native Celebration plans return for next year

JUNEAU (AP) - Celebration, a four-day dance-and-cultural event billed as the largest gathering of Alaska Natives in Southeast Alaska, will return next year as an in-person event after widespread immunizations in the nation's largest state, organizers said April 22.

Sealaska Heritage Institute said the event celebrating Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian cultures will be held in Juneau from June 8-11, 2022.

The institute's board of directors decided to return to an in-person event after the release of coronavirus vaccines, widespread immunizations and the confidence of the staff that life will be back to normal next year, said Rosita Worl, the institute's president.

The biennial event was held virtually in 2020. Another event planned for this year was scrapped back in January.

"We cancelled the in-person event because we had to protect our people. We look forward to reuniting in 2022 and celebrating our cultural survival," Worl said in a statement. "We survived this pandemic. We are still here."

The theme for the event will be "Celebrating 10,000 Years of Cultural Survival."

The event, first held in 1982, draws thousands of people to Alaska's capital city, including 2,000 dancers. Many of those attending dress in the traditional regalia of clans from throughout Southeast Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.

Associated events include a Native fashion show, a juried art show, art market, Native food contests, lectures and a parade through downtown Juneau.

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IS NOW REALLY THE TIME?

Alaska shares vaccine doses with residents of Stewart, BC

By BECKY BOHRER
The Associated Press

HYDER - Gov. Mike Dunleavy has offered COVID-19 vaccines to residents of the small British Columbia town of Stewart, with hopes it could lead the Canadian government to ease border restrictions between Stewart and the tiny Alaska town of Hyder a couple miles away.

"We couldn't ask for better neighbors than the Canadians. But ... their (virus) mitigating approaches have affected us greatly by slowing down traffic, limiting traffic," Dunleavy told The Associated Press as he ended a long day of travel across Southeast late last week.

Hyder and Stewart are closely linked. Hyder residents get gas and groceries in Stewart, and kids from Hyder go to school there. Hyder even shares an area code with its Canadian neighbor and runs on Pacific time, an hour ahead of most of the rest of Alaska. Stewart has about 400 residents. Hyder, with an estimated population of nearly 70, flies a banner declaring itself "the friendliest ghost town in Alaska."

Dunleavy referred to Hyder and Stewart as "one community in two countries."

Hyder is about 75 air miles northeast of Ketchikan, but a lot farther by boat up Portland Canal that separates the two countries.

With COVID-19, travel into Canada has been restricted. Hyder residents say they can't visit the homes of friends in Stewart, and Stewart Mayor Gina McKay said her residents are largely restricted from going to Hyder, including for recre-

ational activities they were accustomed to, such as snowmachining and using Hyder's boat launch to head out on fishing trips.

"It's been tough on both sides," she said.

Hyder is the only community in Alaska's southernmost reaches accessible by road — a road that runs through Stewart. Hyder, at the head of a fjord, has a dock for floatplanes, but air travel can be limited by weather.

Dunleavy said he invited the state's chief medical officer, Dr. Anne Zink, "on the spur of the moment" to accompany him April 22 and offer vaccines not only to Hyder residents who had not yet been vaccinated but also to people from Stewart.

He said he reasoned that, because the state has an adequate vaccine supply, "why not share it with them and try to get them vaccinated?"

Dunleavy, seeking to revive a state tourism industry battered by the pandemic, recently announced travelers could get vaccines at some Alaska airports starting June 1.

McKay said many Stewart residents received a first vaccine dose during a weeklong clinic in Stewart around Easter but the wait time for a second dose is up to four months. British Columbia health officials said the approach is intended to make the most of a limited vaccine supply and allow more people to get their first doses.

Zink said 19 people from Canada, most from Stewart, got shots April 22 in Hyder, and one person from Hyder did.



AP PHOTO/BECKY BOHRER

Alaska's chief medical officer, Dr. Anne Zink, flips through paperwork after a COVID-19 vaccine clinic in Hyder on April 22, during which 19 Canadians crossed the border to get a shot in Alaska. State health officials said Alaska has an ample supply of vaccine and Gov. Mike Dunleavy said he wanted to offer vaccinations not only to residents of Hyder but also to Canadians across the border in Stewart, British Columbia.

Zink administered the vaccines in a parking lot outside a community center.

There are plans to work with state public health nurses to return to the area and Zink said they could bring additional second doses so that if anyone in Stewart wanted a second dose at that time, they could get one.

Dunleavy said he hopes that as more people get vaccinated "then maybe just maybe there's a possibility that those two small communities that are really one can get back together and get back to living

life as normal."

McKay called the state's offer to share vaccines incredible. If Stewart residents could get second doses that way, it could free up doses for others in British Columbia, she said.

But McKay said she's not sure how soon the Canadian federal government might ease any travel restrictions. She said as restrictions have persisted, "I'm starting to forget what normal was like and worrying that this is the new normal."

Investigators determine pilots' vision obscured in 2019 midair collision

JUNEAU (AP) - Two planes collided while on sightseeing flights near Ketchikan in 2019 because the pilots' views were obscured and aircraft-tracking systems failed to warn them about the other aircraft, federal investigators concluded April 20.

Six people died and 10 people survived the May 13, 2019, midair collision.

The National Transportation

Safety Board in its probable-cause finding determined that the limitations of the "see and avoid" concept prevented the pilots from seeing each other before the collision. The board also cited a lack of alerts from the planes' video display systems.

The board during its meeting also noted that the planes' structures or perhaps a passenger had limited the pilots'

views.

Mountain Air Service pilot Randy Sullivan and his four passengers, and a passenger in a plane owned by Taquan Air, were killed when the aircraft collided at 3,350 feet.

The NTSB, citing information provided by the operators, said the Ketchikan-based floatplanes were on sightseeing tours and both "converging on a scenic waterfall" before returning to Ketchikan when the crash occurred. Mountain Air's single-engine de Havilland DHC-2 MK 1 Beaver and Taquan's larger de Havilland DHC-3 Otter collided just after noon over the west side of George Inlet following tours of Misty Fjords National Monument.

NTSB Vice Chairman Bruce Landsberg said the "see and avoid" system that pilots rely on to avoid mid-air crashes doesn't work well in high-traffic areas where the sightseeing planes were traveling.

Chairman Robert Sumwalt said the pilots didn't see each other in time to avoid a colli-

sion.

Staff members told the board the Otter pilot recalled seeing a white and red flash, then a tremendous collision.

The Beaver pilot's view would have been obstructed by the airplane's structure and a passenger seated to his right during the critical moments before the crash. The Otter pilot's view was obscured by a window post, the NTSB staff said.

William Bramble, the NTSB's human performance specialist, told the board that both planes were equipped with systems that track other planes, but visual and audible alerts weren't working in either plane.

"The Otter pilot seemed to miss seeing the target (the other plane) on the display because he last recalled looking at the display about four minutes before the collision," Bramble said.

Contributing to the crash was that the Federal Aviation Administration allowed new transceivers that lacked alert capability, and the lack of a requirement for air-traffic-adv-

sory systems to have audio alerts on planes flown by companies that carry passengers, according to the probable-cause finding.

Board members also recommended that the FAA require planes that operate in high-traffic tour areas broadcast their locations to other aircraft.

The FAA said it had begun in October "a sweeping examination of safety issues specific to the challenges of flying in Alaska." The agency said it would "carefully consider all of today's recommendations from the NTSB as that work continues." It said some are similar to recommendations an FAA safety team made after the accident and that the FAA is weighing or implementing the safety team proposals.

A safety issue the board noted was what it said was an "inadequate checklist" used in Taquan Air operations. The checklist found in the Otter did not include an item for a device that transmits certain altitude data, and the board recommend the carrier update its checklists, according to a summary of the board's actions. The device on the plane had been off for two weeks, Sumwalt said.

In documents released earlier by the NTSB, Otter pilot Lou Beck estimated his plane took five seconds to hit the water 10 miles northeast of Ketchikan. At least three people could be heard saying, "brace brace brace," on a camera recording audio before the Taquan plane hit the water.

The Mountain Air Beaver plane broke up in flight, scattering debris across 3,000 feet.

Mountain Air Service closed after the accident.



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Alaska Fish Factor

By LAINE WELCH
Fisheries columnist

Tire compound in road runoff may endanger salmon

Are toxins from road runoff a threat to salmon in Anchorage's most popular fishing streams? A GoFundMe campaign has been launched so Alaskans can chip in to find out.

The push stems from an organic compound in tires called quinone that was newly identified by researchers at the University of Washington, said Birgit Hagedorn, a geochemist and longtime board member of the Anchorage Waterways Council.

"The little flakes that rub off of tires, especially larger truck tires, can be transported into the streams via stormwater. And they leach out the compound that they discovered was highly toxic to salmon. They were specifically looking at coho salmon," she explained.

Hagedorn hopes to raise \$5,500 to test the urban waters that run off the Seward and Glenn highways into Ship and Campbell creeks. The Ship Creek salmon sport fishery is the region's most popular and successful, where anglers target stocked chinook and coho. Other stocked coho fisheries have been established in Campbell and Bird creeks, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Hagedorn already has samples of snow melt in her freezer to send to testing labs and more will be taken this summer.

"During the first really big rain event, we want to go out and sample again. We provide the sampling and the labor,"

she said. "The fundraiser is to pay for the analysis because it's relatively complicated. It takes up to \$500 for just one sample."

Little is known about the compound that is used by tire manufacturers to make the rubber more durable.

"How long does it actually last in water? What is the degradation rate? Can it be absorbed? Those are really variable research studies that could be put in place to understand this compound better," she said.

The hope is to eventually partner with the Anchorage municipality and the University of Alaska to advance further studies and encourage tire makers to stop using the toxic compound.

Studies like Hagedorn's highlight just how little is known about impacts of compounds in a watery mix of automotive byproducts that run off from roads into adjacent waters.

"Urban runoff mortality syndrome occurs annually among adult coho salmon returning to spawn in freshwaters where concurrent stormwater exposure causes rapid mortality. It is unlikely that coho salmon are uniquely sensitive, and the toxicology of quinone transformation products in other aquatic species should be assessed," wrote the UW scientists in the January 2021 abstract in Science Magazine.

"To know what's out there, I think that's an important first

step." Hagedorn said.

Gulf crabbers go big

Crabbers throughout the Gulf of Alaska are enjoying some great hauls, especially for tanners and dungeness.

An 11-day winter fishery throughout Southeast Alaska produced 1.26 million pounds of tanner crab, the fourth-largest catch in the past 15 seasons for nearly 70 permit holders. At an average price of \$3.72 per pound, the fishery was valued at \$4.2 million at the docks, the highest since 1999.

For golden king crab, four out of seven Southeast fishing districts remain open with a combined harvest limit of 76,500 pounds. Crabbers were fetching \$11.33 per pound and many were selling the crab off the docks.

Southeast crabbers also had their second-best fishery for Dungeness. Catches for the combined 2020 summer and fall crab fisheries totaled nearly 6.7 million pounds, more than double the 10-year average and just shy of the record 7.3 million pounds taken in 2002.

The price to fishermen was disappointing, averaging \$1.72 per pound, down by more than a dollar, making the dockside value over \$11.5 million.

Kodiak is gearing up for a dungeness crab fishery that begins on May 1 and will last into the fall. Last season produced the biggest catch in 30 years at just under 3 million pounds for a fleet of 29 boats. Prices for the

two-pounders dropped to \$1.85, down from more than \$3 in previous seasons.

The higher catches were due in part to "more horsepower on the grounds" as opposed to a higher abundance of crab, said Nat Nichols, area manager for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at Kodiak. The stocks are very cyclical and could be the tail end of a peak.

"We've got 50 to 60 years of history to look at, and in the past these peaks have lasted three years of so and then we kind of go down until we get another big group of crab coming through. This could be that we're coming to the end of this peak. This summer will tell the tale," he said.

Seaweed stops gas

For several years, studies in Australia and Canada have proven that small amounts of red seaweed added to livestock feed greatly reduces methane from the gas they pass in burps and farts. Cow burps alone account for 26% of the nation's total methane emissions, according to the EPA, and the U.S. is only the world's fourth-largest producer of cattle, behind China, Brazil and India.

Now researchers at University of California Davis have determined that cattle eating just three ounces of red seaweed daily over five months gained as much weight as their herd mates, while burping out 82% less methane into the atmosphere. The seaweed additive also did not hurt the

cattle's growth or change the taste of beef.

The studies followed earlier research on dairy cows, where daily seaweed dosages were used from the time they were calves until full grown. Methane emissions dropped by 50% and the longer term use did not change the taste of the cows' milk.

All researchers used a red seaweed found in warmer waters throughout the Pacific called *Asparagopsis toxiformis*. It's one of the most popular seaweed ingredients in Hawaiian cuisine and used traditionally in poke. But the supply from wild harvests is not enough to go around.

To the rescue: start-ups already are underway to produce it.

SeafoodSource reports that Sweden's KTH Royal Institute of Technology has partnered with Yale University to cultivate the seaweed in land-based tanks with intentions of providing it to livestock farmers around the world.

An Australian project called Greener Grazing is the first to develop methods to produce Asparagopsis spores for ocean cultivation. And last year a dried product called FutureFeed created at James Cook University in partnership with Meat and Livestock Australia won a Food Planet Prize of \$1 million. Doses of just 1% to 2% of their dried seaweed reduced methane emissions in cud-chewing livestock by 99%.

CLASSIFIED/LEGALS

FOR RENT
3-BEDROOM, 1½-bath townhouse in Wrangell, quiet neighborhood. \$1,200 per month plus tax, 1-year lease. Call 907-738-6639. (tfn2-4b22)

Doug at 425-785-9283. (8x5-20b18)

FOR SALE
1973 32' Rawson, \$20K, 120 Ford Leyman engine, older

boat with good potential. Major upgrades and improvements. Project boat. As is. Wrangell owner. 907-305-0559 or 874-3676.

HELP WANTED



JOHNSON'S BUILDING SUPPLY is looking for a part-time yard employee to help with customers, freight and deliveries. Work schedule: Tuesday through Saturday. Pay DOE. Applications can be picked up at Johnson's Building Supply. (tfn2-11b36)

HELP WANTED

ROBERTS CONSTRUCTION is looking for a bookkeeper, carpenters and laborers. Pay DOE \$25-\$45 an hour. Call

City & Borough of Wrangell, Alaska PUBLIC NOTICE to Lease Borough Property in the Wrangell Marine Service Center

Notice is hereby given that an application to lease Mill Dock #2 in the Wrangell Marine Service Center (WMSC) has been submitted by Mr. Dustin Phillips for the purpose of: constructing building as well as an Icehouse/Ice Machine to purchase, pack, and ship seafood.

The Wrangell Port Commission has reviewed this and has submitted their approval to move forward. It is not a requirement that the Planning & Zoning Commission review the application since the subject property is in the WMSC and there are rules for leasing city property in the WMSC.

Any person wishing to protest this application to lease WMSC Mill Dock #2 in the WMSC must file a written protest with the Borough Clerk, **no later than May 4, 2021 at 5:00 PM**.

Written protests may be emailed to clerk@wrangell.com or delivered to 205 Brueger Street, Wrangell, AK 99929. Any such protest shall state the reason(s) for the protest in detail.

Kim Lane, MMC, Borough Clerk
City & Borough of Wrangell

Publish: April 22 and April 29, 2021

CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL JOB BULLETIN: Nolan Center Coordinator

The City and Borough of Wrangell is recruiting for a Nolan Center Coordinator to oversee the Nolan Center facility operations and assist in managing the Museum, Collections, Gift Shop, Civic Center, and Theater. This person will work closely with the Nolan Center Director to supervise employees, scheduling, general facilities, and daily operations.

Applicants must be willing to work a flexible schedule and weekends. The ideal candidate must have the ability to work cooperatively with the Director, other employees, other city departments, and the public. They will also have the ability to lead and motivate staff, develop procedures and guidelines for Nolan Center operations, and provide responsible, professional care to the community's collection of artifacts which are housed at the Museum. A high school diploma is required. Previous management experience and some college is desirable. Event planning and catering knowledge is helpful. Technical expertise is a plus.

This is a full-time, hourly position with full benefits, at Grade 12. The full job description and employment application can be found online at www.wrangell.com/jobs. To be considered, submit a cover letter, résumé, and completed employment application via e-mail to Rmarshall@wrangell.com, or in person to City Hall, 205 Brueger St., Wrangell, AK 99929. This position will be open until filled, but the first round of application reviews will begin on April 30, 2021.

The City and Borough of Wrangell is an equal opportunity employer.

Lisa Von Bargaen
Wrangell Borough Manager

Publish: April 22 and April 29, 2021

Seafood processors

Continued from page 1

"It's kind of a trickle-down effect, unfortunately," said John Yeager, a fisherman and member of the Wrangell Port Commission.

Yeager normally does his halibut fishing early in the season. He also operates Alaska Charters and Adventures, so he is usually busy during the tourist season. Like other halibut fishermen who work the early season, he had to sell his catches elsewhere. That means the city loses out on fish tax revenues, which are based on where the catch is sold, and the community loses

out on fuel sales.

Mike Lockabey, a self-described "semi-retired" fisherman, said he is worried about the economic damage of Sea Level's late start, and also about how it might affect the relationship between the processor and its fishermen.

The late opening could push fishermen to sell somewhere else, he said, adding that he believes Sea Level lowballed its prices last year. "The fleet's loyalty is wavering," Lockabey said.

Brindle said there were a number of factors that lead to

the decision to open Sea Level late into halibut season this year, but the primary cause was COVID-19.

With the risk of COVID-19 infections, Brindle said it did not make sense to operate at a time when business traditionally is slower. The plant operates with a smaller team in the early season, and if one worker got sick it could shut down operations, he said.

There just would not be enough early-season volume to justify the risk of a COVID spread, Brindle said.

After opening Saturday, the plant likely will stay open until

its traditional closing time around the end of October.

Brindle said the processor did offer low prices for halibut last season. Due to scheduling conflicts with Alaska Airlines and the ferry service, Sea Level struggled to move fresh halibut to market, he said. This season, he said they are optimistic of offering more competitive prices, but that depends on the supply and demand.

"As long as restaurants continue to operate ... I'm very optimistic for good pricing this year," he said.

Alaska joins Florida lawsuit to restart cruise ship travel

By KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS

The state of Alaska is signing on to the state of Florida's lawsuit filed earlier this month against the federal Centers for Disease Control, asking a court to block the agency from stopping cruise ship traffic under public safety protocols.

Florida led the nation in cruise ship passenger boardings in 2019, at more than 8 million. Alaska was around 1.3 million.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis announced his state's lawsuit on April 8, asking the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida to prevent the CDC from enforcing the agency's Conditional Sailing Order of Oct. 30, 2020, and to "declare that the cruise industry may open with reasonable safety protocols."

Dunleavy said in a prepared statement April 20 that Alaska has urged the CDC to withdraw or amend its Conditional Sail-

ing Order to allow for a cruise ship season in the state. Absent a change in the agency's directive, he decided Alaska needed to join the Florida lawsuit.

"Alaska families and small businesses need fast action to protect their ability to work and provide for their families," Dunleavy said in the statement. "Alaska has led the nation in vaccinations and low hospitalization rates. We deserve the chance to have tourism and jobs."

It's uncertain how quickly the court might consider the lawsuit, and even a quick decision could be too late for this summer in Alaska for the industry which has said it could take at least 60 days to position, provision, crew up and sell tickets for the ships that can each accommodate several thousand passengers.

In addition, cruise ships face another formidable hurdle to a return to Alaska in

2021.

The primary obstacle is Canada's ban on large ship operations in Canadian ports and waters until February 2022. Since the late 1800s, U.S. federal law has prevented foreign-flagged passenger ships — a category that represents virtually all of the large cruise ships that had planned to operate in Alaska in 2021 — from transporting passengers between U.S. ports without at least one visit to a foreign port during the voyage.

Without the ability to visit Canada, the ships could not cruise to Alaska unless Congress approves a waiver to the law. Alaska's congressional delegation has introduced legislation for a waiver, but nothing has passed.

The governor's prepared statements on joining the Florida lawsuit did not mention the Canada ban.

Matanuska breakdown

Continued from page 1

ilar to a week ago Sunday, also on the first stop out of Bellingham, when two engineering crew members tested positive, and the ship was delayed 11 hours in Ketchikan.

"Out of an abundance of

caution, the Matanuska was held in Ketchikan while the entire crew was tested," state Department of Transportation spokesman Sam Dapceвич said of the most recent Sunday delay.

The two crew members will

isolate in their homes, one in Ketchikan and the other in quarantine aboard the ferry until the ship arrives in Juneau and the crew member can go home for isolation, the state reported.

The ship was booked with a

light load out of Ketchikan, just 34 passengers, the state reported. About three dozen passengers and two dozen vehicles got off at their stop in Ketchikan. None of the 34 passengers booked to travel farther north are considered close contacts of the infected crew, Dapceвич said.

The engine troubles were reported after the ship was held up for COVID testing.

This week's breakdown is the fourth in about two months. The ship was taken out of service late March for repairs to its starboard engine and replacement of power-pack cylinder units on its port engine, Dapceвич reported then.

The ferry also was pulled out of service mid-March, and was pulled off its run in February with problems in its port-side reduction gear box.

"Our ferry system is barely afloat, and this is just further proof of that depressing fact," Sitka Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins said Tuesday.

Police report

Monday, April 19

Traffic stop: Citation issued for failure to stop at stop sign.

Tuesday, April 20

Dog complaint.

Concerned citizen.

Traffic stop.

Wednesday, April 21

Agency assist: Fire department.

Abandon vehicle.

Inmate medical.

Agency assist: Fire alarm.

Thursday, April 22

Agency assist: Harbor department.

Agency assist: Fire department.

Welfare check: All was good.

Agency assist: Court.

Friday, April 23

Agency assist: Hoonah police.

Found property.

Dog at large.

Dog at large.

Inmate booking.

Traffic stop: Citation issued for failure to provide proof of insurance.

Saturday, April 24

Driving with license suspended/canceled/revoked.

Driving with license suspended/canceled/revoked.

Found property.

Harassment: Unfounded.

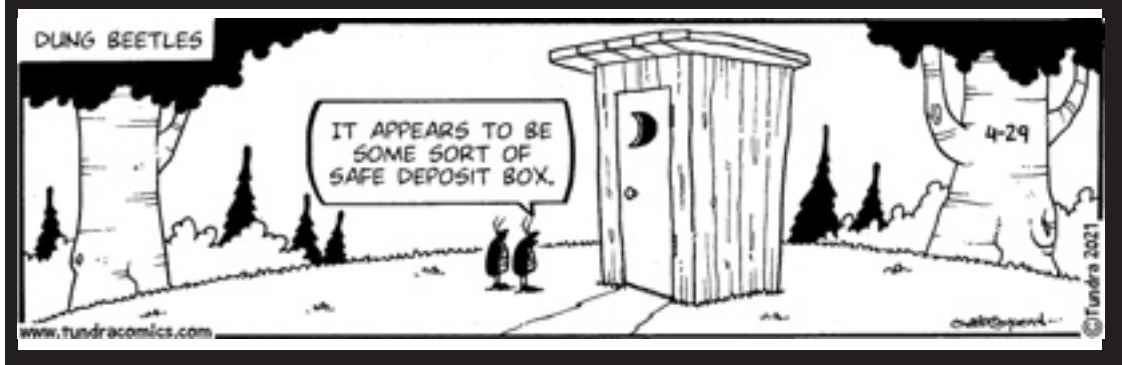
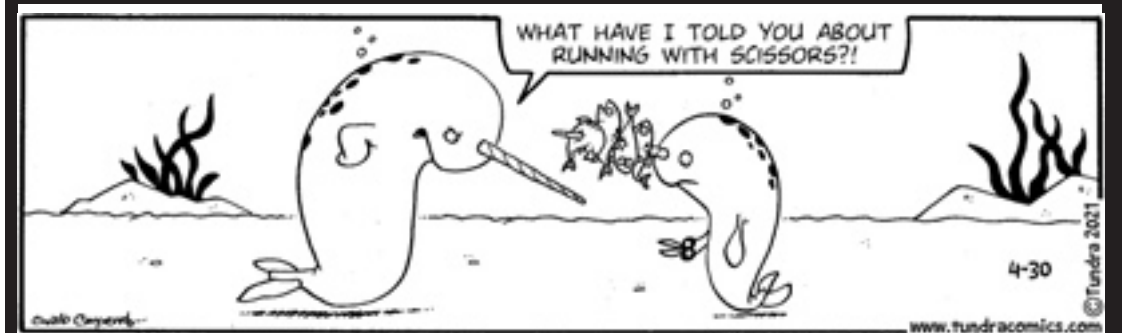
Traffic stop.

Sunday, April 25

Agency assist: Fire department.

Agency assist: Fire department.

During this reporting period there were three subpoena services and four agency assists for an ambulance.



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**The Sentinel is
offering 25% off**

all ads in the May 13 newspaper
that mention the Wrangell High School
graduation scheduled for May 21

**Help the students
celebrate their years
of reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic**

*Call or email or stop by to see Amber at the Sentinel to place your ad
The deadline is noon Monday, May 10*

WRANGELL SENTINEL

874-2301 - wrgsent@gmail.com - 205 Front St.