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Juneau Independent

The True Local Newspaper of Alaska's Capital City

October 4, 2026

Orange Shirt Day recounts trauma of boarding schools

Alaska Native survivors of forcible removal from families say healing is in new generations; youth events occur Wednesday

By ELLIE RUEL, Reporter and
MARK SABBATINI, Editor

Stories of survival and generational healing by Indigenous children and their families were shared among hundreds of people in Juneau on Sunday, in observance of Orange Shirt Day on Wednesday.

A trio of weekend events, occurring for the first time during a historically significant year for Orange Shirt Day, were held in recognition of the trauma of Indigenous children who suffered abuse after being forcibly sent to boarding schools. People also gathered to remember children who didn't return home.

This year the remains of 12 children
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The Yées Ku.oo dance group performs during an Orange Shirt Day event hosted at the Juneau Tlingit and Haida Community Council building on Sunday, Sept. 27, 2026. (Ellie Ruel / Juneau Independent)

Niven and Kelly top fundraisers in competitive Assembly races a week before Juneau's election

Assembly District 2 race the most competitive with three of four candidates raising large sums; Kelly has dominant financial edge over two challengers in Areawide race

By MARK SABBATINI, Editor

Juneau's most competitive Assembly race is also the most expensive, with the four District 2 candidates reporting a total of about \$30,000 raised as of Tuesday, nearly three times the reported total of the four candidates in two other races.

District 2 challenger Joyce Niven with \$12,812.16 and Areawide incumbent Paul Kelly with \$11,322.54 are the solid money leaders in their re-

spective races, according to seven-day reports filed with the Alaska Public Offices Commission. The totals include monetary and non-monetary contributions such as services performed for campaigns.

In the other Assembly race, District 1 challenger Mila Cosgrove is unopposed and is registered as an exempt candidate who does not expect to spend or receive more than \$5,000.

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Alaska Transportation Plan to include Cascade Point regardless of public input

20-year multimodal outlook looks at connections between aviation, marine highways, roads, and bridges; plan could be altered after finalization in November if priorities shift

By JASZ GARRETT, Managing Editor

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities intends to include the controversial Cascade Point Ferry Terminal in its finalized 20-year regional plan, but encouraged public comments on how that happens.

A public comment period on the Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan is
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Mendenhall Lake crests at 10.18 feet at 5:45 a.m after second release from Suicide Basin

Flooding of some areas near Mendenhall Glacier expected to end Friday morning as water level drops rapidly, according to National Weather Service Juneau

By MARK SABBATINI, Editor

A second release this year from Suicide Basin crested at Mendenhall Lake at 5:45 a.m. Friday and the water level there is dropping rapidly, according to the National Weather Service Juneau.

"The Mendenhall Lake crested early Friday morning, and the Mendenhall River will crest shortly," an advisory issued by NWS Juneau at 6:50 a.m. states. "Flooding is ongoing, and is expected to continue near Mendenhall Lake and River before coming to an end later this morning as water levels decrease rapidly behind the crest."

The release, announced early Thursday morning by the weather service, followed a similar pattern to secondary releases in other years that peaked well below the major flooding that occurred in August of each of those years, according to Suicide Basin's official monitoring website.

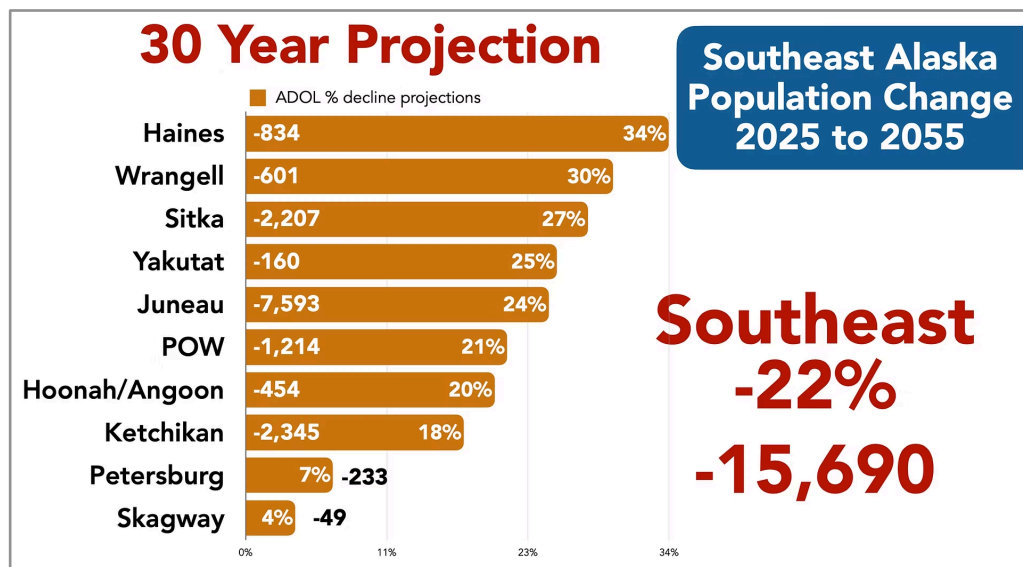
"In 2024, a secondary release occurred October 19-21," the website notes. "In 2025, a secondary release occurred September 14-16. The crests for these respective releases were 10.77' for 2024 and 9.63' for 2025."

City and Borough of Juneau officials on Thursday deployed "a limited number of response personnel and equipment, including pumps, to areas of known seepage," according to the city's website.

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Report: Juneau expected to lose nearly 7,600 residents during next 30 years

Southeast leaders told current economy is strong, with a major shift in jobs by industry during past 15 years, while cautioned about large predicted drop in population



A graph shows projected population losses in Southeast Alaska communities between 2025 and 2055, according to a recent State of Alaska study. (Chart by Rain Coast Data)

By MARK SABBATINI, Editor

Optimism about a strong current economy in Southeast Alaska and a warning about a sharp drop in the region's population predicted during the next 30 years were offered to regional leaders confronting a range of changes and challenges at the beginning of the three-day Southeast Conference annual meeting Tuesday.

The findings were presented in an overview of "Southeast Alaska By The Numbers 2026," the 15th annual report published by Rain Coast Data. Meilani Schijvens, owner of the research and data company, told attendees at the Southeast Conference gathering in Ketchikan that "this is going to be a really good (report)."

"There's going to be some highs, some lows. It's very dramatic," she said. "Hang on to your seats."

The high points include reaching a record-high 46,988 jobs in Southeast during 2025, topping the previous

record of 46,811 in 2012. The current total is an increase from 40,052 in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, although the rate of growth slowed from 5% in 2021 and 2022 to 1% in 2025.

But while the number of jobs is similar to 2012, the types of work people are doing are shifting considerably, Schijvens said.

"We've added 3,800 jobs in four sectors and lost 3,800 jobs in four different sectors," she said.

The job winners during that period are mining with a 68% increase, tourism up 37%, health care up 20% and professional/business up 16%. The biggest drops are social assistance with a 41% decline, state government a 25% decline, seafood a 20% decline and retail an 18% decline.

Tourism remains the region's biggest private industry with 8,721 jobs, although the \$391,851,562 in total earnings are relatively low per-person (about \$44,932). In comparison, gov-

ernment as the largest overall employer with 12,891 jobs and \$965,723,667 in total earnings equated to about \$74,914 per person.

Inflation has risen 24% between 2020 and 2026, but average wages in Southeast have risen slightly more (about 24.5%) during that time, from \$53,635 in 2020 to \$66,796 this year, according to the study.

Many of the findings are similar to — and based on the same data as — an annual assessment of Juneau and Southeast Alaska published Monday by the Juneau Economic Development Council.

A cautionary warning about the "ghost of Christmas future" was offered by Schijvens when presenting a recently released state analysis of population projections during the next 30 years. That study predicts Juneau's population will drop from 31,182 in 2025 to 23,589 by 2055 — a 24% drop.

"This is what's going to happen if we don't change anything," she said. "But there's a lot of things that we can change."

The new report states Southeast Alaska is expected to see a 22% population drop — nearly 16,000 people — during the next 30 years, according to the state's projections. Haines is expected to see a 34% drop, Wrangell 30% and Sitka 27%, while the communities expected to shrink the least are Skagway at 7%, Petersburg at 7% and Ketchikan at 18%.

The regionwide figures include a 35% drop in people ages 0-19, 21% drop in people ages 20-59, and 14% of people 60 and older.

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RESIDENTS

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The findings come after a November 2024 state report projected Southeast Alaska would see a 17% population drop statewide, the largest in Alaska.

Schijvens, echoing comments of other speakers during the opening morning of the conference, noted housing is a significant factor in current outmigration and workforce shortage problems, as well as the future predicted drop in residents. But she said the solution isn't simply building more housing.

"We've built 2,400 housing units across Southeast Alaska in the last 10 years. We know our population is down by 4,000, and yet we know we still have a housing shortage," she said. A key reason, she added, is there are fewer people per household, including a lot of people such as seniors who are living alone.

Among other actions suggested in her presentation to attendees at the conference are expanding affordable childcare, restoring reliable transportation, investing in schools and essential services, and retaining state and federal jobs.

"We had a fantastic 2025, but we have work to do," Schijvens told the audience. Referring to a slide showing the latest 30-year population projection, she declared "this is not going to be what happens because we know what we need to do."

(Disclosure: Meilani Schijvens is a member of the Juneau Independent's board of directors. News articles about her company's annual economic surveys of Southeast Alaska have regularly been published by Juneau and other media for many years.)

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ORANGE SHIRT DAY

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sent to a Pennsylvania boarding school who were buried more than a century ago, including four from Alaska, are being returned to their communities to coincide with the traditional Sept. 30 observance of Orange Shirt Day. That date was selected because it was the time of year when children were historically taken from their homes.

A local Orange Shirt Day observance on Wednesday with multiple activities hosted by the Haa Tóoch Lichéesh Coalition took place from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Zach Gordon Youth Center.

About 80 people listened to a firsthand account during a community potluck at the Tlingit and Haida Community Hall early Sunday afternoon. Kaaháni Rosita Worl, president of Sealaska Heritage Institute, delivered a keynote speech recounting her experiences being forced into the Haines House boarding school at six years old.

"From what is publicly known of my life, it may appear that I have been resilient and had overcome my trauma. I have tried to suppress my memories of those three years and have been fairly successful. However, in reality and in truthfulness, I know that those three traumatic years took their toll on me in ways that have not been apparent to others," she said. "I am one of the multitudes of survivors of boarding schools that have caused generations of trauma."

Worl said a woman in a taxi took her from her Petersburg home without telling her grandparents, forcing her onto a plane and boat to Haines.

"My next memories are being in bed, still crying, and looking out the window, and seeing the moon over the mountain. I kept wondering, 'why am I here?'" Worl said. "I learned that Haines House was an orphanage,

which made no sense since I had a large extended family who had cared for me after my mother died."

During her years at the Haines House, Worl faced countless acts of abuse and was made to do difficult and dangerous "chores."

"I had to wait awake and get out of bed long before others," she said. "I was required to make toast in a large oven. I would crawl onto the oven door and lay the bread on the shelves, which I had pulled out from the heated oven. After a few moments, I would have to then turn the bread over to toast the other side. I also had to iron sheets in the large commercial mangle. I would have to stand on a chair to put the sheets on the large rollers and put that heated mangle down."

Once her aunt started working at Haines House, she no longer had to iron sheets. The children there were sometimes "rented out," and Worl recalled that her grandparents would do this on good days.

The Presbyterian missionaries in charge of the school used to have other students laugh when Worl spoke Lingít.

"This was one of the methods the Christians had devised to manipulate students into shaming other students as a means of suppressing Native language and culture," she said.

Collective punishment was also used, she said. Older children were forced to beat the others if they misbehaved. Worl said she often wondered what happened to a girl who walked around looking "comatose" who suddenly disappeared.

Worl cited an epigenetic study by the University of Illinois and Sealaska Heritage Institute that found genetic changes in Alaska Native populations due to historical traumas.

"Can you imagine that the trauma of your parents becoming apparent in our children's DNA, their DNA is

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changed as a result of that?" Worl asked her listeners at the potluck.

The study also found that stronger connection to culture and traditions was associated with better overall well-being. After Worl spoke, the Yées Ku.oo Dancers performed healing songs, inviting the crowd to join them in dance.

Participants received orange shirts with a blue heart design by Mike Kinville. He created the design in 2021, after the remains of 215 Indigenous children were found in a mass grave at the Kamloops Indian Reservation School. S'eiltin Jamiann Hasselquist, one of the event's organizers, explained that the blue heart represented healing. Hasselquist learned about the symbol from Tracy Thomas, a teacher at Valleyview Secondary School in British Columbia.

"She said, 'They're calling themselves the Blue Generation, the healing generation,'" Hasselquist explained. "We know the orange shirt is for our survivors, for those who didn't come home, and this blue heart, we said, allows them to allow us — the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, of the survivors and their descendants — to speak our own truths."

After speeches, Hasselquist said it's been meaningful to watch the next generation embrace their culture.

"It's all beautiful, especially to watch the kids learning the language, with them speaking it, and dancing, and having all the opportunities that we didn't have that we were shamed for. Because I grew up being shamed," she said. "I remember being at the first Celebration, feeling ashamed of who I was. Now we have an ambulance that has our formline on it, you know? There are signs downtown that have formline on it. We can go around and see ourselves."

She said her generation is a "miss-



Attendees fill their plates at an Orange Shirt Day event hosted at the Juneau Tlingit and Haida Community Council building on Sunday, Sept. 27, 2026. (Ellie Ruel / Juneau Independent)

ing generation."

"We're still a missing generation, trying our hardest to learn the language and watching other people learn it around us," she said. "I have non-Indigenous friends who know more of the language than I do. And that's a little bit hurtful, and it also feels like something to be proud of at the same time."

X'unei Lance Twitchell, an Alaska Native language expert, also looked ahead to a future revival of Indigenous heritage.

"It's time to embrace ourselves, embrace our languages, to make them return to who we are as people," he said, speaking first in Lingít. "Our language contains deeply encoded love for ourselves, our future generations or our ancestors. I know we've been through a lot, but I believe in every one of you, and you can get there."

Twitchell said lifting each other up can make a difference.

"I've heard that our ancestors used to see way out in the future through our language, because they always talked about and thought about this place in reserve for our little grandchildren," Twitchell said.

Local educator Michelle Martin teaches in the Tlingit Culture, Language, and Literacy program, where

she said her first graders are learning the language.

"We sing and dance in the classrooms, and they hear Lingít coming out of the classrooms," Martin said.

'Walking in truth and running for change'

Sunday's activities began mid-morning in heavy rain at Sandy Beach with the inaugural MMIP & Orange Shirt Day 5K/1K Community Walk & Run. About 100 people showed up for an hour of speeches and dance performances that preceded the walk and run events.

Megan Lingle, a clinical intern for Tlingit and Haida's Community and Behavioral Services Healing Center who helped organize the event, noted the significance of this year's Orange Shirt Day by reading the names of 12 children whose remains are being returned to their communities from the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, where they've been buried for more than a century.

Four of those children are from Alaska — Edward Angalook (Iñupiaq), Lucy Spaulding (Tsimshian), Mabel Stack (Tsimshian), and Tum-massak (Iñupiaq) — and their return is

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meant to coincide with this year's Orange Shirt Day observance.

"More than a century later they are coming home," Lingle said. "Today we remember them. We remember every child whose name we know, and every child whose name may have been lost. We honor the children who never came home, the survivors who did come home sharing experiences no child should ever have been asked to carry, and the families and generations who continue to carry those stories today."

"That history did not simply disappear when the school closed. Historical and intergenerational trauma can continue to affect families and communities through grief, addiction, loneliness, disconnection, violence, mental health struggles, and the way people sometimes struggle to find their way home to themselves."

Hasselquist told those gathering at the park that Indigenous children being sent to boarding schools is not an occurrence from long ago — and boarding schools existed in Juneau.

"Canada's last federal-run residential school did not close until 1996," she said. "Here in Alaska, the Wrangell Institute did not close until 1975. This history is not ancient history. There are people living among us today who experience these institutions."

The speeches were followed by performances by the Tlingit and Haida Elders Program Dance Group and the Woosh.ji.een Dance Group. Orange shirts were offered, handprints painted on faces and red blankets were placed around walk/run participants at the finish line.

"When our runners return I want us to wrap them in these red blankets and welcome them home, because today their footsteps can represent those children who ran from residential



Runners begin the 5K course of the inaugural MMIP & Orange Shirt Day 5K/1K Community Walk & Run at Savikko Park on Sunday, Sept. 27, 2026. (Mark Sabbatini / Juneau Independent)

boarding school institutions trying to find their way back to families," Hasselquist said. "Some of those children never made it home."

"So as you begin, walking in truth and running for change, think about the meaning of your footsteps. For those who run, carry the children who ran trying to get home. For those who walk, carry the families who waited for children who never returned. Carry our missing relatives, carry our murdered relatives, carry our ancestors and when you return here today, we will be waiting for you."

Finishing third on the 1K course — just a few steps behind two full-grown men — was Isla Taintor, 8. She was draped with a blanket and took refuge inside the shelter with her mother, Shireen, who said they were there to support awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People issues and "because Isla loves to run."

Isla Taintor, who is being home-schooled this year, said she was familiar with the songs and dances performed during the event as part of her schooling in Juneau.

The meaning of Orange Shirt Day was familiar, but hearing from people directly affected added a new dimension to that knowledge, said Kelsey Delrisco, who trekked the 1K course with her 1-year-old daughter on her back while her husband, Steve, ran the 5K course. She said the family, including two other children, moved to Juneau two years ago.

"I looked up a little bit, but it wasn't as powerful as hearing community members speak about it," Delrisco said. "I think it's really important to hear it directly from them, because reading stuff online is one thing and you can get the knowledge, but you don't really feel it until someone tells it to you."

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South Korea on \$54B for Alaska gasline: 'we will not proceed unless the project is commercially viable'

Trump touts Sen. Sullivan while claiming investment in long-proposed pipeline as done deal, while foreign media describes 'Seoul's possible participation in Alaska LNG project'



President Donald Trump and Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy shake hands during an announcement in the Oval Office involving potential South Korean investments in a natural gas pipeline in Alaska and projects in other states on Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2026. (Screenshot from official White House video)

By MARK SABBATINI, Editor

A claim South Korea is investing \$54 billion in a long-proposed natural gas pipeline in Alaska was announced as a done deal Wednesday by President Donald Trump — crediting Sen. Dan Sullivan in the process as he faces a tight reelection campaign. But South Korea officials say it's still merely a possibility based on a trade agreement reached last year.

That trade deal included South Korea pledging \$350 billion in U.S. investments in exchange for lower U.S. tariffs on South Korean cars and other products. The projects announced Wednesday included \$22.3 billion for a Texas gas-fired power complex, up to \$120 billion for eight nuclear reactors nationwide and "a review of an LNG project in Alaska," according to The Korea Herald.

Trump, during an Oval Office cere-

mony Wednesday, called the Alaska LNG Project "one of the largest energy projects in American history and a gigantic win for the people of Alaska." He also repeatedly praised Sullivan, who is in a toss-up race against Democratic challenger Mary Peltola that could determine control of the U.S. during the last two years of Trump's second term.

"He's been working on this deal and other deals in Alaska, the pipeline, for almost 20 years and we're now getting it done," Trump said. "And so I want to thank in particular Dan Sullivan for getting this deal done."

Also attending Wednesday's ceremony were Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy and Rep. Nick Begich III, both Republicans who have strongly supported Trump. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, who has often criticized Trump, was not present.

Peltola, a U.S. House member from

2022 to 2024, issued a statement Wednesday calling the announcement "great news for Alaska" and declaring "I will continue to champion the Alaska LNG project in the United States Senate."

Skepticism about Trump's announcement was expressed by Alaska State Senate Majority Leader Cathy Giessel, R-Anchorage, who said in an interview "I thought the announcement was devoid of any actual information."

"There was a statement that South Korea was going to invest \$54 billion into AKLNG, but I didn't hear from South Korea at that press conference," she said. "That's who I'd like to hear from."

South Korea Industry Minister Kim Jung-kwan, who detailed the three projects to the National Assembly on Sept. 22, said in a press briefing afterward the Alaska gasline "has a weaker commercial case" than the other two, according to The Korea Herald's report. But the newspaper noted he said "from a strategic perspective, we need to examine it because South Korea's gas supply routes are highly vulnerable."

"We have agreed with the United States that we will not proceed unless the project is commercially viable," the industry minister said, according to the newspaper.

The gasline was a dominant issue during the past legislative session — which was extended for three special sessions during the summer as Dunleavy sought to pass a bill incentivizing the project before his second term

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GASLINE

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ends in December. State lawmakers were unable to reach an agreement due to unresolved issues about the project's costs and who would pay for them, as well as its benefits and who would receive them.

The project's primary developer, Glenfarne Group LLC, stated during this year's sessions the gasline project will cost \$44.5 billion to \$54.5 billion, although the state Department of Revenue told legislators that cost overruns could result in a price tag exceeding \$90 billion. The company's hope was to get the project online by 2029, with production extending beyond 2060, but in a statement after Dunleavy's final bill fell flat, Glenfarne declared the cost and target date will be adversely affected.

Glenfarne was seeking — and Dunleavy was advocating for — large tax breaks on the project to make it more economically viable for the company. Lawmakers opposing those breaks said part of their concern was they were not getting accurate information about the gasline's potential cost — and if the state might get stuck paying much of the bill — as well as how much in profits the company might make.

The news agency Reuters noted Wednesday that "supply agreements secured so far are mostly non-binding, leading some industry participants to

suggest this may reflect support for the Trump administration's efforts to advance Alaska LNG rather than firm commitments to purchase the project's LNG."

Giessel said if South Korea does indeed commit to a major investment in the Alaska LNG Project it will raise a multitude of questions in the Legislature since "we had a lot of concerns about foreign ownership of our pipeline," including who owns the gas produced.

"What does this mean for the cost of gas to Alaskans?" she said. "What does it mean for jobs for Alaskans? Is South Korea going to want their workforce to come over and build this? They're certainly going to want to have a lot of the manufacturing pieces, but we're interested in Alaska jobs."

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ASSEMBLY

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In the open District 2 race, Karla Hart is second in fundraising with \$8,974.27, followed by Malachi Thorington with \$7,758.21 and David Morris with \$600, according to the seven-day reports.

Kelly's two challengers, James McCants and Brad Sapp, are registered as exempt candidates.

All three Juneau Board of Education candidates — challenger Christine Johnson, and incumbents Britteny Cioni-Haywood and David Noon — did not have income or expenditures to report.

How much is money the message?

When Kelly first ran for Assembly in 2023 he had raised less half as much as fellow challenger Laura Martinson McDonnell a week before that race ended, but finished first in votes while McDonnell finished fourth in a 10-candidate field on Election Day. A large percentage of his responses to questions during forums and interviews mentioned knocking on people's doors.

Hart, who has the most cash remaining (about \$3,100) in this year's District 2 race, said Wednesday at this point "I have to figure out if I can responsibly spend it in a way that would make a difference."

"I really feel like in Juneau that anybody who wants to be an involved and informed voter has so many opportunities to learn about candidates that I find it a bit offensive to be buying too much advertising," she said.

Morris, generally acknowledged by District 2 candidates as the most conservative among them, said Wednesday he believes his political differences from the others are enough to give him a legitimate chance on Election Day.

"I think the bottom of this one is
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ASSEMBLY

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taxes or no taxes," said Morris, who opposes ballot measures raising the mill rate cap and imposing a 1% seasonal sales tax, contrary to his opponents. "That's what I think is going to decide this race."

Thorington, who is largely self-funding his campaign, said Thursday "I'm not a big fan of asking people for money and so I was essentially putting my money where my mouth is." He said he also decided to enter the race relatively late, at which point organizations and other regular donors had already been approached by other candidates.

Having significant funds can be an asset in a campaign, as can being a candidate "dramatically outside of a political norm...just because they're not the status quo," in a field of contenders, said Thorington, noting a distinction for him is "being the youngest person in my race by 20 years." But he said those factors may not have a big impact during the last days of the campaign.

"Even last week it really seemed like a lot of people to a large degree have either already voted or knew who they were voting for, and getting out and about now has much less of a ripple effect this late in the election cycle," he said. "Not to say that there isn't still time for change, but the vast majority of people have made up their mind."

Niven, in an interview Wednesday, said the funds she has raised are an indicator of widespread community support, as well as support from two union groups that were her largest individual donors at \$1,000 each. She said fundraising and spending were a significant focus early in her campaign, "and then it switches to more of door knocking and getting the word out."

"I have no idea where my race stands," she added. "I'm hopeful that I



Juneau Assembly candidates participate in a forum hosted by the Greater Juneau Chamber of Commerce on Sept. 10, 2026. (Mark Sabbatini / Juneau Independent)

got the message out that I wanted, and that enough voters agree with my message and will vote for me."

Kelly, comfortably ahead of his two challengers financially while running this year as an incumbent, also has by far the most contributions from unions and other organizations. He said Wednesday he was a union employee and "I feel that they probably supported me out of a sense of solidarity because we're all union and I think we are aligned on quite a few issues."

While such efforts were a shift in focus compared to three years ago when he was an unfamiliar name to many voters, he said the final six days of this year's campaign will return to "knocking on doors."

McCants, as the lowest-funded Areawide challenger, has spent much of the campaign doing another familiar tactic by standing on busy street corners with signs. He said Wednesday he hasn't received any donations so far — and is proud of that fact. Instead, he estimates he's spent about \$500 of his own money "mostly on signs."

"No matter what my platform, personality and X-Y-Z, this was an uphill battle, and that's what it's going to be," he

said. "So I can't guarantee the results."

Sapp on Wednesday said he's raised about \$3,700 which, while below the APOC reporting threshold, is still enough to conduct a competitive campaign against Kelly.

"I'm doing everything he's doing except I'm not doing a whole lot of social media," Sapp said. "I'm doing more signs, canvassing, I'm attending meetings, I'm attending all the forums that I can get to."

Sapp and McCants each have taken largely different positions than Kelly on major issues including the two tax-related ballot measures, and like Morris in the District 2 are hoping that may make more of a difference to voters than money.

"I have a lot of support, I have a lot of momentum and I'm looking forward to unseating Paul Kelly," Sapp said.

The following are income, expenses and notable donors for the eight Assembly candidates, as listed in the seven-day APOC reports:

Assembly Areawide

Paul Kelly

Total income: \$11,322.54

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ASSEMBLY

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Total expenses: \$7,524.33

Major/notable donors: Self (\$717.33), ASEA/ AFSCME Local 52 PAC (\$1,000); Teamsters ALIVE-Gaming (\$1,000); ALPEC Voluntary Contributions Laborers Local 942 (\$1,000); Cynthia Gaguine (\$1,000); Public Employees Local 71 Political League Candidate Fund (\$500); John and Margaret Pugh (\$500; Employees Political Information Committee(\$500); Juneau Central Labor Council (\$500); Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 262 Local PAC Fund (\$500); Paul Voelckers (\$500); Juneau Pro Choice Coalition PAC (\$250); Jesse Kiehl (\$50).

James McCants

Filed as exempt candidate

Brad Sapp

Filed as exempt candidate

Assembly District 1

Mila Cosgrove

Filed as exempt candidate

Assembly District 2

Joyce Niven

Total income: \$12,812.16

Total expenses: \$10,676.20

Major/notable donors: Self (\$1068.66, including \$1,000 loan); ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 PAC (\$1,000); Juneau Central Labor Council PAC (\$500); Paul Voelckers (\$500); Ted Quinn (\$500); Juneau

Pro Choice Coalition-PAC (\$100).

Karla Hart

Total income: \$8,974.27

Total expenses: \$5,874.20

Major/notable donors: Self (\$374.08); Helen Tallmadge (\$500); Christine Kondzela (\$500); Kimberly Metcalfe Helmar (\$350); Juneau Pro Choice Coalition-PAC (\$100); Sara Hannan (\$100).

Malachi Paul Thorington

Total income: \$7,758.21

Total expenses: \$5,991.84

Major/notable donors: Self (\$5,460.04), Elizabeth Figus (domestic partner, \$493.14); John Krapek (\$500); Penelope Glass (\$300); Local PAC Fund, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local Union 262 (\$250)

David Morris

Total income: \$600

Total expenses: \$0

Major/notable donors: Self (\$50); Chris Wallace (listed as "wallace, Chirch Of Christ," \$250); Dennis DeWitt (\$200); Scott Spickler (\$100).

(Disclosure: Joyce Niven is the Juneau Independent's business manager. She is a part-time contractor responsible for accounting and other financial responsibilities, with no involvement in newsroom operations.)

• *Contact Mark Sabbatini at editor@juneauindependent.com or (907) 957-2306.*

DOT

Continued from page 1

open until Oct. 19.

Jill Melcher, planning chief of the Southcoast Region for DOT&PF, said every comment is recorded and responded to. She said the team also discusses whether they should make a change to the plan while reviewing public comments.

"Cascade Point, we're not going to remove. It's a department priority. I'm being completely transparent here," Melcher said in an interview earlier this month. "It's in the plan. We have been asked to remove it many times. But as a department we're being told it's a priority and we're going to keep it in the plan."

More than 90% of the comments submitted to the state rejected the Cascade Point ferry terminal during a public comment period earlier this year. Residents and regional leaders critical of the project say it will impose hardships on travelers, and claim the primary intent appears to be providing an ore shipping facility for a nearby proposed gold mine.

Melcher encouraged people to comment about environmental mitigation efforts and provide their input on operational strategies for Cascade Point, which would be about 30 miles north of the existing Auke Bay Ferry Terminal. "You probably don't want to get your

See DOT on Page 11

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DOT

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family up at 1:30 in the morning, pull your kids out of bed, and then drive 30 miles up the road at that time of the day,” she said. “So it’s a good time to still have the ability to comment about things like that. Like, ‘If you’re going to provide that, OK, we’re going to need some kind of transit, or please don’t have us get up in the middle of the night to get to the terminal.’”

The transportation plan is meant to guide the state’s future public investments in Southeast Alaska’s infrastructure by providing a framework to plan, construct, operate, and maintain a multimodal system for air, surface and marine facilities. An update on the draft Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan was provided at an open house at the Mendenhall Valley Public Library on Sept. 16. About 40 people attended.

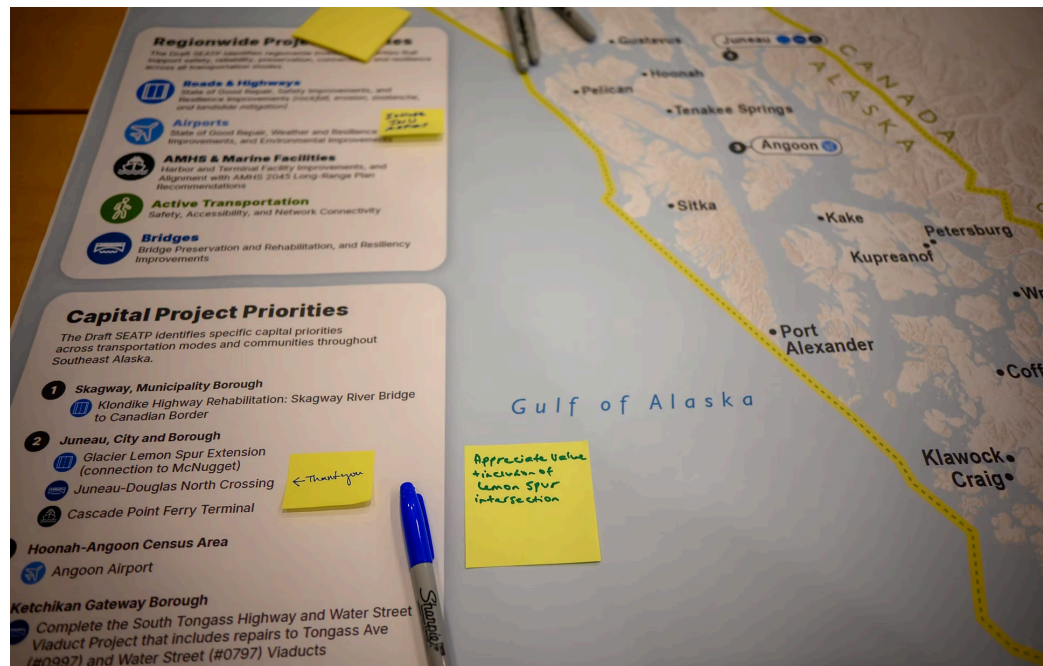
The plan will be finalized after this round of feedback. A final plan is anticipated by this November, a month before Gov. Mike Dunleavy leaves office.

A governor may request to have a plan amended to include or exclude a recommendation or strategy. In an email Friday, Melcher noted it’s important to note that a plan is always subject to evolve with new and changing priorities.

The process to collect input began last fall, with open houses hosted across Southeast and virtually. DOT also held a series of small group meetings by request, including with tribes. Community workshops were also co-hosted with different agencies, according to Melcher.

The Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan is a separate document from the draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) for 2027-30, which is also accepting public comments this month.

“But the relationship, though, is actually important because this plan helps inform the STIP in the future



A map shows public comments left during a Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan open house at the Mendenhall Valley Public Library on Sept. 16, 2026. (Jasz Garrett / Juneau Independent)

because those projects are listed in the plan — and we have hundreds of things in this plan for bridges, for roads, for marine highways, for aviation, all sorts of projects — and those help prioritize projects that go into the STIP,” Melcher explained at the open house.

The updated STIP, released Sept. 14, estimates the proposed Cascade Point Ferry Terminal will cost about \$120 million.

The projected cost of the Cascade Point terminal has grown from about \$36 million in 2022 to \$77 million in the previous STIP to between \$90 million and \$100 million in presentations during the past year.

Juneau resident Michael Neussl said in an interview at the open house he’s concerned about building a ferry terminal so far from town and “what improvements it’ll actually make for ferry travelers.”

“It’s a long way out, Cascade Point, and it’s a lot of money for a project that I’m not sure how much benefit it’s going to provide over the existing ferry terminal in Auke Bay,” he said, adding that people need to have a vehicle to reach the destination, which presents

barriers. Goldbelt Inc. has pledged its intention to provide shuttle service between the terminal, Auke Bay and Mendenhall Valley.

One goal of the 20-year plan is for DOT to be more cost-effective, Melcher said. She pointed toward the Alaska Marine Highway System 2045 Long-Range Plan that came out last year, which aims to improve efficiencies of the marine highway to save money.

“Not just for us paying for those ferries and the terminals and the upkeep — the operations of it — but for people getting on board,” she said. “So one of the things that we recommended in this plan is a feasibility study to look at the trade-offs of building longer roads and shorter ferry routes. So that’s where Cascade came from: this idea of shorter ferry routes and longer roads.”

The proposed terminal aims to cut 24 nautical miles from the route, saving over three hours of vessel run-time each day and saving about \$590,000 annually in fuel and maintenance, according to DOT&PF.

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Neussl acknowledged that Cascade Point aims to shorten a ferry's run length and make the terminal potentially usable for day boats, which the MV Hubbard and the Tazlina were built as.

"But we just spent a lot of money to put crew quarters on those ferries so that they are not day boats and they can operate 24 hours a day because they have enough crew and space for the crew," Neussl said. "So looks like we're solving the problem that we've already spent a lot of money to try and solve by putting crew quarters on those vessels."

Neussl said he's lived in Juneau for nearly 20 years and typically takes the ferry to Skagway and Haines for recreation. Cascade Point would become the primary terminal for the Haines-Skagway route.

Movement on other Juneau projects

Juneau's projects also include a Glacier Lemon Spur Extension with a connection to the McNugget Intersection and the Juneau-Douglas North Crossing.

"There's a lot in there so it includes a list of projects, of course, that are important to the department, but it also includes projects that are important to the communities in a regional context," Melcher said.

She said she wants people commenting to look at: "What did we get right? What did we get wrong?"

"What's important to you? What's important to your community?" she said. "What can we do to help support the business and economy of the region?"

She said feedback from community workshops voiced the importance of maintaining transportation to support social connections, and the ability to travel for events and sports in surrounding communities. Fewer available vessels and staffing challenges have reduced service below historic levels, according to AMHS.

"Having safe access for people walking or riding their bikes. That was really important to communities to have walkable communities," Melcher added. "Another theme was concerns with climate change and big weather impacts. Having increase in landslides and flooding, and those types of things. So resiliency became a big part of our goals because of that."

She said the plan's vision and goals were developed around this community input, and partnering with organizations like the U.S. Forest Service, Southeast Conference, Alaska Marine Lines and the Denali Commission.

"Funding was another one — are we going to have an affordable system to be able to just hop on a ferry or continue to fly somewhere?" Melcher

said. "Costs are going up exponentially and it's getting hard."

About \$410 million for the Alaska Marine Highway System held up for many months is now being awarded as the final installment of a five-year allocation in the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

But there's still the question of where future funding comes from.

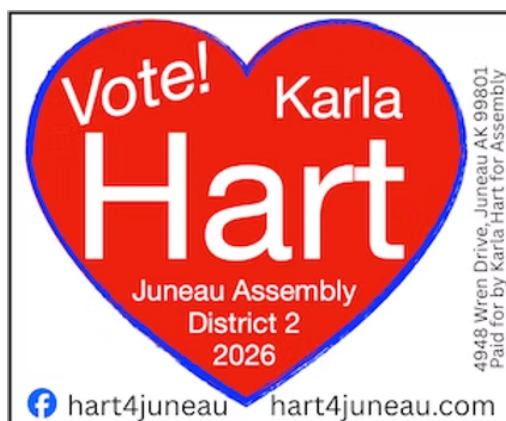
Melcher said the department relies on federal funds to maintain Alaska's transportation system.

"That is an absolute real concern," she said. "If we have less federal funds coming in for all these projects we want to do, then we're going to have to sit down and reprioritize probably a lot of that. Something is going to have to give, or maybe just focusing on maintaining what we have as opposed to building something new... And we can always go after grants. That's the other thing that's covered in the plan is different grant opportunities."

The Juneau-Douglas North Crossing, which would connect Juneau with the north end of Douglas Island, has been studied since the 1980s, but has not progressed beyond preliminary alternative alignments. It was omitted from the STIP, but is included in the broader Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan.

Marie Heidemann, an assistant project manager on the DOWL con-

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DOT

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sultant team who attended the open house, said the most recent cost estimate is provided in the 2025 Planning and Environmental Linkages study.

The timeline for next steps remains unclear as five proposed routes are still undergoing a review through the National Environmental Policy Act. There is also still a no-build option. It was included in the Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan after strong support from the City and Borough of Juneau.

The projected cost of the project has increased significantly from the \$90 million estimate in a CBJ capital improvement projects study published in 2020. Estimates from 2025 place the cost of the alternatives between \$340 million (Vanderbilt) and \$530 million (Sunny Point East).

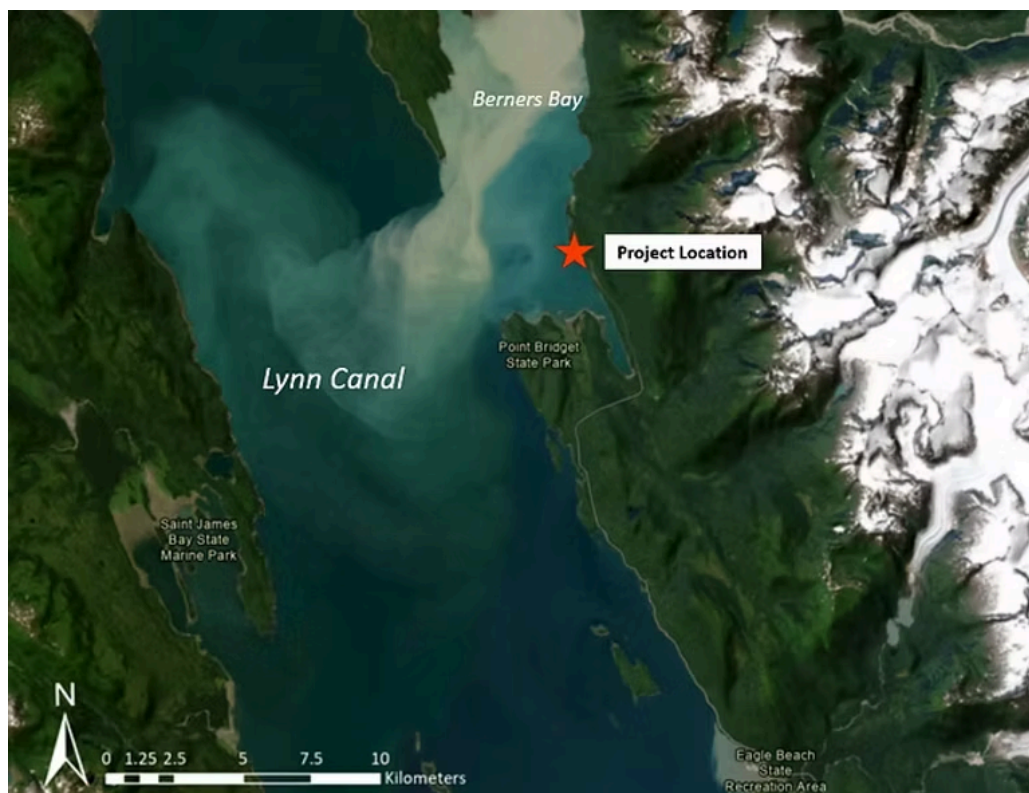
Neussl said he's in favor of the second crossing, but he's also wary of how and where it's built.

"We need to make sure we don't box in the airport by having it too close to the airport runway. We need potential room for future expansion, and we shouldn't build something that blocks the ability to do that," he said. "If the new road is too close to the end of the runway, that would prohibit expanding the runway in that direction."

Neussl is a member of the airport board.

Work on the Egan-Yandukin intersection is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2027 and be completed in about six months, according to project leaders.

The proposed DOT project seeks to install signals and create a partially signalized intersection to help improve safety. Like the other projects, the intersection upgrade is seeing cost in-



The location of the proposed Cascade Point Ferry Terminal, about 30 miles north of the Auke Bay Ferry Terminal. (Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities map)

creases. An estimate of \$10.4 million a year ago is now \$15.5 million, but a federal grant means the state won't have to pay construction-related costs, according to state transportation officials.

The Glacier Highway Extension is not included in the current project due to unsecured funding, according to the project's page.

"It's one of the diceiest intersections in Juneau, I think, in terms of high-speed traffic and crossing traffic. I see pedestrians and bicyclists go across there all the time, even though they're not supposed to," Neussl said. "So there's a need. Especially as the other side of the highway, over in the Hon-singer Pond area, develops, and there's more businesses and more entities over there — the need to cross that highway in that location by pedestrians is going to do nothing but grow. So we need to have a way to address that."

Other local residents and officials have expressed concern for years about the Fred Meyer intersection, where nu-

merous fatal and other serious collisions have occurred. State officials have also recently noted that commercial development in the area has resulted in more pedestrians trying to cross the highway.

Melcher said she hopes one or two projects that people disagree with "doesn't overshadow how much work went into this from all the communities."

"There's 38 communities in Southeast, and we got so much great input from these communities, and it really shaped the themes," Melcher said. "And those themes drove what the goals are, and from those goals we created a whole list of ideas and recommendations and strategies in order to reach those goals. So it isn't just a list of projects; it's also other efforts and strategies to get us there."

• Contact Jasz Garrett at jasz@juneauindependent.com or (907) 723-9356.

Sports

Juneau tops Bartlett 33-28 to secure no. 3 playoff spot at home against East Anchorage next weekend

Krew Ridle runs for 4 TDs, Jaxin Jim scores fifth as Crimson Bears wrap up best regular season in four years

By MARK SABBATINI, Editor

Quarterback Krew Ridle ran for four touchdowns and running back Jaxin Jim scored another as Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé wrapped up its best regular season in four years with a 33-28 home victory on Saturday against Bartlett High School.

Bartlett kept the game close throughout, scoring all four of its touchdowns on big plays ranging from 38 to 74 yards. But the Golden Bears also committed a critical personal foul penalty with 1:31 left in the game that turned a fourth-and-short near the Juneau 20-yard line into a fourth-and-14, resulting in an incomplete pass and JDHS running out the clock.

The Crimson Bears (4-3 in the Cook Inlet Conference, 5-3 overall) will open the playoffs at home next Saturday at 7 p.m. against Bettye Davis East Anchorage High School 2-5, CIC, 2-6 overall). Juneau defeated East Anchorage 17-14 on the Thunderbirds' home field during the second game of the season.

"You're guaranteed a winning season — first time that's happened in



Senior quarterback Krew Ridle breaks away for his fourth touchdown for Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé during the Crimson Bears' 33-28 victory against Bartlett High School at Adair-Kennedy Memorial Park on Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026. (Mark Sabbatini / Juneau Independent)

four years for this program," JDHS Head Coach Rich Sjoroos told his players after the game.

Ridle, whose 17 touchdowns entering the game were five more than any other Alaska high school player this year, outpaced himself Sunday. He scored on the Crimson Bears' opening drive with a 25-yard run, then had subsequent rushing TDs of six and one yards before breaking away on a 59-yard run with 7:41 left in the fourth quarter to put Juneau ahead for good by the game's final score.

"I know it's hard to run it up the middle against Bartlett so I just ran in there with the high motor, planning on not stopping, and I saw green grass and just booked it out of there," Ridle said of his game-winning score.

Jim, who ran for a two-yard touchdown to put Juneau up 21-12 halfway through the second quarter, also forced Bartlett quarterback Flash Auauli Tauanuu into a hurried and errant throw on the Golden Bears' final possession.

*See **BARTLETT** on Page 15*

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BARTLETT

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"My defensive coach just sent me in on a blitz and I finished the job," Jim said.

Key contributions were made by several other Crimson Bears, including Sonny Mazon, who broke up a potential touchdown pass and then made a fourth-down tackle on a completed pass inside the Juneau 30-yard line, forcing Bartlett to give up the ball when it had a 28-27 lead with about 10:30 left in the game. Ridle's winning score occurred five plays later.

Another key second-half contribution was made by JDHS junior lineman Helaman Aitaoto-Tele'a, who on the final play of the third quarter caught his first-ever pass on a 20-yard connection from Ridle to the Bartlett 2-yard line. Ridle scored on the first play of the fourth quarter.

"I was thinking that I was so excited," Aitaoto-Tele'a said when asked about his reaction when the play to him was called. "Like I want to catch the ball. So today was like a day."

The day got off to a promising start for Juneau, which got the opening kickoff and then marched 60 yards in five plays — an 11-yard run by senior running back Ethan Van Kirk, and then runs by Ridle of six, 16, two and 25 yards. A two-point attempt from the 1-yard line after a Bartlett penalty on an extra-point try failed, leaving the Crimson Bears up 6-0 with 9:36 in the first quarter.

Bartlett fumbled an ensuing squib kickoff, but a Juneau player trying to recover it instead knocked it downfield to Golden Bears' wide receiver Christian Goodson, who picked it up and weaved his way down the visitors' sideline for a 76-yard touchdown. The extra-point kick was blocked, making the score 6-6 with 9:18 left in the opening quarter.



Helaman Aitaoto-Tele'a, a junior lineman for Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé, is tackled by four Bartlett High School players as he tries to run a catch into the end zone during the Crimson Bears' 33-28 victory at Adair-Kennedy Memorial Park on Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026. (Mark Sabbatini / Juneau Independent)

The Crimson Bears, mostly on runs by Ridle, took the ball from their own 45-yard line to the Bartlett 25-yard line, where on a fourth-and-7 Ridle was sacked for a one-yard loss to end the drive. Bartlett responded with its own 14-play drive that reached Juneau's 20-yard line before it was set back by penalties to the 35-yard line, where a long fourth down pass by Tauanuu fell incomplete with nobody in the vicinity.

However, Juneau would turn it over two plays later when Ridle fumbled on a run at midfield. The Crimson Bears responded by forcing Bartlett into a fourth-and-16, with the possession ending when a pass by Tauanuu was dropped by a receiver at the first-down marker.

Juneau caught Bartlett off-guard on the ensuing possession by running Jim up the middle on direct snaps that advanced the ball to the Golden Bears' 13-yard line, with Ridle then running for seven yards before scoring his second touchdown on a scamper to the right corner of the end zone with 8:20 left in the half to put the Crimson Bears up 13-6.

Bartlett again responded quickly to the score, with Tauanuu connecting

with senior receiver Colt Jardine on a 65-yard touchdown pass on the first play of the ensuing possession. A failed two-point try left Juneau in front 13-12 with 8:20 left in the second quarter.

The Crimson Bears responded with another scoring drive that saw Jim run for 23 yards on the first play and Ridle 27 yards on the next. Two more runs by Ridle put the ball at the 1-yard line and Jim scored on the next play. A two-point conversion on a pass from Ridle to junior running back Sylvion Washington put Juneau ahead 21-12 with 5:51 left in the half.

A 63-yard touchdown run by the Golden Bears on the second play of the next drive started a 16-point rally that would see the visitors take a 28-21 lead early in the third quarter. Juneau drove to the Golden Bears' 11-yard line with 9.5 seconds left in the first half, but a bad snap with no timeouts left resulted in Ridle falling on the ball and time expiring.

Bartlett opened the second half with a 60-yard drive capped by a 38-yard touchdown pass from Tauanuu to Jardine with 9:46 left in the third quarter, with the two-point conversion giving the visitors a seven-point lead.

The teams then exchanged punts before Juneau took the ball 56 yards in seven plays — aided by two Bartlett penalties — including Ridle's pass to Aitaoto-Tele'a before the quarterback ran the ball in a play later. A blocked extra point left the Crimson Bears down by a point.

While Bartlett came back quickly with two long runs that put the ball well into Juneau territory, Mason's breakup of one pass and fourth-down tackle on another ended the drive and set up Ridle's game-winning score.

Crimson Bears win JIVE over Cordova

By KLAS STOLPE, Sports Editor

The Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé Crimson Bears seemed to stack the courts in their favor during the Juneau Volleyball Extravaganza, with the varsity Crimson Bears defeating their junior varsity counterparts in the Saturday semifinals and then topping Cordova in the finals later in the evening.

The Crimson Bears toppled the Wolverines 2-0 (25-16, 25-18) behind 13 points scored on serve by senior Liliane Veikoso and five apiece from senior Brie Powers and junior Nellie Stowers. Junior Ruby Koski had 13 kill attempts, senior Haley Gilbert and Veikoso nine apiece, and senior June Troxel seven. Veikoso had nine assists and Powers seven.

"I couldn't be more proud of our program," JDHS coach Arnold Ibias said. "We had a lot to be excited about. It was nice to bring back the championship to Juneau. It has been since 2013 that JDHS has won the tournament. This was the first time that the JD JVs had made a gold bracket."

JDHS statistics shared by the Crimson Bears in their 16 games show a powerful hitting team with strong rotation balance.

Veikoso had 51 points scored on serve, Powers 46, Troxel 38, Gilbert 38, Stowers 33, senior Leila Cooper 24, seniors Clairee Overson and Analia Perry four apiece, and senior Faith

Contreras two.

Veikoso led with 24 aces, Gilbert 17, Troxel 15, Powers 10, Cooper and Stowers nine apiece, Perry and Contreras two apiece, and Overson one.

"My thoughts for this weekend are very clear to everyone," Veikoso said. "The only thing our team wanted to do this weekend is win and that is what we did. We won, we stayed consistent, stayed hyped and by doing all that we were able to win our JIVE."

Sophomore Winter Osterhout led with 82 passing attempts, while Stowers had 34, Troxel 26, Koski 20, Cooper 15, Gilbert and Overson 14 apiece, Perry 12, Veikoso 11, Contreras five and Powers four.

Powers recorded 70 assists, Veikoso 62, Osterhout two, Cooper, Koski and Perry one each.

Gilbert led with 35 kills, while Koski had 29, Troxel 20, Veikoso 15, Perry 15, Stowers 15, Cooper eight, Powers two and Osterhout one.

Gilbert had 27 attack points, Koski 21, Veikoso 11, Troxel and Stowers eight apiece, Powers and Cooper two apiece.

Gilbert had 66 kill attempts, Koski 58, Troxel 56, Perry 32, Stowers 31, Veikoso 25, Cooper 20, Contreras six, Osterhout and Powers four apiece and Overson two.

Troxel had 24 hits still in play, Gilbert 23, Koski 21, Perry nine, Veikoso and Cooper six apiece, Contr-

eras three, and Osterhout and Powers two apiece.

Osterhout led with 27 digs, Troxel 15, Veikoso nine, Powers and Stowers seven apiece, Cooper six, Koski four, Gilbert three and Perry and Overson one apiece.

Gilbert had 15 blocks, Perry three, Veikoso two, and Troxel, Powers and Stowers one each.

"The weekend that we spent up in Anchorage was a great learning tool for the varsity," Ibias said. "Although we didn't do as well as we hoped, it did let us see where we stood and that we still had a lot to work on. Julie Weber, one of the lead officials for ASAA, was down for the annual referee clinic and commented that we looked like a different team than last weekend. I would have to agree with her comment. It felt like things were finally clicking. We have another tournament up in Anchorage in a few weeks and I am looking forward to seeing if the momentum will carry on."

The JIVE awarded All-Tournament selections to JDHS senior varsity player Lilaine Veikoso, JDHS JV junior Brynlie Tingey, Sitka sophomore Addie Marx, Ketchikan senior Mariah Colbert, Cordova senior Victoria Nothside, Haines sophomore Brylee Swaner, Skagway junior Millie Meyers and Metlakatla senior Baileigh Nelson.

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Voices

Why I'm voting yes on Proposition A, no on Propositions B and C

By KEN KOELSCH

I dropped off my property tax check this morning. It was our largest expenditure for September. Affordability is the key word for many people this election cycle.

Proposition A: Unless you drive the car with the bumper sticker I saw today that says "I Love Potholes" you probably should consider voting for this proposition as it includes roads, street maintenance, and snow removal.

If you read Proposition A, you will see it includes several other basic functions of City and Borough of Juneau government.

Proposition B: No. We just voted last year to go from a limit of 12 mills to a limit of nine. Keep it at nine. Housing should be affordable and raising taxes on housing does not make housing more affordable. Force questionable expenditures like Telephone Hill and a gondola to come from a different source other than property tax, or go to a vote of the people.

The nine-mills limit has some "of-framp" safeguards. First, bonds passed by Juneau voters are not counted in the nine-mills limit. Secondly, the CBJ has a "rainy day" fund with about \$20 million in it; however, if you use it, you must have a plan to pay it back. Third, the Assembly may levy a tax exceeding nine mills after seeking and securing voter approval by a majority of those voting on the question at a general or special election.

Prop C: No. This is a tax increase. It makes it less affordable to live in

Juneau from April through September.

Prop C is permanent, unlike the temporary 3% on the ballot and the temporary 1% which will probably be on the ballot next year. The voter-approved sales taxes which are "temporary" expire after five years without voters' re-approval. This gives the taxpayers a chance every five years to make their voices heard.

When it comes to "recreation" I wonder if voters are aware that the Assembly allocated \$350,000 (and gave out \$332,500) for CBJ youth activity grants from the already 1% temporary sales tax in 2026?

Here's where it went:

Youth baseball, softball, \$31,805; Glacier Swim Club youth competitive swimming \$14,500; Hoop Rats basketball \$12,350; Juneau Douglas Ice Association/JDIA Youth Hockey \$7,970; Juneau Nordic Ski Club/Juneau Nordic Youth Ski Program expansion \$14,200; Juneau Skating Club/ Youth Ice Skating \$22,000; Juneau Ski Club course, athlete and safety equipment \$7,500; Juneau Soccer Club \$26,000; Juneau Trap Team season \$6,250; JYFL supporting and promoting physical fitness, mental health, safety and character \$23,200; Juneau Youth Wrestling \$10,000; Midnight Suns Baseball/Youth Baseball \$24,000; Midnight Suns Fastpitch Softball Association \$18,000; She Jumps outdoor recreation mentorship for girls in Juneau \$5,000.

The program amount for sports was \$222,775, and the total FY26 amount with arts and academics came to \$332,500.

Also, in the CBJ 2026 budget allocation to the Juneau School District, \$1.2 million for high school activities and \$90,000 for middle school activities

were allocated.

Youth activities are very important to me; they can make a difference. Several of the for-profit and nonprofits sponsor youth activities on their own. Some use pull tab allocations or organizational grants and sponsorships. Juneau Community Foundation has been generous to youth, especially through grants and scholarships in several areas, including making sure free school meals are available to all.

We can do better within the framework of our current budget revenue.

The sales tax exemption for both essential food and non-commercial utilities, which was overwhelming passed last year, has in my opinion helped make Juneau more affordable for many Juneau families.

This permanent 1% seasonal sales tax is intended only to help fund both indoor and outdoor recreation within the CBJ. Proposition C would have us paying 1% more in sales tax every summer season. This proposition is permanent; permanent to me means locked in and now is not time to lock in a 1% seasonal sales tax without knowing what the community will see for bond propositions next fall for dealing with Valley flooding protection or for continuing our focus on affordable housing. Adding a 1% seasonal sales tax does not make Juneau more affordable.

We do not know what the revenue stream actually is for this current 2027 budget. Let's make decisions based on solid information.

Vote no on B and C.

• *Ken Koelsch is a former mayor of Juneau and a longtime educator.*

Why 'yes' this fall?

By LAURA STEELE

Juneau is special. We're a weird, wonderful little community carved out between mountains and water, with our own way of life, our own approach to doing things, our own ways of looking out for each other. I've had strangers offer to hold my baby at the pool while I adjust my older daughter's goggles. I've seen countless parents help someone else's kids with scraped knees, shared snacks, forgotten stuffed animals, zipping raincoats at every one of our playgrounds. Teenagers have voluntarily ridden the chairlift with my five-year-old, offering up hand warmers and cheering her on during her first Hooter runs. Someone is always losing an earring at Amalga cabin, and someone else is always returning it.

We take care of each other. Our playgrounds and pools, our cabins and chairlifts, our schools and soccer fields — these places help us do it. In no world can we expect to invest nothing in these things and for them still to continue to thrive, or to even exist at all.

So much of our little town's magic can be found in the things we choose to invest in: with our time, with our energy, and yes, with our money. If Propositions A, B, and C on the October municipal ballot pass, that would likely look like the same 5% sales tax you're used to; about \$150 more in property tax in 2027 than 2026 for the median Juneau homeowner if the previous 10.24 mill rate were restored; and 1% more in tax on some purchases (food and utilities would still be exempt) from April to September.

As a young family, it's discouraging at best to so often be the focus of discussion and yet so rarely have our voices truly heard. "How can we get young people to stay in Juneau? How do we retain workers and small businesses? How can we grow our popula-

tion instead of seeing more and more outflow each year?"

We're telling you how. Invest in the things that matter to us. And yes, if you have more to give — more wealth, more property, more flexibility with your funds — that investment should be, proportionately, more.

How to make Juneau — and, more broadly, Alaska as a whole — more affordable for families like mine is a conversation we need to have together. Alaska could close oil and gas tax loopholes. The state could adopt a progressive personal income tax, where individuals with high incomes are taxed at a higher rate than the middle class, a measure which would also capture revenue from the 24% nonresident workforce that makes their living off our resources. Such measures at the state level could help offset the financial burden on municipal governments like the CBJ. However, the primary financial policies we are empowered to adjust at the municipal level are in front of us now.

Teaching my daughters to ski at Eaglecrest. Learning about teamwork and supporting one another on the fields and in the bleachers. Collecting fall leaves and making fairy houses along our trails. Finding a warm place to play at the field house, the libraries, and the pools in the winter. I was raised in Juneau, and I choose to make my home and raise my own family in Juneau, for all these reasons and more. And it's for those reasons that I'm asking you to join me in voting yes on Propositions A, B, and C this October.

• *Laura Steele is a lifelong Juneau resident.*

Why I'm voting in favor of Juneau's ballot propositions

By KEVIN MAIER

My wife and I chose to raise a family in Juneau two decades ago be-

cause it is an exceptionally livable place, with biking, skiing, indoor recreational facilities, boating, hunting, and fishing that doesn't require spending most of your weekend stuck in a car to access. When I talk to my brother who lives in the suburbs of Seattle, he is always in his car, driving an hour to mountain bike, two hours to ski, or multiple hours to get to a soccer tournament with his son.

My kids might complain about the terribly long drive to the field house, but after 15 years of making this drive three nights a week, I can assure you that it takes 16 minutes to get there from our doorstep — assuming nobody forgot their cleats. I can get to the Eaglecrest parking lot in 22 minutes. I can pick which harbor to launch our skiff from, getting to four quiet ramps and docks with adequate parking, and the longest drive is 25 minutes. These amenities — an indoor turf field that benefits our collective mental health, well-plowed roads that get us to an affordable ski lift, and docks and harbors with impeccably maintained facilities — are what make Juneau a place I'm proud to call home.

As several of these amenities are on the ballot that just landed in your mailbox, I'm writing to urge you to join me in voting yes, yes, yes on the three propositions before us. Others have outlined what's at stake in these pages, so it's enough to note that I prefer a livable community to some kind of mythical "affordable Juneau, and I hope you do too. The alternative — letting basic services and public infrastructure erode because wealthy landowners didn't want to pay for them — has its own cost, and Juneau's kids inherit it.

Kevin Maier - Juneau

Sports

Community runners last to run in rainy season finale

Open race for any runners finishes off the high school Region V championships



Runners start the JV/Open Community 5K race during the Region V Cross Country Running Championships on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent)

By KLAS STOLPE, Sports Editor

After all the mud was buried under torrents of rain along the Treadwell Historic Mine Trail at Saturday's high school Region V Cross Country Championships — and the meet had concluded — the last hearty runners in the community heard the starter's pistol and raced Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé Crimson Bears non-region team harriers in an all-comers 5K challenge.

"It is great for the whole team to be able to get in on the excitement of the region meet by being able to run that day in the open race," JDHS co-head coach Zack Bursell said. "I think the team really responded to that energy and as a result we saw a lot of strong performances."

Racers all ran in one race. Individual finishes have been separated into boys' and girls' placings.

BOYS:

Carson Kautz, jr, JD, 18:13, Malachi Harrison, 8th, Wrangell, 18:15 Angus Andrews, sr, JD, 18:25, Niklas

Uschmann, jr, JD, 18:47, Brooks Pinney, so, JD, 19:00, Caleb Schane, jr, JD, 19:15, Daniel Degener, sr, JD, 19:16, Luke Miller, fr, JD, 19:18, Lucas Nelson-Vallejo, jr, JD, 19:23, Sam Buttner, sr, JD, 19:48, Yakobi Cole, fr, JD, 20:25, Brandon Ivanowicz, 44, Juneau, 20:39, Soren Richards, fr, JD, 20:50, Knox Francis, so, JD, 21:10, Jude Johnson, 7th, Wrangell, 21:21, Rowan Hightower, fr, JD, 21:23, Austin Treston, 8th, TMMS, 21:34, Porter Goudie, jr, JD, 21:40, Finnan Kelly, jr, JD, 21:48, Benjamin Blackgoat, so, JD, 21:48, Tymur Tkachenko, so, JD, 22:11, Wesley Swanson, fr, JD, 22:55, Craig Thorsteinson, jr, JD, 23:01, Robert Hickman, fr, JD, 24:17, Riley Humphrey, fr, JD, 25:33, Waylon Bricker, jr, Skagway, 26:59, Jackson Bass, 7th, TMMS, 27:09, William Olmstead, fr, JD, 31:00, Giorgi Gagliashvili, jr, JD, 33:43, Jackson Coutu, fr, JD, 40:00

GIRLS:

Emmalynn LaPlante, so, JD, 22:02, Mariah Carney, 8th, Wrangell, 22:04,

Kaycee Carney, sr, JD, 22:14, Jordan Callahan, 39, Juneau, 22:35, Dez Bos, so, JD, 23:03, Ellie Jo Wall, sr, JD, 23:23, Sabine Auger, sr, JD, 24:07, Larkyn Woltring, jr, JD, 24:18, Shandiin Frommherz, jr, JD, 24:20, Adele Fanning, sr, JD, 24:26, Nayeli Hood, fr, JD, 24:28, Trissa Shepard, 8th, Hoonah, 25:05, Eliza Albrecht, so, JD, 25:17, Kira English, so, JD, 25:19, Cianna Kahl, fr, JD, 25:20, Eleanor Peterson, so, JD, 26:01, Leighton Zarazua, jr, JD, 26:35, Katie Rosson, fr, JD, 26:40, Jillian Levy, sr, JD, 27:57, Lucy Wall, so, JD, 28:04, Anna Reiter, sr, JD, 29:03, Makenna Tupou, 7th, TMMS, 28:12, Kara Shrader, so, JD, 29:08, Raegan Adams, sr, JD, 30:22, Elyzsa Sapinoso, jr, JD, 30:58, Cooper Blackgoat-Diehl, fr, JD, 31:25, Callie Stickel, fr, JD, 32:25

• Contact Klas Stolpe at sport-s@juneauindependent.com

Youth runners attack cross-country club meet

Elementary school runners warm up the high school championships

By KLAS STOLPE, Sports Editor

Elementary runners from around Juneau led off last Saturday's high school Region V Cross Country Championships, showing they will be the future in town as nearly 100 took to the Treadwell Historic Mine Trail course for a cross-country club meet.

"Hilary and I started track and field and cross-country running clubs at Sayeik Gastineau and Harborview/T-CLL, respectively, two years ago as a partnership between Lynn Canal Adventures — of Lynn Canal Running Camp fame — and the Juneau School District," co-race director Tristin Knutson-Lombardo said. "This was our biggest elementary cross-country race yet with over 90 Juneau students participating."

Youth runners came from Harborview; the Tlingit Culture, Language and Literacy program; Sayeik Gastineau, Sit' Eetí Shaanáx Glacier Valley, Montessori Borealis and IDEA homeschool.

Second grade and younger runners did a 1.5-kilometer race, fourth through sixth grades completed a 3-kilometer race, and third grade runners got to choose their distance.

"Getting to share running with elementary-aged students has been really special," Hilary Young said. "We try to incorporate games and running on different trails to make running fun. Our hope is that students develop courage, feel a sense of community and get in-



Harborview second graders Jasper Lombardo-Brown (1138) and Beck Percy (1190) sprint to the finish of the Elementary school 1.5K race at the Treadwell Historic Mine Trail, Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent)

troduced to competition. This year we focused on teaching students about pacing, mental strength — positive affirmations, being supportive teammates and being brave. Getting to see so many students participate in the race and feel proud of their efforts was a real highlight. We want to give a special thanks to all of the coaches/parents who volunteer their time to help support the club and to Alaska Tales Whale Watching for supporting us."

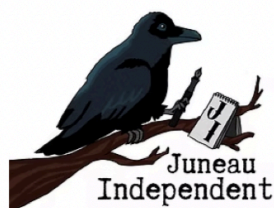
Times were not kept for the racers. Instead emphasis was placed on learning to enjoy the run and understanding that any finish can contribute to a team.

Note on scoring: *Traditional high school cross-country counts the first five runners on a team, with each runner's points equal to their finishing place. The sixth and seventh runners' places do not count towards their team*

score, but they do have the potential to finish ahead of another team's scoring five, thus increasing the score of an opposing team. Like golf, lowest score wins, with the sixth runner breaking a tie. For the purposes of making cross-country scoring easily digestible for the elementary runner and family, and to help Hilary and Tristan, teams were organized by school for each distance. Schools with an excess of runners were split into two teams. Race directors then scored the most runners they could based on the smallest team, which ended up being six. The goal was not to see who won, but to give as many students as possible a chance to see the positive impact they had on their team.

**RACE FINISHES (K-3rd Grade)
1.5K (Name, School, grade):**

See Runners on Page 21



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RUNNERS

Continued from page 20

1. Calder Taintor, SGCS, 2nd; 2. Beck Percy, HBV, 2nd; 3. Jasper Lombardo-Brown, HBV, 2nd; 4. Lita Luchini, MB, 2nd; 5. Toren Davis, MB, 1st; 6. Audrey Pilcher, SGCS, 2nd; 7. Charlie Parr, TCLL, 1st; 8. Clark Zeppelin, SES-GV, 2nd; 9. Grey Wilson, SGCS, 2nd; 10. Eirik Davis, MB, 1st; 11. Miles Muse, SGCS, K; 12. Adelyn Paul, MB, 2nd; 13. Rozina Strong, HBV, 2nd; 14. Odin Howard, HBV, 1st; 15. Colton Morlas, HBV, 1st; 16. Skil Yates, SGCS, K; 17. Ember Gress, HBV, 2nd; 18. Sam Krapek, MB, 1st; 19. Rory Vrabec, SGCS, 1st; 20. Russell Phillips, HBV, 2nd; 21. Lillian Still, HBV, 2nd; 22. Emilia Hinderberger, HBV, 1st; 23. Vivianna Carpeneti-Winfree, MB, 2nd; 24. Ellis Pilcher, SGCS, PreK; 25. August Elliott, HBV, K; 26. Nia Conway, SES-GV, 3rd; 27. Elouise Scott, TCLL, 2nd; 28. Darius Heumann, TCLL, 2nd; 29. Braxton Whiteley, SES-GV, 3rd; 30. Skye Foss, SGCS, 1st; 31. Benny Palomino, SGCS, 1st; 32. Eastman Voelckers, HBV, K; 33. Henry Hinderberger, HBV, PreK; 34. Esben Anderson, SGCS, 2nd; 35. Rylee Paul, MB, K; 36. Wayne Tolles, SGCS, 1st; 37. Samuel LS, HBV, 2nd; 38. Trysten Orendorff, HBV, 2nd; 39. Frances Kiesel, HBV, 2nd; 40. Calla Fylpaa, SGCS, 1st; 41. Annetta Carpeneti-Winfree, MB, K; 42. Henry Waid, TCLL, K; 43. Victoria Bay, SES-GV, 2nd; 44. Ruth Scott, TCLL, K; 45. Isla Ewing, SGCS, K.

1.5K TEAM SCORES (name, grade, place):

Team MB 72 -

Lita Luchini, 2nd, 4; Toren Davis, 1st, 5; Eirik Davis, 1st, 10; Adelyn Paul, 2nd, 12; Sam Krapek, 1st, 18; Vivianna Carpeneti-Winfree, 2nd, 23; Rylee Paul, K, 35; Annetta Carpeneti-



Sayéik Gastineau Community School Pre-K runner Ellis Pilcher (1150) sprints to the finish of the Elementary school 1.5K race at the Treadwell Historic Mine Trail, Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent)



Sayéik Gastineau Community School first grader Skye Foss sprints to the finish of the Elementary school 1.5K race at the Treadwell Historic Mine Trail, Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent)

Winfree, K, 41.

Team SGCS Green 154 -

Grey Wilson, 2nd, 9; Skil Yates, K, 16; Rory Vrabec, 1st, 19; Benny Palomino, 1st, 31; Esben Anderson, 2nd, 34; Isla Ewing, K, 45.

Team SGCS Pink 108 -

Calder Taintor, 2nd, 1; Audrey Pilcher, 2nd, 6; Miles Muse, K, 11; Ellis Pilcher, PreK, 24; Skye Foss, 1st, 30; Wayne Tolles, 1st, 36; Calla Fylpaa, 1st, 40.

Team HBV Yellow 130 -

Jasper Lombardo-Brown, 2nd, 3; Ember Gress, 2nd, 17; Russell Phillips, 2nd, 20; Lillian Still, 2nd, 21; Eastman Voelckers, K, 32; Samuel LS, 2nd 37; Frances Kiesel, 2nd, 39.

Team HBV Orange 91 -

Beck Percy, 2nd, 2; Rozina Strong, 2nd, 13; Odin Howard, 2nd 14; Colton Morlas, 1st, 15; Emilia Hinderberger, 1st, 22; August Elliott, K, 25; Henry Hinderberger, PreK, 33; Trysten Orendorff, 2nd, 38.

See Runners on Page 22

RUNNERS

Continued from page 21

Team TCLL/SES-GV 125 -

Charlie Parr (TCLL) 1st, 7; Clark Zepp (SES-GV) 2nd, 8; Nia Conway (SES-GV) 3rd, 26; Elouise Scott (TCLL) 2nd, 27; Darius Heumann (TCLL) 2nd, 28; Braxton Whiteley (SES-GV) 3rd, 29; Henry Waid (TCLL) K, 42; Victoria Bay (SES-GV) 2nd, 43; Ruth Scott (TCLL) K, 44.

RACE FINISHES (3rd-6th grade)

3K (Name, School, grade):

1. Finn Taintor, SGCS, 4th; 2. Otto Klein, SGCS, 6th; 3. Bramble Pothier, SGCS, 6th; 4. Lynden Richardson, SES-GV, 6th; 5. James Dorn, SGCS, 6th; 6. Tadzio Lesh, SGCS, 4th; 7. Porter VanLandingham, SES-GV, 6th; 8. Sky Pothier, SGCS, 4th; 9. Sophie Barker, MB, 4th; 10. Avery Davis, MB, 3rd; 11. Kira Bell, SGCS, 5th; 12. Elsa Barker, MB, 4th; 13. Henrik Olson, HBV, 3rd; 14. Dylan Still, HBV, 5th; 15. Lorna Olds, MB, 4th; 16. Graham Ewing, SGCS, 3rd; 17. Sebastian Taylor-Manning, HBV, 3rd; 18. Cal Scott, HBV, 3rd; 19. Silas Tice, SGCS, 3rd; 20. Cedar Percy, HBV, 4th; 21. Nathan Rodriguez, HBV, 4th; 22. Adelaide Johnson, MB, 3rd; 23. Silas Muse, SGCS 3rd; 24. Matilda Higdon, MB, 6th; 25. Leonora Johnson, MB, 6th; 26. Mandy Wright, HBV, 6th; 27. Dhillon Gasper, SGCS, 4th; 28. Ida

Seidman, MB, 5th; 29. McKenna Ekis, SES-GV, 4th; 30. William Hartman, IDEA, 5th; 31. Callahan Shanley, SGCS, 4th; 32. Luca Foss, SGCS, 3rd; 33. Aubrey Villa, SGCS, 4th; 34. Whittier Hildebrand, HBV, 5th; 35. Isla Strickland, SGCS, 4th; 36. Molly Dorn, SGCS, 4th; 37. Sayler Williams, SGCS, 4th; 38. Ilea Zura, HBV, 5th; 39. Isaac Ball, SGCS, 4th; 40. Jeffrey Swinton, SGCS, 5th; 41. Wally Seidman, MB, 3rd; 42. Cailea Weiss, SES-GV, 4th; 43. Nayak'aq Yates, SGCS, 3rd; 44. Jason Klawonn, SES-GV, 6th; 45. Alma Hauser, SGCS, 3rd; 46. Charlotte McIntyre-Coble, SGCS, 3rd; 47. In Daniel Lee, SES-GV, 5th.

3K TEAM SCORES (name, grade, place):

Team MB 92 -

Sophie Barker, 4th, 9; Avery Davis, 3rd, 10; Elsa Barker, 4th, 12; Lorna Olds, 4th 15; Adelaide Johnson, 3rd, 22; Matilda Higdon, 6th, 24; Leonora Johnson, 6th, 25; Ida Seidman, 5th, 29; Wally Seidman, 3rd, 41.

Team SGCS White 49 -

Finn Taintor, 4th, 1; Bramble Pothier, 6th, 3; James Dorn, 6th, 5; Tadzio Lesh, 4th, 6; Kira Bell, 5th, 11; Silas Muse, 3rd, 23; Dhillon Gasper, 4th 26; Luca Foss, 3rd, 32; Aubrey Villa, 4th 33; Sayler Williams, 4th 37; Alma Hauser, 3rd, 45; Charlotte McIntyre-Coble, 3rd, 46.

Team SES-GV 172 -

Lynden Richardson, 6th, 4; Porter

VanLandingham, 6th, 7; McKenna Ekis, 4th, 28; Cailea Weiss, 4th, 42; Jason Klawonn, 6th, 44; In Daniel Lee, 5th, 47.

Team HBV 103 -

Henrik Olson, 3rd, 13; Dylan Still, 5th, 14; Sebastian Taylor-Manning 3rd, 17; Cal Scott, 3rd, 18; Cedar Percy, 5th 20; Nathan Rodriguez, 4th, 21; Mandy Wright, 6th, 27; William Hartman (IDEA) 5th, 30; Whittier Hildebrand, 5th 34; Ilea Zura, 5th, 38.

Team SGCS Red 111 -

Otto Klein 6th, 2; Sky Pothier, 4th, 8; Graham Ewing, 3rd, 16; Silas Tice, 3rd, 19; Callahan Shanley, 4th, 31; Isla Strickland, 4th, 35; Molly Dorn, 4th, 36; Isaac Ball, 4th, 39; Jeffrey Swinton, 5th, 40; Nayak'aq Yates, 3rd, 43.

• Contact Klas Stolpe at sports@juneauindependent.com



St' Eel' Shaanág Glacier Valley fourth grader Cailea Weiss finishes the Elementary school 3K race at the Treadwell Historic Mine Trail, Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent)

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Crimson Bears spikers top Cordova on senior night

JDHS honors 17 seniors with 3-1 (10-25, 28-26, 25-22, 25-14) win

By KLAS STOLPE, Sports Editor

The Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé volleyball team filled the George Houston Gymnasium on Thursday, hours before its scheduled match against the visiting Cordova Wolverines, as the Crimson Bears honored 17 seniors and their families.

JDHS volleyball players feted were June Troxel, Haley Anne Gilbert, Clairee Overson, Leila Cooper, Regan Salisbury, Macy Summers, Taylor Petrie, Ysabella Healey, Brie Powers, Aylin Wolte, Jethro Cano, Cassie Chenoweth, Liliane Veikoso, Analia Perry, Faith Contreras, Kristyanna Kate Lohrey and August Rathbone.

Cordova seniors Adelaide Botz, Isabelle Nothstine, Keyshia Ganuelas, Rona May Cabuora, Victoria Nothside, Taylor Tiedeman and Willow Tiedeman were also recognized.

JDHS rotated as many seniors as possible in the matches.

"It was important to me to get all the seniors some time on the court," JDHS coach Arnold Ibias said. "It was hard to hold back from putting in the varsity players sooner. I am happy that we could make it happen for all of them to have their senior night be emotional and with a win."

Cordova took the first game as the excitement of the night created four mishits by JDHS and the Wolverines took an 11-2 lead that included kills by seniors Victoria Nothside and Isabelle Nothstine and three service aces by Nothside.

The Wolverines pushed the advantage out to 19-4 behind two blocks by



The Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé volleyball seniors pose for a photo before their match against the Cordova Wolverines in the George Houston Gymnasium, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent).

junior Avery Reynolds and an ace by Nothstine. Crimson Bears points came via a Summers hit, a Salisbury tip, a block by Gilbert and a serve by Cooper forcing a mishit.

JDHS settled down and exchanged service possessions to the end, but the early advantage favored Cordova for the 25-10 win.

JDHS started strong in game two with kills by Troxel and junior Nellie Stowers, but Cordova stormed back with two kills and two aces by Nothside. JDHS' Gilbert and Cordova's Nothstine exchanged kills and the score would inch out to a 16-11 lead by the Wolverines on an ace by Reynolds.

Cordova would hold a 21-11 lead when they faulted at the net. JDHS' Troxel served JDHS to within 21-18 including a tip by junior Ruby Koskia, an ace, and a kill by Stowers.

Cordova's T. Tiedeman killed for possession and a 22-18 lead, but a service error gave JDHS point 19 and Gilbert served to a 24-22 lead that in-

cluded three aces and a kill by Koski.

Cordova's Nothstine killed to trail 24-23 and the Wolverines' Cabuora served two aces for a 25-24 advantage. A service error allowed JDHS to tie the score, but the Crimson Bears mishit a ball to give the lead back, 26-25.

Cordova had service, but JDHS sophomore Bela Pyare put a passing shot in to tie the game at 26-26, Troxel tipped a ball across game point and Koski served an ace for the 28-26 win.

JDHS jumped out to a 3-0 lead in game three with a block by Gilbert, a kill by Gilbert and an ace from Powers. Both teams would go on multiple scoring runs.

JDHS collected four kills by Gilbert, two by Koski, scoring tips by Stowers and Powers and three aces from Troxel and one from Gilbert for 22-18 lead. Cordova had four scoring plays by Nothside, three from Nothstine, a block by junior Elizabeth Baenen and an ace from Nothside.

See Volleyball on Page 24

IF YOU DON'T HAVE HEART,
YOU'RE IN THE WRONG BUSINESS.

VOLLEYBALL

Continued from page 23

Two JDHS mishits pulled Cordova to within 22-20. JDHS' Perry tipped for a point and Veikoso tipped for a 24-20 lead. A kill by Cordova's Reynolds and a JDHS mishit pulled the Wolverines to 24-22, but the Crimson Bears' Pyare tipped over the game winner.

JDHS used that momentum to control the final game action and close out the match with a 25-14 win. Gilbert had five kills and three blocks in that stretch.

"We took the early lead and kept it," JDHS coach Ibias said. "Haley was a monster in the final set."

Both teams now head into the Juneau Volleyball Extravaganza (JIVE) starting Friday and playing through Saturday. Also in the mix are Haines, Ketchikan, Metlakatla, Sitka, Skagway and the JDHS JV. Action starts with pool play from 4-7 p.m. Friday and continues into Saturday, from 8-11 a.m., with final placings from noon through 3 p.m. The JIVE tournament Gold Bracket begins at 4:30 p.m. Saturday with play fueling the championship game at 8:15 p.m. Following are JDHS senior inside notes.



Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé volleyball senior Leila Cooper smiles during the Crimson Bears senior recognition in the George Houston Gymnasium, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent).



Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé senior Haley Gilbert kills a shot past the block of Cordova senior Victoria Nothside (10) during the Crimson Bears 3-1 (10-25, 28-26, 25-22, 25-14) win over the Wolverines in the George Houston Gymnasium, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent)

June Troxel, #1, outside hitter/defensive specialist. Will be playing college volleyball with plans to study behavioral health and nutritional sciences. Her advice for returning players is "stay positive and show gratitude for every opportunity."

Haley Anne Gilbert, #7, middle hitter. Plans to be a pediatric nurse or physical therapist. She will miss playing with her friends on the JDHS team. She said her favorite memory is "The crunchy pizza from Sitka."

Clairee Overson, #8, defensive specialist. She plans to serve a mission for her church in the fall, then attend college and major in nursing. She is hoping to pursue a career in health care such as a labor and delivery nurse or pediatrics. Her favorite quote is "The joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives."

Leila Cooper, #5, defensive specialist/outside hitter. She plans to attend college in the fall and study in the medical field. She said "I am going to miss all of the girls I have had the opportunity to play with over the years, along with all the inside jokes, memories, and friendships we have

made along the way."

Regan Salisbury, #7, setter. Her favorite subject in school is lunch. She noted that "traveling with the team and making friends" is what she will miss the most. Her favorite quote or personal motto is "yolo."

Macy Summers, #4, middle hitter, outside hitter. She said her favorite memory is "Zoe and I cheering for the varsity girls in Ketchikan, ruling the student section," and her advice for returning players is "always fight for what you deserve."

Taylor Petrie, #5, defensive specialist, all around. Her favorite subject is woodshop, and she plans to attend UAA and receive a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing). Her advice for underclassmen and returning players is "bad days happen but don't let them ruin your season."

Ysabella Healey, #1, outside hitter. Her favorite subject is literature. Her advice for returning players is "try new things that you are incredibly unfamiliar with, things that may intimidate you, because surprising yourself with your newfound abilities is far better than being too surprised to start."

See *Volleyball* on Page 25

VOLLEYBALL

Continued from page 24

Her favorite quote: Romans 12:21 - Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Brie Powers, #3, setter. She plans to attend college and major in Kinesiology, with the goal of becoming a physical therapist. She said "I am going to miss all of my amazing teammates and Nellie's dad's conditioning."

Aylin Wolter, stats manager. Plans to go to college for science and work as a researcher. Her extracurricular activities include: Interact, NHS, Future Women of STEM, and Enigma. Her favorite team memory is "when we went to Haines my freshman year. We got ice cream the first day, and had a lip-sync battle the last evening."

Jethro Cano, manager. His favorite memory was witnessing the last Thunder Mountain High School volleyball team playing the last TMHS varsity game of the school year, the long speeches by Coach Herman, her last goodbye to them all. His favorite quote is "Make use of the connections you have built. Have none? Make some by a smile and a greeting."

Cassie Chenoweth, #15, outside hitter. She plans to continue playing softball at the collegiate level while attending a community college in Washington, study kinesiology, pursue a career in physical therapy, and remain involved in sports by helping athletes recover from injuries, improve their performance and achieve their goals. Her advice for returning players is "regardless of the quality of coaching, don't let negativity affect you. Find your own love and passion for your sport, strive to be the best athlete and person you can be, and always maintain a positive mindset."

Liliane Veikoso, #17, setter, middle hitter, outside hitter, rightside hitter. Her favorite subject is Human Anatomy and Psychology. She plans to serve a mission for her church,

maybe play collegiate-level volleyball, or attend college to study psychology or dental practice. Her favorite quote is "Without the power of God I really am completely inadequate."

Analia Perry, #10, middle blocker, rightside hitter. Plans to study sports medicine in college and will miss all the friendships she made in the JDHS program. Perry said "Thank you to my mom and the coaches for pushing me to work hard."

Faith Contreras, #11, defensive specialist. Her favorite memory was a trip to Sitka and "though in the moment it was very exhausting, we walked up to the school, then back down to the bottom, and then back up again. It was fun team bonding, getting to know and talk to everyone on C, JV,

and V." Her favorite motto is "Practice makes better."

Kristyanna Kate Lohrey, #8, libero, all around. She plans to be an Esthetician/cosmetology in Tucson, Arizona, and will miss all the friends she has made in the JDHS program. Her favorite memory is "when some of my teammates went to the lake and played volleyball and paddle boarded."

August Rathbone, #9, setter. Her favorite subject is Native Design and Honors Chemistry. She plans to build a steady career and pursue her dreams. Her favorite quote is by Fiona Apple: And I know none of this will matter in the long run, but I know a sound is still a sound around no one.

• Contact Klas Stolpe at sports@juneauindependent.com



Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé sophomore Winter Osterhout (2) and senior Leila Cooper (5) save a ball during the Crimson Bears 3-1 (10-25, 28-26, 25-22, 25-14) win over the Cordova Wolverines in the George Houston Gymnasium, Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026. (Klas Stolpe / Juneau Independent)