



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA SINCE 1903

Inside Today

U.S attorney general honors slain trooper, Cox prosecution team. » INTERIOR, A4

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Partly cloudy skies expected today. Highs in the mid-60s.

High today65
Low tonight43

WEATHER » A9

Aurora forecast.

Auroral activity will be active. Weather permitting, active displays will be visible overhead across the state.

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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FLAGGED

Lathrop's flag football team remains unbeaten.



ON COURT

Monroe sweeps North Pole volleyball team.

SPORTS
Page B1

...

SOURDOUGH JACK:
"That bird looks darn graceful but looks a tad cold for my taste."



Standoff: 6 felony charges

By Weston Morrow
WMORROW@NEWSMINER.COM

Michael Bracht has been charged with six felonies and one misdemeanor for leading police on a high-speed chase and setting off a 10-hour standoff in Fairbanks Tuesday.

Several of the charges stemmed from the standoff. During the

standoff Bracht, 36, pointed a gun at his head and threatened to shoot his passenger, his girlfriend, when police were able to stop him in the Justa Store parking lot, according to charging documents.

The threat with the handgun caused officers to pull back, leading to the hostage standoff. Bracht's girlfriend stayed in the vehicle voluntarily for the next two

hours until an officer convinced her to leave with her dog, which was also in the car. Bracht agreed to allow his girlfriend to exit the vehicle, though he would stay in the vehicle threatening suicide or suicide by police officer for another eight hours before police could convince and coerce him out of his car.

Bracht was charged with several

crimes for the high-speed chase, in which he led police through various parts of Fairbanks for 30 minutes. The chase at times reached speeds greater than 80 miles per hour, according to charging documents.

Bracht allegedly struck an officer and nearly struck two others

CHARGES » A5

COLORFUL SWIM



A trumpeter swan swims in a private pond in the Ester area as the golden colors of fall reflect in the water's surface Wednesday morning. ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER

Flint Hills, EPA settle

By Jeff Richardson
JRICHARDSON@NEWSMINER.COM

Flint Hills Resources Alaska has agreed to pay an \$80,000 fine to resolve accusations by federal regulators that the company mishandled hazardous waste last year at its North Pole refinery.

The company's settlement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency stems from groundwater cleanup activity at the refinery on June 19, 2013. Flint Hills was processing groundwater to remove sulfolane, an industrial chemical that has been traced back to an old spill at the refinery.

FLINT HILLS » A7

International tension: Air show canceled

By Casey Grove
CGROVE@NEWSMINER.COM

ANCHORAGE — An Air Force exercise usually conducted in the fall near Alaska as a cooperative effort between the United States, Canada and Russia is not taking place this year because of tension related to Russia's military intervention in Ukraine.

That's according to the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, comprised of U.S. and Canadian forces and tasked with detecting and responding to airborne threats to both countries.

Since 2007, NORAD and the Russian Federation Air Force had cooperated on the Vigilant Eagle exercise, which, in recent versions, saw fighter jets intercept a mock hijacked passenger airliner passing from Russia's airspace to Alaska's, or vice versa.

The exercise took place in August or September and sometimes coincided with the anniversary of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

It "provided an opportunity for NORAD and Russia to cooperate and coordinate on the response to a mutually acknowledged hijacking threat," NORAD spokesman Sgt. Charles Marsh wrote in an email. "For example, in 2013, the Vigilant Eagle scenario involved a foreign flagged commercial air carrier on an international flight that was seized by terrorists and

did not respond to communications."

Fighter jets that took off from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson met in midair with Russian fighters, Marsh said. As the airliner passed from one country's airspace to the other, the pilots practiced a visual "hand-off" while flying in the same airspace so the appropriate country's fighters could continue following it, he said.

The Vigilant Eagle exercise was suspended, at least for 2014, by U.S. Department of Defense officials and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper "due to

the situation in Ukraine," Marsh said. NORAD was already in the early planning stages earlier this year when the cancellation was announced. The exercise would have included, for the first time, the Japan Self Defense Force, he said.

In 2013, U.S. defense officials touted the exercise as a stepping-stone toward closer military relations and a cooperative effort that transcended political tensions.

Staff writer Casey Grove is the News-Miner's Anchorage reporter. Contact him at 770-0722 or follow on Twitter: @kcgrove.



A pair of Russian SU-27 fighters escorts a mock hijacked airliner Aug. 9, 2011, during the second day of flying for Vigilant Eagle, an exercise between Russia, the United States and Canada put on hold for 2014. U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. THOMAS J. DOSCHER

Expand effort against Islamic State, Obama says

By Juliet Eilperin and Ed O'Keefe
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama outlined an open-ended campaign Wednesday night to combat the threat posed by the Islamic State, significantly expanding the counterterrorism strategy that has been a hallmark of his presidency.

Obama said in a prime-time speech delivered from the White House that the United States will join "with our friends and allies to degrade, and ultimately destroy, the terrorist group known as ISIL," using an alternative acronym for the

OBAMA » A9

INSIDE

Classified » B7 | Comics » B6 | Dear Abby » B5 | Markets » A9 | Obituaries » A5 | Opinion » A6 | Sports » B1



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