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The ^{75¢} Valdez Star

Vol. 28 Edition 6

Serving Prince William Sound and the Copper River Basin

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The vision



Photo courtesy Port Valdez Co.

Meals Hill development could be a key to strengthening the future economy according to the Port Valdez Company. See more page 4.

Election for mayor
and city office opening

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Record year for
salmon in Port Valdez

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Buccaneers take
trophy in
Seward tourney

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Lady Bucs ready
for action in Elks
Tournament

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Have something to say? Send in your letter, 250 words or less to editor@valdezstar.net

The Valdez Star

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Guest opinion:

View on development

From: Port Valdez Co.

President John Clark
VP Philip Clark

Long inaccessible, with only a roughed-in road, this special vantage point is the Port Valdez Company's most cherished property. With a pristine, park-like setting and amazing million-dollar views of the bay, standing on that hill feels almost like a form of time travel. You can see all of Valdez's past - and maybe all of its future as well.

That's why The Port Valdez Co.(PVC) is collaborating with a museum design firm to develop a vision and strategy for the best use of this property. Solid Light is a company that has, for 16 years, worked with communities around the country to create museum-based "destina-

in which the Port Valdez Company would donate six prime acres of what we now call "Museum Hill" for the development of a new location for the Valdez Museum. This would be a fitting step for the Port Valdez Company, which is owned by the Hazelet and Meals families, who homesteaded this region during the 1898 Alaska Gold Rush. Those families, as you know, donated over 116 acres of those homesteads to rebuild Valdez after the 1964 earthquake.

In recent years, the two families have been discussing ways in which the Port Valdez Company can continue to contribute to Valdez in a positive manner. Our offer to donate six prime acres of "Meals Hill" for the new museum is only one suggestion. Maybe someone else in the community has dreamed of a more dynamic use of Meals Hill? If so, we would love to hear from you.

Happy Valentine's Day



IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS...

Anniversary of the organization and the Solomon Gulch Hatchery. From humble beginnings in 1980 to

million pink salmon to the hatchery last summer. The volume of fish harvested took everyone by surprise

Nature's bounty continues to amaze.

educational and cultural museum experiences that anchor commercial centers of economic development. PVC has made an offer to donate land on Meals Hill for the new museum and to provide additional hiking trails for Valdez, including a new hotel, restaurant. Our offer and additional ideas were presented to the Board of Directors of the Valdez Museum, Valdez City Council and management. We now would also like to invite the residents of Valdez to join in the discussion of economic development options for Meals Hill.

Nearly 10,000 people visited Valdez in 2015 - significantly contributing to our economy. Imagine if we could entice each of these people to stay a little longer, or bring another person with them. A top-notch museum, good local restaurants, a boutique hotel - these are the type of amenities that encourage ice climbers or fishing enthusiasts to bring their families and stay for an extra weekend, spending additional money that can potentially multiply many times over in the Valdez economy.

For years, we've been discussing arrangements

Solid Light's experiences have allowed us to share its perspective and understanding of museum "destinations" and their role in economic development. The Port Valdez Company believes now, more than ever, that in order for Valdez to have a bold, dynamic and growing future, we must make these sorts of investments in education, quality of life, and tourism amenities. With new leadership joining the community at the city management level, the energy is high and full of anticipation in Valdez. Now is the time to start meaningful and actionable steps to frame the future of Valdez.

Please email us (john@portvaldezco.com) or go to our web site www.portvaldezco.com and click on the "contact tab" with any comment, support or just conversation about what you think is important to a bright future for Valdez. We will listen and want to help.

Fish on

2015 proved to be a very successful year for the Valdez Fisheries Development Association. Its passing marked two major milestones for the association.

VFDA celebrated the 35th

tors and staff of VFDA have worked tirelessly to responsibly increase returns of salmon for the sport and commercial harvesters of Prince William Sound. This dedication has created a successful and sustainable hatchery program which is frequently recognized for the major role it plays in the economic development of the Valdez community and beyond.

Another event worth noting was the record return of 34

as the preseason forecast was for a healthy yet average return of 15.7 million pinks. The actual total harvest of more than twice the preseason forecast provided an unexpected and welcome economic boost to sound fishermen and seafood processors both within and outside of the region. In addition, Valdez benefited from a robust coho salmon return which provided for excellent sport fishing opportunity and a successful Silver Salmon Derby. Mother


is predicting a mid-range return of 17.4 million pin salmon to the Solomon Gulch Hatchery this season. In addition, a return of 100,809 coho salmon is expected for harvest by area sport fishermen. VF will also begin phasing in additional permitted egg capacity as we gradually increase our production to 250 million Pinks. Thanks and great fishing!

Regina Blood
Valdez Fisheries Development Association

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WITH ALL THINGS RELATED TO THE CITY OF VALDEZ




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The Parks & Recreation & Cultural Services also has a page: FACEBOOK.COM/VALDEZALASKAFUN



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For questions or further details please contact the City's Public Information Office at 834-3468