



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA SINCE 1903

Inside Today

Alaska crime and corrections reform bill has bipartisan support in the Legislature. » A2

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Today will be clear with temperatures hovering around zero. High today 5 Low tonight -10

WEATHER » A7

Aurora forecast.

Auroral activity will be low. Weather permitting, low displays will be visible overhead from Barrow to Fairbanks.

This information is provided by aurora forecasters at the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. For more information about the aurora, visit <http://www.gi.alaska.edu/AuroraForecast>

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MODERN MEETS CLASSICAL

UAF festival hopes to expand the base of what's considered modern music.

LATITUDE 65

...



A WORK OF ART

Folk School class teaches students how to make wooden paddles by hand.

OUTDOORS Page B1

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SOURDOUGH JACK:

"I got plenty of downed branches in my yard. What can I make outta them?"



2 dead in apartment fire



Fairbanks police investigators dig through the rubble of the Geraghty Street fire Thursday afternoon. Investigators found two bodies after the apartment building fire early Wednesday. SAM HARREL/NEWS-MINER

No IDs yet on victims of Geraghty Street blaze

By Tim Mowry TMOWRY@NEWSMINER.COM

Two bodies were found in the rubble of a fire that destroyed an apartment building in west Fairbanks early Wednesday morning, and fire officials still were digging through the debris Thursday looking for the cause of the fire — and possibly more bodies.

Fire officials say there still is a chance there are more victims buried in the rubble.

"We don't know; that's why going through every bit of this to make sure," assistant fire chief Ernie Misewicz said late Thursday afternoon as he and other investigators sifted through the rubble left from the fire. "One of the challenges we have with big buildings is knowing who's coming and who's going. We don't know who all was there."

Firefighters and investigators found the first body Wednesday night around 8 p.m. as they were sifting through the debris while looking for the cause of the

fire, Misewicz said. The second body was discovered by fire investigators about 4:30 p.m. Thursday. Fairbanks police also were at the scene investigating the fire.

The identities of the victims were not known and the bodies were sent to the state Medical Examiners' Office in Anchorage for identification and cause of death, Misewicz said. He said hopes to have identities by early next week.

The 3:45 a.m. fire destroyed the two-story Geraghty Street building, which housed a second-hand furniture store on the first floor and apartments on the second floor. Fire officials believe the victims were in one of the second-floor apartments when the fire started.

Residents in the apartment building reported hearing a loud explosion before realizing the building was on fire. The fire spread so quickly that some residents were unable to get out of the burning building and had to be rescued by firefighters using ladders to reach them.

VICTIMS » A7

Owner: Sprinkler system in apartment complex didn't activate

By Weston Morrow WMORROW@NEWSMINER.COM

The fire sprinkler system inside the Geraghty Street apartment complex destroyed by fire early Wednesday had been declared operational by city fire officials a day earlier, but the building's owner said Thursday it appears the system did not activate.

The early morning fire killed at least two people and displaced more than 50 people.

Assistant Fire Chief Ernie Misewicz confirmed that the department had been working with the building's owner to inspect the system and had declared it functional. Owner

Monica Sue Carney said she performed a walk-through with fire officials Tuesday.

The building had a wet and a dry sprinkler system with sprinkler heads in each apartment.

Carney, who has owned the building since 1990, had been leasing the building to a prospective buyer since 2010. The lessee had failed to provide proper upkeep for the building and its emergency systems, Carney said, so she had taken it up herself in the fall.

"We were working on the sprinkler system," Carney told the News-Miner on Thursday.

SPRINKLERS » A7

INSIDE: COUPLE LIVING IN GERAGHTY STREET APARTMENT HAD JUST MOVED TO FAIRBANKS TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE FIRE. » A7

Casavant claims 1st position in start of Yukon Quest

By Jeff Richardson JRICHARDSON@NEWSMINER.COM

Normand Casavant plucked a scrap of paper from a bunny boot Thursday, took a peek and broke into a grin.

The Whitehorse musher had just selected the No. 1 bib during the Yukon Quest start banquet, and he instantly recognized it as a good omen. When Casavant picked No. 7 last year, he finished seventh. His No. 10 bib in 2012 was followed by a 10th-place finish.

"That's good," Casavant said. "I love supernatural things, the little things that make it special."

The bib draw is the highlight of the start banquet, where mushers gather before the start of the Fairbanks-to-Whitehorse race to visit with volunteers, supporters and competitors. People wearing bunny boots and ball caps mingled with formally dressed visitors in the Westmark ballroom, as each musher took turns selecting their number and offering thanks to friends and sponsors.

Healy musher Dave Dalton will start his record 24th Yukon Quest this year, an event he said has become an annual tradition. It's pretty much

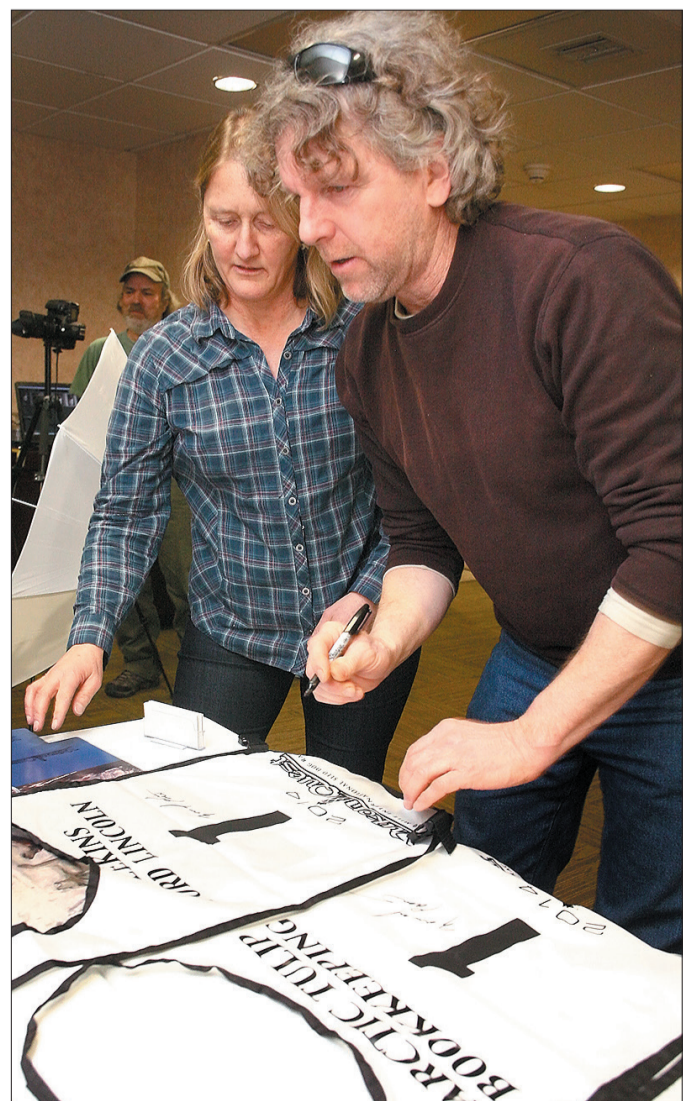
2014 QUEST STARTING ORDER

1. Normand Casavant
2. Brent Sass
3. Matt Hall
4. Jerry Joinson
5. Dave Dalton
6. Ken Anderson
7. Mike Ellis
8. Allen Moore
9. Brian Wilmshurst
10. Cody Strathe
11. Mandy Nauman
12. Tony Kohnert
13. Torsten Kohnert
14. Hugh Neff
15. Jean-Denis Britten
16. Curt Perano
17. John Schandelmeier
18. Hank DeBruin

the only race Dalton runs anymore, but the rugged appeal of the Quest keeps drawing him back, he said.

"This has been my life, pretty much, for the past 25 years," he said.

QUEST » A7



Normand Casavant, of Whitehorse, Yukon, is helped by Yukon Quest volunteer Carlene Vantol as he signs the start and finish bibs during the start banquet Thursday evening at the Westmark Hotel in Fairbanks. Casavant, who is a veteran of three Quests, drew bib No. 1. SAM HARREL/NEWS-MINER

