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DAILY SITKA SENTINEL

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Traditional Events Start Alaska Day

By SHANNON HAUGLAND
Sentinel Staff Writer

The Alaska Day Festival kicks into high gear tonight with the Alaska Day Ball, to be followed on Friday with the parade and a full schedule of events.

In the words of the organizers, "The Alaska Day Festival annually commemorates the Transfer of Russian claim of Alaska to the United States of America at Sitka on October 18, 1867, and celebrates the diversity of cultures and historical perspectives of our people."

This year's theme is "Frontier First Responders," in honor of Sitka's emergency response professionals and volunteers, including search and rescue volunteers, EMTs and other medical personnel, law enforcement, firefighters, and Coast Guard response teams serving the community.

History is always the centerpiece of the Alaska Day Festival – with educational events, lectures and tours peppered throughout the schedule.

Friday's events lead up to the reenactment of the transfer ceremony atop Castle Hill immediately after the parade. A recent addition to the Alaska Day events is a Mourning Ceremony at the base of Noow Tlein (Castle Hill) by the Kik.sadi clan and other clans, at 2 p.m.

The Alaska Day Committee has declared: "As we focus on the annual commemoration of Alaska Day, we hope to inspire a deeper exploration into the cultures and history of the 1867 era. We aim to stimulate the imaginations of our current generation, and to look beyond our own histories, and to better appreciate the experiences

of others."

A military presence is a regular feature, with U.S. Army Band performances, service work by soldiers, and all visiting military personnel welcomed as guests.

High-ranking military officers here this year include Alaska Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Charles Knowles, Commander of the Alaska Army National Guard, from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson; and Maj. Gen. Peter B. Andrysiak Jr., U.S. Army Alaska Commanding General.

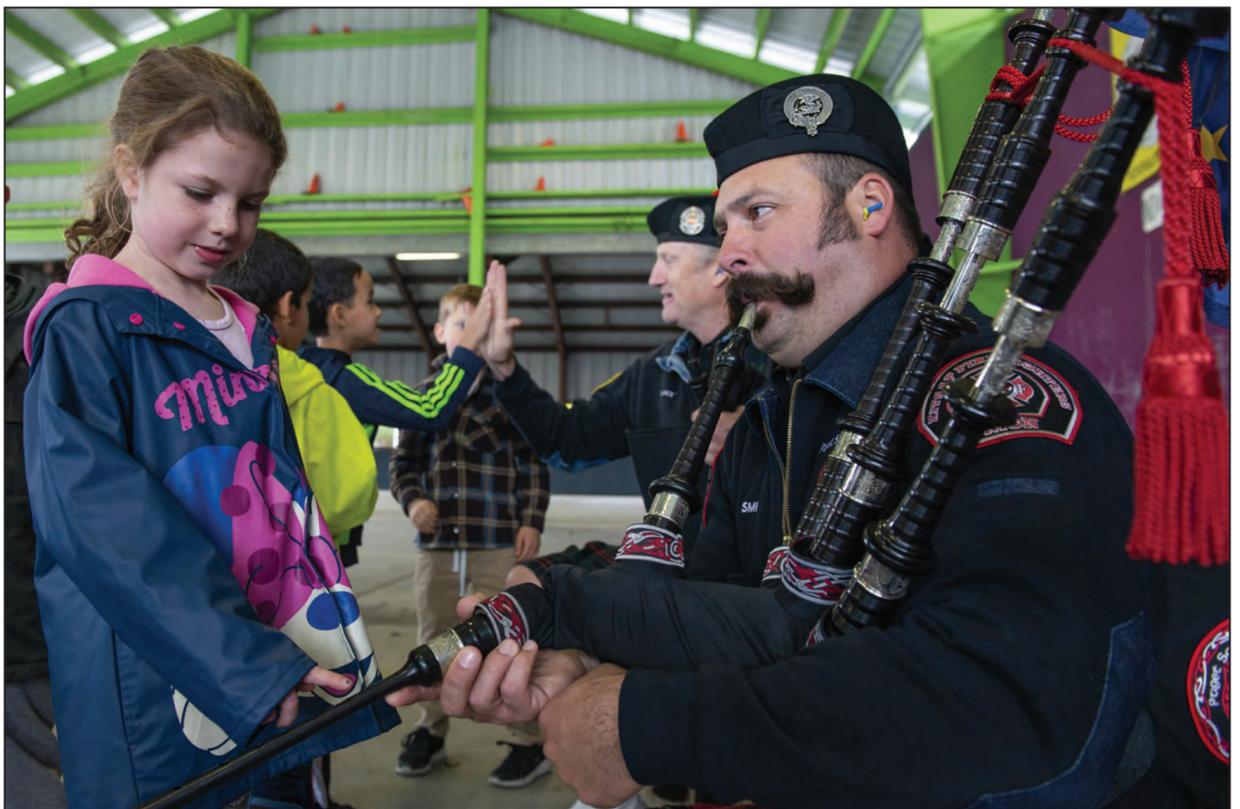
U.S. Army Alaska has assigned 12 members of the 4th Brigade Combat Team at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to form a rifle squad and color guard for ceremonies at Sitka National Cemetery and on Castle Hill.

"Soldiers from out of town combine with local National Guard members to participate in the Friday parade and other activities, including military training," the Alaska Day Committee says on its website.

For its part, the U.S. Army Alaska issued a statement that "Alaska Day in Sitka is the one opportunity USARAK has to come in contact with the Sitka community, which has an exceptional military and military retiree population. By participating, we are creating a relationship with citizens who may not have any further contact with the Army in the future and show that USARAK has a genuine understanding and appreciation of the historical significance of this event for the Sitka community."

The Alaska Day event schedule (* denotes official Festival event):

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Piping Pointers

Bagpiper Adam Smith, with the Seattle Firefighters Pipes and Drums, gets an assist from Baranof Elementary School first-grader Eleanor Ebanks this afternoon at the covered shelter on the school playground.

The Seattle band has become an integral part of the Alaska Day festival, performing at schools and at events during the day and at downtown venues during the night. (Sentinel Photo by James Poulson)

Improvement Allowed For Fry Bread Stand

By SHANNON HAUGLAND
Sentinel Staff Writer

A street vendor received the go-ahead from the Sitka Planning Commission Wednesday to replace his tent with a removable shed of comparable size.

The vote was 5-0 to approve an amendment to Colin Flanagan's conditional use permit for a food stand in the Central Business District. The property owners are Troy and Vickie Denkinger.

Flanagan runs a seasonal fry bread stand in the summer in the space between the buildings at 200 and 206 Lincoln Street.

Flanagan said he has been talking with the Sitka High School shop teacher about having a shop class build a more durable structure than the canopy, which he and his business partner have been putting up and taking down every day. The shed would be put up at

the start of the summer visitor season and removed at the end, he said.

Planner 1 Amy Ainslie asked the commission to consider the aesthetics of the more permanent structure, as well as fire and life safety issues. She said Flanagan has been working with the city building department and the fire department on those concerns.

Flanagan told panel members it is his goal to have "an aesthetically pleasing building," as well as a safe one.

From the public, Richard Wein asked that special attention be given to life safety issues, noting that an enclosed structure will increase certain dangers such as fire.

Chairman Chris Spivey noted, "It has to pass life safety inspection with the building department."

The vote was to approve the amendment and conditions, which include keeping a safe walkway and approval

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Dunleavy: Will Try For Smoother Budget Effort

By BECKY BOHRER
Associated Press

JUNEAU (AP) — Republican Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy outlined plans aimed at improving public safety in rural Alaska during a speech Thursday to a major gathering of Alaska Natives that was interrupted by protests.

The speech during a televised meeting of the Alaska Federation of Natives in Fairbanks touched on plans to address a backlog of sexual assault kits, hire 35 Alaska State Troopers with a focus on serving rural communities and work with tribes on education issues.

It came during a politically turbulent year for Dunleavy, marked by drawn-out legislative sessions with fights over spending cuts and the size of the check residents should receive from the earnings of Alaska's oil-wealth fund. Less than a year after taking office, Dunleavy faces a recall effort.

His speech was interrupted by protesting voices, prompting Will Mayo,

co-chair of the Alaska Federation of Natives board, to urge those gathered to be respectful.

"I respect your right to protest in this way, but I want to ask you, with respect, to please express your views at the voting booth, express your beliefs in a constructive way and don't come into our house and disrespect our guest," Mayo said to applause.

Dunleavy then resumed his speech.

The conference theme is "Good Government, Alaskan Driven." The agenda explained that good government refers to how well the state is meeting the needs of Alaskans and said the Dunleavy administration "tested the bounds of this principle in 2019," with his budget proposal and vetoes.

Divided lawmakers couldn't muster support to overturn Dunleavy's initial vetoes but passed another spending package for him to consider, which required a lower threshold of votes.

Dunleavy moderated his position on University of Alaska system cuts and accepted restored funding for areas including certain early childhood learning and senior citizen programs.

He cut money for Medicaid, public broadcasting and other areas.

Dunleavy has credited his vetoes with forcing Alaskans to talk about what they value. He has said he listened to comments he received.

In July, Dunleavy announced he was replacing Tuckerman Babcock, a former Republican party chair, as his chief of staff with Ben Stevens, a for-

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U.S. Hails Cease-Fire: Kurds Must Go

By ROBERT BURNS and
ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — The U.S. and Turkey agreed Thursday to a cease-fire in the Turks' deadly attacks on Kurdish fighters in northern Syria, requiring the Kurds to vacate the area in an arrangement that largely solidifies Turkey's position and aims in the weeklong conflict. The deal includes a conditional halt to American economic sanctions.

After negotiations with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence hailed the five-day cease-fire as the way to end the bloodshed caused by Turkey's invasion. He remained silent on whether it amounted to a second abandonment of America's former Kurdish allies in the fight against the Islamic State group.

Turkish troops and Turkish-backed Syrian fighters launched their offensive against Kurdish forces in northern Syria a week ago, two days after President Donald Trump suddenly announced he was withdrawing the U.S. military from the area. Trump was widely criticized for turning on the Kurds, who had taken heavy casualties as partners with the U.S. in fighting IS extremists since 2016.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said the United States had accepted the idea of a "safe zone" long pushed by Turkey, and he insisted

Turkish armed forces will control the zone. He also made clear that Turkey will not stop at a previously limited zone; he said Turkish control of the Syrian side of the border must extend all the way to the Iraqi border.

The commander of Kurdish-led forces in Syria, Mazloum Abdi, told Kurdish TV, "We will do whatever we can for the success of the cease-fire agreement." But one Kurdish official, Razan Hiddo, declared that Kurdish people would refuse to live under Turkish occupation.

Trump had no reservations, hailing "a great day for civilization."

"Everybody agreed to things that three days ago they would have never agreed to," he told reporters. "That includes the Kurds. The Kurds are now much more inclined to do what has to be done. Turkey is much more inclined to do what has to be done."

Trump seemed to endorse the Turkish aim of ridding the Syrian side of the border of the Kurdish fighters whom Turkey deems to be terrorists but who fought against IS on behalf of the U.S. "They had to have it cleaned out," he said.

Leading U.S. lawmakers were less pleased than Trump.

Sen. Mitt Romney, the Republicans' presidential nominee in 2012, said he welcomed the cease-fire but wanted to know what America's role in the region would be and why Turkey was facing no consequences for its invasion.

"Further, the cease-fire does not change the fact that America has abandoned an ally," he said on the

Senate floor.

It was not clear whether the deal means the U.S. military will play a role in enabling or enforcing the cease-fire. Pence said the U.S. would "facilitate" the Kurds' pullout, but he did not say if

that would include the use of American troops.

The Pentagon had no immediate comment.

As Pence was speaking in Ankara, Pence said the U.S. would "facilitate" the Kurds' pullout, but he did not say if

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Civil Rights Champion Elijah Cummings Dies

By BRIAN WITTE and
REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Maryland Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, a sharecropper's son who rose to become a civil rights champion and the chairman of one of the U.S. House committees leading an impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump, died Thursday of complications from longstanding health problems. He was 68.

Cummings was a formidable orator who advocated for the poor in his black-majority district, which encompasses a large portion of Baltimore and more well-to-do suburbs.

As chairman of the House Oversight and Reform Committee, Cummings led investigations of the president's government dealings, including probes in 2019 relating to Trump's family members serving in the White House.

Trump criticized the Democrat's district as a "rodent-infested mess" where "no human being would want to live." The comments came weeks af-



Rep. Elijah Cummings at the National Press Club in Washington in August. (AP Photo/Patrick Semansky, File)

ter Trump drew bipartisan condemnation following his calls for Democratic congresswomen of color to go back to their "broken and crime-infested coun-

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Delegation Favors New Roadless Rule

WASHINGTON — The three members of Alaska's Congressional delegation have issued a statement supporting the exemption of the Tongass National Forest from the national Roadless Rule.

The joint press release by Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan and Rep. Don Young, all Republicans, came following the announcement by the U.S. Forest Service that the 60-day public comment period has opened on the agency's proposal to replace the national Roadless Rule for an Alaska-specific plan for managing the Tongass.

"I'm very pleased the administration has listened to Alaskans and is proposing a full exemption from the Roadless Rule as its preferred alternative," Murkowski said in the release. "I thank President Trump, Secretary Perdue, and the team at the Forest Service for their hard work to reach this point — and for their continued efforts to restore reasonable access to the Tongass National Forest. This is important for a wide array of local stakeholders as we seek to create sustainable economies in Southeast Alaska."

Sullivan said he also welcomed the

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END OF THE SEASON RIDE — Children crowd the stage as members of the New Archangel Dancers perform at Harrigan Centennial Hall Monday during the End-of-Season Grand Finale. Harrigan

Centennial Hall will be the venue for the Alaska Day Festival Ball 7 p.m. tonight, the Brew Fest Friday from 2:30 - 6:30 p.m., and the Alaska Day variety show 6:30 p.m. Saturday. (Sentinel Photo)

The Daily Sentinel will not publish Fri., Oct. 18, in observance of Alaska Day.