

OUTDOORS



On The Trails:
November trailside
observations



COZY CAPTURES



**Enter the Indy's photo
contest: New
winners monthly**



FREE FULL ACCESS



← **Scan**
**Read full
story** →



Juneau Independent

The True Local Newspaper of Alaska's Capital City

November 30, 2025

More time for Cascade Point

DOT's comment period extended six weeks until Jan. 9 for controversial ferry terminal 30 miles north of Juneau

By MARK SABBATINI
Editor

The public comment period for the Cascade Point Ferry Terminal, which would relocate the docking point for Alaska Marine Highway System vessels far north of the current Auke Bay terminal, has been extended by six weeks until Jan. 9.

The extension was made on Friday — the orig-

inal comment deadline — by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. DOT officials could not be immediately reached on Saturday for an explanation of why the deadline was extended.

The long-discussed terminal is being advocated by the Dunleavy administration as part of a revived Juneau Access Project — declared dead by former

Gov. Bill Walker in 2017 — with an eye on extending roads linked by shorter ferry routes. A recently released state economic study says the Cascade Point terminal has mixed transportation impacts, but would be a boon to a proposed gold mine and other possible development north of town.



JASZ GARRETT / JUNEAU INDEPENDENT



MARK SABBATINI / JUNEAU INDEPENDENT

At left, people walk through the Indigenous Artists and Vendors Holiday Market on Friday, Nov. 28, 2025. At right, Heather West, seated, helps people browsing items at Lodestone Library and Lounge's space during the Juneau Public Market on Friday at Centennial Hall.

High spirits for the holidays

Gratitude at Indigenous Market, where artists hope to share healing through cultural crafts

By JASZ GARRETT
Managing Editor

The fourth consecutive Thanksgiving weekend Indigenous Artists and Vendors Holiday Market is growing along with the giving holiday spirit.

The market features more than two dozen Indigenous artists at Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall. The event offers free public entry throughout Thanksgiving weekend, open from noon to 5 p.m.

"It's a voice and opportunity to showcase our art and curate it in a concentrated way," said Tlingit and Haida Indigenous Market organizer Jaime Smith. "The other thing is it's a good opportunity to keep the art alive."



Novel experiences and items again part of the tradition at 43rd Juneau Public Market

By MARK SABBATINI
Editor

Slingshots and fossilized turtle poop aren't items typically available in the small lending library and cafe co-operated by Leslie and Patty Kalbrener. But they were part of a whole new section of merchandise at her first-ever vendor space at the 43rd annual Juneau Public Market on Friday, in anticipation of a huge and diverse crowd of new customers.

"We have a lot of children in our house and we were looking at our wholesale distributors and stuff, and they saw these toys and they're like 'You have to get those,'" said Patty Kalbrener, co-president of Lodestone Library and Lounge.



Get fully
Independent at
www.juneauindependent.com

Juneau Public Market

Juneau Independent

The True Local Newspaper of Alaska's Capital City

Latest

Thankful for a life-giving holiday feast

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Archives

November 2025 (0)

October 2025 (28)

September 2025 (28)

August 2025 (27)

July 2025 (27)

June 2025 (27)

More top stories

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Sports

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Features

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Other Juneau news media

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Southeast Alaska news

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Alaska News

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

U.S./International News

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Police blotter

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Obituaries / Death Notices

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Local business owners are busy this morning, working to help others after a long day of shopping for the holidays.

Subscribe

Receive our newsletter by email

First Name Last Name Email Address

Subscribe

Voices

Southcentral's miscues costly to all

By **LARRY PERSILY**

Too many residents, business owners and politicians of Southcentral Alaska — we're talking the state's population center of Anchorage, the Mat-Su and Kenai Peninsula — are all agog in anticipation that a multibillion-dollar North Slope natural gas pipeline will save them from unaffordable heating and electric bills.

It's the time of year for holiday dreams — a warm tradition like Hallmark movies, grandma's cookies and the Budweiser Clydesdales. But the wintry cold truth about this dream is there will be no pipeline under the tree — just bits of tinsel left from premature and misleading celebrations.

The megaproject is too costly and too risky in a world

that has plenty of easier and cheaper gas to sell. It has no credible, publicly available construction cost estimate; no long-term customer contracts to provide collateral for loans; no binding financial commitments from investors; and actually no gas under contract to sell. Other than that, it's a great holiday package, with the lead promoter publicly talking of delivering a construction decision before the holiday season is over.

Yet, many still want to believe it's possible, preferring to perpetuate the dream of bountiful gas, plentiful jobs and wishful thinking of billions of dollars flowing into the state treasury.



Telephone Hill Concept C vs Concept D

By **LARRY TALLEY**

It is standard that before a municipality undertakes a construction project for housing that a pro forma is done for the project that shows the cost per housing unit.

The pro forma is a financial document that shows the financial feasibility of the project. It enables the municipality to answer the question: Is the price tag per housing unit an amount the city, and the voters, would find acceptable? The Assembly does not have a pro forma for Concept C and therefore cannot answer this essential question. But the public record suggests that large, but unknown subsidies will be

required for housing units if the Assembly goes forward with Concept C. And it is clear that moving forward with demolition without answers to these questions is very unpopular with your constituents.

The market analysis proposes that of the 155 units in Concept C, 25% are destined for short-term rentals -- essentially Air BnB -- and that rounds off to 39 units. Yes, 25% of the units in Concept C are short-term rentals. So perhaps 116 units remain for people who live in Juneau.



Why Juneau needs an Independent voice

By **BRUCE BOTELHO**

When a community loses its local news, it loses more than headlines — it loses part of its identity. A vibrant, informed public depends on journalists who understand local people, local issues and local life. That used to be the role of our hometown newspaper, but as corporate ownership has shifted the focus away from Juneau something vital has gone missing.

The Juneau Independent arose to fill that gap. It is locally rooted and nonprofit, built on the principle that news should serve the public, not shareholders. For that reason it has erected no paywall. Its mission is straightforward: provide accurate, independent and fair reporting that helps Juneau's citizens understand what's happening in their government,

schools, neighborhoods and environment.

In an era of shrinking newsroom budgets and copy-paste coverage from afar, that is no small thing. Local reporters are the ones who attend city meetings, follow school board debates, ask hard questions and celebrate community milestones. Without them, public accountability falters and civic life withers. In our case, we're blessed with an experienced editor in Mark Sabbatini, talented writers Jaszz Garrett, Ellie Ruel and Laurie Ferguson Craig, and the irreplaceable Klas Stolpe who covers our sports scene.

• *Bruce Botelho is the president of the Juneau Independent's board of directors.*



What is the Juneau Independent?

The Juneau Independent is a nonprofit, online newspaper founded by a team of local journalists and community supporters. It seeks to report news of local interest and importance without allowing commercial or political influences to interfere, while also providing a forum so all voices of the community who wish to be heard are given the opportunity. Funding comes from donations, ads and grants.

DONATE HERE!

Friday night tree lights in Douglas

Residents turn out to watch branches light up before joining others to ice skate with Santa

By ELLIE RUEL
Reporter

Douglas residents sparked their festive spirit with an annual Christmas tree-lighting ceremony on a chilly Friday evening, marking the shift into winter celebrations.

"It's kind of the kickoff to the holiday season," said Maggie Swanson, president of the Douglas Fourth of July Committee, which organizes the annual event. "The lights will stay on through the holiday, so people can take pictures with the lights, like when it starts to snow, then it's beautiful."

This year, the spruce tree growing in the Douglas Community United Methodist Church courtyard was decorated by employees with CBJ Parks and Recreation and lit by members of the Juneau Disc Golf Club.

The committee has been hosting the event an-

nually for over 25 years, as part of their celebration of the two holidays when workers at the historic Treadwell mine were allowed off work in Douglas during its 40-year operation.

"Miners got two days off a year, that's all. So don't complain about the jobs that you have now," Swanson said, prompting some laughs from the crowd. "In those two days, the whole town was quiet, the stamps all shut down, the whole town was quiet and got to celebrate."

After the lighting, the assemblage of about 25 people sang carols and headed inside the church for cookies and hot beverages, and many continued to the Santa Skate at Treadwell Arena. A few stayed behind to take photos among the brightly glowing branches with family and friends.

Liz Balstad and her daughter, decked out in lights of their own in the form of colorful Christmas bulb necklaces, handed out flashlights and sheet music to attendees. For Balstad the tree lighting has been a staple for years, and her daughter Laurie used to help with the Santa Skate.



DOUGLAS FOURTH OF JULY COMMITTEE

A tree outside Douglas Community United Methodist Church is lit for the holiday season on Friday, Nov. 28, 2025.

JDHS teachers and students share insight on possible cuts

Tax reductions OK'd by voters in election may affect extracurricular activities, buses and meals

By AURORA MADSEN
For the Juneau Independent

The outcome of the recent municipal election, passing tax cuts, will have a substantial effect on Juneau School District education and activities.

The election results, officially released on Oct. 21, were solely in favor of increasing affordability for Juneau residents and decreasing city revenue, consequently decreasing funding for education and

Editor's note: Aurora Madsen is a junior at JDHS and editor of The Crimson Chronicle, the school's student newspaper. This article examines the issue from a peer perspective.

city services.

Voters passed Proposition 1, which lowers property taxes for Juneau residents and commercial landowners, as well as Proposition 2, which removes essential food and residential utilities from the sales tax. Proposition 3, implementing a seasonal sales tax, which was put on the ballot to offset the possible revenue loss from Propositions 1 and

2, did not pass.

Proposition 1, lowering the property tax cap to nine mills instead of 12, may have the most significant effect on funding in the Juneau School District, according to local officials. Over half of the property taxes collected go to education.

"This decrease will make the city look closer at its priorities," said Karina Reyes, the librarian at Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé, who has been a school district employee for 28 years.



Sports

Shot clock comes to 4A play

JDHS, other schools plot for faster game, how to adjust in underdog situations during coming season

By **KLAS STOLPE**
Sports Editor

Basketballs may not bounce differently during the upcoming Alaska high school season, but the pace of the game could move faster with first-time usage of a 35-second shot clock.

“I have had some coaches tell me it will add another level of excitement to the game,” Alaska School Activities Association Executive Director Billy Strickland said.

“It forces coaches that have maybe been in a certain pattern for a long time to kind of have to rethink what they are doing, but 35 seconds is a long time. I don’t think you are going to see a lot of differences in the game until the very end.”

In their Oct. 6-7, 2025 meeting the ASAA board of directors voted unanimously to implement a 35-second shot clock for games between 4A opponents. The clock can also be used against a lower classification if both schools agree in writing at the time the game is scheduled and that written consent is retained by both schools and provided to the game officials prior to the contest.



JULIE HERMAN / JDHS

The Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadaa.at Kalé shot clock inside the George Houston Gymnasium.

Features

AI TRIES TO WRITE THE NEWS

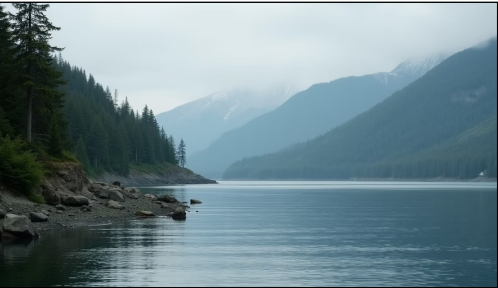
Cascade Point ferry terminal, Juneau Public Market

Editor’s note: AI Tries To Write The News is a weekly feature where a commercial AI blog tool is asked to write news stories about notable local events, with excerpts of the results provided. The intent is to familiarize readers with what AI-generated news content looks like, and should not be considered factual or “reporting” in any sense. This print edition contains only the AI-generated “photos” and captions — see the stories generated by scanning this QR code to access the full article at our website.



AI-GENERATED PHOTO AND CAPTION

“Handmade holiday ornaments and crafts displayed at the Juneau Public Market.”



AI-GENERATED PHOTO AND CAPTION

“Cascade Point shoreline near Juneau showing natural landscape and potential ferry terminal site.”



Always here for Juneau.
Quality orthopedics, physical therapy, and massage.

[Learn More](#)

More guidance
Local insurance that’s here for you.

[Get started](#)



Emil Mackey
907-500-7017

