



8-10 Select champs

Defeats Sitka 5-3, next stop state tourney in Anchorage, A-6

First City Cycles

Cyclery looks to become community bike hub, Scene



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Views sought

Pot regulations

JUNEAU (AP) — Alaska marijuana regulators are once again asking the public for comments on a proposal to allow onsite consumption at retail stores. The Alaska Marijuana Control Board approved on a 3-2 vote to send the proposal out for public comment on Friday, the third day of a three-day meeting being held in Fairbanks. The board will allow the public 60 days to submit comments. The board's attorney, assistant attorney general Harriet Milks, says in an email to The Associated Press that the comment period will likely open in early August. If ultimately approved, Alaska would become the first state in the See 'Marijuana,' page A-3

Fungus spreads

Alaska trees

JUNEAU (AP) — A fungus that damages trees is making its way through the state of Alaska. The fungus, spruce bud blight, has left damage in Southcentral and Interior Alaska, and now has been discovered for the first time in the southeast part of the state. The infection was discovered in Southeast Alaska in late June, the first reported sighting in the region, CoastAlaska News reported Thursday. The blight infects Sitka spruce, one of the most common trees in Southeast Alaska's rainforest. "Right now, I'm considering it potentially a significant threat," Forest Pathologist Robin Mulvey said. "I'll be incredibly happy to be wrong about that." It is unknown how the spruce bud blight ended up in Southeast Alaska. Mulvey said it's unlikely it came in on the clothes or boots of one of the shrine's many visitors. It is often found on Colorado blue spruce, a common ornamental plant used in landscaping. Mulvey said there's a chance the fungus could be stopped if it did not arrive naturally. "I just have to do what I can to try and prevent any further spread, while it still seems feasible," she said. Her team is continuing its search for spruce bud blight in Southeast. It's also asking for public help. She suggests checking landscape See 'Fungus,' page A-3

KIC Housing unveils new units



Above, attendees of the grand opening of a Ketchikan Indian Community Housing Authority apartment building walk around the parking lot Friday at the top of Jackson Street. Below, sunshine pours through the windows of a room inside one of Ketchikan Indian Community's new apartments. Staff photo by Taylor Balkom

7 apartments set to open

By ZACHARY HALASCHAK Daily News Staff Writer
The Ketchikan Indian Community on Friday unveiled seven new units that have been constructed in Ketchikan for low-income Native American families in need of housing. The apartment complex at 1409 Jackson St. is composed of seven units — five two-bedroom units and two one-bedroom units. There was a grand opening event on Friday afternoon and a number of interested parties and supporters of KIC showed up to tour the new units. Joel Azure, development manager for KIC, told the Daily News that the effort to get the new apartments built was part of a larger effort between a number of groups and government agencies, even noting that the Federal Highway Administration paid for the parking lot. "The funding came from Housing and Urban Development, through the Native American Housing Assistance and Self See 'Apartments,' page A-4



Boro to talk grant funds

By ZACHARY HALASCHAK Daily News Staff Writer
The Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly is expected to use part of Monday's meeting as a work session to discuss grant funding for nonprofit agencies. During this meeting the Assembly will work on deciding how to manage and allocate community grant funding going forward. Furthermore, the Assembly may decide to create an ad hoc grant committee. This committee would consist of Assembly members and grant recipients. On June 28, borough staff hosted a lunch session with fiscal year 2018 grant recipients and discussed what the grant process is doing right and how the grant process could be improved. The borough also used an electronic survey to obtain opinions from 10 different grant recipients. These responses will be used by the Assembly to discuss grant money should the Assembly decide to recess to a work session and discuss the matter. The results of the survey showed that a number of respondents (60 percent) supported using an excise tax on tobacco and/or marijuana as a revenue alternative for grant funding. The borough has used its economic development fund to finance grants in the past, but that fund's coffers have dwindled significantly over the past few years. The survey also asked the question: "Should the borough wish to reconfigure its grant process, which option do you prefer?" While 30 percent of respondents wanted to maintain the current funding process, 20 percent wanted individual amounts of nonprofit grants to be decided by a committee or outside foundation, and 30 percent supported merging the grant process with the City of Ketchikan. When grant recipients were asked whether they thought funds were allocated fairly, 60 percent agreed while 20 percent said it was not fair. The remaining 20 percent were unsure. If the Assembly establishes an ad hoc grant committee, as borough staff recommends, the following questions are expected to be addressed:
• Should the borough develop a new process for awarding grants?
• What, if any, criteria should the borough develop to determine how See 'Grant funds,' page A-2

Court: No single-faith prayer

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press
RICHMOND, Va. — Elected officials in North Carolina violated the Constitution by opening meetings with Christian prayers and inviting audience members to join, a federal appeals court ruled Friday in a closely watched case that could end up in the Supreme Court. The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower court ruling that found the Rowan County Board of Commissioners' prayer practice to be "unconstitutionally coercive." The Supreme Court already has ruled that it's appropriate for local clergy to deliver predominantly Christian prayers and town meetings in New York. The question in the Rowan County case was whether it makes a difference that the prayers were given by the commissioners themselves and whether their invitation for the audience to join them in prayer was coercive. The 4th Circuit, located in Richmond, Virginia, stressed that it's not inherently unconstitutional for lawmakers to lead prayers. But the fact that the Rowan County commissioners were the exclusive prayer givers combined with them consistently invoking one faith and inviting the audience members to participate sent the message that they preferred Christianity above other religions, the court said. "The principle at stake here may be a profound one, but it is also simple. The Establishment Clause does not permit a seat of government to wrap itself in a single faith," Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III wrote in the majority opinion that was joined by nine other judges. Dissenting judges said the majority opinion can't be reconciled with Supreme Court rulings upholding government prayer. Judge Paul Niemeyer said the majority's decision "actively undermines the appropriate role of prayer in American civil life." In finding Rowan County's prayer practice unconstitutional, essentially because the prayers were sectarian, the majority's opinion strikes at the very trunk of See 'Prayer lawsuit,' page A-5

Trump increases lobbying

Health care focus of talks with GOP senators
By ERICA WERNER and ALAN FRAM Associated Press
WASHINGTON — From both sides of the Atlantic, President Donald Trump and other administration officials lobbied Republicans Friday to support the Senate GOP's reworked health care bill, with the president saying wavering senators "must come through" to keep the measure from collapsing. But the bill, repealing much of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul, hovered near failure as Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell strained to keep more Republicans from deserting. Complicating the effort, Ohio GOP Gov. John Kasich called the revised measure "still unacceptable," largely because of its cuts to Medicaid, the same concern that's been voiced by holdout Ohio Republican Sen. Rob Portman. McConnell, R-Ky., released the measure Thursday, a plan that caps seven years of his party's promises to obliterate Obama's 2010 law. But two GOP senators immediately said they'd vote "no" on a crucial vote planned for next week. Facing uniform Democratic opposition, a third Republican defection would sink it — a reality not lost on Trump. "After all of these years of suffering thru ObamaCare, Republican Senators must come through as they have promised!" the president tweeted from Paris, where he was attending Bastille Day ceremonies. Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev., was also targeted as top administration officials were talking to his state's GOP Gov. Brian Sandoval. Republicans consider winning over the popular Sandoval a key to gaining Heller's vote. In an interview Friday, Sandoval said his initial understanding of McConnell's new bill was that it "really doesn't change the dynamic" about its Medicaid cuts, and "that's a big concern for me." Nevada added 200,000 new beneficiaries under Obama's expansion of the health insurance program for the poor, disabled and nursing home patients. See 'Health care,' page A-5



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Today's Trivia: When is Ketchikan's Blueberry Arts Festival? Answer, Page A-2