



USS Hopper in Kachemak Bay



The *USS Hopper* passes in front of Kachemak Bay State Park on April 29.

Kachemak Bay State Park was the backdrop for many photographs taken when the *USS Hopper*, a U.S. Navy Destroyer, visited Homer, Alaska for a few days in late April. The ship and its 300-member crew were in the Gulf of Alaska on their way to a two-week long joint naval exercise, called Northern Edge 2017, with the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force.

National Trails Day in Chugach State Park

Chugach State Park is excited to celebrate National Trails Day on June 3rd by hosting an all-day volunteer trail work event. Chugach State Park is partnering with Alaska Trails to host a project on the Middle Fork of Campbell Creek near Glen Alps. The trail is being rerouted to bypass a long, muddy, and dilapidated section of the trail. Volunteers will work on cutting in a new sustainable trail on a slope, and installing boardwalk and turnpikes through flat, boggy sections. Chugach State Park and Alaska Trails will host multiple events on the Middle Fork Trail throughout the summer as well. For registration and more info, contact Alaska Trails at steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org.



Annual Ranger Training

The annual ranger law enforcement in-service training took place in April at the Anchorage Police Department training facility. The 40-hour refresher for rangers, required by the division's law enforcement policy, ensures that rangers maintain firearms and defensive tactics proficiency and review new legal updates every year.



Rangers sighting in their shotguns at Rabbit Creek Rifle Range during a firearms training exercise.



Commissioner Andrew Mack presents the law enforcement commission to Kodiak's newest ranger, Ben Shryock.

Right: Josh Taylor, the new ranger for the Kenai and Kaslof rivers, receives his law enforcement commission from DNR Commissioner Andrew Mack at the annual ranger in-service training in April. Josh previously served in the Army for 14 years and was an officer for the Kenai Police Department. His first day as a ranger for Alaska State Parks was also the first day of the in-service training in April.



Acting Director Matt Wedeking practices proper application of the thigh lock during defensive tactics on Ranger Kurt Hensel.



(L - R) Kurt Hensel, Keith Wilson, Preston Kroes, Brad Garasky, Ali Eskelin, Ian Thomas, Dan Amyot, Ben Corwin, Chris Love, Ben Shryock, Melissa Smith, Andrew McElvain, Thomas Crockett, Josh Taylor, Jason Okuly, Matt Wedeking, Tom Anthony, Jack Ransom, Jacques Kosto, Jacqueline Erion, Damon Hampel, and Travis Russell. Absent from this year's training were Dane Happ and Kevin Murphy.

The Award-Winning Office of Boating Safety

The Office of Boating Safety won six awards at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit held in late April. The contest was hosted by the National Safe Boating Council, National Water Safety Congress, and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. Organizations from around the world submitted media materials used to promote safe boating and other water activities to be judged by a panel. Alaska's Office of Boating Safety won four 1st place awards in the categories of booklets/brochures, special category-education, audio public-service announcements, and video public-service announcements, and two 3rd place awards in the posters/signs and electronic education categories. View the award-winning media elements at www.AlaskaBoatingSafety.org. Congratulations!



(L-R) Rachel Johnson, Executive Director, National Safe Boating Council delivers one of six awards to Kelli Toth, Education Specialist and Spokesperson, Alaska Office of Boating Safety.

Northern News



Northern Area maintenance workers are helping get Rika's Café and Gift Shop open for the season. New doors have been installed, a commercial dishwasher plumbed, LED lights put in, drywall repaired, fire extinguishers serviced, and the water system turned on.

"Happy Pappy" Ranger Happ shows off the newest member of the Happ Family, Hugh Lester Happ.



New doors installed at Rika's Café and Gift Shop



The bank stabilization project at Big Delta State Historical Park is underway. The project will protect four historic structures threatened by the Tanana River. Funding for the project came from a variety of private foundations, local businesses, and the federal Historic Preservation Fund program.