

**Alaska Senate pushes for increase in oil tax revenue**

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Karen Schramek**

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Annette Olson**

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# petersburg pilot

PETERSBURG, ALASKA



March 26, 2026  
Vol. 52, No. 13

www.petersburgpilot.com

12 Pages  
\$2



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Monday, March 23 Tom Begich, candidate for governor of Alaska, held a meet and greet at Glacier Express Cafe during his campaign stop in Petersburg.

## Begich brings gubernatorial bid to Petersburg, touts coalition-building

By ORIN PIERSON  
Pilot writer

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Tom Begich visited Petersburg last week, holding a community meet and greet and sitting down afterward with the Pilot and the KFSK radio station.

Begich, a former state senator from Anchorage, is running for governor on a platform centered on education funding, affordable energy, fiscal accountability, and a governing style he says is defined by dialogue rather than division.

The meet and greet drew a roomful of Petersburg residents and discussion touched on many of the pressures facing Southeast Alaska communities. Rocky Flint, who attended the event, told the Pilot afterward that the candidate demonstrated “a depth of knowledge” that he considered “invaluable.”

Begich comes from one of Alaska’s most prominent political families. His father, Nick Begich Sr., served in the Alaska State Senate before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. His brother Mark served as a U.S. senator and as mayor of An-

Continued on page 3

## Wastewater plant working toward meeting the new standards

By JAKE CLEMENS  
Pilot writer

Every day the Petersburg wastewater plant handles between 300,000 gallons to 1.8 million gallons during heavy rain, but there have been some changes in how they do that in

an attempt to meet new EPA requirements. While the wastewater staff have been able to greatly improve the water quality discharged by the plant, it’s going to take more equipment to fully meet the disinfection requirements. That’s going to mean either chlorination and

dechlorination equipment (as discharge of both bacteria and chlorine is limited), or an ultraviolet disinfection system, that demands a great deal more electricity than is currently supplied to the wastewater plant. These improvements could cost somewhere in the ballpark of

\$15 million. The requirements themselves aren’t new, just the fact that they now apply to Petersburg, which along with 8 other Alaska coastal communities, had been granted an administrative exemption for the past 20 years. That exemption expired in November 2025.

Most of what has traditionally occurred at the wastewater plant has been primary, physical treatment. “If we couldn’t screen or settle it, it wasn’t happening,” said Justin Haley, Wastewater Operations Supervisor. But to control fecal coliform bacteria, chemical treatment using chlorine is necessary. In the past, chlorine was simply dumped into the headworks periodically. But since the November requirement changes, there are tighter fecal coliform limits to meet (200 organisms per 100 milliliters of wastewater). Now, pucks of solid chlorine are added to a tube with an adjustable opening at the bottom, better controlling how much chlorine gets dissolved into the water. With the new method of adding chlorine, the coliform discharged has dropped from about 1.2 million to around 9,000 organisms per 100 milliliters of water—a huge

improvement, but still above the 200-organism limit. The new coliform limits can’t be met by just adding more chlorine, because there is also a limit on how much chlorine can be discharged (100 parts per billion). Hence the need for added dechlorination equipment, or an ultraviolet purification system that doesn’t require such high levels of chlorine.

Much of the wastewater plant relies on nearly 40-year-old equipment, that continues to function only through the intimate knowledge and resourcefulness of the staff. And even as the equipment has gotten older, more water quality testing has been required, demanding more and more of the staff’s time. The new requirements have only increased that time demand for testing, with all the same regular operations still requiring the same careful

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## Southeast Alaska’s commercial Dungeness crab fisheries had below-average harvests with ‘decent’ prices in 2025-26 season

By OLIVIA ROSE  
KFSK Radio

The numbers are in for Southeast Alaska’s 2025-26 commercial Dungeness crab season. Participants harvested 2.07 million pounds of crab during the summer and fall/winter fisheries combined. With the estimated overall price averaging \$4.17 a pound, the full season amounts to a total value of \$8.64 million.

Joe Stratman is a regional shellfish biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, which manages the fishery. He said the full harvest came in lower than what the fishery has seen over the past five years or so.

“I think you could say it was below-average this summer, I think you could say it was below-average for the fall/winter, I think you could say it was below-average for the full sea-

son combined,” he told KFSK in an interview.

The five-year average full season harvest is about 3.6 million pounds. But Stratman noted that figure is “buoyed” by some high-harvest seasons, like in 2020, which was the second-largest on record.

Even though fewer crabs were harvested, they sold at above-average prices this season.

The average price for the fall/winter fishery was about \$4.04 per pound. That’s roughly the same as the previous fall, but down from the summer’s \$4.19 average.

Most Dungeness crab caught during a given season are taken during the summer fishery, and that was especially true in 2025. About 84% of the overall harvest was taken in the summer, and 16% was caught in the fall/winter. Usually, the split is 78% and 22%, according to Stratman.

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# 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.

**March 16, 1951** - It's nothing but the best for the Glen Reid family when something happens to one of their little folk. On Thursday morning Sandy Reid, small son of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Reid, was trying to help his brother grind up some clams for the family lunch. But he tried too hard and poked his tiny finger too far into the chopper, taking it off at the first joint. The family frantically rushed him to the hospital where they learned that three prominent doctors had just departed for Juneau, but were due back because weather was too bad for their plane to go through. So small Sandy had his finger treated by a pair of doctors of national renown. Brewster S. Miller, of Westfield, New Jersey, and David Slate, of St. Paul, Mississippi, despite being cancer specialists enroute to a gathering in the north, did a neat job and the child is feeling fine according to reports this morning.

**March 24, 1976** - A 6 1/2-foot lighthouse lens from Cape Decision has been given to the Clausen Memorial Museum on

permanent loan from the U.S. Coast Guard. The French-built lens first saw service at Cape Decision in 1930. The classical brass piece with its intricate layering of glass prisms was described at the last Chamber of Commerce meeting by USCG Lieutenant Bob Fischer of Juneau as a beacon seen for 20 - 25 miles by mariners at sea. The glass prisms bend rays of light for distribution in a horizontal line in all directions. "The contribution of this type of lens is incalculable," said the regional public information officer. "Before the age of electricity, this was the only way to project light for a great distance." The lens is made up of a series of bent prisms in a heavy brass shell. Original instructions for the French-built Fresnel lens called for daily cleaning with wine.

**March 22, 2001** - Four separate explosions ripped through the foggy gray-shrouded hills surrounding the city rock pit just after 4 p.m. Friday, sending Petersburg residents pouring out of their homes and businesses to see if the town had suddenly come under attack. Eleven sticks of Powermite, a highly explosive gel commonly used to blow up boulders, were discovered Wednesday by City Public

Works employee Tom Lutton near the rock pit at around 3:15 p.m., March 14. Petersburg Police investigated and found a 50-pound box containing the eleven unused Powermite A-P logs. Each gel log was wrapped in plastic, resembling "a 5-lb roll of hamburger." Alaska State Troopers with the Petersburg Department of Public Safety (DPS) office alerted agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) in Anchorage. ATF agent Don Gillespie contacted officials with the 716th U.S. Army Explosives Ordnance Disposal Company at Fort Richardson. On Friday morning, Gillespie and two Army Bomb Disposal experts boarded a DPS plane in Anchorage and arrived by early afternoon to dispose of the material. Petersburg Police Officer Heidi Agner witnessed the explosive detonations. "Just be thankful they didn't detonate all eleven logs at once. I asked them why they set off four separate detonations rather than the whole amount. They said, 'if we set off the whole amount, we would have broken half the windows in Petersburg.' So, this way, people just got a little rattled," Agner noted. Police Chief Dale Stone said their preliminary investigation indicated the explosive logs were left behind by accident

while the rock pit was still in use. The ATF is continuing to trace the source and purchase off the Powermite logs. At present it is not believed that

the material had been stockpiled for criminal use. In any event, the episode gives new meaning to the phrase, "starting the weekend off with a bang."



## Petersburg Indian Association

### Junk Vehicle Removal 2026

PIA will be removing 10 vehicles. Sign-ups will be on a first come, first serve basis and begin on April 1st, 2026 on our website at [piatribal.org](http://piatribal.org)

- ELIGIBILITY**
- Must have title in hand
  - Must have all tires
  - Must NOT have any garbage inside of vehicle
  - Must be accessible for a tow truck

Published: March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 2, 2026

## Pioneer's Annual Spring Tea Party

**Saturday, April 11, 1 pm - 3 pm**  
**Holy Cross House**  
**\$20 per person**

Tickets can be purchased at Lee's Clothing  
 All proceeds after expenses go to PHS Graduating Senior for college or trade school

Serving teas & coffee with a wide selection of sweet & savory finger foods.

For more information, contact

Gayle Eastwood 907-518-4232 or Margaret Newlun 907-518-3358

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## FERRY SCHEDULE

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NORTHBOUND DEPARTURES			SOUTHBOUND DEPARTURES		
MON 3/30	KENNICOTT	01:00 A.M.	WED 4/1	KENNICOTT	02:00 A.M.
SUN 4/5	KENNICOTT	07:15 P.M.	WED 4/8	KENNICOTT	01:00 A.M.
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.

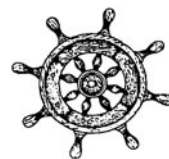
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## PETERSBURG TIDE TABLE

MARCH & APRIL 2026

	HIGH TIDES				LOW TIDES			
	A.M.		P.M.		A.M.		P.M.	
	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.	Time	Ft.
26 Thu	7:31	14.2	9:27	11.7	1:14	5.9	2:50	1.5
27 Fri	9:09	13.8	10:45	12.7	3:02	6.0	4:12	1.2
28 Sat	10:33	14.4	11:39	14.0	4:36	5.0	5:16	0.5
29 Sun	11:36	15.2	....	....	5:40	3.4	6:05	-0.1
30 Mon	0:21	15.3	12:27	15.9	6:28	1.8	6:46	-0.5
31 Tue	0:57	16.3	1:11	16.3	7:10	0.5	7:22	-0.5
01 Wed	1:30	17.0	1:50	16.3	7:47	-0.5	7:55	-0.2

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Island Refrigeration, LLC / ACE 907-772-3310 908 S. Nordic Dr.

## PETERSBURG HAPPENINGS

Brought to you by:



### THURSDAY, March 26

**Tai Chi for Arthritis & Fall Prevention:** 10:00 am, Mitkof Dance Studio  
**Hospital Board Meeting:** 5:30 pm, Borough Assemble Chambers  
**Free Dinner Get Together:** 5:30 pm, Lutheran Church

### FRIDAY, March 27

**WAVE Board Meeting:** 11:15 am, WAVE  
**AI-Anon Support Group:** 12:00 pm, Episcopal Church  
**PIA Culture Club Program - All Students Welcome:** 2:30 pm, Elementary School Cafeteria  
**Friday Night Bingo:** 6:00 pm, Sons of Norway Hall  
**Family Game Night:** 6:30 pm, Parks and Rec Gym  
**AA Candlelight Meeting:** 7:00 pm, Episcopal Church

### SATURDAY, March 28

**Free Soup and Bread Meal:** 12:00 pm, St. Catherine's Catholic Church  
**Family Movie Night:** The Sandlot: 2:00 pm, WAVE

### SUNDAY, March 29

**Clothing Swap:** 10:00 am, Upstairs at the Elks Lodge  
**Devil's Thumb Shooters:** 2:00 pm, Gun Range  
**Knitting Group - All Welcome:** 2:00 pm, Mt. View Manor Social Hall  
**Salvation Army Sunday Worship:** 4:30 pm, Salvation Army Chapel

### MONDAY, March 30

**Tai Chi:** 7:00 am, Mountain View Manor Social Hall  
**SHARE Coalition Meeting:** 12:00 pm, PMC Dorothy Ingle Conf. Rm  
**Burger Night:** 5:30 pm, Moose Lodge  
**Petersburg Arts Council Meeting:** 6:00 pm, Bearing Song & Gifts  
**AA Women's Meeting:** 7:00 pm, Presbyterian Church  
**Volleyball:** 7:30 pm, Parks and Rec Gym

### TUESDAY, March 31

**Tai Chi for Arthritis & Fall Prevention:** 10:00 am, Mitkof Dance Studio  
**Family Game Night:** 6:30 pm, Parks and Rec Gym  
**AA 12x12 Meeting:** 7:00 pm, Holy Cross Classroom

### WEDNESDAY, April 1

**Tai Chi:** 7:00 am, Mountain View Manor Social Hall  
**Rotary Mtg:** 12:00 pm, Salvation Army Hall  
**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](mailto:pilotpub@gmail.com)

**Northern Nights Theater**  
**No Movie This Week**  
 Check our Facebook page and sign up for the latest updates for showings

**Coming this April**  
 Hoppers  
 Project Hail Mary  
 The Pout-Pout Fish

Concessions available. Credit cards accepted.  
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**WEATHER**

	High	Low	Precip	Snow
3/18	36	30	0.36	4.2
3/19	33	28	0.16	2.3
3/20	33	28	0.27	2.7
3/21	39	31	0.16	4.2
3/22	38	28	0.19	4.5
3/23	36	27	0.27	3.1
3/24	38	22	0.00	0.0

This Week's Precipitation: 1.41"  
 This Week's Snow: 21"  
 This weather service is provided by the FAA weather observation station at the James A. Johnson Airport.

**DAYLIGHT HOURS**

Date	Sunrise	Sunset	Daylight
Mar 26	6:40a	7:16p	12:35hrs
Mar 27	6:38a	7:18p	12:40hrs
Mar 28	6:35a	7:20p	12:45hrs
Mar 29	6:32a	7:22p	12:49hrs
Mar 30	6:30a	7:24p	12:54hrs
Mar 31	6:27a	7:26p	12:59hrs
Apr 01	6:24a	7:28p	13:04hrs

## Begich

Continued from page 1

chorage. His nephew Nick Begich III currently serves as Alaska's representative to the U.S. House.

Tom Begich spent decades in public life before seeking elected office himself — working in substance use prevention, mental health, community justice, and strategic planning for school districts and boroughs across the state. He served in the state Senate from 2017 to 2023, including as minority caucus leader for the last four years.

"I didn't run for office until my mid-50s," he said, "but part of it was because this driving desire to ensure we had a strong substance use prevention system, mental health — I've worked in all those fields, community-based organizing all around the state... What can we do to keep lifting the place up? That to me, that's the whole point of it."

### Education

If Begich has a central cause, it is education. His signature legislative achievement came through an unlikely partnership. In 2019, then-Commissioner of Education Michael Johnson approached Begich about collaborating with Governor Dunleavy on a bill combining pre-kindergarten expansion with science-based reading instruction.

"The governor and I don't see eye to eye on virtually anything," he said. "But I said, if you're serious, I want commitments ... we focus on the science. We focus on what works."

The bill they crafted together, the Alaska Reads Act, passed the state House by a single vote — 21 to 19 — and was unanimous in the Senate. Begich calls it the most significant education reform in more than three decades. Early results in districts that have fully implemented the combined pre-K and reading programs, he said, show students performing two to three times better than state averages. The problem, he says, is that the governor has not provided adequate funding to extend those results statewide.

Begich's broader vision for education in Alaska includes restoring a defined benefit retirement plan for teachers so they can afford to teach in Alaska long term, forward funding the education budget two years to give districts stability for recruitment and planning, and inflation-indexing the Base Student Allocation to remove the annual funding debate permanently.

### Governing through collaboration

Begich is emphatic that good policy requires a governor who communicates directly with the legislature rather than through the press or public conflict.

"Part of that really does rest on a governor who has to be present during the legislative session, for sure, and then throughout the year, reaching out to and communicating with members of the legislature," he said. "If the only dialog you actually have is one through the press... you end up creating animosity that creates dysfunctional government."

### A fiscal plan

Begich has laid out a specific set of revenue proposals he says would generate more than half a billion dollars in recurring annual income. They include an approximately \$35 million annual fee on internet service providers — a bill Dunleavy already vetoed, which Begich says he would sign; eliminating a corporate income tax exemption held by Hilcorp, which he says costs the state between \$100 and \$150 million per year; and reducing oil and gas tax credits on the North Slope to \$5 per barrel — a figure the industry supported when SB 21 originally passed the Senate in 2013, before the House amended it upward to \$8. He noted that, since the passage of SB 21, years of budget deficit spending have drawn down roughly \$18 billion from the state's reserve funds.

### Energy and housing

Begich wants to create a state Department of Energy and chart a 20-year course away from Alaska's depend-

ence on diesel fuel. He pointed to innovations already underway: Kodiak Island Borough running on 95% renewable energy; an Alaska Gateway School District heating its buildings with biomass; limestone pellet energy storage being tested by Kotzebue Electric with a 95% return rate; clean hydro power providing low-cost energy for much of Southeast Alaska. He urges the legislature to purchase solar and wind equipment now, while a market surplus has pushed prices down.

On housing, he described workforce housing as a critical bottleneck all across the state — pointing to a Ketchikan shipbuilding operation he said could pursue an additional \$100 million in contracts if it could house 100 more workers.

He called Petersburg's shop class recently building a tiny home from locally milled second-growth Tongass timber an innovative model worth replicating.

### Health care

Begich mentioned a proposal to provide basic health coverage for Alaskans through a state self-insurance model, bypassing private insurance companies.

"When you call with a health concern, the person on the other end of the line isn't trying to save money for their shareholders," he said. "They're trying to serve their shareholder, which is you."

He said the concept would build on the existing Denali KidCare children's health program, extending similar state-administered coverage to a broader population of Alaskans.

### A competitive race

Begich said crowd sizes at his Southeast Alaska stops have grown at each visit — Wrangell, Ketchikan, Sitka, Prince of Wales, and now Petersburg. On the question of where he stands in the race, the available polling suggests a competitive position. A poll commissioned by his campaign and conducted by Democratic firm Lake Research Partners in February showed him at 22% in a crowded field of 17 candidates, leading every modeled ranked-choice runoff scenario. An independent poll by Alaska Survey Research conducted in November 2025 painted a similar picture, simulating a four-way ranked-choice race between Begich, former Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom, former state Sen. Click Bishop, and Bernadette Wilson. Begich led in the first round with 41% and won the final round 50.6% to 49.4% over Dahlstrom. However, national forecasters at Cook Political Report still rate the race Solid Republican.

No matter where he stands in the polling, he assures that his efforts on the campaign trail will not slow down at all. "You always run like you're behind," he said. "That's what my dad taught me."

He wants to win the governor's seat, but Begich says he also wants his campaign to change the conversation itself.

"I want to leave this campaign having changed the dialog, so that people aren't just doing these one-line platitudes," he said. "If I can help educate people so that they hold every candidate accountable to these issues, we are all stronger for it."

### Correction:

In last week's story "Petersburg High School poets recite on KTOO," the English teacher for the students Freya Tucker and Mette Miller was incorrectly identified as Tim Shumway. Jill Lenhard is actually their teacher this year in AP Language & Composition where they did the initial assignment in class and received extra credit for performing in the school-wide competition.

The Pilot apologizes for that inaccuracy.

## Petersburg's Stedman Elementary to get new accessible playground equipment over the summer

By TAYLOR HECKART  
KFSK Radio

Petersburg's elementary school will be getting new accessible playground equipment next school year as part of a \$173,000 grant from the Hurst Wood Education Foundation, a nonprofit that supports special education projects in schools.

The current playground at the Rae C. Stedman Elementary School has swings, slides, monkey bars, and a variety of climbing equipment. For students in wheelchairs or with limited mobility, playing on that equipment can be challenging.

Special Education Director Cyndy Fry said having a playground that's inaccessible to certain students means they lose opportunities to play with other kids.

"The need of it is to have a playground where our students who have accessibility concerns ... can have places where their peers can come join them," Fry said. "It's at their level, and it's interactive."

Fry said only a handful of elementary students have limited mobility, about 10 or less, but it's still important to include these students at recess.

Superintendent Robyn Taylor agreed.

"This allows them to be down there with their peers, interacting with their peers," she

said.

Of the \$173,000 grant, roughly \$128,000 will be used to cover the costs of new equipment. The remaining money will be used on professional development for special education staff.

Fry said the district is planning on adding an art station, a music station, and an area for removable sand or water tables. They'll extend the existing covered structure on the playground, so this area will be dry too.

She said this equipment will be something that all kids can use.

"So, it's not targeting just those students who specifically need to be able to access in one way or another," she said. "It's something that every single kid can choose, if that's what they choose to engage in."

She said the additions to the playground will also offer options for kids who have different play styles at recess.

"Not every student really wants to run around or go on the slides," she said. "There's those kids who are just a little bit more quiet, maybe a little bit more artistic, and this will be a great place for all of those students, or any kid really."

The district hopes to get the new playground equipment installed this summer.

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



Standing indivisible, we the people  
are coming together to

**SAVE DEMOCRACY**

**PROTECT THE CONSTITUTION and**  
**CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

**Join us Saturday, March 28**  
**12-1pm in the Borough Parking Lot**  
as we say  
**NO Tyrants • NO Corruption • NO Kings**

Contact: 907-518-0590

COMMENTARY

Alaska's Moment Is Here: Let's Finish the Pipeline

By GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY AND FORMER SENATOR MARK BEGICH

Conflict in the Middle East is sending shockwaves through global energy markets. And yet again, Alaskans are wondering why, with a huge amount of North Slope natural gas, we are going to increase our dependence on some of the world's most unstable regions. The answer, in part, is that we have failed to develop our own energy resources—including vast natural gas reserves that could supply our households, fuel our industries and military bases, and reliably deliver energy to trusted allies abroad. The good news, however, is that we are on the brink of changing our storyline by finally delivering the Alaska LNG pipeline.

Our pipeline is more than just an energy project. It's an economic engine. Independent estimates project lower energy costs for Alaskans

who currently pay two to three times the national average, in addition to thousands of construction jobs, and billions in state and federal tax and royalty revenues. The best news is that these aren't just hypothetical statistics, we are making real progress to making this project a reality.

Alaska has been called on in times of energy crisis before and Alaskans know how to deliver big solutions. After the 1973 oil embargo, we built the 800-mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline (TAPS) which has delivered over 18 billion barrels of oil since 1977. The natural gas pipeline and LNG terminal will provide energy and economic security for decades to come. Alaskans have been working hard on this opportunity for years and now is the time to finish the deal.

Back in 2014, the Alaska Legislature passed a bill granting authority to Alaska Gasline Development Corporation (AGDC) to

secure a deal for a private developer to take this project because it is too big and complex for the State to manage. That is exactly why we have partnered with Glenframe. In this deal, Alaska maintains our 25% ownership, as we did when the project was being developed by the producers. However, there is one significant improvement. Now there is no risk to the State of Alaska. The State does not have any liability on the project, we do not have any costs related to the project, and we are not on the hook for any cash or debt required to reach a final investment decision. In addition, State entities and other in-state Alaskan investors will have an additional option to directly invest in any of the three core project elements - the liquification plant, gas treatment plant, or the pipeline. Ultimately, that additional investment decision will be left to the legislature.

The pipeline has received its

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission certificate and Department of Energy license. The necessary engineering is done. Permits are in hand. The lawsuits are over. The right-of-way is secured. The gas is available for the first time to put into the pipe. The markets are there — Japan, South Korea, and other Pacific partners have made clear they want a reliable North American supplier rather than depending on hostile, unstable countries elsewhere.

But our most important market is — and always will be — Alaska. This pipeline means that over the long-term we will eliminate the need to import gas to Alaska. Allowing us to supply Alaska communities with North Slope natural gas means we aren't beholden to foreign countries — or their increased highly volatile prices — for our energy supply. This is a huge benefit not only for Alaska families heating their homes, but

also for our strategic military bases.

The due diligence is complete and the benefits are clear, but now we must put aside our differences to make this opportunity a reality for all Alaskans. It is time for us to do what we do best — come together and get big things done. Just like with TAPS, we must harness our ability to meet the moment.

While former political opponents like us may seem like unlikely allies, we are not going to let this once-in-a-generation opportunity pass us by due to old politics. There is an old saying that "potholes aren't political" — well neither are pipelines. We hope all members of the Legislature will join us in having a unified voice and delivering on secure, affordable energy.

Alaska has massive amounts of natural gas. Our communities need it. Let's get it done.

GUEST EDITORIAL: Growing the Permanent Fund is good, but it forces decisions

By LARRY PERSILY  
Wrangell Sentinel publisher

Spending money can be a lot of fun, while saving money can be pretty boring. Sure, you get to watch your account grow — assuming you invest it wisely — thinking about spending it someday, though thinking about that someday is not nearly as much fun as spending today.

But when you do a good job of saving, life is much better as you grow old and life will be much better for the future generations who may benefit from your savings.

As Alaskans depend ever more heavily on the Permanent Fund as the largest single source of stable revenue to pay for public services, schools, construction and, yes, the Permanent Fund dividend too, it becomes ever

more important to ensure that the fund grows as large as possible so that it generates as much investment earnings as is responsible.

Voters created the fund when they approved a constitutional amendment in 1976 to set aside a portion of oil and gas royalties to save for the future, knowing that North Slope oil production would decline — it did, starting in 1989 — and knowing that the fund's investment earnings would have to carry the state budget.

That day came in 2018, when the Legislature voted to start taking an annual draw of the fund's earnings to pay for services.

That annual draw is limited by law to 5% of the fund's total market value, averaged over the past five years. Seems manageable, but remember that inflation erodes the value of the fund, so

to stay even in real dollars for the years ahead, the fund needs to earn enough on average to cover the 5% withdrawal plus inflation.

That would be 7.6% a year, according to the Permanent Fund's own projections. That's easily achieved in strong investment years but never guaranteed and not achieved in bad years. Over the past 10 years, the fund has lost money in two years, made less than 7.6% in three years, come in around the long-term assumption in two years and did really well in three years.

Which gets us to this year. The fund was at almost \$89 billion as of Feb. 28. It averaged better than an 8% return on investments in the first seven months of the fiscal year through Jan. 31 (the fiscal year ends June 30). But the stock market has dropped more

than 6% since the U.S.-Israel war on Iran started four weeks ago, as escalating energy costs and concerns of a wider war are hitting the global economy.

Ever since the Legislature adopted the 5% annual draw, cautious lawmakers have questioned whether that is too high and risks drawing out too much today at the risk of shortchanging tomorrow's generations.

The State Senate Finance Committee is considering a bill that would lower the maximum annual draw to 4.5% of the fund's value. The projections show less money for the state general fund for several years, but a larger Permanent Fund as more money

stays in the account to invest. In time, taking less today would produce larger withdrawals in the future as the fund grows bigger.

But it's not that easy. Cutting back on withdrawals from the fund to allow it to grow bigger and stronger for the future means finding additional cash in the meantime to pay for the services, and the dividend, that Alaskans want.

Not easy, but not impossible. It may mean taxes, a smaller dividend, spending cuts — maybe all three. But making those changes today to have billions more in the fund for the future is a smart savings investment.

Ritter's River

by Marc Lutz



Tundra

by Chad Carpenter



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USPS NO. 053-570-00  
Published Weekly by:

PILOT PUBLISHING, INC.

207 N. Nordic Dr., P.O. Box 930 • Petersburg, Alaska 99833  
PHONE 907-772-9393 • FAX 907-772-4871

E-MAIL pilotpub@gmail.com WEB SITE www.petersburgpilot.com

PILOT STAFF:	SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
PUBLISHER AND EDITOR..... Orin Pierson	Single Copy ..... \$2
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS	Local ..... \$82
.....Aiden Luhr	Online Only ..... \$82
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POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to Petersburg Pilot, Box 930 Petersburg, AK 99833  
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# Police report

**March 18** - An officer responded to a parking complaint on S 2nd St.

An officer conducted a welfare check on Sing Lee Alley.

An officer responded to a two-car accident at Nordic Dr. and Surf St.

There was a report of suspicious activity on Sing Lee Alley.

An officer responded to a dog complaint on S Nordic Dr.

Papers were served on S 3rd St.

A driver on S Nordic Dr. was issued a warning for tail light requirements.

An officer assisted with a civil issue on Skylark Way.

**March 19** - An officer assisted a citizen with a stuck wheelchair on N 2nd St.

An officer responded to a parking complaint on N Nordic Dr.

**March 20** - An officer conducted extra patrols.

An officer assisted with a vehicle damaged on 12th St.

**March 21** - An officer responded to a parking complaint on Haugen Dr.

A resident on Lumber St. reported the plow had made it impossible to get into his house. Public Works (PPW) was notified and responded.

It was reported that a vehicle hit the guardrail near the S-curve.

An officer conducted a welfare check on N Nordic Dr.

**March 22** - An officer responded to a parking complaint on Haugen Dr.

An officer provided transport to Petersburg Medical Center (PMC).

An officer assisted a citizen with health concerns on Fram St.

An officer assisted a citizen with family concerns.

There was a report of harassment.

A driver on Lumber St. was issued a warning for registration requirements.

An officer conducted extra patrols.

**March 23** - An officer conducted extra patrols.

A wallet found on Fram St. was turned in to the Police Department (PD).

An officer responded to a report of motor vehicle damage on Aaslaug St.

An officer assisted a citizen with a civil issue.

An officer conducted a welfare check on S Nordic Dr.

**March 24** - An officer conducted extra patrols.

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

An officer responded to a parking complaint on Dock St.

Officers responded to a two vehicle accident on Mitkof Hwy.

A driver on Sing Lee Alley was issued a warning for headlight requirements.



Photos courtesy of Dave Berg / Petersburg Volunteer Fire Department

The vehicles on Mitkof Highway after the collision on March 24, 2026



## Two drivers injured in morning collision on Mitkof Highway

By TAYLOR HECKART  
KFSK Radio

Two drivers have been transported to the Petersburg Medical Center after a collision around 10 a.m. Tuesday on the Mitkof Highway near Petersburg's cemetery, about two miles south of town.

"There was a car heading southbound, and as he was accelerating into the 40 mile an hour zone, he ran into a patch of ice and lost control of the vehicle," said Dave Berg, a spokesperson for the Petersburg Volunteer Fire Department. "He crossed the center line and hit another vehicle."

Berg said when the two trucks collided, one spun off into the ditch, and the other

ended up on the side of the highway. He said the highway was open to traffic in both directions as of noon, but may briefly be closed when the vehicles are moved.

In addition to the two drivers, Berg said one volunteer firefighter had "a minor injury in connection to the incident," and was also taken to the hospital.

Berg said road conditions this time of year can be dangerous.

"Any place that the sun hasn't been shining on the road makes it slick," he said. "And so we certainly encourage people to be cautious when they're driving."

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

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# Wastewater plant

Continued from page 1  
attention.

As wastewater enters the facility, it goes through the flow meter. This is monitored and checked against the flow meters at the 20 lift stations around town that pump wastewater to the plant. Next, two stainless steel cylindrical screens filter anything bigger than one fortieth of an inch, most of which is organic debris and food waste. During the Pilot's recent tour of the facility Haley explained: "Those screens have been turning since '88." The staff alternates the flow each day, so the filter not in use can be cleaned.

Next, water goes to the grit separator, a centrifuge that removes small heavy debris such as sand and glass. The debris is conveyed up and away, while the water continues to the clarifier.

Each clarifier tank holds 60,000 gallons, and there are two side by side, allowing for longer detention of water, giving more time for contaminants to either float or sink, with the paddles doing double duty as they slowly rotate like a tank tread, skimming the surface then scraping the bottom. The addition of chlorine has made a visible difference at this stage, changing the color of the scum skimmed by the booms from black to white.

The digester receives solids from the drum screens, grit separator, and clarifier, to be further broken down by circulating and aerating the water constantly, so it looks like a 30-ft section of a raging

muddy river. This accelerates the natural decomposition of the bacteria. Asked about the life ring on the wall, Haley explained that a ladder would collect too much debris. Some means of escape is required though, since it's about ten feet down into the digester. "But if I fall in there, don't pull me out," joked Haley. The tank is drained yearly, to remove the sludge in the bottom. That used to be 18 inches of "mud flat mud," but since a recent replacement of the aerator pump, that has decreased to 6 inches. Before being mixed with wood debris for composting, the sludge from the digester is dewatered, by adding polymer and by pressing it through a system of belts on rollers. That increases the sludge from 3% solid to 30% solid. That roller machine is also a survivor since 1988. While it is larger and less efficient than newer designs, it still works and it would cost \$100,000 to replace.

Staff take composition samples every 10,000 gallons from the clarifier, dropping a deck bucket down into the outlet hole to obtain a 200-milliliter representative sample. There is a lab in the wastewater facility where staff perform many of the required water quality tests, which make up a significant portion of their weekly work. Testing more aspects of water quality since the new requirements came out takes more time in most cases. Some new test types, such as Colilert and Enterolert for fecal coliform and enterococci bacteria, take less



JAKE CLEMENS / Petersburg Pilot

Wastewater Operation Supervisor Justin Haley demonstrates the components of Petersburg's wastewater treatment plant during a recent tour of the facility.

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time. The previous tests each took two hours, now they're ten minutes. But that saved time is used for other tests, such as accurately testing for chlorine down to very low concentrations. Also, dissolved nitrogen is tested weekly, while it had been monthly. "Half an hour a week adds up. It all adds up," said Haley.

Then there are the tests that can't be done in-house, such as whole effluent toxicity, which must be done every three months. This test is time and temperature-sensitive, and the lab that does it is in Sacramento. The water samples must be shipped in coolers and arrive within 36 hours, meaning they must be GoldStreaked to hopefully arrive on time. "But this is Southeast Alaska," Haley said, looking out the window at heavy snow falling. "Travel is tricky." But if Petersburg's wastewater passes that test eight times in a row, then it will only have to be done once a year.

In total, Petersburg's wastewater is now tested for 150 parameters, including toxic metals and pesticides. Still, the wastewater team is figuring it out according to Haley, and they've managed to meet most of the new requirements since November.

The last leg of the journey for Petersburg's wastewater is the outfall pipe into Frederick

Sound. Which was recently discovered to be damaged. The outfall pipe hadn't been inspected since the early 1990s, since there was no requirement to inspect it. The only reason it was inspected was to settle a discrepancy in the discharge point from different maps. So, divers inspected the outfall and found that the anchor had failed to keep part of the pipe in place. Instead of being dispersed along a section of perforated pipe, the dispersal now just comes out of the end of a solid pipe, closer to shore.

"All you can see is a small amount of different-colored water coming out of the pipe," Haley described. It's about 200 gallons per minute. The discharged water, "disperses pretty well anyway, but since it was designed with that pipe, it should be put back. Engineering bids are open until May for a new outlet pipe." Divers' inspections of the pipe have measured how much the outfall has moved, and taken some interesting video.

Some surprising findings of divers inspecting the outfall pipe include rockfish living in it, and an octopus hanging out nearby, as well as abundant sea anemones. The octopus hangs out between the pipe and the anchor that was supposed to keep the pipe anchored to the sea floor. Haley seemed pleased

Continued on page 7

# 50th anniversary of jet service to Petersburg lands on June 1

By **LARRY PERSILY**  
*Wrangell Sentinel*

June 1 will be the golden anniversary of Alaska Airlines jet service to Wrangell and Petersburg, marking when the first scheduled Boeing 727 passenger flight touched down in the communities in 1976.

Before the arrival of the 104-passenger jets, which provided daily same-plane service to and from Seattle, travelers had to take a plane with one-fifth the passenger capacity and catch a connecting flight in Ketchikan or Juneau.

"It would be nice to get on a jet at Wrangell and relax all the way to Seattle, with a stop at Ketchikan," a Wrangell Sentinel columnist predicted in January 1975. "It would also add some prestige for the community to have the big air-

planes whistling in."

Olga Norris, who has lived in Wrangell since 1938, remembers the start of jet service to town, and holds a special appreciation for the larger planes.

She also recalls air service before the Boeing 727 landed in town. "I remember the PBY," she said of the 24-passenger twin-engine amphibious planes that landed in the harbor before the airport was built.

Later, after retiring the PBY, Alaska Airlines flew de Havilland twin-engine Otters with room for 19 passengers.

Norris didn't like flying. "I couldn't stand to be in a small space." She took the state ferries as much as she could after they started running in the early 1960s.

"I had to force myself to go flying."

The arrival of the jets — with

their roomier cabins — made travel easier for her.

Jet service also brought more freight capacity to town, which she appreciated in the years she ran Norris Gifts downtown.

The 727 could fly almost three times as fast and carry about eight times the freight of an Otter, an Alaska Airlines official told the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce in May 1976, just days before the first flight.

"Jet service with Boeing 727s ... was a big deal at the time and necessitated airfield improvements, paved runways, plus many required modifications to the existing terminal," Ron Suttell, a retired director of facilities planning at Alaska Airlines, said in an email.

"Both terminals (Wrangell and Petersburg) were undersized for a jet operation, having been constructed in the early 1970s for twin-engine turbo-prop de Havilland DHC-6 Twin Otter service in South-

east."

Building an area to screen passengers "took up valuable space in an already crowded terminal," Suttell said. "This necessitated that a new stand-alone baggage claim be built adjacent to the main terminal — not the ideal, but it generally worked for the time being until terminal expansion took place in the early 1990s."

The other part of preparing the town for the new service "was the paving of runways at both airports to accommodate the jets. Although Alaska had many years earlier pioneered the certification of its Boeing 727s to operate scheduled service out of gravel strips in the Arctic and charters to other remote points, it was prudent to lengthen and pave the runways, as well as improve the airport's navigational aids in advance of jet service."

Suttell was part of the company's properties and facilities team when the switch was

made.

Not everyone, however, was elated about the new service.

The late Winnie Grey, better known as Aunt Winnie, had prepared carry-out lunches from her Wrangell restaurant for Otter pilots since 1964. She wasn't totally happy to see the Boeing jet land on June 1. The start of jet service meant the end of Otter flights, and the end to her carry-out pilot lunches.

"I don't like them (the jets) because they're taking my boys away from me," she told the Sentinel the week of the new service.

Her "boys," as she called the Otter pilots, treated their "lunch mother" to a day and lunch in Juneau, buying her a ticket on the first flight out of town. "They treated me royally."

Still, she wasn't convinced that the change to jet service was a good thing. "We're moving too fast."

## Wastewater plant

Continued from page 6

that Petersburg's wastewater appears to pass the test with the local sea life. Still, Petersburg's wastewater has to pass all the EPA requirements by 2030.

\$8 million in funding has been earmarked by Senator Murkowski to this end. Still, the total cost of the necessary improvements to Petersburg's wastewater system are estimated to be between \$12 and \$15 million, possibly more with the recent surge in construction costs. Public works assistant director Tom Rummel has been looking into additional grants that could help close that gap.

## Alaska Senate pushes for increase in oil tax revenue, amid war-driven oil boom

*Lawmakers in support of a measure to strengthen the state's corporate income tax on the oil and gas industry said it was essential for boosting state revenues*

By **CORINNE SMITH**  
*Alaska Beacon*

The Alaska Senate approved a measure to boost state taxes on oil and gas production on Wednesday. Lawmakers tacked it on to what would have been a routine renewal of a state oil royalty agreement.

Sen. Forrest Dunbar, D-Anchorage, sponsored the amendment to House Bill 194, saying it would close a corporate income tax loophole and potentially capture more than \$100 million in new state revenues each year — at a time when Alaska is in dire need of revenue to pay for state services.

"Can we afford this loophole while we close schools? Can we afford this tax subsidy while we slash the permanent fund dividend? Can we afford this tax subsidy while our infrastructure languishes, while we struggle to recruit and retain state troopers and firefighters and maintenance crews?" Dunbar said. "The answer is no."

The provision would impose the state's corporate tax rate on oil and gas companies doing business in the state, at a maximum rate of 9.4% for companies whose net profits are more than \$5 million per year.

Alaska's oil prices are surging amid the Iran War, and state forecasters are projecting hundreds of millions in potential state revenue in the coming months. Despite the spike in oil prices, Dunbar said lawmaker action to capture more revenue from the oil and gas industry is long overdue.

"There is still a long term revenue problem in this state, regardless of short term prices connected to the Iran war," he said. "Now is the time to do this. Prices for oil are high. These corporations are doing very well. You fix the roof when the sun is shining."

The Senate approved the amendment by an 11 to 8 vote, then passed the underlying legislation by a 12 to 7 vote, with Sen. Kelly Merrick, R-Eagle River, absent.

The original legislation was introduced by the governor, and passed the Alaska House last year. It would renew a three-year oil royalty agreement between the state and Marathon Petroleum Corporation, for state owned oil to be processed at its refinery in Nikiski, on the Kenai Peninsula. The proposed contract is estimated to generate between \$4 million to \$18 million in state revenue.

However the bill's sponsor, Sen. Jesse Bjorkman, R-Soldotna, objected to the new oil tax provision, saying the Senate should take time to evaluate how the tax measure would affect the broader industry and energy supply for Alaskans.

"I'm a no vote on this amendment, because we do need a legitimate plan," he said. "We don't rush things. We don't do things in a half-cocked manner, because that's how mistakes are made."

He said lawmakers should model potential revenue measures so they know how they will function within a state fiscal plan.

Lawmakers have been hotly debating Alaska's oil and gas tax structure for years. A bill introduced last year, Senate Bill 92, would change the way the state's corporate income tax applies to the oil company Hilcorp, which is an S-corporation, and the state's largest oil producer. Hilcorp is a privately held, Texas-based energy company that since 2020 has operated the Prudhoe Bay oil field in the North Slope, as well as most of the operations in Cook Inlet.

That bill is currently in the Senate Rules Committee and has not moved this year.

The measure approved by the Senate on Wednesday would enact state taxes not just on Hilcorp but many companies, and collect revenues that would otherwise be leaving the state, Dunbar said in an interview after the vote.

"To be clear, it's not just Hilcorp that might be affected by this, but that is one of the large, obvious holes we see in our oil tax structure right now that is causing us to shift tens of millions, and over the long term, hundreds of millions of dollars, from schools and roads and the permanent fund dividend to out of state companies and individuals," he said.

The amended bill now goes to the House for a concurrence vote.

Dunbar urged support for the measure, citing financial woes in his own district where the Anchorage School Board has voted to close three elementary schools and cut hundreds of staff positions to help address a \$90 million budget shortfall.

"I hope they agree that it's not an acceptable world where the price is high and this industry is booming and we are closing Lake Otis Elementary School because we don't have enough money," he said.

*The AlaskaBeacon.com is a donor-funded independent news organization in Alaska.*

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# PHS Track and Field eyes another strong and fast season

By **AIDEN LUHR**  
Pilot writer

With spring (officially) underway, the Petersburg High School Track and Field team have hit the ground running with fierce and intense competition. Due to the extended winter Petersburg has seen, the team has mostly been focusing on conditioning and physically preparing themselves for the fast season.

While the team has only been practicing for a little bit, head coach Casey Gates already has an idea of the potential strengths of this year's squad.

"I think our strengths are going to be in sprinters and hurdles. Last year the 4x8 relays were strong and they should be strong again. Our distance runners will be good too," Gates said.

One of those runners will be sophomore sprinter Maelle Boitor.

This season, Boitor plans to run the 100, 200, 400 and 4x100 relay. Last season, Boitor did not qualify for state for the 100

meter dash — this season, she's seeking improvement.

"I was kinda slower last year because I had shin splints but I think I can work on not having shin splints this year," Boitor said.

Coach Gates cited several runners who could potentially kick it into a higher gear this season.

"Cedar Helms. I think he has an opportunity for a lot of growth. I think Ben Kandoll was a kid who elevated quite a bit last year and I think he can continue that," Gates said.

Gates also mentioned Arielle Tucker and Lexie Tow as athletes who have the potential to reach bigger heights.

This season Kandoll will be competing in the 100, 200, 400 and 4x200 relay.

"I'm just excited to compete again," Kandoll said.

Kandoll, now in his junior year, will be competing in the 400 for the first time since his freshman season.

"I kind of expect myself to be at the

same level as I am in the 100 and 200," Kandoll said.

Last year Kandoll did not medal at state, he's looking to change that for this season.

"I'm really hoping to medal this year — the 100, 200 or 400, as well as medal in a relay," Kandoll said.

This is Gates' first time coaching track and field since the 2024 season but he's looking to build a team that has a tight knit connection.

"I want them to be successful in their pursuits of track and field, build some camaraderie and connection," Gates said.

With over 25 kids competing, this year's team has enough for a boys and girls 4x800 relay, 4x100, 4x200 and more.

In the previous season, the girls 4x100 relay, consisting of returnees Boitor, Tow and [Freya] Tucker qualified for state and finished sixth at the championship meet.

In previous history, unfortunate mishaps during the championship meet plagued the boy's relay teams, resulting

in disqualification. This happened last season in the 4x200, despite having one of the fastest times.

"We really have to focus on our skills like handing off the baton as well as just getting faster," Kandoll said. "I think I can do my best to improve my form [and] running strength."

"Focusing on the little things. Doing the little things correctly, being precise, communicating as far as the relay goes, really working on chemistry," Gates added.

The first meet of the season will be April 22-25, in Ketchikan.

"It'll be a learning experience for everybody. The veterans get to see where they're at. The young kids get to see what it's like," Gates said.

It will also be the first step for a lot of the team in their pursuit of reaching their season-long goals.

"If I get to state, then I'll feel accomplished [and] hopefully place, that's the goal," said Boitor.

## Petersburg Rod and Gun Club plans shooting range upgrades in 2026

By **ORIN PIERSON**  
Pilot writer

The Petersburg Rod and Gun Club has outlined a slate of range improvements and community events for 2026, with some construction already underway and several projects in the pipeline.

Reid Brothers Construction is slated to replace the rifle range boardwalk with gravel extending to the 100-yard line and establish truck access to the rifle field. The project, funded through a state capital projects appropriation, is expected to take place this year, though the timeline will depend on Reid Brothers' schedule, according to Rod and Gun Club contact Jake Slaven. "It's been years in the making," said Slaven. The club is also eagerly accepting donated fill and gravel materials and building materials to assist with the work and to eventually extend the rifle range improvements out to 200 yards.

"Hopefully somebody working on their house says, 'I've got a couple sheets of siding left over' — concrete blocks, beams and posts, some guys have that stuff laying around," Slaven said. "This could be a real good use for it."

Slaven said lining up funding for the range's ongoing improvements has been a learning experience. "It's a kind of whole new level for me, but I'm glad I've gotten the experience to learn how to do it," he said.

At the pistol shelter, the club is proposing a cement pad to improve footing and make brass cleanup easier. Petersburg Power and Light recently installed two light poles at the shotgun field, and the club is seeking funding for full field lighting and an additional cement pad at the shotgun shelter. The trap houses will also need new roofing and patch work.

Longer-term plans include ADA parking and wheelchair access at the clubhouse, a project the club hopes to pursue through an NRA accessibility subsidy program.

The club's annual meeting is set for April 25 at the Range Clubhouse, where members will vote on officer and bylaw elections. Two executive committee positions are open — one secretary/treasurer and one at-large member. Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest to [psgakrodandgunclub@gmail.com](mailto:psgakrodandgunclub@gmail.com).

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game will host a Hunter Information and Training program field day at the range March 29. The range will be closed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. that day. Those interested in next year's course can contact Hilary Wood at 907-772-5228 or [hilary.wood@alaska.gov](mailto:hilary.wood@alaska.gov).

Other upcoming events include a July 4 membership drive at a booth on Main Street and an Outdoor Swap and Sale at the Moose Lodge on Sept. 5. Table space at the swap meet is available for \$20. All items are welcome, and the club is also accepting donated items to sell as a fundraiser.

The club credited several local sponsors with supporting this year's projects, including Reid Brothers Construction, JOAT-MON Construction, Tonka Toy Rentals, Rainforest Contractors and Hammer and Wikan, as well as grants from Alaska Power and Telephone and the designated legislative grant.

Volunteers and donations of any kind are welcome. For more information, contact Slaven at 907-518-4025 or [psgakrodandgunclub@gmail.com](mailto:psgakrodandgunclub@gmail.com). The club can also be followed on Facebook.

## PHS Baseball set sights on return to postseason

By **AIDEN LUHR**  
Pilot writer

Petersburg High School's baseball team will be looking to rebound after a winless campaign and missing the postseason. Unlike last season, this year's is more experienced. Head coach Jim Engell said the team boasts seven kids that are juniors and seniors.

One of the big differences between this season and the previous one is the team boasts an eight man pitching rotation, which will be key for depth and postseason aspirations.

"The year we took fourth at state, we were deeper pitching wise. The year we were runners up, we weren't as deep but we had two starting pitchers that were able to go the distance in the quarter and semi finals," Engell said. "If we are able to use so many pitchers throughout the season, then that's going to be a huge advantage for us going into tournament."

In regards to pitching, the team is focused on starting with the basics, which means getting command of a good ol' fastball.

"Until we can become 70% accurate with our fastball, we're gonna keep on [practicing] those because that's the bread and butter pitch. You set everything else up based on the fastball," Engell said.

Starting senior pitcher Aiden Knudsen feels good heading into the new season.

"It's definitely getting there. [I'm] focusing more on not just throwing strikes but focusing on the corners. When we miss, we want to have a good miss, low or high, not in the middle," Knudsen said regarding his fastball. "Personally, I think I'm already better than I [was] last year. As a team, it feels better this year."

If this team wants to stack more wins this season, there's going to have to be more improvement in multiple areas of the team.

"We have to pitch better. We have to be able to throw first

pitch strikes 60% of the time. We need to hit better and we need to reduce errors," Engell said. "We gave too many second chances to teams last year."

To reduce errors, it's all about being in sync with one another, especially when it comes to defense. While the team hasn't had a lot of time to fully implement their defense due to all the snow up at the fields, they've been putting in work to fix one of their weaknesses.

"We've worked on some rotation and fielding stuff. We're looking pretty good, especially compared to last year," senior first baseman Logan Tow said.

Too often last season, the team was not able to generate enough runs on offense to close deficits when their fielding and pitching weren't at their best.

"Staying present in the moment. Any hit will drive in runs. Going up [to the plate] with full confidence in yourself," Tow said regarding needed improvements to generate more runs.

"Last year it was tough. We would lose games 5-0. We couldn't do anything about it so I think a big step for us this year is to get runners on. Not playing individual baseball, playing together," Knudsen added.

Much like how the MLB has evolved, analytics will be used more for the Vikings this season.

"We're using a lot of analytics as far as video and bullpen sessions and hitting. Kids are getting their feedback every single day of what they're batting is like and what they're bullpen sessions are like," Engell said. "We're charting everything so kids have a good idea of where they're strong and weak at."

The team's main focus right now is to continue to get better so they can stack wins. They'll get their first opportunity for live games during a preseason tournament when they play

Kodiak, Juneau-Douglas, Diamond High School and more from April 9-11, in Sitka.

If this team can improve on their weaknesses from last season, they're poised to return to the postseason.

"We can do some damage in the state tournament, in our region. We have a lot of talented guys," said Tow.



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**Wednesday, Apr 1**

Lunch

WG Beef Spaghetti

**Thursday, Apr 2**

Lunch

Steve's Lava Chicken

WG Roll

WG Pasta Salad

**Friday, Apr 3**

Lunch

Broccoli Beef

WG Rice



Don't like Lunch Menu?

Try the Salad Bar

All Meals Served with Milk

Breakfast Served with

Fresh Fruit and Juice

\*WG = Whole Grain

**ALASKA MARINE LINES**

• 772-4234 •  
• 800-950-4265

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

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

Those celebrating birthdays this week are: **March 27:** Dustin Delong, Elly Hegar, Joyce Bergmann, Mandy Kivisto, Sage Drillevich. **March 28:** Barb Luhr, Blair Martens, Bridget Davidson. **March 29:** Beth Schneider, Ole Whitethorn. **March 30:** Ana Wohlhueter, Brittany Johnson, Dollie Mang. **March 31:** Jeanne Norheim, Nathan Holtzing. **April 1:** Teri Slaven, William Stolpe. **April 2:** Ralph Duddles. Those celebrating anniversaries this week are: **March 30:** Christina and Sam Jackson.

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

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

**Petersburg School District  
Is Seeking Quotes For Services**

The Petersburg School District is seeking quotes from licensed providers for itinerant special education-related services in the following areas: **Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Educational Psychology.** These services include screening, evaluation, direct service contact, collaboration, and training for the 2026-2027 school year. **Contract specifications are posted on the school district website at [www.pcsd.us](http://www.pcsd.us)** and are available at the School District Office, 201 Charles W. Street, Petersburg, AK 99833. Submit quotes to Mara Lutomski at [exec@pcsd.us](mailto:exec@pcsd.us) or (877) 526-7656 ext 100 for additional information. **Quotes are due by 4:00 pm on Monday, April 6th, 2026.**  
**Published: March 19, 26, and April 2, 2026**

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE  
OF ALASKA AT PETERSBURG**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE )  
OF: )  
HOMER HOSEA SARBER, )  
DOB: 04/11/1939 )  
Deceased. )  
\_\_\_\_\_ ) Case No. 1PE-25-00019PR

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that SABRINA M.SARBER has been appointed as Personal Representative of the Estate of HOMER HOSEA SARBER. All persons having claims against the Deceased are required to present their claims within four (4) months after the date of the first publication of this Notice or said claims will be forever barred. Claims must be presented to the Personal Representative at her address, as follows:

SABRINA M. SARBER  
4938 BARAT CIRCLE  
ANCHORAGE AK 99508  
Phone: (907) 964-2271  
E-Mail: [aksummitdog@gmail.com](mailto:aksummitdog@gmail.com)

**Published: March 19, 26, and April 2, 2026**

**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**

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE  
OF ALASKA AT PETERSBURG**

In the Matter of the Estate of: )  
 )  
Sandra Elaine Edgars )  
Person Who Died (Decedent) )  
DOB: 11/24/1940 )  
\_\_\_\_\_ ) Case No. 1PE-26-00008PR

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

You are notified that the court appointed DeAnn Elaine Minnilo as personal representative of this estate. All persons having claims against the person who died are required to present their claims within four months after the date of the first publication of this notice or the claims will be forever barred.

Date 3/10/2026  
DeAnn E. Minnilo  
PO Box 19241, Thorne Bay, AK 99919  
907-201-1046, [akharleybabe@gmail.com](mailto:akharleybabe@gmail.com)

**Published: March 12, 19 and 26, 2026**

**Obituary:**

**Karen Schramek April 9, 1951 - December 13, 2025**

Karen Schramek was born in Portland Oregon April 9th, 1951 to Maxine and Roland Hayzlett. She grew up close to her older brother Steve, looking after her younger sisters and helping around the house. The family made many memories camping, visiting national parks, and on day trips to the Oregon Coast or Oregon mountain streams. Karen especially enjoyed fishing with her Dad. Karen joined Camp Fire Girls, eventually becoming a camp counselor near Mt. Hood for several summers. Her early experiences with outdoor education sparked a lifelong passion for teaching and working with kids.

Karen graduated from Southern Oregon University and began her career in Petersburg, Alaska, as a high school PE teacher and coach, returned to Oregon for two years, then worked in Petersburg in several jobs including as a secretary with the Forest Service. Karen later settled into a position as an Elementary PE and swim teacher working with many teachers and coaches over the years. Her work built a strong PE program and an innovative swimming program which eventually combined competitive swimming, AMSEA skills, boat safety, ice safety, hypothermia awareness, and CPR skills. Her lessons maximized water time and built in fun time to practice and explore, occasionally surprising students by filling the pool with duck decoys or sinking flowers & dinosaurs. Karen was a firm believer that physical play is essential to healthy development and was an advocate for maintaining a vibrant PE/Swim program in our community. In addition to her work with the school district, Karen taught Red Cross Lifeguard, CPR, and Water Safety Instructor classes and was a professor with University of Southeast from 1995 – 2008 teaching PE teachers across Alaska.

Karen met Jim Schramek in Petersburg while working for the Forest Service, they married in 1978 and had two children: Lisa and Alec. Karen worked hard to support their interests and volunteered in various ways, including: Girl Scout Troop leader, Viking Swim Club stroke-and-turn official, VSC board member, chaperone, and was a secret sponsor to several VSC swimmers.

Summer breaks from teaching were packed with family cabin camping, fishing trips, visiting family, and working on the house and garden. Karen always had hanging baskets to attract hummingbirds, fresh carrots, and a large rhubarb



**Karen Schramek**

patch. She baked and made special recipes to share with friends and family. On Halloween, she greeted children with Jim's homemade caramel apples and handpopped popcorn.

Every year Karen traveled to Oregon to visit with family. She was a great daughter and sister, keeping in touch with family. Karen was also a great Aunt to her nieces and nephews and prioritized attending weddings, graduations, family reunions and other special events.

In retirement, Karen dove further into genealogy, attending reunions, traveling to explore family history, and visiting family. She volunteered as president of the Mountain View Manor board for several years. Karen was an enthusiastic Grandma who loved relaxing with family and meeting up with friends for coffee.

In June, Karen learned she had pancreatic cancer and battled for more time. She died in Oregon on December 13, 2025, supported by family. She is survived by her sisters, extended family, and her children: Alec Schramek, Lisa Schramek, son-in-law Joshua Adams, and grandson Erik Adams.

A memorial will be held April 25th at 2 p.m. at the Lutheran Church Holy Cross House in Petersburg.

Correspondence may be sent to: Lisa Schramek, Box 746, or Alec Schramek, Box 124, Petersburg, AK 99833. In lieu of flowers, please donate to either the Petersburg EMS, PO Box 75 or KFSK, PO Box 149 in Petersburg, AK, 99833.

**School News**

Five Petersburg students have been named to the University of Alaska Fairbanks deans' and chancellor's lists for the fall 2025 semester.

Alexa Francisco and Isaac Lister earned a 3.9 grade point average or higher to be placed on the chancellor's list.

Adrian Ducat, Emiko Newman and Sean Toth earned a grade point average of between 3.5 and 3.89 to be placed on the deans' list.

**Representative  
Rebecca  
Himschoot  
coming to  
town**

Representative Rebecca Himschoot will hold a constituent meet and greet in Petersburg on April 4, from 10 a.m. – noon at the Petersburg Legislative Information Office.

For more information, please contact Rep. Himschoot's office at [rep.himschoot@akleg.gov](mailto:rep.himschoot@akleg.gov) or call 907-465-3732.

**Senior Meals**

**Monday, March 30**

Sweet and Sour Pork, Rice, Vegetables, Apple, Bread Pudding

**Tuesday, March 31**

Chicken and Dumplings, Green Salad, Yogurt with Fruit, Cake

**Wednesday, April 1**

Crab Pasta Salad, Garlic Bread, Fresh Fruit, Cookie

**Thursday, April 2**

Pork Tenderloin, Scalloped Potatoes, Broccoli, Apple, Muffin

**Friday, April 3**

Hot Dog, Macaroni Salad, Fruit Cup, Cookie



**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.**

## Obituary: Annette Carol Olson, 81

Annette Carol Samuelson was born on October 27, 1944, to Mildred (Israelson) and Gainhart Samuelson in Petersburg, Alaska, where she would live her entire life. The second of six children, Annette was a born mama's helper. She loved her family deeply and her desire to do whatever she could for them informed her entire life. Her father, a fisherman, was rarely home. Even at a young age Annette recognized how hard Mildred worked to keep food on the table and to fill her family's childhood with love. Annette wanted nothing more than to help her, so from an early age she pitched in however she could—and she loved it. Her greatest dream was to one day have a family of her own.

Before she was twenty she had two girls, Cindy and Shirlene. Despite the challenges she then faced as a young mother, Annette was determined to graduate high school – and she did in 1965 with her younger brother Bud Samuelson's class, an accomplishment Bud would praise for the rest of his days.

The summer after Annette and Bud graduated, when Cindy was two years old and Shirlene one, Bud brought a friend over to meet Annette. Helmer (Bill) Olson had noticed her on the first day of his sophomore year at Petersburg High School as the-new-kid-from-Ketchikan, but was told, "she's a senior and she has a boyfriend." So he'd respectfully admired her from afar. Bill graduated the year before them and had been working hard ever since. He loved children and was undaunted by the responsibilities of taking on a family. They were married in Ketchikan on January 22, 1966, and would prove to be the perfect team to create the family Annette had always dreamed of – one where the children would always come first in a home with a full cookie jar for the extended family and friends, who would always be welcome.

Bill loved her girls as his own, and with the births of Duane and Tanya, Annette's dream was coming true. Together they worked hard to make ends meet and to create warm family memories. Annette remained very close with her mother and they both loved picnics – regardless of the weather. Bill shoveled snow so they could get the car, which the kids refused to get out of, close to the campfire so Mildred and Annette could deliver cooked hotdogs through the window. This is not a thing that happened once, it was a winter routine.

In addition to caring for her family, Annette cared about the Lutheran Church. She created lasting memories with her quilting friends over many years of gathering in the basement most weeks to sew quilts and share sack lunches. One of her favorite things was showcasing all the quilts they'd created over the previous year on the church pews each Easter before sending them off to people in need around the world. When the gardens around the church had become overgrown Annette volunteered to help. She took great pride in reviving and tending the church garden until her health just wouldn't allow her to keep up with it anymore.

She often returned home from running

errands to find children sprawled around her living room and sometimes none of them were technically hers. When school broke for lunch, anywhere from two to 10 of her kids, nieces, nephews and their friends would show up at her house and she truly enjoyed making sandwich after sandwich so that no one left her home hungry. They affectionately called her 'The Lunchlady.' They loved her – and her endless supply of delicious chocolate chip cookies.

Each and every May she and Bill looked forward to participating in the Memorial Day weekend's Salmon Derby, meticulously crafting lists, comparing them to previous years, and adding new items to enhance the weekend experience. Annette loved to spend time on the F/V Cindy Kaye fishing for salmon with Bill and caught several 45 to 50 pound king salmon, a beautiful 52 pound king salmon and one that weighed in at 56 pounds! One morning in Thomas Bay, before she'd even had her coffee, Annette hooked a 44-pound king that won first place in the 1992 Derby.

In the summer she enjoyed spending weeks at a time at Point Agassiz. Annette cherished her Israelson-family heritage and loved tending to the old family homestead with her dear uncle Marvin Israelson. Together they expanded the gardens and lawns, forming a dynamic duo tackling various projects such as preparing a new potato patch, painting to maintain the homestead, and devising ways to improve efficiency with limited resources. Annette loved nothing more than being up to her elbows in dirt! She truly had a green thumb, growing absolutely beautiful flowers and delicious vegetables. Agassiz neighbors joked, "Give her an old lawn mower and she could clear a path for Reid's Logging."

In the fall Bill and Annette would prepare for moose camp, loading up the camp trailer with plenty of coffee and numerous tins filled with her famous spritz and overnight cookies to satisfy the remarkable number of people who stopped by needing to warm up, before heading out to find that elusive legal moose. Annette bagged two moose over the years, a source of great pride for Bill. She loved the subsistence lifestyle, harvesting berries for her famous jams and jellies, canning fish, smoking fish, pickling fish, making jerky, spekejott, rullepølse and her own sauerkraut with cabbage she grew in her gardens. When work was done, she relaxed by crocheting. While most famous for her cozy baby blankets, she also enjoyed making doilies, Christmas ornaments, afghans and beautiful cross-shaped bible bookmarks.

Whatever Bill was doing or working on, Annette was happy to lend him a hand. From new recipes for his smoked salmon to hand-slicing a LOT of onions for his pickled fish, she was right there by his side. They shared everything in life – more than just husband and wife, they were partners and best friends who often began their days at Point Agassiz with an early morning beach walk to their favorite log where they'd enjoy their coffee, and ended them with an evening drive to admire the surrounding beauty, hoping to catch a glimpse of some wildlife.



Annette Carol Olson

On the beautiful, cold and crisp morning of Sunday, December 21, 2025, Annette passed away with her loving family by her side after a four-year battle with cancer. She spent her life serving and loving people – and they loved her back. She will be missed beyond measure and her spirit will remain with us in her stunning flowers and gardens and whenever friends and family gather together to enjoy a meal, especially a picnic!

She was preceded in death by her father, Gainhart Samuelson; her beloved mother and best friend, Mildred Massey; step-dad Jack Massey; brothers Gainhart (Bud) Samuelson and Andrew Massey; sister Darlene Samuelson; and grandson Bryan Cheney.

Annette is survived by her devoted husband of sixty-years, Bill Olson; children Cindy Vanatta, Shirlene Olson, Duane Olson and Tanya (David) Thynes; sisters Janice Kvernvik and Betty Massey; grandchildren Jessica, Heather, Tanelle, Dustin, Hannah, Shane, Aaron, Joshua, and Erik; great-grandchildren Addison, Odessa, Helmi, Heidi, Grayson, and Emmerson, as well as many beloved nieces and nephews. They will dearly miss her Swedish Pancake family breakfasts, chex mix made in her 'magic pan' and the homemade Jell-O and Kool-Aid popsicles (in dixie cups with a craft stick for the handle) that she made each summer.

*A memorial service will be held at Petersburg Lutheran Church on Saturday, April 4, at 1:00 p.m. followed by a reception at the Holy Cross House. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the WMC Foundation Cancer Care Program, PO Box 2175, Wrangell, AK 99829.*

## 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.

*The Library will be closed Monday, March 30, in observance of Seward's Day.*

**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 beginning Monday, April 6.

**Year of Reading Challenge!** / For teens & adults / All new prompts with prizes awarded monthly! / Register at [psglib.beanstack.org](http://psglib.beanstack.org)

**Yoga with Karen Malcom** / Saturday, March 28 / 11 a.m. – noon / \$\$, pay at the front desk / bring your own mat / For beginners and seasoned Yogis.

**Foliage & Flowers in Oil: A two evening workshop with Ashley Lohr** / Tuesday & Wednesday, March 31 & April 1 / 5 – 7:30 p.m. both days / For Adults and HS Students 14+ / \$\$ (Free for HS Students) / Registration required at [psglib.org](http://psglib.org)

**Prenatal Breastfeeding with Kellii Wood, CLC & RN** / Saturday, April 4 / 2 – 3 p.m. / FREE / Great for expecting parents new to breastfeeding or those that may need a refresher.

**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.

**Wiggle & Giggle!** / Wednesdays, April 8, 15, 22, & 29 / 11 a.m. – noon / Children ages 0 – 5 and their caregivers, join us for a rollicking good time!

**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.

**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](http://psglib.org/newsbank)

**Voices of Séet 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](mailto:library@petersburgak.gov)

**JOBS**

**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](http://petersburgwave.org/careers) . . . . . tfn3-5b80

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

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**907-978-6365**  
 Musical Equipment & Lessons  
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**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](http://www.p-wins.com/job-posting) to apply. . . . . tfn5-15b84

**Wanted: boat/crew** to harvest outside southeast black cod. 907-738-1439 . . . . . tfn5-1b9

**FOR RENT**

Refurbished studio apartment: Partially furnished, on-site laundry. Non-smokers only. No pets or smoking. Outside deck. \$1,000/month. \$800 damage deposit, first & last months rent payable upon move-in. We will email tenant application – call Anne 907-518-1912. . . . . 2x4-2b35

**KEN'S PAINTING:**  
 Interior/Exterior Painting & Power Washing  
 at an affordable price  
**772-2010 or 772-2028**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Newsprint Roll Ends** - good for packing, table coverings, artwork. Pay by the pound. Available at Petersburg Pilot, 207 N. Nordic

Drive. . . . . 1x3-26dh  
**Become a Subscriber** - Call 772-9393 to have the Petersburg Pilot delivered to your mailbox each Thursday. . . . . 1x3-26dh

**SALES**

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

Estate Sale. 1004 S.Nordic Dr. 10am-4pm, this Saturday and

Sunday. Please, no early birds. Items-lots of free items, 3 different queen bedroom sets with mattress, lots of kitchen items. . . . . 1x3-26b31

**NOTICES**

**Suicide Hotline:** 800-273-8255

**ISLAND LEGAL SERVICES**  
 Southeast Alaska based law firm providing in person and remote services.  
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**Free Consultations**  
 Phone: (901) 235 2320  
 Website: [islandlegal.net](http://islandlegal.net)

**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 required. Application can be found online at [www.FirstBankAK.com](http://www.FirstBankAK.com) or at the branch. We offer competitive salaries, health insurance, paid

**Anchor PROPERTIES**  
**See what properties are for SALE in Petersburg**  
  
[www.apalaska.com](http://www.apalaska.com)

**FACILITY MAINTENANCE JOB OPENING**

  
**Silver Bay SEAFOODS**  
 Applicants to apply online at [silverbayseafoods.com](http://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 ALASKA**

**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](mailto: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



SCAN CODE to view position descriptions & to apply online. Additional career opportunities are listed at [pmcak.org](http://pmcak.org)

  
**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](http://www.pmcak.org). Questions contact Cindy at (907) 772-5719 or [cnewman@pmc-health.org](mailto:cnewman@pmc-health.org).

## Alaska House backs resolution urging waiver for \$100k visa fee for international teachers

By **CORINNE SMITH**  
*Alaska Beacon*

The Alaska House of Representatives approved a resolution urging the Trump administration to waive a steep visa fee for international teachers. The vote comes amid a growing teacher shortage throughout the state.

Lawmakers are calling for the Trump administration to waive the fee for teachers hired through the H-1B visa program, which allows employers to recruit highly-skilled workers from overseas. The federal government raised the fee from \$5,000 to \$100,000 for each new applicant to the H-1B visa program in September.

The House passed the resolution by a 38-0 vote on Friday, with Reps. Bill Elam, R-Kenai, and David Nelson, R-Anchorage, absent.

Rep. Alyse Galvin, I-Anchorage, sponsored the resolution. The former teacher said the cost is impossible for Alaska school districts.

"We know it's a deep concern," Galvin said on the House floor Friday. "In Alaska, in particular, in our rural areas, we are desperate for more teachers, qualified teachers in the

classroom before our students. We have a true need here that can be met, and this is one tool that I hope all of us will raise our voice together and send to our federal delegation so they can use it."

Rep. Ted Eischeid, D-Anchorage, a former science teacher, noted international teachers are also employed in urban districts like Anchorage.

"At last count, we had 66 teachers that work for the Anchorage School District providing critical education," Edischied said, referring to the number of international teachers. "So if the most important educational reform is to have a highly qualified teacher in front of kids every day, this resolution moves us in that direction. So I support this."

Rep. Nellie Jimmie, D-Toksook Bay, said 60% of teachers in the Kuspuk School District in her district are international hires. "The Kuspuk district cannot recruit teachers fast enough off the road system. You can't train somebody to be a teacher overnight," she said. "Ten teachers at a \$100,000 rate visa, that's a million dollars. Do we have a million dollars in our budget to spare for these teachers? I don't think so."

Jennifer Schmitz is director of the Alaska Center for Recruitment and Retention, a division of the Alaska Council for School Administrators, which supports districts in recruiting and hiring teachers and staff. After the vote, Schmitz said she was glad to hear legislators' support because districts are hiring now.

"I'm thrilled that it passed, especially that it was unanimous," Schmitz said. "Legislators all seem to understand that this is an issue and that they're supportive of helping our international teachers get here more easily."

There are nearly 600 teachers in Alaska hired through the H-1B visa program, which lasts for five years. Despite that, Schmitz said the center's job board has over 700 job openings across the state, including for teachers, administration, para-professionals and staff.

"Special education is always at the top and then often harder to fill," Schmitz said. "Positions can be secondary specialties like math, science, and chemistry, those higher level classes, those are often harder to fill and harder to find qualified candidates. But we have openings in every possible posi-

tion."

Schmitz said the center recently held several job fairs, including connecting University of Alaska students with education jobs as well as recruiting from around the United States and internationally.

"We are hopeful that people can find teachers from that. But we're just really at a standstill," she said for international hiring because of the visa fee. "And our attorney is looking at ways around that and other kinds of visas, but we just don't know if they're going to work... And we need to get their paperwork going now if we want them

here by fall."

The resolution now goes to the Senate where it is expected to garner support. The initiative backs federal action in the U.S. Congress, where Alaska Republican U.S. Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan are cosponsoring a bill in the Senate to waive the \$100,000 visa fee for all public school employees. A similar bill in the U.S. House is urging the Trump administration to waive the visa fee for health care workers.

*The AlaskaBeacon.com is a donor-funded independent news organization in Alaska.*

## Dungeness crab

Continued from page 1

While the summer 2025 fishery accounted for most of the overall harvest, poundage and effort was up slightly from the previous summer, which had a lower value. About 1.75 million pounds of Dungeness crab were harvested by 168 permit holders last summer, amounting to about \$7.3 million.

"It was a below-average season. However, the price was decent," Stratman said. "So I think it maybe kept some people fishing longer than they would have if the price was low, because you can still make some money at a lower catch rate."

The 2025 summer fishery was shortened by six days because legal-sized, soft-shell crabs contributed to low harvest projections, which doesn't happen often. But the department later allowed for a full-fall season after accounting for the soft-shell crab that were left in the water in early summer.

The fall fishery opened in October; most of the region closed at the end of November, but a couple areas stayed open through February. 66 permit holders landed about 325,000 pounds of crab in the fall/winter fishery, adding up to about \$1.3 million.

Fishermen can expect information for the next Southeast Alaska Dungeness crab season, which starts in mid-June, to be announced by the department in early April.

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

## Federal law doesn't mandate minimum amounts of logging in Alaska's Tongass rainforest, judge says

By **JAMES BROOKS**  
*Alaska Beacon*

A federal judge in Alaska has rejected a lawsuit that sought to reinstate a management plan that would allow heavier logging in the world's largest temperate old-growth rainforest.

The result leaves an Obama-era management plan in place, but it could be short-lived: The administration of President Donald Trump is already at work on a new plan that could allow more logging in Alaska's Tongass National Forest.

In an order published Friday, Judge Sharon Gleason dismissed the lawsuit filed by Viking Lumber, Alcan Timber and the Alaska Forest Association.

The three groups sued the U.S. Department of Agriculture — the parent organization of the U.S. Forest Service — last year, alleging in part that the federal Tongass Timber Reform Act of 1990 required the Forest Service to offer enough timber sales to meet market demand.

Gleason ruled otherwise, finding that TTRA does not impose "a mandatory duty" on the Forest Service to ensure that market demand is met by Tongass timber sales.

"Whether the harvest levels are designed to actually meet market demand is a discretionary agency action, not a mandatory requirement imposed by the TTRA on the Forest Service," she wrote.

Gleason also declined to take up plaintiffs' argument about whether the Forest Service violated the Administrative Procedures Act, and she ruled that a 2021 announcement about Tongass strategy did not amount to formal rulemaking under law. She did not analyze whether it would have met legal standards if it had been a formal rulemaking process.

Plaintiffs were represented by Pacific Legal Foundation, which on Friday said that the Forest Service's approach has been devastating to plaintiffs.

Kyle Griesinger, a spokesperson for the foundation, said that even with a new management plan in the works, the case isn't moot because the old plan remains in effect until superseded.

"And, moreover, the Forest Service has not lived up to the 2016 plan so any new plan they may not live up to is no guarantee for our clients," he said.

Marlee Goska, an attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity, agreed that last week's ruling still has merit.

Goska was one of several attorneys who represented tribal, tourism, fishing and environmental groups that intervened on the side of the Department of Agriculture.


"I don't think we have enough information yet to say the Forest Service is going to implement what the plaintiffs want. And certainly we'll fight tooth and nail to stop that from happening," she said of the upcoming plan change.

Goska added that last week's ruling is important because it shows that the Forest Service does not have to meet market demand under existing law, and it shows that federal law doesn't draw a distinction between old-growth harvests and new-growth ones.

"To the extent this administration and the Forest Service might be thinking about saying the TTRA mandates large old-growth timber sales to meet market demand, the court has already said that is incorrect," she said.

Gleason published a final judgment on Friday. Plaintiffs have 30 days to file an appeal.

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