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petersburg pilot

PETERSBURG, ALASKA



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12 Pages
\$2

Viking Travel named Petersburg's Business of the Year

By **ORIN PIERSON**
Pilot writer

When Dave and Nancy Berg sold Viking Travel at the start of 2023, they said they were handing the keys to the right people. Three years later, the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce resoundingly agreed.

The chamber named Viking Travel the 2025 Business of the Year at its annual banquet Saturday, citing the business — co-owned by James and Madeleine Valentine — for their community involvement, their contribution to the Petersburg economy, and their commitment to keeping Petersburg a vibrant place to work and raise a family.

The Bergs founded Viking Travel in 1981 after relocating from Valdez, where they had both worked at a travel agency. They chose Petersburg deliberately — the town had daily jet service, near-daily ferry service, and no travel agency to speak of.

Over 42 years they built a business around booking Alaska itineraries for visitors and helping locals escape somewhere warmer. By the time they were ready to retire, James Valentine had returned home to Petersburg in 2020 after working in tourism in Skagway and had launched a bus tour company on Mitkof Island, and his contact with the cruise ship trade had put him on the Bergs' radar.

At the chamber banquet, James said the agency has become more than a business. It anchors his broader involvement in the community.



OLA RICHARDS / Petersburg Pilot

(Left to right) James Valentine holding baby Violet, Anne Volk, Maura Moyer, and Madeline Valentine of Viking Travel receive the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year award at the chamber banquet on April 4 in the Sons of Norway Hall.

The Valentines credited staff members during their acceptance remarks, and highlighted Anne Volk, who has been on their team for over 30 years and Fini Hanson who in nearing the 20-year mark on the Viking travel staff. Volk and fellow staffer, Maura Moyer, joined the Valentines at the podium for photos as the crew accepted the recognition.

"Without them, I couldn't do much," he said. "These guys have my back."

Like the Bergs before them, the couple said they see Viking Travel as a vehicle for Petersburg's long-term health — a way to grow small-scale tourism while keeping the community livable year-round.

Editor's Note: Pilot writer Orin Pierson was the presenter of this award at the banquet and serves as a volunteer member of the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, the body whose vote decided the winner from among finalists nominated by chamber member businesses.

Silver Bay CEO brings message of resilience, renewal to Chamber banquet

New value-added programs coming online at Petersburg plant

By **ORIN PIERSON**
Pilot writer

Cora Campbell, president and CEO of Silver Bay Seafoods, returned to her hometown of Petersburg as guest speaker Saturday evening at the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet. Over

the course of about 20 minutes, she drew a through-line from the town's 1897 founding to the hard lessons of the 2023 salmon crisis — and outlined an optimistic slate of value-added products she said will soon be flowing through the Petersburg plant.

"As pink salmon goes, so

goes the economy," Campbell told the assembled business owners and community leaders. "We absolutely have to focus on that challenge and get more value out of these pink salmon."

Campbell described Silver Bay's 2025 absorption of OBI Seafoods' operations — includ-

ing the Petersburg plant — as a return to the model Petersburg fishermen pioneered more than six decades ago.

In the 1960s, she said, when Pacific American Fisheries announced it would close its Petersburg cannery, local fishermen pooled their resources, purchased the facility,

and formed Petersburg Fisheries — one of Alaska's first fisherman-owned processors. After years of institutional ownership, most recently under the Canadian salmon farming company Cooke Aquaculture which owned Icicle and merged with Ocean Beauty to create OBI, the plant is again in fishermen's hands.

"We've had almost two decades of what's really been absentee ownership of this facility," Campbell said. "I'm really

Continued on page 3

Scow Bay tenants to vacate as boat yard nears construction

By **ORIN PIERSON**
Pilot writer

After more than three decades of planning, Petersburg's Scow Bay marine facility project is approaching construction, and the borough has begun the process of clearing the site — notifying businesses leasing borough-owned parcels at the location that their leases will end this fall.

Harbormaster Glo Wollen sent letters April 3 to tenants at the Scow Bay site outlining a schedule that calls for all leases on borough property there to end Sept. 30, 2026, at the earliest. Tenants then have 60 days under their lease terms to remove

equipment and personal property, with the grounds to be construction-ready by Dec. 1.

Wollen said the timeline being offered substantially exceeds what the leases require.

"Their terms say 60 days," she said. "We're giving them 200." She said dates could be pushed back further if the project is delayed into 2027, and is seeking assembly authority to make that adjustment if needed. The schedule is being presented to the assembly at its meeting at noon on Monday, April 13.

The boatyard project, funded through a combination of federal grants and state loans totaling over \$15 million, has been in

Continued on page 5



Yesterday's News: News from 25-50-75-100 years ago

1926 - There are no issues in the archive until May 19, 1926. Thank you for your patience.

April 6, 1951 - With the coming of spring rains the snow is fast disappearing in the woods and ice has gone out of most of the creeks. This has meant an upswing in activity among those men concerned with predator control. Hosea Sarber, wildlife agent, and Doyle Cisney, skipper of the *Black Bear*, returned late last week from a field trip on wolf control. They found wolves very scarce along the Narrows, so scarce "there don't seem to be any on Mitkof," they said. They also found few signs along the Stikine. In one place they found a dead wolf alongside their set. On Tuesday Sarber and Cisney left in the *Black Bear* for an extensive field trip for control. They will go first to Ketchikan to work that district and do not expect to return to Petersburg until the last week of April.

April 7, 1976 - Venke Hakensen has donated patterns for Norwegian bunadar (traditional costumes) designed by her mother, Solveig Simonsen. Her mother fashioned a new design just for Petersburg five years ago when many divergent patterns were developing and costumes from

various counties of Norway were being worn for Petersburg's Little Norway Festival. The patterns will be available through the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce to anyone wanting to trace off a pattern. Also, Mrs. Hakensen is donating her children's bunadar, designed

and made by her mother in the new Petersburg design, to the Clausen Memorial Museum.

April 5, 2001 - During their regular session, members of the Petersburg Council voted to spend \$245,085 for a 2001 Triple Action Pumper truck for the Petersburg Volunteer Fire

Department to replace a 1975 model American LaFrance fire truck. The 1975 'battle wagon' fetched a mere \$3,750 trade-in bid from Fred McPherson, retired chief of Federal Way, Washington, who is also the regional sales representative for Pierce Manufacturing Inc. of Appleton, Wisconsin, the manufacturer of the new pumper truck. "Most people are surprised to learn," McPherson said, "that there is no secondary market for fire trucks over 25-years old. Because they can't be rated for service after that age, no government entity wants them." McPherson said he bid \$3,750 for the stately red fire truck because he would like to have it for his own collection.

"I have four fire trucks already, but I don't have an American LaFrance," he remarked. Apparently McPherson won't be getting Petersburg's used LaFrance fire truck anytime soon. Upon digesting the news of the trade-in offer, Mayor Ted Smith commented, "If that's all the money we can get for it, why not keep it?" And, so it shall be. In fact, PVFD Public Information Officer Dave Berg said there has been some discussion about stationing the still serviceable fire engine in the Papke's landing area. "Even though it's outside the city limits, putting the truck there is something that would provide fire protection for people in the area," Berg stated.

**Thursday, April 9th
5:16-6:15pm**

**Stedman
Elementary
Kindergarten
Registration**

Rae C. Stedman Elementary
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Questions? 907.302.2385
Child must be 5 by Sept. 1, 2026
Please provide a birth certificate
and vaccination record, required
to attend in the fall

PETERSBURG HAPPENINGS

Brought to you by: 

THURSDAY, April 9

Tai Chi for Arthritis & Fall Prevention: 10:00 am, Mitkof Dance Studio
SE Caregiver Call-in Support Group: 12:00 pm, Toll Free 1-866-746-6177
Hospital Board Meeting: 5:30 pm, Borough Assemble Chambers

FRIDAY, April 10

WAVE Board Meeting: 11:15 am, WAVE
Al-Anon Support Group: 12:00 pm, Episcopal Church
PIA Culture Club Program - All Students Welcome: 2:30 pm, Elementary School Cafeteria
MMS Native Youth Olympics: 5:15 pm, PHS Gym
Family Game Night: 6:30 pm, Parks and Rec Gym
AA Candlelight Meeting: 7:00 pm, Episcopal Church

SATURDAY, April 11

Native Youth Olympics: 10:00 am, PHS Gym
Friends of Petersburg Libraries Book Sale: 11:00 am, Public Library
Pioneers of Alaska Annual Afternoon Tea: 1:00 pm, Holy Cross House

SUNDAY, April 12

Devil's Thumb Shooters: 2:00 pm, Gun Range
Knitting Group - All Welcome: 2:00 pm, Mt. View Manor Social Hall

MONDAY, April 13

Tai Chi: 7:00 am, Mountain View Manor Social Hall
Borough Assembly Meeting: 12:00 pm, Borough Assembly Chambers
Hospital Guild Meeting: 1:30 pm, PMC Dorothy Ingle Conf. Rm
Burger Night: 5:30 pm, Moose Lodge
AA Women's Meeting: 7:00 pm, Presbyterian Church
Volleyball/Open Gym: 7:30 pm, Parks and Rec Gym

TUESDAY, April 14

Tai Chi for Arthritis & Fall Prevention: 10:00 am, Mitkof Dance Studio
Board of Equalization: 12:00 pm, Borough Assembly Chambers
Planning Commission Meeting: 1:00 pm, Borough Assembly Chambers
Family Game Night: 6:30 pm, Parks and Rec Gym
AA 12x12 Meeting: 7:00 pm, Holy Cross Classroom

WEDNESDAY, April 15

Tai Chi: 7:00 am, Mountain View Manor Social Hall
Rotary Mtg: 12:00 pm, Salvation Army Hall
PIA Board Meeting: 5:15 pm, PIA Building
Humane Association Meeting: 5:30 pm, Scandia House
School Budget Committee Meeting: 6:00 pm, PHS Library
Free Dinner For All: 6:00 pm, First Baptist Church

To add an event to the Happenings calendar call us at 772-9393 or email pilotpub@gmail.com

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WEATHER

	High	Low	Precip	Snow
4/1	46	25	0.0	0.0
4/2	45	25	0.0	0.0
4/3	41	36	0.5	0.0
4/4	43	35	0.2	0.0
4/5	41	35	1.3	0.0
4/6	43	34	0.4	0.0
4/7	43	35	0.0	0.0

This Week's Precipitation: 2.00"
This Week's Snow: 0.00"

This weather service is provided by the FAA weather observation station at the James A. Johnson Airport.

DAYLIGHT HOURS

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Daylight
Apr 9	6:02a	7:46p	13:43hrs
Apr 10	5:59a	7:48p	13:48hrs
Apr 11	5:57a	7:50p	13:53hrs
Apr 12	5:54a	7:52p	13:58hrs
Apr 13	5:51a	7:54p	14:02hrs
Apr 14	5:49a	7:56p	14:07hrs
Apr 15	5:46a	7:58p	14:12hrs

2026 Beat the Odds 27th Anniversary

Saturday, April 18th
A Race Against Cancer 5K/3.1m
@ Sandy Beach, Shelter #1

• Registration @8a • Warm-Ups @8:45a • Run/Walk @9a
T-shirts for the first 150 to register for \$25 cash or check only.
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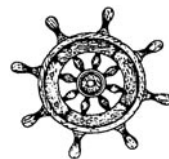
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NORTHBOUND DEPARTURES

SOUTHBOUND DEPARTURES

SUN 4/12	KENNICOTT	10:45 P.M.	WED 4/15	KENNICOTT	01:15 A.M.
SUN 5/3	KENNICOTT	06:15 P.M.	WED 5/6	KENNICOTT	05:00 A.M.
SUN 5/10	KENNICOTT	08:30 P.M.	WED 5/13	KENNICOTT	12:00 A.M.
SUN 5/17	KENNICOTT	04:00 P.M.	WED 5/20	KENNICOTT	12:30 A.M.
SUN 5/24	COLUMBIA	08:15 P.M.	SUN 5/27	COLUMBIA	12:00 A.M.

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PETERSBURG TIDE TABLE

APRIL 2026

	HIGH TIDES				LOW TIDES			
	A.M.		P.M.		A.M.		P.M.	
	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.
9 Thu	5:53	13.0	7:52	10.3	1:09	3.2
10 Fri	7:07	12.1	9:23	10.6	1:08	6.8	2:34	3.4
11 Sat	8:39	12.0	10:27	11.6	2:54	6.7	3:51	2.9
12 Sun	9:59	12.6	11:11	12.9	4:16	5.5	4:47	2.1
13 Mon	11:00	13.5	11:46	14.3	5:12	3.9	5:31	1.3
14 Tue	11:50	14.6	5:57	2.1	6:09	0.6
15 Wed	0:20	15.7	12:36	15.6	6:37	0.3	6:46	0.2

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Cora Campbell

Continued from page 1

pleased to be part of returning this plant to fisherman ownership again."

Silver Bay itself was born from a similar moment. In 2007, a group of Sitka fishermen frustrated by low salmon prices and limited processing capacity pooled their savings, bought an abandoned mill property, and built a small processing facility. After a profitable first season, they shared the surplus back with fishermen through a profit-sharing model. Word spread, and Silver Bay eventually expanded into Prince William Sound, Bristol Bay, False Pass, Kodiak and other regions.

The 2023 season, Campbell said, pushed the company to a crossroads. Russian state-subsidized salmon flooded the U.S. market, driving pink and chum prices down roughly 50 percent in a single year. Processors stopped buying early to avoid mounting unsellable inventory. Fishermen struggled through a bruising season and a hard winter.

Silver Bay's response, she said, was to double down.

"We're fishermen," Campbell recalled telling her board. "We're not going to go do something else."

Campbell described the

company's turnaround strategy in three parts.

The first was leveraging Alaska's congressional delegation. She credited Sen. Dan Sullivan with securing a ban on Russian pink salmon being dumped into domestic markets, as well as a USDA program that purchased excess 2023 inventory — providing processors, including the Petersburg plant, critical breathing room.

The second was product form diversity. Silver Bay purchased canneries in Ketchikan and Valdez in 2024, then absorbed OBI's operations — including the Petersburg cannery and facilities in Seward, Cordova, and Kodiak — in 2025. Campbell said the combined company now has what she called "unprecedented product form flexibility," able to pivot between frozen, canned, and other formats depending on market conditions and geopolitical risk.

She acknowledged the bet on canning runs counter to years of industry conventional wisdom. "For 20 years, our industry has been told, 'You have to move away from the can,'" she said. But shelf-stable products sold primarily in the U.S. and European Union are insulated from the kind of export market disruptions that torpedoed 2023.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Cora Campbell, president and CEO of Silver Bay Seafoods, addresses the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce at its annual banquet on Saturday, April 4, in the Sons of Norway Hall.

The third leg, and the one that drew the most detail from Campbell and the most excitement from the Chamber audience, is a domestic value-added program targeting pink and chum salmon — and increasingly, black cod.

Campbell outlined several specific programs already coming online or under development at the Petersburg processing plant.

A chum salmon fillet program launched last season. Chums are filleted at the Petersburg plant, sent to Silver Bay's Seattle facility, seasoned with a marinade, and sold at Sam's Club locations across the country — a higher-value outcome, Campbell said, than exporting whole fish to Asian commodity markets.

Pink salmon fillets are next. The product will follow a similar path to Seattle, where it will be finished with an herb butter and shrimp preparation destined for Costco Canada. Campbell noted the package will carry a front-of-label protein callout — 37 grams per serving

— designed to tap into what she described as widespread consumer interest in high-protein foods. She said the product launch earned front-page coverage at the Boston Seafood Show, the largest such trade event in North America, and drew buyers who sought her out specifically to discuss pink salmon.

A black cod fillet line is also being installed at the Petersburg plant. The fillets will be sent to Seattle for a miso marinade and distributed to Costco, Trader Joe's, and Whole Foods, as well as international markets.

"After decades of having one single market in Japan for black cod, where our fishermen were just subject to the whims of whatever the Japanese were paying," Campbell said, "we are pretty thrilled to have a domestic value-added program."

Silver Bay is also working to extend its canned salmon brands into the pouch format. The Honey Boy label — an Icelake-era brand with, Campbell said, a 40 percent market share among canned salmon buyers

in Texas — is among those slated for a pouched version aimed at younger consumers.

Campbell also highlighted SB 130, which cleared the full Alaska Senate last week and now heads to the House. The bill, which emerged from the Joint Legislative Task Force Evaluating Alaska's Seafood Industry, would expand the state's existing fisheries product development tax credit from a handful of specific species to all seafood, extend the program's sunset to 2037, and broaden eligibility to include equipment improvements that benefit quality and the cold chain. Sen. Bert Stedman, R-Sitka — originally from Petersburg and co-chair of the Senate Finance Committee — was a prominent supporter of the bill. Campbell also acknowledged the support of Petersburg's Representative in the State House Rebecca Himschoot, who was present at the banquet.

She closed with a call for broader civic engagement from everyone in the room — not just fishermen.

"When decision makers don't recognize and support the importance of the seafood industry, the consequences are felt by fishermen and processors and communities," she said. "Please be engaged."

Campbell concluded by recognizing the Petersburg plant's management team and crew — noting that without the people doing the work on the floor every day, nothing else would matter — then pointed to three of her nephews and her son seated in the audience.

"They're watching to see how we respond to these challenges," she said, "and they're deciding: do I have a future in fishing? Do I have a future in this community?"

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TO THE EDITOR

More harm than good

To the Editor:
The "SAVE" Act was intentionally given that name to infer that somehow we need to "save the voting system in America." It's a trick used by politicians to make uniformed voters believe they are supporting a just cause. I say it's a trick because the United States has one of the most secure election systems in the world. No amount of unproved claims of voter fraud change that fact. A closer look shows it is a solution in search of a problem - and one that risks doing more harm than good.

Voter fraud in the United States is very rare (really... look it up), especially when it comes to noncitizens voting. There are already laws and strict penalties in place and, realistically, why would a non-citizen even care to vote in an election? Most are just trying to make a living, not get involved in politics. Investigations over the years have consistently found that noncitizen voting occurs at minimal levels. In other words, the threat this bill is designed to address is almost non-existent.

The SAVE Act would require proof of citizenship - such as a passport or birth certificate - to register to vote or update voter information. While that may sound reasonable in theory, in practice it creates significant barriers. Do you have a passport? If not, it will cost you \$165, a very specific type of

photo of yourself, and about 6 weeks of waiting. Did you change your name when you got married? Then dig out that faded copy of your birth certificate. This will be hard on many eligible voters, especially seniors, rural residents, and women whose names have changed. In Alaska, where access to government offices and records are a long way away and often slow to respond, this requirement could prevent eligible citizens from exercising their fundamental right to vote.

Also, this law duplicates systems that states already have in place, adding unnecessary bureaucracy and cost. Election officials would be burdened with additional paperwork and administrative hurdles, slowing down voter registration and increasing the chance of errors - without clear evidence of a problem being solved.

And in a bizarre last minute twist, the administration added anti-trans policies to the bill. Regardless of one's feelings about trans rights, there is absolutely no reason to include these measures in a voting policy law. Safeguarding elections is essential, but it should be grounded in reality, not fear. Policies that risk disenfranchising eligible voters in order to address a virtually nonexistent issue undermine, rather than strengthen, our democracy. If this is an issue that concerns you, as it does me, reach out to Sullivan, Murkowski and Begich and let them know this is an unnecessary and damaging

piece of legislation.

Dan Sullivan
Petersburg, Alaska

Penny rounding

To the Editor:

I am writing to bring attention to an issue that may soon affect everyday transactions across Alaska: the growing shortage of pennies and the potential need for cash rounding.

As many are beginning to see, the availability of one-cent coins has declined significantly. This is tied to broader federal actions reducing or eliminating penny production, combined with the unique challenges we face here in Alaska - namely, limited banking distribution and the high cost and complexity of shipping currency to our communities.

At the same time, legislation is being discussed that would provide clarity and structure around how businesses handle cash transactions when exact change is no longer practical. While these changes are not yet fully in place, the direction is clear: as pennies become increasingly unavailable, businesses may be required to round cash transactions to the nearest five cents.

It is important for the public to understand exactly how this works. Rounding applies only to the final total of a cash transaction, after all items are rung up and tax is calculated. It does not affect individual item prices.

The rounding follows a standard, neutral method:

- Totals ending in \$0.01 or \$0.02 are rounded down to the nearest \$0.00
- Totals ending in \$0.03 or \$0.04 are rounded up to the nearest \$0.05
- Totals ending in \$0.06 or \$0.07 are rounded down to the nearest \$0.05
- Totals ending in \$0.08 or \$0.09 are rounded up to the nearest \$0.10

Over time, this system balances out - customers will sometimes pay a few cents more and sometimes a few cents less, but the process is designed to be fair and consistent.

It is also important to note that electronic payments - including

debit cards, credit cards, and checks - are not rounded. Those transactions continue to be processed to the exact cent.

My goal in raising this issue is simple: awareness. This is a change that may soon impact everyone and understanding it now will help avoid confusion or frustration later. As with many challenges in Alaska, we must adapt to circumstances beyond our control while continuing to serve our communities as fairly and transparently as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this perspective.

Sincerely,
Jim Floyd
General Manager, CEO
Hammer and Wikan

GUEST EDITORIAL

Time to stop playing games with politically rich dividend

By LARRY PERSILY
Wrangell Sentinel publisher

Little kids can't help but play with their food. Gamblers can't stop playing with a pair of dice or deck of cards. Cats can't help but play with a ball of yarn. It's the same with legislators who play around with voter-enticing talk of a fat Permanent Fund dividend.

They just can't help themselves, particularly in an election year. Like kids, gamblers and cats, it's in the DNA of too many elected officials.

It's too much "fun" to talk about a PFD this year of almost four times the size of last year's dividend.

It's too much "fun" to recite their pro-dividend pledges and votes when they campaign.

And it's electioneering "fun" to portray the other political party as anti-PFD, setting them up for blame when the supersize fat dividend goes on a diet during the last weeks of the budget-writing process.

Yet there is nothing funny about being fiscally irresponsible.

Continued on page 6

Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



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Scow Bay tenants

Continued from page 1

planning since 1993 and is now fully funded, according to Wollen. The project received \$8.88 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation's RAISE grant program, in addition to \$4.1 million in congressionally designated spending secured in 2024. The borough is currently awaiting completion of a federal environmental review, after which the project can go out to bid. Wollen said the borough is targeting a 2027 opening.

The plan for the project is primarily to develop a boat haul-out ramp and wash down pad, along with approximately 22 work slips on the yard, utility hookups extended to the edges of leasable parcels, and a limited storage area. The facility is being engineered to eventually accommodate a large submersible travel lift capable of hauling vessels considerably larger than what is currently possible in Petersburg, though Wollen said no decision to acquire one has been made.

Businesses currently leasing borough land at the Scow Bay site include John Murgas, who holds multiple leases through Island Ventures — which operates the haul-out and storage business Petersburg Marine; Taylor and Scott Pullar, who operate the shipwright shop 13 Marine; and shipwright Raleigh Cook, who operates Joatmon Enterprises.

Taylor Pullar expects moving his shop could cost upward of \$50,000 in direct expense and lost revenue. He said he would have managed off season expenses differently, like postponing the purchase of \$10,000 worth of boat paint, if he had he known sooner or with more certainty about the eviction.

Pullar said he believed from conversations with borough officials over the course of the project's planning that his lease location might not be included in the construction footprint. Cabrera confirmed that planners did at one point look for a way to work around the spot.

In the end, however, she said it became clear that grading the entire site — including Pullar's current location — was necessary to avoid drainage problems.

Wollen said the site where Pullar currently operates is expected to be among the parcels available for lease once the facility is complete and new applications are opened. But both officials acknowledged that lease costs at the improved site will be considerably higher than current rates — a reality Pullar said puts him in a difficult position in the near term.

But Pullar said his deeper concern is not the disruption of this season — it's the shape the new facility takes once it opens.

"I think if it benefits the town, it benefits our fishermen, it's a good thing," he said. "I just have to compete, and that's fine. I just want a fair playing field."

Pullar has worked alongside John Murgas's haul-out and boat yard operation since his teens and anticipates possibly taking over as Murgas, who is nearly 80, approaches retirement. He recognizes that the new facility could meaningfully expand what local operators are capable of offering — particularly if it eventually accommodates a large-capacity travel lift capable of hauling vessels, like seiners, that currently have to leave Petersburg for service.

"If they brought a travel lift to town, we could haul bigger boats — that's the benefit," he said.

Pullar is concerned that the fee structure at the new facility not put local service providers at a disadvantage relative to the borough. "Competition is best for the consumer, which is our fishermen. That's what we're after — to bring the cost down for them," he said.

Officials say they have been closely watching how similar facilities in Wrangell and Sitka have developed, and are trying to build those lessons into Petersburg's approach from the outset — though the two cases offer different warnings.

In Wrangell, Cabrera said, the facility initially allowed storage, which gradually crowded out active boat work. Reclaiming that space has taken years.

To avoid repeating that pattern, Wollen said the Scow Bay facility will have enforcement mechanisms built in from the start, similar to those the harbor already uses for vessels that

have sat too long without moving. Slips are intended for active projects, not long-term storage.

In Sitka, the cautionary tale is different. Wollen said the harbor department there chose not to operate the travel lift facility themselves, and instead contracted operations to an outside corporation based in Kodiak.

The borough retains ownership of the travel lift and infrastructure there, Wollen said, but the day-to-day operation — and the revenue it generates — flows through a private company not particular staked in the local economy.

Cabrera said watching that play out has sharpened Petersburg's thinking about what the Scow Bay facility is ultimately meant to accomplish.

"That's not what we want to replicate here," she said. "I mean, that's the whole premise of the small boat yard grant process — it should be of benefit to the people providing services in this community. We want to preserve a way for people to be able to haul and work on their own boat if they want to, here in our community."

She sees the project as an opportunity for Petersburg-based marine businesses to grow rather than be displaced.

Wollen acknowledges the facility is already generating interest from prospective operators even before construction has begun.

"I'm getting calls right and left from Wrangell — when are you going to open this?" she said, noting that inquiries have come specifically from jobbers looking to work the yard. "It's nothing but an opportunity."

Lease rates at the new facility have not been set. Cabrera said pricing will be guided by a borough assessor's appraisal of the new parcels. Wollen said revenue from leaseholders, per-haul fees, wash-down fees and square footage charges is intended to cover the facility's ongoing operations and maintenance costs — and that she has no intention of leaning on general harbor rates to make up any shortfall.

"I can't be raising rates in the harbor to pay for this," she said.

Wollen acknowledged the fa-

Police report

April 1 - An officer assisted Emergency Medical Services (EMS) on S 2nd St.

An officer assisted EMS with a stroke on Mitkof Hwy.

An officer provided lockout assistance on Mitkof Hwy.

A citizen reported their dog was lost.

An officer assisted a juvenile with concerns.

April 2 - An activated alarm at a business on Harbor Way was reported.

A protective order was served.

There was a report of vehicle damage.

April 3 - An officer assisted a citizen concerned about a city ordinance.

A protective order was served.

An officer provided a courtesy transport.

An officer provided lockout assistance on Fram Street.

A wandering dog was reported at 10th St. and Excel St.

A dog found on N 1st St. was turned in to the Police Department (PD). The owner was contacted and picked up their dog.

A lost dog was reported.

April 4 - An officer conducted an extra patrol.

An officer provided lockout assistance on S Nordic Dr.

A vehicle was reported as disabled on N Nordic Dr. The owner was attempting to move it.

There was a report of harm to an animal.

An officer took a person's personal items to them on S 3rd St.

A disturbance was reported on N Nordic Dr.

April 5 - An officer conducted extra patrols.

An officer responded to a disturbance on S 2nd St.

There was a report of a speeding truck on S 3rd St.

There was a report of suspicious behavior on Gjoa St.

Officers provided medical assistance on Dock St.

An aggressive dog was reported on Hungerford Hill Rd.

April 6 - Jared Nicholas Burns was arrested for allegedly violating conditions of release.

There was a report of a vehicle speeding on S 3rd St.

An officer responded to a parking complaint on S 2nd St.

There was a report of harassment on S 2nd St.

April 7 - An officer conducted a welfare check.

An individual completed a sex offender registration update.

An officer assisted a citizen with a civil issue.

An officer responded to a report of suspicious behavior on Chief John Lott St.

A found credit card was turned in to the PD.

An officer assisted EMS with a fall on N 12th St.

cility is unlikely to break even immediately as it ramps up, and said she is also exploring startup pricing arrangements for early tenants. She described the harbor's ambition for the facility in modest terms. The goal isn't for the facility to be a profitable revenue source for the harbor department, but it will need to sustain its own operations and maintenance. "Success in government is breaking even," she said.

The 8 percent ramp grade being engineered for the project was designed specifically with existing haul-out equipment in mind. Wollen confirmed the grade is calibrated for the hydraulic trailer Murgas currently operates, while also being compatible with a larger submersible lift should one eventually be acquired.

The existing concrete ramp at Scow Bay, originally built for seaplanes and long used for boat haul-outs on favorable tides, will remain open through the fall for launches and haul-outs. Cabrera said the borough intends to include language in its bid documents requiring the contractor to keep an access easement leading to that ramp open throughout the construction period, meaning Murgas and other operators would retain the ability to haul vessels through the easement even while work is underway — though the adjacent yard space will no longer be available for storage or work. Because of its shallow slope, using the ramp currently depends heavily on the tide and can only be used for a few hours a day — and some days not at all.



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Public employees retirement crisis:

A pension reform bill working through the Alaska Legislature has put a spotlight on a quiet crisis facing Petersburg's teachers, police officers and public workers — many of whom are staring down a retirement they say they cannot afford to live on.

By **ORIN PIERSON**
Pilot writer

Molly Taiber recently returned from Juneau, where she spent several days this legislative session doing what she has done every year for the past six years: sitting across from state legislators making the case that Alaska's public employees are heading toward a retirement they will not be able to live on.

For most of Alaska's history as a state, a career in public service came with one of the better retirement packages in the country — a guaranteed pension that rewarded workers for building careers in Alaska. That system was dismantled in 2006. What replaced it, advocates say, has left teachers, police officers, hospital workers and borough employees with a retirement outlook that bears almost no resemblance to what their predecessors enjoyed.

"People don't understand," said Taiber, a Petersburg municipal employee and labor representative. "They're aware of it — but they're not really thinking about it."

House Bill 78, which passed the Alaska House last May and is now before the Senate Finance Committee, would restore a defined benefit pension — the kind that guarantees retirees a monthly check for life — as an option for Alaska's public employees and teachers. Alaska eliminated that system in 2006, replacing it with a 401(k)-style defined contribution plan. Twenty years on, advocates say the consequences are compounding into a workforce crisis visible in every corner of the state and, increasingly, in Petersburg.

With the legislative session approaching its final weeks, the bill remains before the Senate Finance Committee, where it has yet to receive a vote.

Taiber traces the current situation back through two separate policy decisions that, taken together, left Alaska's public employees uniquely exposed.

In 1978, Alaska's state em-

ployees voted to leave Social Security, with the state activating the Supplemental Benefit System as a replacement on Jan. 1, 1980 — a decision made with a pension as the backstop. Then, in 2006, the Legislature moved from a defined benefit system to a defined contribution plan, leaving workers hired after that date with neither a guaranteed pension nor access to Social Security.

The shift was codified in the retirement tier system. Workers hired before July 1, 2006, fall under Tiers 1, 2 or 3 and retain defined benefit pensions. Those hired after that date entered Tier 4 under the Public Employees' Retirement System, or PERS, and its teachers' equivalent, TERS — defined contribution plans in which retirement income depends entirely on how much was contributed and how well the market performed.

"What do you mean you don't pay Social Security? What do you mean you may not have a retirement suitable to live off of?" Taiber said, describing conversations she has with community members who assume public employees still have both. "People don't understand that. And some employees don't even understand that."

The retirement calculator Taiber keeps on her desk puts numbers to that fear. For a worker entering at 25 who retires after 30 years, a tier four retiree starts retirement drawing about 44 percent of their former income — and by their mid-80s, that figure falls to around 23 percent. A tier three retiree, by contrast, starts near 61 percent and holds closer to 53 percent deep into old age.

"How am I going to live on 24 percent of my retirement when I'm 86 or 87?" Taiber said.

Petersburg Police Investigator Eric Wolf joined the conversation partway and put those numbers in human terms. He described a colleague with 19 years on the job who has accu-

mulated roughly \$300,000 in his tier four account.

"That's no way, shape or form a retirable system, by comparison, for the amount of time he's invested in," Wolf said. "\$300,000 — how far in Petersburg does that get you when you retire?"

There is another officer in the same building who will retire with a full defined benefit pension — the result of having been hired just before the 2006 cutoff. The two men did essentially the same job for essentially the same number of years. One can afford to stay in Petersburg after retirement. The other most likely cannot.

Wolf himself is in a similar position. He has been in the building nearly nine years and makes about \$35 an hour — a wage that does not stack up well when compared to his same job down in Washington or even some places in Alaska, like Nome, where he says a comparable rank there earns roughly \$52 an hour. Nome also participates in the state's Supplemental Benefits System, providing a Social Security-equivalent contribution, but Petersburg does not.

The department has been short at least one or two officers for most of the time Wolf has worked there, driving chronic overtime and leaving recruitment perpetually strained.

"I hope it makes it," Wolf said of HB 78. "It'll be one of the things that is a determining factor in whether I continue to stay here or not."

The issue extends across Petersburg's public workforce. Harbor employees, streets crews, hospital staff and borough workers hired after 2006 are all in the tier four system, without Social Security. The school district's classified staff are 93 percent tier four. Among certified teachers, about 75 percent are now in defined contribution.

Tim Shumway, a Petersburg High School teacher in his 20th year, traveled to Juneau in February to testify before the Senate Finance Committee in support of HB 78. He started teaching in Alaska in 2006 — part of the first cohort placed directly into the defined contribution system.

"I've watched in, every single district, teachers leave because it's just not smart financially to stay here," Shumway said. "They do their five or six years and they take their money and run."

Under the current system, employees vest after five years, at which point they can withdraw the full balance — including employer contributions — roll it into a retirement account in their next state,

and leave without penalty.

"We still can get people to come and be edu-tourists for a few years, but they're not going to stay if they don't feel like this is a secure place to spend their entire career," Shumway said. "We need to create that anchor for people. We need to make it hard to make that decision to leave the state, because they're leaving behind something meaningful."

That argument has broad support among Alaska's public employees — but it runs headlong into the objection that has blocked pension restoration for two decades: that returning to a defined benefit system would be too costly, and that the state has still not finished paying off the multi-billion-dollar unfunded liability left by the old one.

HB 78's sponsors argue the bill is built differently. When the Senate Finance Committee took up the bill on Feb. 9, House Majority Leader Chuck Kopp, R-Anchorage, pointed to its risk-sharing mechanisms — automatic contribution increases if the plan falls below 90 percent funded, and reducible cost-of-living adjustments — as structural safeguards against a repeat of the old system's collapse.

However, the state's actuarial consulting firm, Gallagher, found that HB 78 would increase state contributions to PERS through 2039, and cautioned that shifting members to a defined benefit plan would have the state assume greater risk of unfunded liabilities.

Sen. Bert Stedman, R-Sitka, and co-chair Sen. Lyman Hoff-

man, D-Bethel, were both in the Legislature back when it voted to eliminate the old pension and both have pressed hard on whether history might repeat. Rather than restore a defined benefit, Stedman has introduced his own separate legislation — Senate Bill 55 — which would bring Alaska's teachers and municipal public employees into the state's Supplemental Benefits System, a Social Security-equivalent program, as an alternative path to improving retirement security without creating new pension liability.

Taiber argues SBS doesn't address the situation of Tier-4 workers already deep into careers — and notes that Petersburg has not opted into SBS, in part because the required employer contribution of roughly 6 percent per employee would be a significant added cost for municipalities managing tight finances. Stedman's bill includes a ten-year phased approach for the employer contribution where the state would cover the borough's cost of the contribution for the first three years, then would pay 66% until 2033, then 33% until 2037, after which it the cost would be fully borne by the employers.

Since February, the defined contribution bill has remained in Senate Finance without a vote. The session is expected to end in mid-May.

Fairbanks and Anchorage have both passed resolutions supporting HB 78. A similar resolution is expected before the Petersburg Borough Assembly at their April 13 meeting.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Continued from page 4

Yes, oil prices have climbed far up the price ladder, which means state oil tax and royalty revenues will be much higher than expected. Which means the state can afford more than it could a month ago, before President Donald Trump decided to declare war on Iran, and Iran retaliated by declaring war on the free movement of oil and natural gas out of the Persian Gulf.

There is a long list of needs for those additional oil dollars that will flow into the state treasury, not the least of which is more funding for public schools, housing, public safety — and putting money into savings for the next time oil prices drop and the state is woefully short of cash.

The dividend fixation needs to stop. There's real work to do if Alaska is going to improve its schools, stop the 13 years of more people leaving the state than moving here, and build a state based on quality of life, education, public services and jobs. Pouring almost every available state dollar into the PFD does nothing to help the collective good.

Legislative votes, such as the one in the House Finance Committee last week, serve little purpose other than to have "fun" with politics. The committee voted 6-5 to include a PFD estimated at \$3,800 in the budget. In addition to spending much of this year's higher oil revenues, the fat dividend would drain half of the state's budget reserves account.

It's similar to draining your savings because you're trying to impress your date. Only for legislators, their dates are the voters later this year.

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2026 Petersburg Port Schedule

Sunday, April 26 Nat Geo Sea Lion 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Monday, May 4 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, May 5 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Thursday, May 7 Nat Geo Quest Bird 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Thursday, May 14 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, May 15 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Saturday, May 16 Amer. Constitution 9:30pm — PORT DOCK
Sunday, May 17 Amer. Constitution 1pm PORT DOCK	Monday, May 18 Amer. Constellation 5pm PORT DOCK Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY Star Seeker 7:30am—3pm LIGHTER	Tuesday, May 19 Amer. Constellation 1pm PORT DOCK Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, May 26 Amer. Constitution 5pm PORT DOCK	Wednesday, May 27 Amer. Constitution 9:30pm PORT DOCK	Thursday, May 28 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, May 29 Amer. Constellation 8am—5:30pm END C FLOAT Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY
Monday, June 1 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, June 2 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY Luminara 9:30am—7pm LIGHTER	Wednesday, June 3 Amer. Constitution 8am—7pm PORT DOCK	Friday, June 5 Amer. Constellation 8am—8pm END C FLOAT	Monday, June 8 Star Seeker 7:30am—3pm LIGHTER	Thursday, June 11 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, June 12 Amer. Constitution 8am — END C FLOAT Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY
Saturday, June 13 Amer. Constitution 5am END C FLOAT Amer. Constellation 7:30am—11pm PORT DOCK	Monday, June 15 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, June 16 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY Star Seeker 9am—4pm LIGHTER	Friday, June 19 Amer. Constellation 6am END C FLOAT	Saturday, June 20 Amer. Constellation 10am END C FLOAT	Sunday, June 21 Amer. Constitution 12:30pm PORT DOCK	Tuesday, June 23 Amer. Constitution 6:30am PORT DOCK
Wednesday, June 24 Luminara 7:30am—4pm LIGHTER	Thursday, June 25 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, June 26 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Monday, June 29 Amer. Constellation 6am PORT DOCK Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, June 30 Amer. Constellation 12:30pm PORT DOCK Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Thursday, July 2 Amer. Constitution 6:30am PORT DOCK	Friday, July 3 Amer. Constitution 8am PORT DOCK Hanseatic Inspiration 12:30am—5pm LIGHTER
Thursday, July 9 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, July 10 Amer. Constellation 8:30pm END C FLOAT Amer. Constitution 8am—8pm END C FLOAT Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Sunday, July 12 Amer. Constellation 5am END C FLOAT	Monday, July 13 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, July 14 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, July 17 Amer. Constitution 8am—9pm END C FLOAT	Saturday, July 18 Amer. Constellation 6pm PORT DOCK Hanseatic Inspiration 12:30am—5pm LIGHTER
Sunday, July 19 Amer. Constellation 10pm PORT DOCK	Tuesday, July 21 World Residence 12:30pm LIGHTER	Wednesday, July 22 World Residence 6pm LIGHTER	Thursday, July 23 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, July 24 Amer. Constitution 8am—7:30pm END C FLOAT Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Sunday, July 26 Amer. Constellation 8am—5:30pm PORT DOCK	Monday, July 27 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY
Tuesday, July 28 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY Hanseatic Inspiration 8:30am—7pm LIGHTER	Thursday, July 30 Amer. Constitution 5pm END C FLOAT	Friday, July 31 Amer. Constitution 7pm END C FLOAT	Tuesday, August 4 Amer. Constellation 8am PORT DOCK	Wednesday, August 5 Amer. Constellation 4:30am PORT DOCK	Thursday, August 6 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, August 7 Amer. Constitution 8am—6:30pm END C FLOAT Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY
Monday, August 10 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, August 11 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Thursday, August 13 Amer. Constitution 5pm END C FLOAT	Friday, August 14 Amer. Constitution 7:30pm END C FLOAT	Saturday, August 15 Amer. Constellation 12pm PORT DOCK	Sunday, August 16 Amer. Constellation 6pm PORT DOCK	Thursday, August 20 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY
Friday, August 21 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Saturday, August 22 Amer. Constitution 7:30pm PORT DOCK Amer. Constellation 8am—7pm END C FLOAT	Sunday, August 23 Nat Geo Sea Bird 7am—6pm INNER DOCK	Monday, August 24 Amer. Constitution 10am PORT DOCK Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, August 25 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Saturday, August 29 Amer. Constellation 8am—7pm PORT DOCK	Wednesday, Sept. 2 Amer. Constitution 8:30am PORT DOCK
Thursday, Sept. 3 Amer. Constitution 9am PORT DOCK Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, Sept. 4 Amer. Constellation 6pm PORT DOCK Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Saturday, Sept. 5 Amer. Constellation 6pm PORT DOCK	Sunday, Sept. 6 Nat Geo Quest Sea Lion 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Monday, Sept. 7 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Tuesday, Sept. 8 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Wednesday, Sept. 9 Luminara 7:30am—4pm LIGHTER
Friday, Sept. 11 Amer. Constitution 7am—8pm PORT DOCK	Saturday, Sept. 12 Amer. Constellation 8am—7pm PORT DOCK	Thursday, Sept. 17 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Friday, Sept. 18 Nat Geo Venture 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Sunday, Sept. 20 Amer. Constellation 7am PORT DOCK	Monday, Sept. 21 Amer. Constellation 3am PORT DOCK Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY	Thursday, Oct. 1 Nat Geo Quest 7am—6pm DRIVE DOWN FACILITY

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3x Olympic medalist Margaret Hoelzer hosts swim clinic with VSC

By AIDEN LUHR
Pilot writer

This past weekend, Viking Swim Club held a three day clinic that saw 3x Olympic medalist Margaret Hoelzer bring her knowledge and experience to Petersburg. These days, Hoelzer resides in Seattle, where she coaches swim team athletes year round.

"I've been doing swim clinics for 20 years now. I do this periodically, all over the place, specifically in Seattle, I teach lessons," Hoelzer said.

Her lessons are every year, while the swim clinics are periodically.

"I did a lot of [clinics] when I was still a current athlete and when I very first retired," Hoelzer said.

Hoelzer said she helps coach kids age 7-18. When doing a clinic, Hoelzer talked about the importance of being open to the young athletes you're coaching.

"You talk a little bit about your own story and the trials and tribulations and things you went through because every swimmer has their own story, it wasn't easy for any of us," Hoelzer said. "For me personally, I always try to relate things to real life because [kids] are gonna move on and half real lives. I think there's a lot of very important lessons that are applicable in the real world."



Photo courtesy of Derek Gibb

3x Olympic medalist Margaret Hoelzer shares her knowledge with the Viking Swim Club, on Friday, April 3, 2026, in Petersburg. Hoelzer held a three day clinic with VSC.

During the three day clinic, Hoelzer got to work with VSC. "Saturday and Sunday I got in the water with them. On Saturday, we did a little kid

group and then the big kids. On Sunday, it was mostly older kids - we did starts, turns," Hoelzer said.

Much like how VSC got to practice with an Olympic medalist, Hoelzer remembers when she got to do the same thing when she was younger.

"I remember the swim clinic I went to when I was about four years old and I got to see and meet Rowdy Gaines. That was my first time even seeing an olympic medal," Hoelzer recalls. "I remember being so inspired and most olympians have some story where they get to meet olympians - so letting those kids [in VSC] have that experience."

During Laps for Loot, VSC roughly raised \$20,000 that will help in paying for new equipment and other things.

Out of the three medals Hoelzer claimed during her swimming career, she finds her bronze medal in the 100m backstroke to be her most prized possessions

"The bronze medal is my favorite because it was not an event that was considered my best. I'm a middle distance swimmer so 200 backstroke, I kind've expected that but the 100 backstroke - I wasn't even supposed to be on the team, let alone medal so that [bronze medal] is the most special to me," Hoelzer said.

Both Hoelzer and VSC head coach Derek Gibb were teammates at Auburn. Both had success but who was the

better swimmer?

"Pound for pound, if you're just looking at straight up speed, it's Derek absolutely. I might've had a little more endurance just because I was a little bit more longer distance," Hoelzer said.

Hoelzer will continue to coach young swim athletes in Seattle and Gibb will continue to prepare his team for the southeast championships in Juneau, from April 10-12th and then the state championship.



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ANSWER D. A bell and a whistle

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Sport fishing for king salmon is less limited this year in Southeast Alaska

By OLIVIA ROSE
KFSK Radio

Sport anglers in Southeast Alaska can fish more Chinook (king) salmon this year than last year, with a daily bag limit of two fish for residents. Any wild king salmon harvested by sport anglers must be at least 28 inches in length.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game this week announced updated sport fishing regulations for the region that went into effect April 1.

Jeff Rice, a state biologist for the Petersburg/Wrangell area, said the updated regulations in place for the fishery are "more beneficial" than last year.

"There's more opportunity, and that's due to the fact we believe there's more fish around, and we're hoping that that will be something that continues moving forward. So there is no negative news," Rice said. "Everything's either better or the same as it was last year ... as far as what one's allowed to catch."

Resident sport anglers can harvest up to two wild king salmon a day. Last year, the daily bag limit was just one.

Meanwhile, nonresidents can harvest one per year. There is a brief window from now through June when they can harvest up to three king salmon in most Southeast waters; but otherwise, the non-resident annual limit is the same as last year — a single fish.

However, harvesting Chinook salmon in certain areas is currently prohibited until the summer for all sport anglers. They'll need to wait until June 14 to harvest wild kings in most of the Petersburg management area. In waters by the Stikine River — around Wrangell and Petersburg, west of Mitkof Island — taking king salmon is prohibited until July 14.

Fish and Game also announced the amount of Chi-

nook salmon allocated under the Pacific Salmon Treaty for this year, which plays into the updated sport fishing regulations.

The treaty is an agreement between the U.S. and Canada that ensures both countries get some fish. And anglers get a slice of that overall target.

Southeast's sport fishing allocation, or how much fish the group is allowed to take, is 43,600 wild king salmon.

That's more than last year, when the treaty allocation for all fisheries dropped by almost 40% from the year prior.

At the direction of the Alaska Board of Fisheries, and accounting for the allocation, the department prioritizes sport fishing opportunity for resident anglers over nonresidents.

"For nonresidents, we're trying to give them as much as we can while always allowing a resident to go out and catch a king salmon," said Rice.

Sometimes that leads to in-season closures. Last year's restricted harvest brought managers to close the fishery to nonresidents for a few weeks.

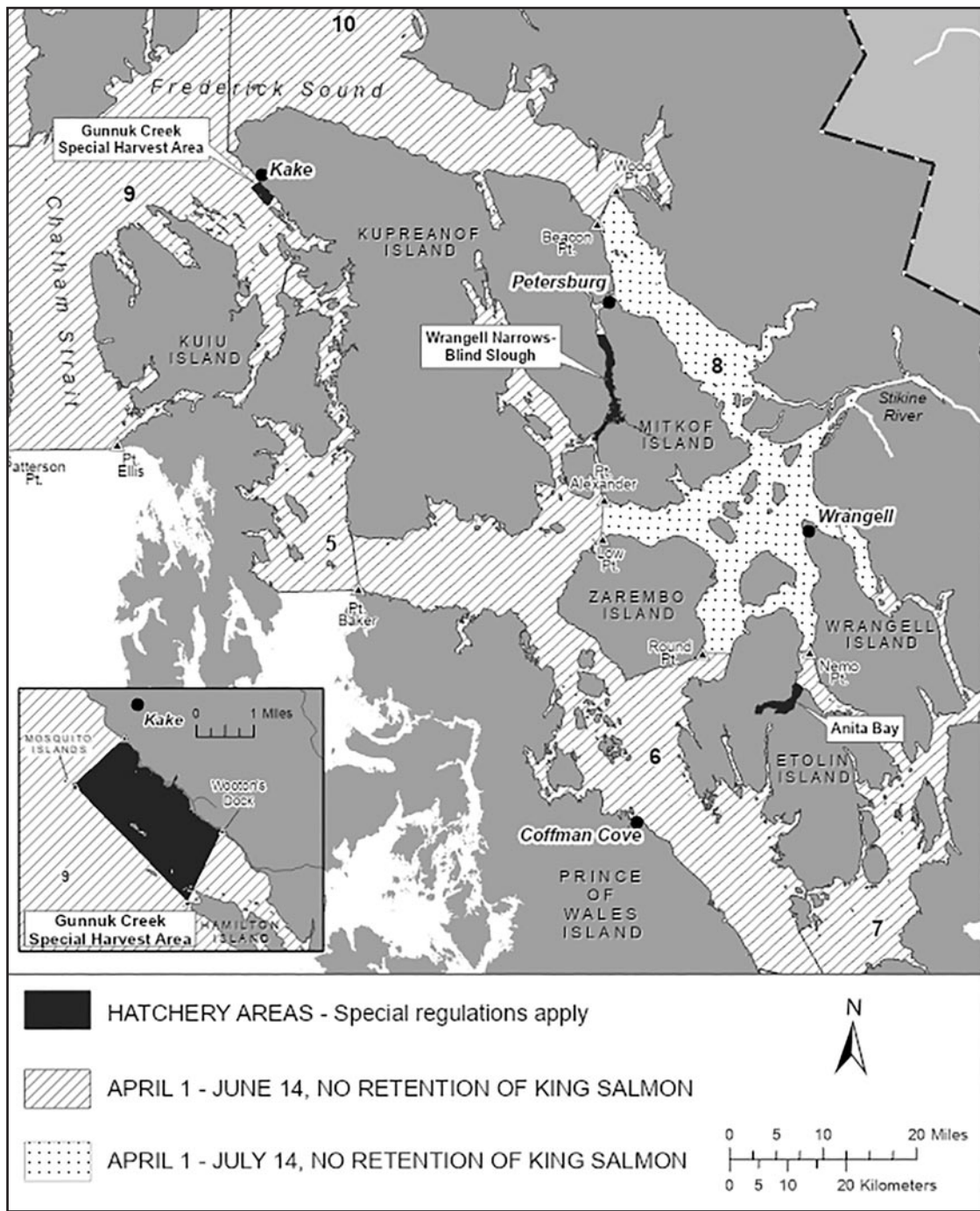
But Rice said having more fish to work with this year shows promise.

"Hopefully that will benefit us ... and everything works out so we can keep it open for everybody all the way through," Rice said.

There are special regulations for hatchery areas — like the Wrangell Narrows/Blind Slough fishery, which opens May 15 — but hatchery fish are not part of the treaty allocation of Chinook salmon, so fish caught in those waters don't count toward the bag limit for anglers.

Rice expects the department to announce specific hatchery regulations for fishing king salmon in the coming weeks.

This story was first published at www.kfsk.org and is reprinted here with permission.



Map courtesy of ADFG's March 31 announcement
The retention of king salmon is prohibited to June 14, 2026 in District 6, District 10, and portions of District 5, District 7, and District 9; the retention of king salmon is prohibited to July 14, 2026 in District 8 and a portion of Eastern Passage near Wrangell, according to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

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Library News



Library Hours: Monday, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Tuesday – Thursday, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Friday – Saturday, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Closed Sunday.

Friends of Petersburg Libraries BOOK SALE & Silent Auction! / Saturday, April 11 / 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. / Donations for the book sale can be dropped off at the library front desk.

Year of Reading Challenge! / For teens & adults / All new prompts with prizes awarded monthly! / Register at psglib.beanstack.org

Wiggle & Giggle! / Wednesdays, April 15, 22, & 29 / 11 a.m. – noon / Children ages 0 – 5 and their caregivers, join us for a rollicking good time!

Petersburg Science Series presentation by Dr. Fred Sharpe / Friday, April 17 / noon – 1 p.m. / Bring your curiosity and a lunch, and join us to learn about whales!

Baby Raven Reads with Teacher Brandi Heppe! /

Saturday, April 18 / 11 a.m. – noon / Join us for a Baby Raven Reads story followed by fun and engaging Alaska Native cultural activities for young children! / Program provided by Sealaska Heritage Institute.

Mama-To-Mama Milk Meet-Up with Kellii Wood, CLC & RN / Saturday, April 18 / 2 – 3 p.m. / A supportive and safe space for mothers to talk openly about their postpartum breastfeeding experiences, challenges and triumphs. Babies welcome!

Friends of Petersburg Libraries 25th Anniversary Celebration! / Tuesday, April

21 / noon – 2 p.m. / Please join the Friends of Petersburg Libraries for an afternoon of celebration & community! This special event will honor: **Don Nelson**, our outstanding history writer and storyteller, whose work has helped preserve and share Petersburg's rich history, and **Chris Weiss**, as we celebrate her retirement after years of dedicated service at the library. Come help us celebrate the people that have contributed so much to our library and community. / Refreshments will be served.

Lego Club / Tuesday, April 21 / 3:15 – 4:15 p.m. / For kids in grades K – 5 / Limited space: pick up your ticket 15 minutes

before the program starts.
Yoga with Karen Malcom / Saturday, April 25 / 11 a.m. – noon / \$\$, pay at the front desk / bring your own mat / For beginners and seasoned Yogis.

NewsBank / Stay connected to Alaska and the world by using your library card to access online news sources for FREE! / Check it out today at psglib.org/newsbank

Voices of S'et Ká Kwáan on KFSK Community Radio / Wednesdays / 6:30 – 7 p.m.

Need technology help? The

Library's Digital Navigator can help. Book an appointment by contacting the Library's front desk.

Looking for an audio book, ebook, or online Magazine? Download the FREE Libby App today and have access to the Alaska Digital Library at your fingertips.

Need help? Call us at 907-772-3349, or email: library@petersburgak.gov

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

The Pilot extends its best wishes to the persons listed on the Community Calendar.

Those celebrating birthdays this week are: **April 10:** Carolyn Martin, Corey Volk, Crystal Lyons, Mike McNeil. **April 11:** Amy Hemenway, Heidi Benitz, Heidi Leekley, Jim Birch, Marci Lockhart, Matt Bertagnoli, Noah File, Pat Blair, Sarissa Miller, Traci Vinson. **April 12:** Bosjun Reid, Britney Nichol森, Erica Wikan, Jeff Robinson, Jenn Hess, Nate Olson, Theresa Craig. **April 13:** Andy Strong, Callie Bell, Carol Bennett, Sequoia Fahey. **April 14:** Dan Whitethorn, Eric Rosvold, Justin Jackson. **April 15:** Bucky Eddy, Shannon Stolpe. **April 16:** Mel Stockton.

If you'd like to be included on our list, please call 907-772-9393.

Public Notices

Read the
• BE AN INFORMED CITIZEN • PARTICIPATE IN DEMOCRACY
• EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that April Lane Miller has been appointed Personal Representative of the Estate of James Lindell Miller. All persons having claims against the said deceased are required to present their claims within four months after the date of the first publication of this Notice or said claims will be forever barred. Claims must either be presented to April Lane Miller, Personal Representative, c/o Faulkner Banfield, One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 300, Juneau, Alaska 99801, or filed with the Superior Court for the State of Alaska, First Judicial District at Petersburg, Alaska, 1PE-26-00012 PR.

Published: March 26, April 2 and 9, 2026

PETERSBURG BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Planning Commission, on **Tuesday, April 14 th, 2026, at 1:00 pm** will be holding a meeting and conducting a public hearing in the Assembly Chambers located at 12 South Nordic Drive. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comment on the following:

- A. Consideration of an application from Scott & Stacey Fredricksen for a variance from the yard setback requirement to allow for construction of a deck within 5 feet of the side and 5 feet from the rear property line at 701 RAMBLER ST (PID: 01-011-552)
- B. Consideration of an application from Sandy Beach Holdings LLC for a preliminary plat at 410 SANDY BEACH RD (PID: 01-003-275). Note: Due to a procedural deficiency at the previous meeting, this item will be reconsidered.
- C. Consideration of an application from Sandy Beach Holdings LLC for final plat approval at 410 SANDY BEACH RD (PID: 01-003-275).
- D. Consideration of an application from Central Council Tlingit Haida for a minor subdivision at 1200 HAUGEN DR (PID: 01-012-010).
- E. Consideration of an application from the Petersburg Borough for a replat of a portion of N 7th ST and 200 AASLAUG ST (PID: 01-002-339).
- F. Recommendation to the Borough Assembly regarding an application from Robert Funk to purchase borough owned property at 502 LUMBER STREET (PID: 01-011-324).

Published: April 9, 2026



Stork report

Juniper Jean Lopez was born to Caroline Dowd and Chad Lopez on January 25, 2026, weighing 9 pounds, 6 ounces and measuring 21.5 inches.

Senior Meals

Monday, April 13

Pot Roast, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Mixed Vegetables, Cupcake

Tuesday, April 14

Vegetable Beef Soup, Half a Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Trail Mix, Fruit Salad

Wednesday, April 15

Spaghetti with Meat Sauce, Garlic Bread, Spinach Salad, Blueberry Buckle

Thursday, April 16

Liver & Onions, Mashed Potatoes, Vegetables, Yogurt Cup, Cupcake

Friday, April 17

Parmesan Crusted Rockfish, Rice, Brussels Sprouts, Grapes



The community dining room is open to eligible diners (60+ and their spouses, or disabled individuals living in an assisted living facility). Dinner is served at 5 p.m. All meals are suggested donation only. Please call Mountain View Food Service at 772-4331 before noon for reservations.



at Petersburg School District

BREAKFAST IS AVAILABLE
K-5 AT 7:45AM / 6-12 AT 8:50AM

Monday, Apr 13

Breakfast

Chef's Choice

Lunch

WG Biscuits and Gravy

Tuesday, Apr 14

Breakfast

Chef's Choice

Lunch

WG Pork Taco

Wednesday, Apr 15

Breakfast

Chef's Choice

Lunch

Alaskan Fish and

Brown Rice

Thursday, Apr 16

Breakfast

Chef's Choice

Lunch

Cheesy Broccoli Soup

and Sandwich

Friday, Apr 17

Breakfast

Chef's Choice

Lunch

WG Mac and Cheese

with Chicken Nuggets

Don't like Lunch Menu?

Try the Salad Bar

All Meals Served with Milk

Breakfast Served with

Fresh Fruit and Juice

*WG = Whole Grain



772-9393

Petersburg Indian Association

JOB FAIR 2026

Join us to learn about exciting new career possibilities and information on Job Training opportunities!

JOHN HANSON SR HALL
12 N. 1ST STREET

Thursday, Apr. 16
1pm - 6pm

Open to all in the community!

JOBS

L&L Taxi and Tours is looking for a full and part time driver. Good driving record a must. Call Larry at 907-723-8120

.....tfn4-9b22
Now hiring in Petersburg, Alaska Executive Director for Working Against Violence for Everyone - WAVE. We are seeking an energetic, passionate, trauma informed leader for our mission driven 501(c)(3) organization. At WAVE, we work on preventing root causes of violence and provide advocacy for survivors of power-based, personal violence. Responsibilities include fiscal and budget management including grant writing and reporting, program and staff development and management, community and support to the Board of Directors. Position open until filled. petersburgwave.org/careers

.....tfn3-5b80



907-978-6365
Musical Equipment & Lessons
Accepting used instruments for consignment & purchase.
223 S. Nordic Dr.

First Bank is looking for a Customer Service Representative/Teller for the Petersburg Branch. If you like to work with customers, enjoy problem solving, are dependable, and you are interested in the position, stop by the branch and let's talk about it. Previous experience is not re-

quired. Application can be found online at www.First-BankAK.com or at the branch. We offer competitive salaries, health insurance, paid holidays, vacation, 401 (k) retirement plans, employees stock ownership plans and educational opportunities.

.....tfn11-13b77
The Salty Pantry is looking for enthusiastic full-time and part-time people to join our team. Contact Mindy at 907-518-0571 or stop in the Salty Pantry at 14 Harbor Way.

.....tfn10-30b29
Join the PW Insurance Team! We are hiring a customer service representative with the opportunity to transition to an insurance producer if desired. The ideal candidate is enthusiastic, detail-oriented, and willing to learn. We are looking for someone with customer service experience and strong communication skills. If you thrive in fast-paced environments and enjoy building relationships, this is the job for you! Salary DOE, minimum starting wage \$24 per hour. Please call 907-772-3858 or text 907-802-5366 for more information or visit www.p-wins.com/job-posting to apply.

.....tfn5-15b84
Wanted: boat/crew to harvest outside southeast black cod. 907-738-1439

.....tfn5-1b9

CLASSES

PIA is hosting a canoe paddle making class at the PHS Woodshop from April 16th-19th. This class is being held to supply the 2026 PIA Canoe Journey with paddles and does not have a fee. To register, check our Facebook page or go to piatribal.org

.....1x4-9b45

SALE / RENT

Seasonal Lease 2026 (Nordic Drive) Commercial kitchen/small deli restaurant. Range hood with fire system, walk-in freezer/cooler, ~2000sq/ft. Cell: 907-518-0110, email: igloolcalaska@gmail.com

.....1x4-9b20

MISCELLANEOUS

Competitive Printing - No obligation price quotes. 10 -14 day delivery on many jobs. Petersburg Pilot. 207 N. Nordic Drive. Call for prices. 772-9393.

KEN'S PAINTING:
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Rubber stamps available at Petersburg Pilot. Custom made to your size and specifications. 207

N. Nordic Drive.
.....1x4-9dh

NOTICES

PIA invites the community to the blessing of the Kéet Yaakw (Killer Whale Canoe) on April 19th at 3:00 PM at Sandy Beach Shelter #2! Please come and be a part of this historic occasion!

.....1x4-9b35
Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255

ALASKA FIBRE INC.
2.74 Mile Mitkof Hwy.
772-2173



Job Openings

The Petersburg Borough is accepting applications for the following positions:

- Resident Assistants at Mountain View Manor: \$20.67/hour**
On Call & Swing shifts available, Training Provided!
Bonus of \$900 after probation/\$900 at one year.
- Assisted Living Supervisor at Mountain View Manor: \$29.77/hour**, 40 hours per week, Monday through Thursday

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Health Insurance • Dental Insurance
- Life Insurance • Retirement • Paid Time Off

Full job descriptions and employment applications can be obtained from the Borough's website at <https://www.petersburgak.gov>. Applications will be accepted at the front desk of the Borough office, 12 S. Nordic Street; or via email at tiffany.glass@petersburgak.gov Call Tiffany at 907-772-5404 for more information.



There are exciting career opportunities available at

PETERSBURG MEDICAL CENTER

COME JOIN OUR TEAM!

Petersburg Medical Center is accepting applications for:

- COOK I / II / III**
 - Starting wage \$21.20 per hour for a Cook I - dependent on experience
 - Higher wages available for Cook II and Cook III based on qualifications
 - Differentials: Weekend shift \$2.50 per hour, Evening shift \$1.25 per hour
 - Full time, with benefits, 40 hours per week
- STAFF NURSE – HOME HEALTH / ELDERCARE SERVICES**
 - Provide compassionate care to patients within their homes
 - Dynamic role across home health, eldercare services, and community nursing
 - Full time (40 hours per week) with benefits

Benefits:

- Health Insurance • Enrollment in State of AK PERS
 - PTO (Vacation & Holidays) + Sick Leave
- Wellness Program, Community Gym Discount



Nutritional team members - Celebrating PMC's Dietitians - Kelly, Jennifer

Choose from many FULL-TIME & PART-TIME, benefited positions

Additional information on PMC, our mission / values and job opportunities is available at www.pmcak.org. Questions contact Cindy at (907) 772-5719 or cnewman@pmc-health.org.



SCAN CODE to view position descriptions & to apply online. Additional career opportunities are listed at pmcak.org

FACILITY MAINTENANCE JOB OPENING



Applicants to apply online at silverbayseafoods.com or call (907) 772-4294 for more information.

Silver Bay Seafoods, Petersburg
P.O. Box 1147 • Petersburg, Alaska 99833
Telephone: 907-772-4294

Petersburg senior Canek Sosa selected to second All-State Jazz Band

By AIDEN LUHR
Pilot writer

For the second time in his music career, Petersburg senior Canek Sosa was selected to the All-State Jazz Band. Sosa was also selected to the Juneau Honor Jazz Band. Only one drum set player is selected to the All-State Jazz Band and the Juneau Honor Jazz band, it's rare.



Canek Sosa

"It's definitely exciting. I'm not someone that's pressured very easily so I would say I didn't feel as much pressure as people would think. I took it very well knowing I was the only drummer there," Sosa said.

Sosa got to play some pretty cool compositions at Anchorage. Sosa's two favorites were "Mattitude," a vibrant swing composition written by Harris Matt and "Cuukin."

"[Cuukin is] a fast swing where we're taking it at 180 or 200bpm and I like playing fast songs," Sosa said.

Ever since he was a kid, Sosa has been drawn to the rhythm and steady pulse of drums.

"As a young kid, I've always loved the drums. Even as a baby, my parents have said that I used to grab cans and smack them with my hands or get pencils and then just start banging them randomly," Sosa recalled. "I feel like [drumming is] a good way to release the energy that I have inside that sometimes is hard to release. It's an important part of music, especially percussion - and I

feel important."

Sosa said he started in middle school jazz band with mainly percussion in sixth and seventh grade but then in their final concert, he got to play the drum set.

During his junior year, Sosa went through a rough patch as he felt like he had plateaued in his music. That there weren't any more ways for him to get better. It left him in a state of limbo, marked with uncertainty.

"I reached a point where I thought I couldn't get any better. Where I thought the skills that I had right there were my limit," Sosa said. Thanks to [Chelsea] Corrao, with my jazz additions and listening to more drummers and applying those, I was able to find out that I don't necessarily have a limit. The only limit I have is the one I'm willing to put on myself."

During the week, Sosa practices three to three and a half hours a week, which includes jazz band practice.

"After school, I try to at the very least, practice 30 minutes but if I feel very motivated that day, I would maybe crank it to 45 or an hour," Sosa said.

Sosa's skills have vastly improved over the years.

"Coordination is a big thing for drums. You have to use all four parts of your brain to control four limbs," Sosa said.

In the All-State Jazz Band, there were four trumpets, four trombones, a baritone saxophone, two tenor saxophones, four alto saxophones and one drummer. For Sosa, that was special.

"My proudest moment is being announced [and] published on facebook that I'm the only drummer in Alaska that got into this really good band. I feel very proud of that," Sosa said. "All the time I spent practicing and listening to drummers paid out."

Some of Sosa's favorite drummers include Buddy Rich and Adam Osmianski.

"[Osmianski] is friends with Corrao so I'm able to have a little bit more contact with him and that also helped with figuring out some Latine style for Juneau and Anchorage," Sosa said.

After graduation, Sosa will be attending Oregon State University.

"I will 100 percent keep playing the drums [and] jazz. Just follow what has pretty much called me," Sosa said.

Above all else, Sosa hopes he can be an inspiration for other people.

"I hope I will serve as a motivation for future generations that even small schools are able to do such big accomplishments," said Sosa. "I'm the only drummer for 2026 from all schools in Alaska."



OLA RICHARDS / Petersburg Pilot

Spring sunrise

Beams of golden light shine on Frederick Sound at sunrise, as seen from Petersburg's Sandy Beach Park on Wednesday morning, April 8.

Herring seining halts; Roe harvest continues

By SHANNON HAUGLAND
Sentinel Daily Sentinel

The Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery remained open Monday in the south end of Sitka Sound, although fishing has slowed to a standstill, the Department of Fish and Game announced.

Spawning activity also appear to have slowed, with 30.6 nautical miles of spawn measured as of this morning, biologists said.

No commercial harvest was recorded for Friday, Saturday or Sunday, and the total caught to date remained at 6,555 tons. Fish and Game opened the fishery over the weekend in Deep Inlet, and from Cape Burunof to Cape Aspid, on the southernmost border of the fishery area.

The 20 participating seiners continued to look today for marketable fish in the large area where the fishery has been open since Friday, said Aaron Dupuis, F&G area management biologist who manages the fishery.

"The fishery is currently open and seiners are actively looking for opportunity but so far they haven't been successful," he said.

While the pace of this year's fishery has been slow, the catch has been fish with high roe percentages, and an average size around 156 grams.

Fish and Game is continuing to look for commercial seining opportunities, but no test sampling is taking place. Aerial surveys will continue until spawning activities have stopped, Fish and Game said.

Last year's harvest was around 6,200 tons.

This year's guideline harvest level is 35,015, which is 15% of the 233,433 tons of mature herring that managers expected to return this year. This year's forecast is a 6% decrease from the 2025 mature pre-fishery biomass estimate of 247,081 tons, the Fish and Game said.

"So far the fishery has gone very well; we were able to take advantage of commercial opportunities that presented themselves," Dupuis said. "The processors I've spoken with have been pretty pleased with product quality."

The 2026 fishery opened on March 27 and the last seine catches, totaling 1,400 tons, were recorded on April 2.

The commercial harvest so far has been:

March 27 - 495 tons, Crescent Bay, Jamestown Bay;

March 28 - 947 tons, Crescent Bay, Indian River;

March 29 - 1,515 tons, Crescent Bay, Jamestown Bay, Shoals Point, Kamenoi Point;

March 30 - 1,000 tons, Hayward Strait, Magoun Islands, Krestof Sound;

March 31 - 200 tons, Hayward, Magoun, Krestof;

April 1 - 1,000 tons, Hayward, Magoun, Krestof, Shoals Point;

April 2 - 1,400 tons, Hayward, Krestof.

April 3-5 - no harvest, Deep inlet, from Cape Burunof to Aspid Bay.

Subsistence Harvest

The customary and traditional, or subsistence, herring egg harvest was in full swing over the weekend, with harvesters pulling up sets of hemlock branches laden with herring eggs.

"We've seen (subsistence) sets throughout the sound in the closed waters and on the north part of the sound as well," said Anthony Walloch, assistant area management biologist for Fish and Game.

The maps of the closed waters show an area stretching from Big Gavanski on the north to the Japonski causeway on the south, and including Middle and Crow Islands on the west. The Board of Fisheries closed these waters to commercial herring fishing in 2012 at the request of the subsistence community. The subsistence only area was expanded in 2018.

Dozens of herring egg harvesters in small skiffs were working in waters near Kasiana Island, Promisla Bay and other areas this weekend. Some were utilizing larger vessels, such as the F/V Christina Dawn of Kake, to gather quantities of herring eggs for later distribution in other communities.

ANCHOR
PROPERTIES

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