

FAIRBANKS

Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA SINCE 1903

Inside Today

Aurora Energy says it will increase steam heat rates gradually, beginning this month. » A4

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Today will be mostly cloudy. High today 5 Low tonight -12

WEATHER » A9

Aurora forecast.

Auroral activity will be moderate. Weather permitting, moderate displays will be visible overhead from Barrow to Talkeetna.

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



ON DISPLAY Hockey Hall of Fame exhibit wows fans.

SPORTS Page B1

JUMPING HURDLES

Keystone XL oil pipeline clears significant obstacle.

NATION/WORLD Page A3

SOURDOUGH JACK: "I love getting involved in local sports. I'm going to be arm-chair mushing for the next couple weeks."



Inquiry into fatal fire continues

By Tim Mowry TMOWRY@NEWSMINER.COM

Fire and police investigators on Friday continued to sift through the rubble of a fire that destroyed an apartment complex in west Fairbanks early Wednesday morning, killing two people, seriously injuring one and displacing 50 people.

"We're still looking," assistant fire chief Ernie Misewicz with the Fairbanks Fire Department said early Friday afternoon from the scene.

Investigators have found two bodies in the rubble, one Wednesday night and one Thursday afternoon, and it's unknown whether there are more buried amid the debris of the fire that destroyed

the large, two-story building on Geraghty Street. The building housed offices and a secondhand furniture store on the first floor and an 18-unit apartment complex on the second floor.

Fire officials have said they don't know exactly who or how many people were in the building at the time of the fire. The two bodies were sent to the state Medi-

cal Examiner's Office in Anchorage to be identified.

Assisted by heavy equipment to move burned debris, investigators had combed through about three-quarters of the debris as of early Friday afternoon, Misewicz said. Fire investigators are trying to

FIRE » A9

Quest kicks off today



Jerry Joinson, of Fort St. James, B.C., works on his wife's sled as last-minute preparations are made for the start of the Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race on Friday morning at the Alpine Lodge. Joinson is running the 1,000-mile race, while his wife, Lisa, is running the 300. ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER

Taking a peek inside the 2014 race

By Jeff Richardson JRICHARDSON@NEWSMINER.COM

The 31st running of the Yukon Quest 1,000 Mile International Sled Dog Race will be held at 11 a.m. today, with 18 mushers set to depart Fairbanks for the journey to Whitehorse.

There are a handful of changes this year, including where the race begins. Because of fragile ice conditions beneath the Cushman Street Bridge, the early portion of the trail will shift two blocks south to Second

Inside » Musher photos and bios » A10

Avenue.

The course will return to the Chena River near the Wendell Street Bridge and will proceed down the river. A variety of good vantage points are available to see mushers, including two bridges at Fort Wainwright (post access is required) and the Nordale Road Bridge.

QUEST » A9



Two Rivers musher Aliy Zirkle loads up her dogs after her team's vet check for the 300-mile race.

ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER

Senators reject raise for top state official

By Matt Buxton MBUXTON@NEWSMINER.COM

JUNEAU — Senators cited a lagging budget, camaraderie with the financially strained public, public service as compensation and an unwillingness to compete with the private sector when they roundly rejected a proposed 1 percent raise for the state's top officials on Friday.

Lawmakers on the Senate Finance Committee advanced a bill to reject the State Officers Compensation Commission's recommendations to raise the pay for the governor, lieutenant governor and heads of the state's departments.

"I support the recommendation, but the timing's not good when we are in deficit funding," said Co-chairman Sen. Kevin Meyer, R-Anchorage.

His fellow co-chairman, Sen. Pete Kelly, R-Fairbanks, had a slightly different view on pay raises.

"We do tend to attract the best and the brightest on a lot of levels," he said. "I would actually prefer that they were in the private sector because that's what really drives our economy."

RAISES » A9

Nenana Ice Classic tickets go on sale today

By Tim Mowry TMOWRY@NEWSMINER.COM

Several vendors had the same reaction when Nenana Ice Classic manager Cherrie Forness showed up recently to deliver the red Ice Classic ticket cans that grace bar and store counters across Alaska each spring.

"Everywhere we went, people were asking, 'Is there even going to be an Ice Classic this year?'" Forness said with a laugh, referring

Online » Go to www.nenanaaiceclassic.com to see where tickets are sold in the Fairbanks area.

to the unseasonably warm temperatures that have plagued the country's coldest state the past few weeks.

Have no fear Ice Classic fans: It hasn't been that warm.

Tickets for Alaska's richest guessing game go on sale today at

about 200 locations around Alaska, from gas stations to grocery stores to bars to restaurants.

Believe it or not, the warm weather may be good for business, Forness said. Based on her experience, which amounts to 18 years as the Ice Classic manager, Forness said extreme weather during the winter, whether it's hot, cold, snow or rain, tends to increase ticket sales.

CLASSIC » A9

EARLY MEASUREMENTS

Here's a list of first measurements for the Tanana River ice in Nenana for the past 10 years.

Table with 4 columns: Year, Date, Measurement, Breakup Date. Rows show data from 2014 back to 2004.

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