



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA SINCE 1903

Inside Today New rule allowing two-way communication on Iditarod trail upsets mushers. » A2

Group hopes to open new charter school

By Weston Morrow
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A group of parents and teachers is hoping to bring a new charter school to the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

The group, known as the Boreal Sun Charter School Initiative, has been active in the Fairbanks area since at least 2014. This evening, the group will present its plan for the first time to the school board at a work session. At the meeting,

board members will hear from group leaders and have the opportunity to ask questions, but no action is planned.

Charter schools are publicly funded and operated by local school districts. Though they are eligible to receive waivers for things such as curriculum, they are still beholden to state standards.

The Fairbanks school district has four charter schools: Chinook Charter School, Effie Kokrine Early College Charter School, Star of

the North Secondary School and Watershed Charter School.

Boreal Sun Charter School would serve students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Its philosophy is based on a pedagogical approach known as Waldorf Education, a teaching method that seeks to engage students through hands-on learning, artistic expression and “a sense of wonder,” according to the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America. The method focuses on holistic

education and introducing subject matter at times aimed to correspond with the developmental age of students, which in some cases may differ from the typical grade level subjects are introduced at most public schools.

Waldorf schools are also set apart from traditional public schools in their stance on technology use and teacher placement. The schools generally limit the use of technology by students, and teachers generally stay with their classes through

multiple years. At Boreal Sun Charter School, teachers would stay with a single class from first through fifth grade and from sixth through eighth grade, according to the group’s charter application.

To explain the Waldorf method, Boreal Sun’s application quotes the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America’s description.

CHARTER » A3

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

More of the same: rain showers and scattered thunderstorms with highs around 60.
High today58
Low tonight45

Sunrise: 3:17 a.m.
Sunset: 12:34 a.m.

WEATHER » A9

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NBA FINALS

Golden State takes series lead against Cleveland.

SPORTS
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ENDING STIGMA

Sidewalk Talk project aims to normalize therapy and mental health treatment.

HEALTH
Page B4

• • •

SOURDOUGH JACK:
“Only charter I’m interested in these days is for a fishin’ boat.”



BIZ SPOTLIGHT • RON RADY

‘Beyond superstar’: North Pole contractor credited for effort on public memorial

By Amanda Bohman
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NORTH POLE — Three concrete walls jut out of the dirt and shimmy across the ground like humongous eels.

The walls on Doughchee Avenue off of Badger Road are the beginnings of a new memorial park honoring borough residents killed in the line of duty while serving their country or community.

The walls are the backbone of the Trooper Gabe Rich and Trooper Scott Johnson Memorial Park, which is on the way to being completed this summer thanks in large part to the company that built the walls, Rady Concrete.

Ron Rady, owner of the company, provided the labor and materials to construct the monoliths, valued at more than \$75,000.

North Pole Police Chief Steve Dutra, who is leading up an effort to build the park, described Rady’s contribution to project as “beyond superstar.”

“He has been the guy that made this project pop,” Dutra said.

Rady never thought he would be in a position to make this kind of contribution to his community.

The 38-year-old arrived in Alaska in 2000 after deciding to get out of the Arizona heat. For the first year, he slept on his aunt’s couch.

“We’re blessed that we were able to do this,” he said.

Rady, the oldest of 13 children, is originally from northern Wisconsin. He



Ron Rady poses next to the concrete walls his company installed at the Sgt. Scott Johnson and Trooper Gabe Rich Memorial Park in North Pole on Thursday afternoon. ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER

once wore a uniform, serving in the U.S. Army and the National Guard.

He was studying engineering at Arizona State University on the G.I. Bill 16 years ago when he decided to make a break for a colder climate.

“I couldn’t stand Phoenix,” he said. “It was miserably hot. Alaska just seemed cold.”

Rady had never been to Alaska but he had two aunts here. He worked jobs babysitting and spraying foam before joining the cement finishers union in 2002.

In 2008, the company he was working for, Interior Concrete, went out of business. Rady had a choice, he

said. He could move out of Alaska or he could start his own concrete company.

“I swear, I thought it would only last a year,” he said. “Every year, it just keeps going. There doesn’t seem to be a shortage of work.”

Rady Concrete employs 30-40 people and did \$5 million worth of work last year, Rady said.

It was last year when Rady was approached about helping at the memorial park.

Rady’s wife, Amy, grew up in North Pole, and members of his family moved to North Pole from Wisconsin.

“My parents and half my family live in North Pole,”

he said. It felt like the right time to give back to the community.

Rady said his role at the park grew after the design of the facility evolved.

“The design got significantly more complicated,” he said. “We just kind of went with it.”

The walls will bear plaques honoring police officers, firefighters, state workers and military service members killed in uniform. They’ll be lighted in the wintertime. Rady also built two concrete benches.

It took about a month to install the walls and benches last fall, Rady said. The forms were built

at Rady’s shop on Peede Road and workers poured the concrete on site. They were wrapped in blankets for the winter and sealed this spring.

The park is named after two Alaska State Troopers shot and killed in the line of duty in 2014. One of them, Gabe Rich, is a former North Pole policeman.

Rady said he occasionally stops at the park to check out the walls. He looks forward to seeing the park when it’s finished.

“I think it will be real peaceful,” he said. Contact staff writer Amanda Bohman at 459-7587. Follow her on Twitter: @FDNMBorough.

US cities see unexplained rise in violent crimes this year

By Lisa Marie Pane and Don Babwin
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Violent crimes — from homicides and rapes to robberies — have been on the rise in many major U.S. cities, yet experts can’t point to a single reason why and the jump isn’t enough to suggest there’s a trend.

Still, it is stumping law enforcement officials, who are seeking a way to combat the problem.

“It’s being reported on at local levels, but in my view, it’s not getting the attention at the national level it deserves,” FBI Director James Comey said recently. “I don’t know what the answer is, but holy cow, do we have a problem.”

Americans have grown accustomed to low crime rates since a peak in the 1990s. But law enforcement started seeing a spike last year that has continued

unabated. What’s unusual, however, is that it’s not happening everywhere. Chicago and Los Angeles are seeing homicides on the rise, but other places like Miami and Oakland are not.

Chicago, a city long associated with violent crime that plagues its poorer neighborhoods, saw six people fatally shot over the Memorial Day weekend and 56 wounded, ending a bloody month in a bloody year. May’s 66 homicides — 19 more than May 2015 and 25 more than May 2014 — raised the total number for the year past the 240 mark. That’s more than 50 percent higher than last year, and puts the

city on a pace to easily surpass the 500 homicides it saw in 2012.

Perhaps more significant is the number of people who are being shot; well over 1,200 as of Tuesday, which far surpasses the 800 by this time last year.

All of it has left the city on edge. “Our kids are afraid to go out of the house,” said the Rev. Michael Pfleger, a Catholic priest and activist on the city’s South Side. “You have children asking teachers to pray for them before they go home.”

Some say the splintering of gangs has created deadly rivalries, others say the disbanding of specialized

police units has helped embolden gangs. Guns are pouring into the city — with police saying they’ve seized more guns this year (3,500) than any city police department in the United States — but courts also have overturned or gutted the city’s once-tough gun laws.

Add to that concerns, expressed publicly by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and privately by officers, that videos like the one of a white officer fatally shooting 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, who was black, are making officers reluctant to combat crime. That video, which led to

“It’s being reported on at local levels, but in my view, it’s not getting the attention at the national level it deserves. I don’t know what the answer is, but holy cow, do we have a problem.”

FBI Director James Comey

CRIME » A9

