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WRANGELL GUIDE



2014

Visitor Guide & Vacation Planner

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The Wrangell Guide

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Cover photograph: The Chief Shakes House is an example of classical Tlingit architecture and a centerpiece attraction for Wrangell. The Inner Harbor area was once ringed with similar clan houses for the various Tlingit clans which called Wrangell home.



The One People Canoe Society, along with dancers and community members from many Native towns and villages across Southeast Alaska visited the Shakes Island Tribal House after a monumental parade through downtown in 2013 during the dedication of the refurbished structure.

Welcome to friendly Wrangell, Alaska

Wrangell, one of the most historic communities in Alaska, is the only town in the state to have been ruled by four nations: Tlingit, Russia, England and the United States.

Wrangell also has the reputation for being the “friendliest little town in Southeast Alaska.”

Located on the northern tip of 30-mile-long Wrangell Island, Wrangell is a community of about 2,448 people, set amid the forests and mountains of Alaska’s Panhandle along the scenic Inside Passage.

Situated in the middle of the Tongass National Forest, the island has a mild climate with temperatures seldom dipping below freezing in the winter. Rain is more common than snow and summer temperatures range anywhere from the mid-50s to the mid-70s.

Wrangell is 750 miles north of Seattle, 85 miles north of Ketchikan, and 150 miles south of Juneau, the state capitol. It sits near the delta of the Stikine River, an important resource in the lives of those who live here. Through it, Wrangellites enjoy recreation, commerce, and subsistence. At Wrangell’s back door is neighboring British Columbia, the westernmost province of Canada. On a clear day you can see the majes-

tic snowcapped mountains to the north and east of Wrangell Island, which spill to the coast. The border is only hours away via airplane or boat up the Stikine River. Between here and there lie many lakes and rivers available for camping, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Developed as a trading post for the native Tlingit and early white settlers, Wrangell was incorporated in 1903. However, not much remains of the original town – much of downtown has twice been decimated by fire; first in 1906 and again in 1952.

Wrangell has periodically seen declines in its economy due to constraints on the timber and fishing industries. The region continues to clamor for stability for its human inhabitants through the ever-changing sport and commercial fishing industries, small-scale timber operations and the development of the tourism industry.

Wrangell has a fleet of hand and power trollers, seiners, and gillnet vessels. Salmon is the major product, along with halibut, shrimp, crab and herring. Several seafood processors are scattered throughout town.

Individual fishermen have been known to sell their catch to residents or visitors on the docks in the downtown harbor area. You



can watch the catches being hauled onto the docks and sample some of the freshest seafood you’ll ever taste.

Wrangell shrimp are famous for their delectable flavor. From large, luscious prawns to the small salad variety, the shrimp truly melt in your mouth. Local restaurants feature shrimp in dinners and salads. Shrimp are also sold by local fishermen and processors and packaged for shipping.

The downtown harbor can accommodate small pleasure craft and larger fishing vessels. Slips

for visitors are available either in the downtown harbor or at Shoemaker Bay, about five miles south of town on the island’s west side or at Wrangell’s newest harbor, Heritage Harbor, located approximately a mile from downtown.

To obtain a slip assignment, vessel captains should contact the harbor master on VHF Ch.16. The harbor master is on duty from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., seven days a week.

The harbor master office is located at the head of Wrangell Harbor (Reliance Dock) and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and can be reached at 874-3736. Harbor personnel are on duty 7 days a week.

If the harbor master can’t be reached, a transient float is located at Reliance dock, the first float on the port side past the seaplane float. Boats may tie up here until the harbor master is contacted by phone or radio.

Wrangell offers a true taste of small town Alaskan life with friendly residents who welcome visitors. Everyone in town is an unofficial greeter. Don’t hesitate to ask if you need help.



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World class bear viewing, local attraction

One thing — salmon — draws the bears to Anan Wildlife Observatory.

The abundance of fish allows the normally solitary bears to tolerate one another in close company, creating a viewing opportunity unique in Southeast. In addition, black and brown bears work the salmon stream together, which is atypical of areas where the two species' ranges overlap. For example, Baranof, Chichagof and Kruzof islands are the exclusive domain of brown bears, according to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

The bears get along because — like amiable buffet patrons — they are more concerned about the food than each other, said Dee Galla, Wrangell Ranger District Outdoor Recreation Planner.

“The food source is so rich that the bears will tolerate one another,” she said. “It’s all about the salmon. They’re going to go where they’re going to get the most food. To come here, they have to tolerate each other. It makes for a unique experience.”

The fishy bounty also means the bears seen at Anan are unusu-

ally tolerant of humans, Galla said.

“It’s not because they like people,” she said. “It’s just that they have to be less reactive if they want to eat.”

In addition to a strong showing of bears, visitors to the observatory have also been plenty with the daily allowance of people per day nearly being reached every day, according to Galla. Since 2004, a \$10 fee permit is required from July 5 to Aug. 25. The Forest Service limits visitors to 60 people per day.

Although the observatory is open outside of the permit season, the best time for a close encounter of the bear kind falls between those dates.

According to Galla, the observatory draws people from around the world and so far, she has seen groups from Canada, Germany and Australia. From the United States, she said that every state has been represented throughout the years, although West Coast residents seem to be more prevalent.

Visitors to the observatory can expect to see bears working the streams, but a nearby hiking trail



An Alaskan black bear catches its lunch near the Anan Wildlife Observatory.

also provides opportunities for bear encounters. U.S. Forest Service statistics — the service tracks virtually all information about the bears — suggest a visitor can stay at the observatory only 10 minutes and see at least two bears, according to figures provided by Matt Jurak, a Natural Resource Specialist and Anan site manager.

“We basically track everything on site and who’s going up and

down the trail,” he said.

A regular roster of resident bears has even earned names based on their appearance. A bear with a healed side wound is called Stitches, because the wound looks like it was stitched up. A female black bear with a heart-shaped white patch over her heart is known as Boboli.

Local charter services provide trips to Anan during the peak season.

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ZIMOVIA B&B 874-2626, 319 Weber St. Box 1424, zimoviabnb@rgbwebs.com www.zimoviabnb.com Toll free: 866-946-6842	Yes	Yes	Yes	Continental Breakfast	Yes	Yes	<u>Yes</u>



The M/V Matanuska pulls into port just after sunset on a spectacular summer's eve.

By air or sea, getting here is part of the fun

Even though there are no roads to Wrangell, it's easy to get here.

The town is served by daily jet service, charter planes, and state ferries several times a week.

The Alaska Airlines jet flies north from Seattle via Ketchikan each day, arriving in Wrangell. Sunrise Aviation, also located at the airport, offers charter flight and sightseeing services.

Wrangell Airport has a paved runway and taxi area, and navigational aids for use when cloud cover gets heavy. It's located 1.5 miles north of town, and taxis and rental cars are available.

State ferries on the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) service Wrangell northbound from Bellingham, Wash., Prince Rupert, B.C., and Ketchikan, Alaska. AMHS vessels also serve Petersburg, Sitka, Juneau, Haines and Skagway, with routes to Hoonah, Tenakee, Kake, Angoon, Metlakatla and Stewart/Hyder.

The local state ferry terminal and dock is on Stikine Avenue, one block north of the Stikine Inn and downtown. The state ferry system was recognized recently as an official "Scenic Byway," the only one in the United States where the automobiles get to ride as well.



A Bearfest bear stands watch on the 18th hole of Muskeg Meadows as the late jet arrives at Wrangell Airport.

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- Send for a brochure - most operators have them and many include photos of the boat and descriptions of available trips.
- Consider the size of your party - some operators can accommodate larger parties while some prefer to concentrate on small groups.
- Consider the ages and abilities of your party - find out if trips can be paced for elderly or handicapped persons, and what ages of children are welcome.
- Ask what to wear - some operators furnish gear that others don't, and they can tell you what type of clothes to wear for your greatest comfort.



Sea lions gather on Lesnoi Island in the spring waiting for the Hooligan run.

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Directory of Coast Guard - Licensed Charter Boat Services

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Alaska Waters Box 1978 874-2378, 1-800-347-4462	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Breakaway Adventures Box 2107, 874-2488 1-888-385-2488 (toll free)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X

Stikine River: highway, larder, playground, wilderness

The fastest-flowing navigable river in North America, and one of the few remaining free-flowing rivers, the Stikine (pronounced “Stick EEN,” meaning “great river”) runs 330 miles through British Columbia and the Alaska mainland to its delta, just a few miles NW of Wrangell.

A favorite camping, fishing,

hunting and boating area for residents and visitors alike, the Stikine offers magnificent scenery, with unparalleled views of glaciers, ice fields and mountains.

In 1980, when Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, ANILCA), the 449,951-acre Stikine-LeConte Wilderness was created, surrounding the Alaskan portion of the river.

Roaring rapids and unique landscapes are among the many attractions found by following the Stikine River into interior British Columbia. Relatively few people have seen the spectacular mountains, canyons, glaciers, forests and wildlife of this area.

Those who wish to experience this beauty should come prepared for a real wilderness adventure.

The Stikine empties into the Pacific Ocean just five miles north of Wrangell, but the river begins its 330-mile-long journey deep inside British Columbia at peaceful headwaters in Spatsizi Wilderness Park.

Grizzly bear, caribou, moose, and mountain goat roam the tranquil rolling tableland in this area, which is surrounded by vast mountains.

The alpine tundra along the upper reaches of the Stikine gradually gives way to a thick spruce forest farther downstream.



Deer and moose can occasionally be viewed along the banks of the Stikine.

One of the most spectacular features of the river is the 55-mile long Grand Canyon of the Stikine, about 200 miles upstream from Wrangell. Canyon walls soar as high as 1,000 feet.

Just south of the Grand

Canyon is Mount Edziza Provincial Park and Recreation Area, a significant volcanic area in Canada. No eruptions have been officially

Continued on page 6



The Bald Eagle, America's national bird, is at home and widespread among almost all the communities in Southeast Alaska. They are seen widely in Wrangell.

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Stikine River

Continued from page 5

recorded, apart from in the oral histories of Native clans.

At the west end of the Grand Canyon is Telegraph Creek,



This young moose wades onto a sandbar near the mouth of the Stikine River between Mitkof and Farm Islands.

population approx. 300, the only town along the Stikine, established by the Tahltan people. Rafters, kayakers and canoeists use the town as a starting point for exciting, scenic trips downriver to Wrangell.

The high peaks of the Coast Mountains tower up to 10,000 feet over the river. Glaciers hang from high mountain valleys. The river snakes between forested shores and wide expanses of sand and log deposits past connecting river outlets and cascading waterfalls, through untamed country where visitors enjoy camping, fishing, hunting, and exploring.

The Stikine crosses the border into Alaska for the last 30 miles of its run.

Many Wrangell residents pilot their boats across the Stikine delta – not an easy feat, since the delta is laced with tricky sandbars – to explore the side sloughs of the river, picnic on sandy beaches or visit other favorite spots.

Several Wrangell charter boat and jet boat operators offer trips on the Stikine, including roundtrips to Telegraph Creek, B.C. More information is available at the Chamber of Commerce, in the advertisements in the Wrangell Guide, or from museum staff.



This flock of migrating snow geese is observed from the Little Dry Island Forest Service rental cabin located on the Stikine River delta, an excellent location for birdwatching and wildlife observation.



One way to see the Stikine River is by small plane. This view of the braided channels at the lower end of the river was taken in the spring, before the flats turn green and the channels have lost all their ice. Small plane is also one of two ways to reach Telegraph Creek, British Columbia, the other being via jet boat. Other favorite Stikine destinations - Garnet Ledge, Chief Shakes Hot Springs and Twin Lakes - which are all accessible via jet boat.

Stikine River provides opportunities for relaxation

GARNET LEDGE

At the edge of the river delta, near a U. S. Forest Service public recreation cabin, a trail leads to a 38-acre garnet mine where local children mine the garnets, which they then sell to visitors. The mine was deeded to the Boy Scouts of America and the Presbyterian Church in 1962 and “children of Wrangell” (See story on page 21)

are the only ones allowed to remove garnets, using only hand tools. The local Scouts quit-claimed the deed to the Church in the early 2000s. Prior permission is required before setting foot on or around the ledge, which is private property of the church. Permission may be obtained by phone from church officials by calling 874-3534.

CHIEF SHAKES HOT SPRINGS

Located 28 miles up the Stikine River, this is one of the more popular recreational destinations for local residents. One covered and one open-air tub provide comfortable places for a hot soak. Locals often refer to the springs as “The Chief Shakes Hot Tubs” because of the tubs.

There are dressing rooms, benches and outhouses, but no overnight accommodations. Expect large crowds on weekends, holidays and sunny days throughout the summer.

High river level at Ketili Slough is required for easiest access, though a .3-mile trail (easy to moderate) off Hot Springs Slough provides access at lower water levels.

TWIN LAKES

When the river is high enough to allow access to these lakes, they are a favorite summer recreation spot for water skiing, jet skiing, picnicking and swimming. At the

entrance to Twin Lakes Slough, the Forest Service has a public recreation cabin available for rent. A trail leads from the cabin to the lakes.

TELEGRAPH CREEK, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Wrangell also provides an opportunity for an excursion up the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek, 160 miles from Wrangell into the Canadian interior. Telegraph Creek is accessible by either plane or boat.

Visitors get a first-hand look at a historic Gold Rush town, replete with historic buildings, including the former Hudson’s Bay Company store, (a Canadian Heritage Building site). The area surrounding the town provides opportunities for walking, hiking, fishing, and camping. Telegraph Creek also offers a land link into Canada. Just 70 miles to the NE is Dease Lake and the Cassiar Highway, which crosses the “Grand Canyon of the Stikine” a storied British Columbia river canyon, by bridge.

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Walking tour of Wrangell and its historic buildings

Wrangell has many historic and fascinating places to see during your visit. The Wrangell Walking Tour is designed for an easy 45-minute stroll. You'll probably want to allow extra time for browsing in shops, visiting the museum or stopping somewhere to eat.

To get into town from the ferry terminal, locate the weathered wooden "Wrangell" sign, near the edge of the parking lot, with its history of the town, and the Forest Service sign with its information about cabins and bears. Follow the narrow one-lane road south (it looks like an alley between small wooden houses) and enjoy a fine view of Zimovia Strait as you go. There's an informational sign on the walkway as you near town, naming the visible islands, and telling the story of "Elephant's Nose," a local land-

mark.

One block will bring you to the **Stikine Inn**, a blue two-story building, which also houses the Stikine Inn Restaurant, The Parlor and Alaska Waters gift shop.

Uphill, to your left, is the **Post Office**, dating from about 1940. This was the original site of Fort Wrangell and the Customs Office in the late 1800s. There is an excellent totem on the front lawn. (You'll notice there are no mailboxes on city streets, so if you want to mail a letter or postcard, this is where to do it.)

At the Stikine Inn (where cruise ship passengers will start their walk from City Dock) turn onto the town's main street – **Front Street**. Many famous people from history have stepped off ships and onto this dock and down Front Street, such as Wyatt Earp, John Muir, and President



Mail is not delivered to street addresses in Wrangell so residents must pick up their mail at the Post Office. It is also a great place to run into friends and swap news.

Warren G. Harding to name a few. A good number of buildings date from the late 1800s and early 1900s. All the historical buildings are on the left side of the street, because a fire at the beginning of the 1900s and another in 1952 burned all the structures and docks that used to exist on the waterside: that area is now occupied by buildings constructed on fill.

Note the historical plaques affixed to the buildings: the **Matheson/Angerman's Building** (c. 1907); the **Grant/Buness Building** with its two parts dating from 1906 and 1927, which used to house the Pioneer Hotel; the **Patenaude/Grant Building** with its six-sided shingled turret, which served as the center for city government between 1907 and 1911; the **Campbell/Ottesen**

(1934), a hardware store incorporating the old Fire Hall from 1912; **Wheeler/Angerman**, (now the Totem Bar), built in 1908; the **Greif/Stough Building** (1898), formerly the Fort Wrangell Brewery Beer Hall, currently between tenants; the **Uhler/Nolan Building** (1913) which houses **Stikine Drug**; the **Engstrom/Taylor Building**; the **Waters/Phillips Building** (1922) which now features **Jerry's Arcade**; the **Jenkins/Hofstad Building** (1934) which houses **Wrangell Insurance**; the **Biehl Building** (1898); and the **Grant/Wilcox Building** (c1910) on the west side of Front Street.

Across the street from Stikine Drug, you'll see the office of the **Wrangell Sentinel**, Alaska's

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Walking tour

Continued from page 8

longest continuously published newspaper. Looking toward the waterfront on Lynch Street (across from the Stikine Drug) you'll see the one-story brown building with a large Native design on the side, housing **City Hall**. Nearby is a picnic area with a fine view of the harbor, and public restrooms to the right, behind the **Elks Lodge**.

Take a short excursion now along Campbell Drive, behind **Bobs' IGA supermarket**, to the home of the **James and Elsie Nolan Center**, Wrangell's museum and convention center. Leaving the museum area, and continuing on past First Bank, you will again meet Front Street.

(Practical matters: **The Wells Fargo Bank** on Front Street houses a 24-hour ATM. Another ATM machine belonging to First Bank is located on the south side of the building at the intersection of Breuger Street and Campbell Drive.

Continuing along Front Street just past **Sentry Hardware** and **City Market grocery store**, you will see **Totem Park** to the left. The Kiks.ádi (also called the Kahlteen) Totem at the front of the park, and the other three totems farther back, along the gravel paths, are painstakingly carved replicas of totems that once stood throughout the community. Note the church at the top of the hill. Your tour will take you past it later.

Front Street ends at the corner of Case Avenue and Shakes Street, near the blue building called **Rayme's Bar**. Angle off to the right at the "Y" and soon you will pass **Churchill's Laundromat** and the **Marine**



Detail of carved house posts inside Chief Shakes House.

Bar on the left. The Marine Bar is located on the site of **Fort St. Dionysius**, built by the Russian American Company in 1832 to keep "King George's men" of the Hudson's Bay Company from going up the Stikine River. Across from the bar is **Trident Seafoods** cannery and cold storage.

In the dock area is the **Harbormaster's Office** on the right.

A wooden walkway leads to **Shakes Island** across from the Harbormaster's Office. Dating from 1840 to 1940, the island's Tlingit tribal house and totems are maintained by the Wrangell Cooperative Association. The building, which is on the National Register of Historic Sites, is open at times during the summer months and for cruise ships, and offers an excellent chance to see firsthand a glimpse of the past and the items and lodgings of the early Tlingit people. Tours are offered frequently. A wonderful, peaceful oasis, the island affords a picturesque (and photogenic) view of the harbor. Half-log benches offer a restful place to sit and drink it all in. Up in the trees, watch for ravens and bald eagles, which seem to have adopted this place as their own private

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ACROSS FROM THE BOATYARD HAUL OUT

Continued on page 10

Walking tour

Continued from page 9

refuge.

Returning from Shakes Island, retrace your steps to the “Y” at Rayme’s Bar and turn right onto Case Avenue. Walking for a few minutes will take you to a sharp right bend after which you will pass a few houses on the left and a **boat shop** on the right. Across from the boat shop, up on a hill, is **Chief Shake’s Grave**. This site is nestled amongst evergreens and salmonberry bushes and is marked by two killer whale totems and a fence.

Returning back toward town on Case Avenue, take the first right heading up onto Church Street, where the **Bible Baptist Church** sits on a hill. Looking over to your right, on the next street over, Zimovia Highway, you can spot the backs of the **Salvation Army** and the **Harbor Light Assembly of God** churches.

Continuing on Church Street stands **St. Philip’s Episcopal Church**. Founded by the Rev. H. P. Courser, a noted figure in Wrangell history, the church was



Wrangell harbor’s Reliance Float, as viewed from Chief Shakes Island, on a calm summer evening.

built by local Native people in 1903. The Episcopal Church also operated the first hospital in Wrangell until the city took it over in the 1960s. The church is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Church Street parts on the left at the next intersection (turning right would take you to Zimovia Highway, towards the **hospital**, **police department** and south

highway). Turning left, toward town, you’ll see the studios of **KSTK-FM** (Radio Stikine: 101.7 on the dial) and the blue-roofed **Stikine Middle School** and

Continued on page 11

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Walking tour

Continued from page 10

Wrangell High School, built in 1985, complete with a **swimming pool and exercise rooms** that are open to the public.

Continuing north on Church Street, you pass the **First Presbyterian Church**, the “Oldest Protestant Church in Alaska” founded in 1879 by the Rev. S.

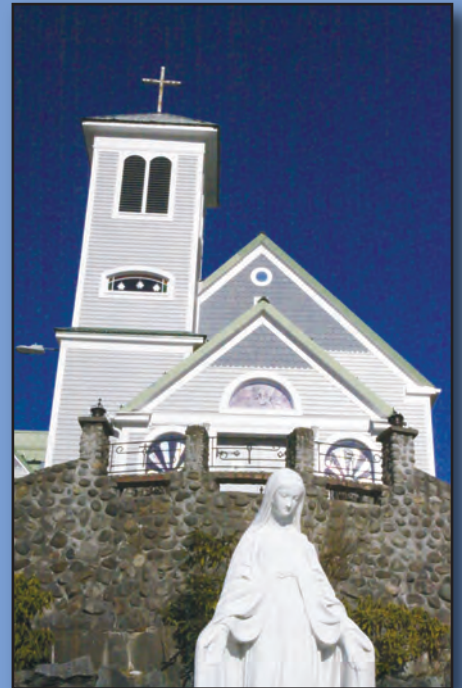
Hall Young, a noted Christian missionary and friend of the naturalist John Muir. Another Presbyterian missionary, Amanda McFarland, arrived in 1878 to start a school for Native girls; this was on the site of the present high school. The church has maintained a continuous ministry since its organization in August 1879. The lighted cross on the steeple is used as a beacon for fishermen at sea.

Two buildings down is **St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church**, also established in 1879, and the “First Catholic Church in Alaska.” The church was established by Fathers C.J. Seghers and J. Althoff. Note the stonework stairs and the rose-stained glass window above the doorway.

At the corner of Church Street and McKinnon is the **Wrangell Senior Center**, which offers hospitality and lunches Mondays through Fridays. Visitors are welcome, though lunch reservations must be made beforehand. More information is available by phone at 874-2066.

The **Irene Ingle Public Library**, located on 2nd St. across from the back of the **Post Office**, is named for its former longtime librarian. The library has an excellent collection of Alaskan, cur-

Continued on page 14



The St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church is one of several historic churches offering services in Wrangell. For a map of locations, check pages 14 and 15 of this guide.

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13 Front Street

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Wrangell Business Directory

This map is presented as a public service by the following businesses advertised in the Wrangell Guide

1. **Alaska Charters & Adventures, Marine Arts**, 5 Front St. Unit 1, Box 1996, 874-4157
2. **Alaska Waters**, 107 Stikine Ave., Box 1978, 874-2378
3. **Angerman's Inc.**, 2 Front St., Box 928, 874- 3640
4. **Breakaway Adventures**, 5 Front St., Unit 4, Box 2107, 874-2488
5. **Bobs' IGA**, 223 Brueger St., Box 21, 874-2341
6. **City Market**, 423 Front St., Box 140, 874-3333
7. **Haystack**, 1002 Case, Box 431, 874-3648
8. **NAPA Southeast Auto & Marine Parts**, 5 Front St. Unit 1, Box 1955, 874-2339
9. **Rooney's Roost**, 206 McKinnon St., 874-2026
10. **Smith Chiropractic**, 109 Lynch St., Box 1651, 874-3361
11. **Sentry Hardware & Marine**, 408 Front St., Box 1139, 874-3336
12. **Stikine Inn and Restaurant**, 105 Stikine Ave., Box 662, 874-3388
13. **Wrangell Chamber of Commerce**, 107 Stikine Ave, 874-3901
14. **Zimovia B&B**, 319 Weber St, 874-2626


See map on page 13 for the following business

15. **Sunrise Aviation**, Wrangell Airport, Box 432, 874-2319

-  **Public Restrooms**
-  **Public Building**
-  **Totem Locations**







~ Wrangell Churches ~

- A. Island of Faith Lutheran Church-ELCA
- B. St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church
- C. First Presbyterian Church
- D. St. Philip's Episcopal Church
- E. Wrangell Community Church of God
- F. Wrangell Seventh-day Adventist Church
- G. The Salvation Army
- H. Harbor Light Assembly of God
- I. Bible Baptist Church
- J. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Walking tour

Continued from page 11

rent newspapers, magazines, as well as computers and a friendly staff to serve you.

Continue across the street to the Post Office, (which you saw from the bottom of the hill earlier) a two story white stucco building which served as federal offices for many years. From here you can enjoy a spectacular view of Zimovia Strait.

From the Post Office, go back down the hill to Front Street and City Dock, or if you're going back to the state ferry terminal, continue walking north from the Library.

Customs are the last stop in any Canadian travel

Anyone interested in visiting Alaska's nearest neighbor, Canada, may do so if they have a few hours to spend on a spectacularly scenic and enjoyable trip. Local jet boat operators and Sunrise Aviation will transport visitors on relaxing tours of the Stikine River, Canadian mountains and scenery, and stop in

Telegraph Creek, B.C. for a visit if time allows. Anyone visiting another country (yes, Canada is near, but still a foreign country) must be cleared through customs. Twenty-four hour notice is generally required by Canadian Customs, and can be done in advance by calling the company that you will be using



One way to get into Canada is via small airplane.

(see Charter Boat Listing on page 4), giving each your birth date and nationality. Tours on shorter notice are possible, depending on the Canadian Customs schedule.

Customs aren't required for a non-stop flight through Canadian airspace. American Customs are available by phone at 874-3415 when returning to Wrangell.



"Wrangell's Waterfront Hotel"



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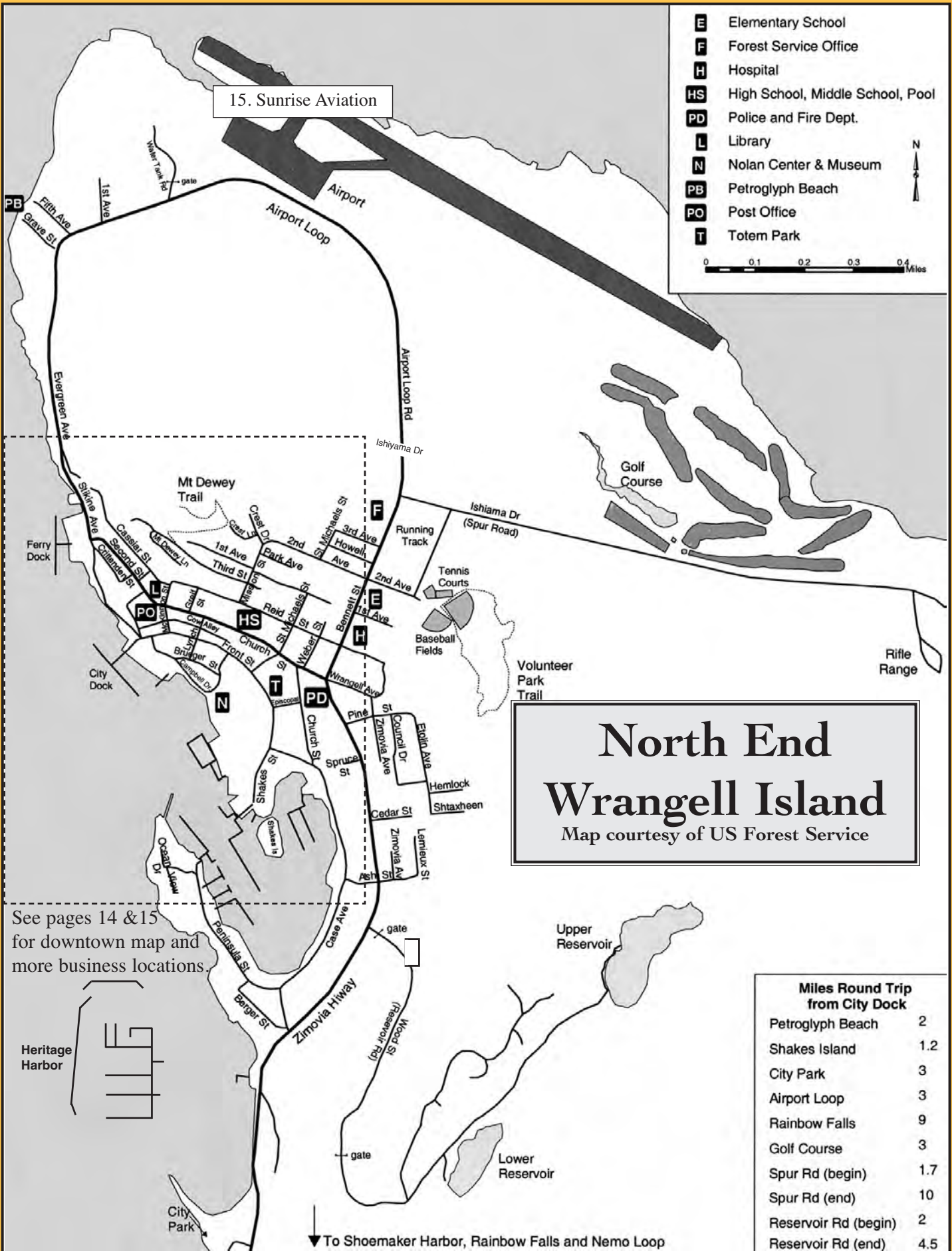
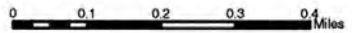
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15. Sunrise Aviation

- E** Elementary School
- F** Forest Service Office
- H** Hospital
- HS** High School, Middle School, Pool
- PD** Police and Fire Dept.
- L** Library
- N** Nolan Center & Museum
- PB** Petroglyph Beach
- PO** Post Office
- T** Totem Park



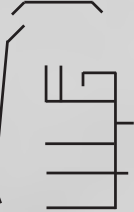
North End Wrangell Island

Map courtesy of US Forest Service

See pages 14 & 15 for downtown map and more business locations.

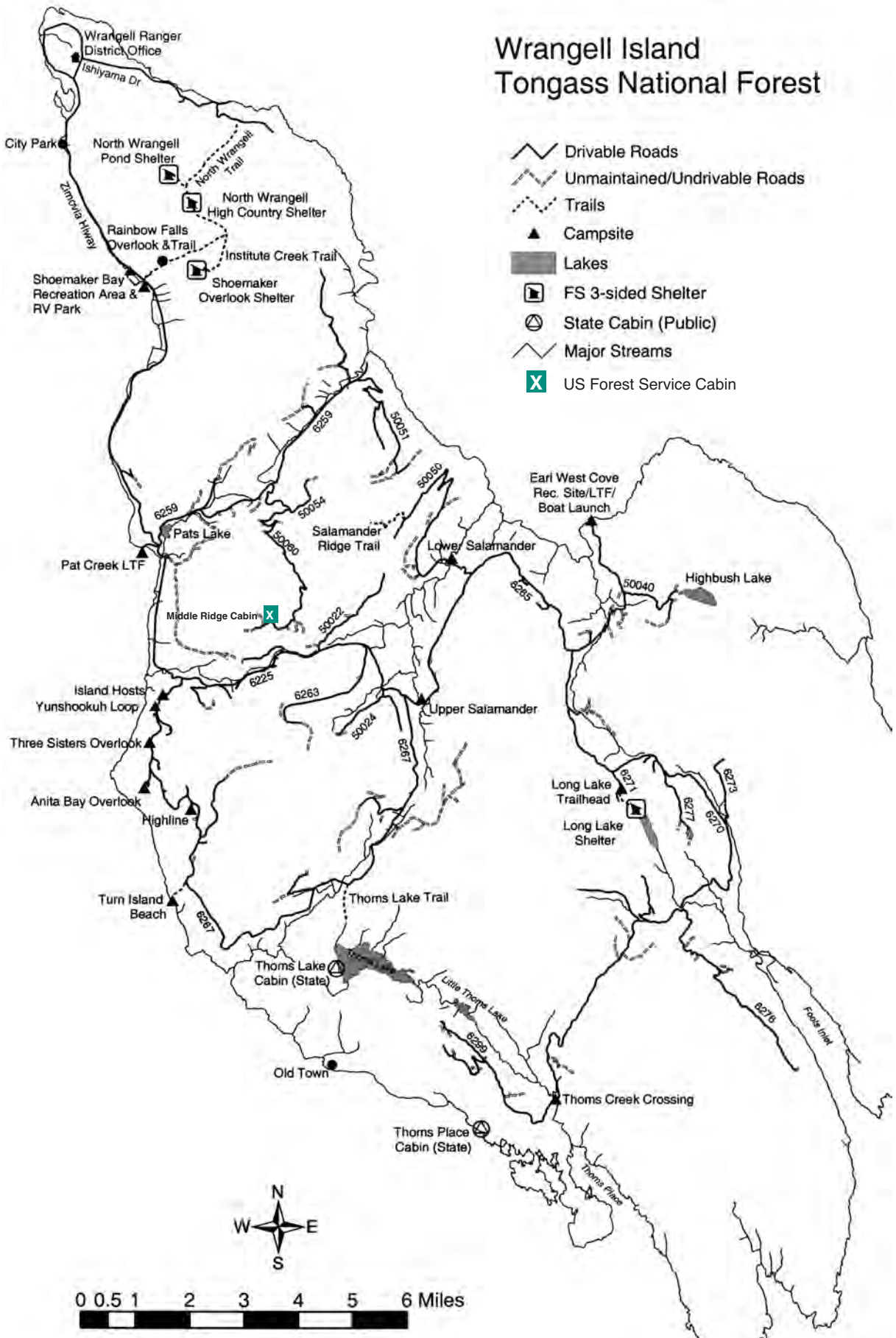
Miles Round Trip from City Dock	
Petroglyph Beach	2
Shakes Island	1.2
City Park	3
Airport Loop	3
Rainbow Falls	9
Golf Course	3
Spur Rd (begin)	1.7
Spur Rd (end)	10
Reservoir Rd (begin)	2
Reservoir Rd (end)	4.5

Heritage Harbor



▼ To Shoemaker Harbor, Rainbow Falls and Nemo Loop

Wrangell Island Tongass National Forest



- Drivable Roads
- Unmaintained/Undrivable Roads
- Trails
- Campsite
- Lakes
- FS 3-sided Shelter
- State Cabin (Public)
- Major Streams
- US Forest Service Cabin



Nolan Center a community gathering place

Since its opening in 2004, the James and Elsie Nolan Center has become a well-established part of the community and town skyline. Housed within the Nolan Center are the Wrangell Museum, the Wrangell Convention Center, the Wrangell Visitor's Center, and Castle Mountain Theater.

The museum features a chronological history of Wrangell and the Stikine River. Exhibits feature the natural environment, Native culture, the fur trade, military presence, the gold rushes and mining, churches and schools, fishing, logging and 20th Century history. In addition, there is a central area that allows for a three to five minute video highlighting these topics. There are also audio, video and hands-on components at various stations in the exhibit area. More than 250 photos from the museum collection — which number in the tens of thousands

— have been selected for display. Many of the museum's three-dimensional artifacts are used, as well as several borrowed artifacts that help with the interpretations of different aspects of Wrangell's rich history.

In addition to the current exhibits in the main gallery, the museum's storage is available for viewing through a window in the back of the main gallery. This is to allow visitors to view the artifacts not currently on display. The museum's extensive art collection is featured in the lobby area.

Upon entering the Nolan Center, visitors see the original Chief Shakes House house posts. Further into the lobby are two totems overlooking a replica of the Stikine River Delta inlaid on the floor. Overhead, an advanced lighting system displays the northern lights on the ceiling.

The Visitor's Center houses an



The Nolan Center and Museum is truly a multi-use facility, housing the museum, civic center, convention and visitors bureau, and theater.

interactive map of the island and Stikine River Delta. Here visitors can also find maps, brochures, and photos. Representatives from the US Forest Service are in the Visitors Center on days when a boat is in town.

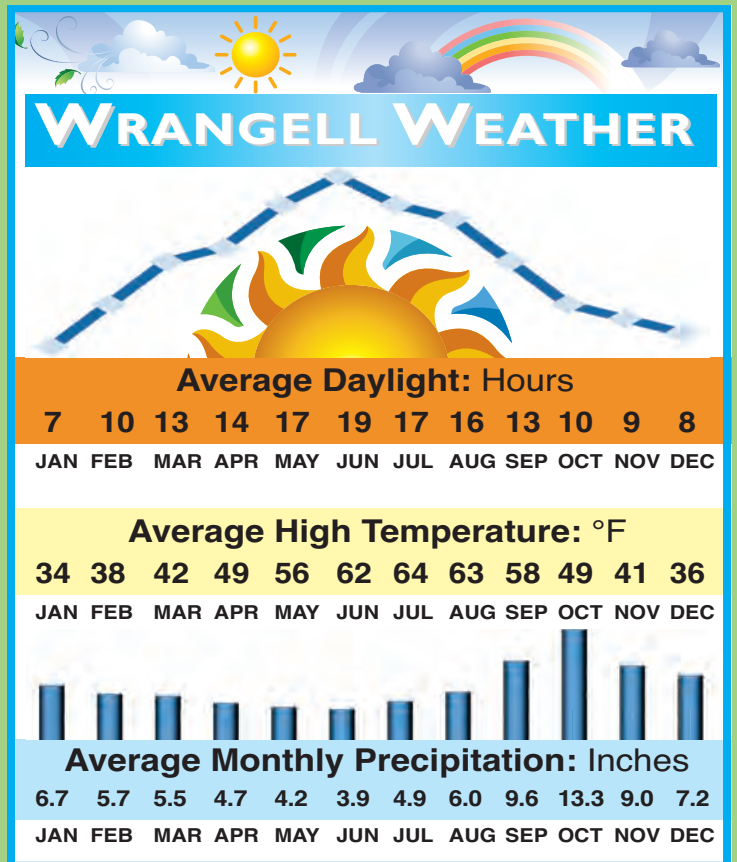
A small theater next to the Visi-

tor's Center has seating for twenty-four. The large theater seats two hundred in a stadium-style setup, and is also available for use as a convention space.

More information is available by phone from the Nolan Center at 874-3699.



The museum is packed with informational exhibits from the various epochs of Wrangell's "four flags" history, including this scale model of a timber ship from the logging industry.



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Muskeg Meadows periodically hosts community golf tournaments, like this Brian Gilbert Memorial Golf Tournament. A tournament typically kicks off Fourth of July festivities.

Muskeg Meadows, Southeast's only regulation golf course

Wrangell is the site of Southeast Alaska's first regulation 9-hole golf course, Muskeg Meadows.

The fairways are long and wide and there is a covered driving range and an eight-station practice putting green available for free use.

Wrangell Golf Club has hosted many "Best Ball Scrambles" and other tournaments, drawing contestants from around Southeast Alaska and the Lower 48 states.

Hard-core players may want to come out whatever the weather. The covered driving range will keep you out of the rain while working on your slice or hook.

And on sunny days, there's no nicer place for a walk – and few prettier courses. Visible over and between the trees are spectacular ocean views, with forested and snow-capped islands beyond. Keep an eye out for bald eagles overhead, too, and be

aware that bear and moose occasionally also like to wander the course.

Located on Ishiyama Drive near the airport, the course is entirely the work of volunteers, with much of the equipment and materials donated by Alaska Pulp Corporation (which until 1994 operated Wrangell's sawmill), Ketchikan Pulp Corporation, and Silver Bay Logging.

Membership currently stands at over 450, with 65 percent of the members from Southeast Alaska. The Club does however boast members from all across the states and several foreign countries including Canada and Japan.

The club has established a "Raven Rule" that provides if a raven steals your ball you may replace it with no penalty provided you have a witness.

There are golf clubs and pull carts available for rental at the course.

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Hiking, camping, sightseeing and enjoying the island



A carving of the city name in driftwood adorns City Park, which also provides opportunities for picnicking and beachcombing at low tide.

Wrangell offers many scenic spots for picnicking and camping, from easily reachable City Park and Shoemaker Bay, to the more remote Nemo Point and Salamander Creek campsites.

CITY PARK

Located about a mile south of downtown on Zimovia Highway, the waterfront park is adjacent to an historic cemetery and an old baseball field now in use as the Community Garden.

The park contains picnic tables, shelters and restrooms. Tent camping is restricted to 24 hours. Camping is not allowed inside shelters. Overnight parking is prohibited.

Avid cyclists may want to take advantage of the paved bike trail along Zimovia Strait, which starts near the Public Safety Building and runs past Shoemaker Park.

MOUNT DEWEY

Located right behind downtown, this large tree covered hill is a quick hike for a fine view of Wrangell and Zimovia Strait. A trail leads up the hill from downtown. Go up to Third Street behind the high school, or up McKinnon Street to the set of stairs leading up to Reid Street,

veer left and follow the residential street until it becomes a narrow dirt road. A sign points the way to the trail, and more eye-catching signs may be in place soon, courtesy of local volunteers.

VOLUNTEER TRAIL

For a short, but pleasant walk near town, head for Evergreen Elementary School and the baseball fields behind it. Taking either the route between the two fields or north past the tennis courts, a gravel trail meanders through the muskeg with interpretive signs pointing out particular flora and fauna, as well as occasional benches to rest on, courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

SHOEMAKER BAY

Shoemaker Bay RV Park is located about five miles south of town, along Zimovia Highway.

The park offers 25 sites open exclusively to RV and trailer campers – 15 with electricity, 10

Continued on page 20



City Park catches the last rays of a sunny summer day. It is a popular place for picnics.

Wrangell's Muskeg Meadows Golf Course

9 hole scenic regulation course with 250 yard driving range



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Photo by Alaska Pix

www.wrangellalaskagolf.com

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Hiking

Continued from page 19

without. All sites have excellent views of Zimovia Strait and neighboring Woronkofski Island. A fresh water pump is located near the entrance to Shoemaker Harbor parking lot.

Facilities are on a first-come, first-served basis; no reservations taken.

A holding tank dumpsite for RVs has been installed in the harbor parking lot. There are also restrooms and a dumpster. A tent camping area is located in a wooded spot near a creek. South of the creek is a tennis court, restrooms and picnic shelter. Tent campers should use the designated camping area only. Inquire at City Hall at 874-2381 or Parks and Recreation at 874-2444 for rules.

RAINBOW FALLS TRAIL

Moderate to Difficult

Just across Zimovia Highway from the Shoemaker Bay camping areas is Rainbow Falls Trail, which offers a self-guided hike through the pristine Southeast



Pats Lake is a favorite place to canoe in the summer or ice-skate in the winter.

Alaska rainforest. A little less than a mile up the trail is a beautiful view of Rainbow Falls; a tenth of a mile later, the trail ends above the waterfall and provides spectacular views of Chichagof Pass, Zimovia Strait and surrounding islands. Viewing platforms and bench seating make this a great place for a pic-

nic. The trail intersects with InSTITUTE CREEK Trail.

INSTITUTE CREEK TRAIL

Difficult to Most Difficult

If you choose to continue from the Rainbow Falls Trail, this trek offers many scenic views from another 2.7 miles (and a total 1,500-foot gain in elevation) on the way to Shoemaker Bay Overlook.

SHOEMAKER BAY OVERLOOK SHELTER

There's a three - sided shelter, picnic table, fire grill and out-house, as well as an excellent view of Shoemaker Bay Harbor, Zimovia Strait, and surrounding islands.

NORTH WRANGELL TRAIL

Difficult to Most Difficult

This trail begins 2.2 miles from the Rainbow Falls Trailhead via Rainbow Falls and InSTITUTE CREEK Trails. The trail leads 1.3 miles to the High Country Shelter and continues another 1.0 mile to the Pond Shelter. Shelters are three-sided with picnic table and an out-house. An optional starting point

is from the trailhead at the parking area on the Spur Road Extension, approximately 3.6 miles from the intersection of Bennett Street and the beginning of Ishiyama Drive (Spur Road). This trail is surfaced with boardwalk.

PATS LAKE

Pats Lake recreation area is located 11 miles south of downtown Wrangell, at a crossroads where dirt roads branch off Zimovia Highway. The first road to the left goes by Pats Lake, while the second turn-off leads to Pats Creek. There's pleasant hiking along an easy mile-long trail from Pats Lake, which follows Pats Creek as it empties into the sea. Several varieties of trout are found in the lake and creek. The creek also has a fall salmon run.

The turn off to the right leads down to a log dump on the water. A short walk north — and back across Zimovia Highway — leads to the mouth of Pats Creek to a sandy point, which is good for picnicking or a little seaside relaxation as well as an occasional haunt of local saltwater fly fishermen.




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Wrangell wee ones wield world-class gems

Among the heirlooms of Wrangell's long history, one shines particularly brightly.

Fred Hanford bequeathed the Garnet Ledge in 1962 to the Boy Scouts of America and the Presbyterian Church "for only so long as the said grantee ... shall use the land for Scouting purposes and shall permit the children of Wrangell to take garnets therefrom in reasonable quantities."

It was the birth of a multi-generational youth industry, which continues today in both retail and wholesale forms, though not — Bill Privett, the facilities manager for the Church tasked with overseeing access to it — on an industrial scale.

Garnets are semi-precious gemstones forged in the heat of metamorphic rock. They represent a family of semi-precious stones, and the Wrangell garnet is of the type known as the almandine or carbuncle. They are composed of iron, aluminum and silica.

The garnets have been mined industrially in the past. In 1907,



A Wrangell garnet on display at the Nolan Center museum catches an overhead light. The source of all Wrangell garnets is the Garnet Ledge along the Stikine River, which was the source of the first all-female corporation in 1932. Only children of Wrangell are allowed to mine garnets at the ledge, though the Presbyterian Church, which holds the deed, is accommodatingly flexible about what this means and they insist that all mining must be done without the aid of industrial mining equipment.

two sisters incorporated the Alaska Garnet Mining & Manufacturing Company in Wrangell and Minneapolis, Minn. It was the first female company incorporated in the United States.

Part of the manufacturing process involved crushing the gar-

nets for use in sandpaper. The process lends its name to the Garnet Grit Betties roller derby team, which is based in Wrangell. The company remained active until 1936, when Hanford purchased it.

In 2002, the Scouts quit-claimed their portion of the deed, leaving it the sole property of the Presbyterian Church of Wrangell, who hold title to the property today.

Because of the condition of the will, the church insists that any adults wishing to dig their own garnets out of a shelf of metamorphic rock must be accompanied by a child of Wrangell, Privett said. The Church interprets the conditions to allow for children very recently of Wrangell to count. For example, a couple from Wyoming accompanied by their geologically enthusiastic son were allowed to mine garnets from the ledge, since he was counted as "a child of Wrangell," Privett said. In other instances, local suitably mature children have accompanied enthusiastic geologists up the Stikine River to the ledge to see their gemstones themselves.

At the same time, the church

discourages commercial mining operations, Privett said.

"What we're trying to do is do this from the heart," he said.

A nearby US Forest Service-maintained cabin is available for those wishing for some extra time to mine, though prior permission is still required from the Church in order to access the property. The cabin is on federal land, but the ledge and its deep scarlet prizes, are on private property.

"We don't want to be garnet cops," Privett said. "We want to be garnet shepherds."

Children are allowed to sell the fruits of their labor to tour boats, and to wholesale them to the local gift shops, giving them an up-close learning experience with business and commerce. Some locals make a "concentrated effort" to raise funds using small-scale garnet mining, though the use of industrial mining equipment — like pressure hoses, for example — is not allowed.

"The Church holds this in trust on behalf of the children of Wrangell in perpetuity," Privett said. "If people act responsibly, this 39 acres, unique to Wrangell, is going to exist long after we're dead and gone, and long after our grandchildren are dead and gone."

Permission to mine garnets can be obtained by phone at 874-3534 or 874-2203.

Tourists without youthful overseers or prior permission can obtain Wrangell garnets from entrepreneurs down by the ferry terminal, at the Wrangell Museum gift shop, and other select gift shops. A full inventory of shops which usually carry the garnets is available at the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce.

Prospective garnet holders beware: availability is subject to the whims of the miners themselves.



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A brief guide to Wrangell's totem poles

A brief guide to Wrangell's totem poles.

Throughout Wrangell are reminders of the rich Native culture that has contributed greatly to the community's growth. These totem poles are duplicates of the many totems that stood in Wrangell when the Native village thrived in the 1800s.

Shakes Island Tribal House

Shakes Island is on the National Register as a historic monument site.

Construction on the house ended June 1940, about the time Southeast Native Alaskans gathered to name the last Chief Shakes.

The Tribal House is an exact double of high-caste Tlingit residences before Christian missionaries forcibly ended traditional communal residency. The building's Tlingit name is Shéiksh Hí'di.

Carved replicas of the Naanyaa.aayí Clan and Kiks.ádi Clan house posts adorn the interior of the structure. Carvers created the original house posts in the late 1700s.



A trio of Southeast elders.

Continued on page 23

U.S. Forest Service cabins and campsites, a great escape

Imagine unwinding in a quaint little log cabin in the solitude of a vast forest, beside a lake, river, or seashore, experiencing nature at its best. If you're prepared to give up some of the benefits of civilization and enjoy a simpler way of life for a few days, you can do just that by reserving a Forest Service cabin or heading to a campsite.

The Forest Service has more than 125 public use cabins throughout

the Tongass National Forest, with 22 in the Wrangell Ranger district. A variety of other open-air campsites are available without a reservation on a first come first serve basis.

Renovations conducted last fall at the Yunshookuh Campground on Nemo Point Road erected a 16-foot by 20-foot picnic shelter, and added a wheelchair accessible 8-foot by 8-foot tent platform.

Most Forest Service cabins are in remote areas and are primarily used for hunting, fishing and recreation. Inland cabins are usually accessible only by airplane, while those on saltwater beaches can be reached by boat or float plane, depending on tides.

The Wrangell Ranger District also has a road-accessible cabin on Middle Ridge. Officials dedicated the cabin in June 2010. While the road is accessible during the summer months to most vehicles, potential cabin users should consider carefully the abilities of their car before heading out.

A \$25-\$35 per night cabin fee is charged, regardless of the number of occupants. The fee must be paid in advance at the time the user reserves a cabin.

Use of a cabin is limited to a maximum of seven consecutive days between April 1 and October 21, and to 10 consecutive days the rest of the year.

Detailed information on all area cabins is available at the Wrangell Forest Service office, located at 525 Bennett St.



The Middle Ridge Cabin is the Wrangell Ranger District's first road accessible cabin. The cabin is about 20 miles outside of town and is accessible to high clearance vehicles in the summer and snow machine, snowshoe and ski in the winter.

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Wrangell Chamber of Commerce



➔ VISITOR INFORMATION

➔ DETAILED LOCAL MAP

➔ BUSINESS DIRECTORY

107 STIKINE AVE (Stikine Inn Building)

www.wrangellchamber.org

Totem poles

Continued from page 22

Local Native organizations refurbished the building's façade – which contains donated human hair along the top of the entry carving – and interior last year and rededicated the building in a ceremony that drew Alaskan Natives from across Southeast.

As a result of the rededication and ongoing construction of a carving facility along Front Street, many historic poles were taken down from public view, though some remain visible under shelter on Shakes Island.

All poles on Shakes Island will be either refurbished or re-carved before being put on display.

Eagle Totem

The Eagle Totem – also once called the Nachee-su-na Totem – once stood at the entrance to Shakes Island before being moved to its present location under shelter behind the clan house.

The lowest figure on the pole clasps a rat, representing strength or spirit.

When this spirit would come, the doctor would tell the people to tie up all their belongings or his strength would get them. This made the people ashamed and they decided the doctor must die.

They laid the doctor in the bottom of a canoe and paddled out to sea and began throwing the doctor's belongings overboard. The people then placed a mat in the water for the doctor to step onto. The mat disappeared under the waves, and a strong wind broke the canoe in half. All the people perished, except a grandson.

The center figure clasping an adze is Nachee-su-na, who carved the first killer whales from yellow cedar, according to Tlingit oral history.

The figure at the top of pole is the legendary Killisnoo hunter Scow-qua.

The Eagle Totem is 44 feet tall and three feet wide. It was carved from a single cedar log in the late 1930s as part of CCC efforts during the Great Depression.

Shakes Graves Markers

Two totems off of Case Avenue mark the corners of Chief Shakes's grave, the third set of killer whale totems erected at the site.

Chief Kadashan Totems

Two additional totems once stood on the left side of the Shakes House. Like the Eagle Totem, they were moved to a covered area behind the Shakes House.

The Kadashan Red Snapper pole is 40 feet



The history of Shakes Island clan house extends back to the house's original construction in the 1840s, through reconstruction efforts by the CCC in the 1940's, to the 2013 reconstruction and re-dedication efforts, which prepare the iconic residence for a new generation of Wrangellites and visitors.

tall and 4.3 feet wide. Its twin, the Kadashan Haida Staff pole is 36 feet tall and three feet wide.

CCC carvers based the present poles – said to be among the more successful copies made during that area – on originals carved in the Kaigani Haida Style in about 1860.

The pole surmounted by the figure of a man representing the Tlingit creator Naas Shakée Yeíl also features a Raven with a man between his wings representing the Tlingit creation story. Below that is the thunderbird.

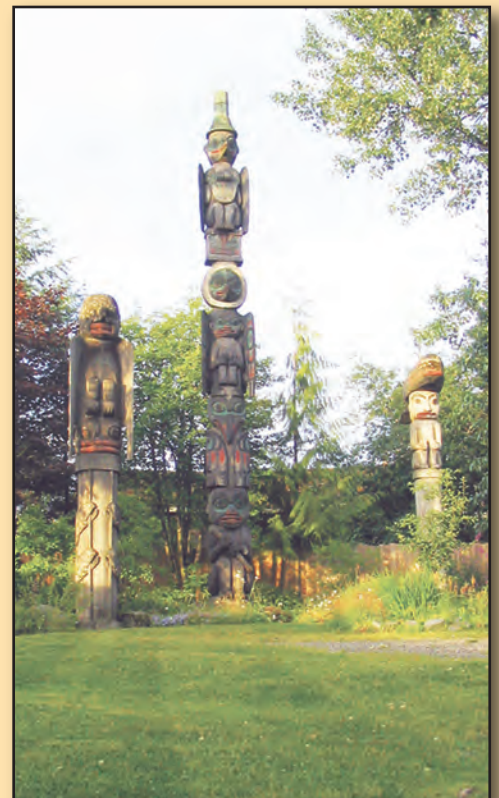
An eagle adorns the top of the other pole, atop a crane and a Gunaakadeit, or sea monster.

Three Frogs Totem

The totem was destroyed by vandals in the early 1980s, and represents a low point in relationships between local clans.

The three frogs on the post represent three Kiks.ádi women who became lovers of three of Chief Shake's slaves. Shakes presented the Kiks.ádi chief with a bill for the women's maintenance, but the chief refused to pay. He ordered the women ejected from the tribe and had the ridicule pole carved.

The pole appears, among other places, in the masthead of the Wrangell Sentinel newspaper.



Totem park offers several examples of totems from the CCC era of reconstruction in and around Wrangell.

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Fishing gear, bait and a fishing license

Salmon and halibut are some of the most sought-after fish in South-east Alaska – and there's no shortage of them here.

A state license, however, is required for sport fishing.

A Non-resident one-day sport fishing license costs \$20; three-day license, \$35; seven-day license, \$55; 14-day license, \$80; annual license, \$145; and an annual hunting and sport fishing license will cost \$230.

The licenses do not include a king salmon stamp, which is needed to go king salmon fishing. One-day king salmon stamps are \$10; three-day stamp, \$20; seven-day stamp, \$30; 14-day stamp, \$50; and an annual stamp costs \$100.

Locally, licenses and stamps are available from Ottesen's True Value, Angerman's Inc., Bunes Bros., and Sentry Hardware, which are all located on Front Street.

Sportsmen who catch a king with a clipped adipose fin are encouraged to turn in the head to the Fish and Game Department. Data compiled from such marked salmon help Fish and Game determine the viability of hatchery-release programs like Earl West Cove.

King salmon, also called Chinook salmon, are available beginning in early May. Coho (silver) salmon runs start in August and run into September. Pinks (humpies) run in July and August to fresh-water spawning grounds.

Steelhead and Dolly Varden fishing is open year-round, although the best steelhead fishing is in April and May. The "Dollies" best season starts in June and continues through September.

Halibut can be caught year-round. However, they can more easily be found "Inside" during the summer months.

For the best places to catch your favorite species, local anglers – and charter boat operators – are an invaluable source of information (though everyone's favorite spot is a closely guarded secret).

Popular saltwater spots include the outlet of Babbler Creek, the Stikine River delta, and the Elephant's Nose.

Some of the best freshwater spots are a short drive away. They include Thom's Lake, Pats Lake, Pats Creek, Virginia Lake, Mill Creek,



Jeannie Easterly shows off her 43.6-pound King Salmon caught at Aaron's Creek June 8, 2013.

and Institute Creek. Mill Creek, Institute Creek, and Pats Creek are accessible off Zimovia Highway. Virginia Lake, Highbrush Lake, Thom's Lake, and Pats Lake are all accessible only via US Forest Service roads.

Charter operators often offer assistance in shipping seafood home and can recommend seafood processors that are able to process catches. Anglers wishing to fly home with their catch should first check with the airlines to determine acceptable containers for shipping seafood.

Totem poles

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Totem Park

Totem Park is located at the intersection of Front and Episcopal streets. It has been there since 1987, commemorating a totem restoration project undertaken by the Wrangell Cultural Heritage Committee.

The site is the former home of the Sun House and the original home of the Kiks.ádi totem. Along with the Naanyaa.aayí, the Kiks.ádi are among the clans that call Wrangell home.

The totem was erected in 1895 to honor Chief Kaalteen, head of the Wrangell Kiks.ádi.

The replicated totem was

carved without power tools. The frog carved in the totem is the clan emblem.

Post Office Totem

The last carved by Thomas Ukas in the 1960s, the Raven totem stands in front of the Wrangell Post Office.

Like many totems in Wrangell, this is a replica of an older pole. Weather destroyed the original several years before Ukas made his version using hand mixed paints to ensure color authenticity.

The One-Legged Fisherman

Erected in 1897 and originally located on Cemetery Point – near the community

garden – the one-legged fisherman records the story of Tlingit hero Lkayák'w. It is now located in Totem Park.

Ongoing Preservation Efforts

These totems represent just a fraction of the poles once publicly displayed in Wrangell. A number of other poles have been damaged or destroyed by weather over the years. The Wrangell Cooperative Association, which owns and maintains the Chief Shakes Tribal House, is seeking donations for Phase 2 of the restoration of native culture in and around Wrangell.

Phase 1 was the restoration and re-dedication of the Chief

Shakes clan house. Phase 2 is the construction of a carving facility and cultural center, underway along Front Street. Phase 3 will involve using the facility, Native master carvers from Southeast, and traditional implements to refurbish or re-carve poles no longer able to stand up to the rigors of Alaskan winter.

The eventual hope is to establish a resident master carver in Wrangell. Donations may be made at the Wrangell Cooperative Association office on Front Street. More information is available by phone at 874-4304.

Petroglyph Beach a mystery and puzzle from the past



The morning sun illuminates a petroglyph believed to represent a killer whale at Petroglyph Park. Replica petroglyphs are available for tracing, but visitors are reminded that removal of any petroglyph is a violation of Alaska law.

No visit to Wrangell is complete without seeing the ancient carvings on Petroglyph Beach, a State Historic Site.

To reach the picturesque beach from the state ferry terminal (it's about a 20 minute walk), turn left on Evergreen Avenue, walk north about a mile and watch for a sign and a small parking area with a gravel road to the left, heading down to the beach. The Alaska State Park Service recently built a wheelchair-accessible viewing platform where petroglyph replicas can be seen and used for rubbings. Rubbings made on the original rocks on the beach are discouraged as years of erosion and abrasion have taken their toll. Visitors are asked to help preserve the original carvings for future generations.

There are steps leading down to the beach for closer inspection of the ancient carvings and enjoying the local seashore. The best time for this is at low tide.

Theories abound about the origins of and reasons for the carvings. Carbon-14 dating is ineffective, and dating by use of nearby organic substances isn't feasible because the rocks are located on an active beach.

Former U.S. Forest Service archaeologist Larry Roberts believes the petroglyphs were probably carved by early Stikine Tlingits possibly 1,000 years ago. The late Tlingit elder, Dick Stokes, concurs. However, archaeological finds elsewhere in Southeast Alaska show that man was present here more than 8,000 years ago, so the rock carvings could be far older.

Some of the petroglyphs have been removed to the museum and the library and can be viewed there.

Please do not damage the carvings or take any of the rocks home with you. They are treasured landmarks to the people of Wrangell, and are protected from loss, desecration, and destruction under the Alaska Historic Preservation Act of 1971.

The ebb and flow of Alaska tides

Look out at the shoreline, wait a few hours and look again... notice anything?

Approximately every six hours, the ocean tide fluctuates throughout Alaska, filling and draining area waterways. Tidal variations can be as much as 20 feet.

The rise and fall of the sea level is caused by the combined gravitational forces exerted by the moon and the sun on the rotation of the earth.

This extreme tidal fluctuation is noticeable on beaches around Southeast, but more so in the skinny Wrangell Narrows.

Low tides restrict access to popular fishing spots around Wrangell, including the Stikine River delta, which transforms into a maze of sandbars. Dry beaches can periodically vanish under the peaking tide. Picturesque coves can become beaches at ebb tide.

Nearly all fishermen or water enthusi-

asts carry a tide book to track when the next high and low tide will occur. Tide tables are also published weekly in the Wrangell Sentinel. Tide books are also available at area retailers.

If you find yourself heading for Petersburg, the 22-mile long Wrangell Narrows — often simply called “the Narrows” — is one of the most difficult navigational stretches in Southeast Alaska, and becomes more difficult due to the tides ripping up and down its shores.

Because of its depth and width restrictions, large cruise ships can't navigate the Narrows. The largest vessels able to navigate the stretch include flat-bottomed barges and the 418-foot M/V Columbia, the largest Alaska Marine Highway ferry.

To allow for passage, approximately 60 lights and buoys mark both sides of the shipping lane. High tide is necessary for larger vessels.



A stack of rocks photographed from the exact same position at different times of day demonstrates the effects of tide along Zimovia Strait. Tide changes can reveal startling new details about the surrounding shore. They can also pose navigational difficulties in surrounding waters.

