



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA

Inside Today White nationalists meeting today in Washington to celebrate Trump victory. » A7

Kidnapper gets 13+ years in prison

District Court judge rejects plea deal for Michael D. Bowen Jr. of Wasilla, who admitted he grabbed two North Pole girls during 2015.

By Dorothy Chomicz
DCHOMICZ
@NEWSMINER.COM

A Wasilla man who kidnapped two North Pole girls last year was sentenced Friday to serve more than 13 years in prison after a federal judge rejected the terms of a plea deal as too lenient.

Michael D. Bowen Jr. admitted to kidnapping the girls Aug. 1, 2015, in

North Pole as they rode their bicycles home from a store on a rainy day. Bowen drove the girls, who were 9 and 6 at the time, south on the Richardson Highway but turned around after two hours when the 9-year-old told him their father worked with the police.

Bowen dropped the girls off near their home and they told North Pole police what happened, but the investigation was

delayed as police tried to determine whether they were telling the truth, according to courtroom testimony.

The girls were interviewed by an FBI agent trained in interviewing children and were able to provide a detailed description of Bowen and his truck. Security camera footage from a local business provided more details. Bowen's truck was spotted at a

Van Horn Road business Aug. 7, 2015, and he was brought in for questioning and later arrested.

Bowen was charged with two counts of kidnapping but pleaded guilty to a reduced count of coercion and enticement of a minor for an agreed upon sentence of 10 years. At Friday's sentencing hearing, U.S. District Court Judge Ralph Beistline balked at being "asked to accept a less-

er charge, then go below mandatory sentencing guidelines."

"I've been very impressed with everyone's work, but I just cannot accept the dog-gone plea," Beistline said.

Beistline said he didn't think Bowen was an evil man, but he didn't want the message going out that a minimum sentence was acceptable.

BOWEN » A3

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Today: Mostly clear. Highs around 4 above. Light winds.
Tonight: Mostly clear. Lows 10-15 below; except around 6 above on the hills. Light winds.

High today 0

Low tonight -15

WEATHER » A9

Aurora forecast.

Auroral activity will be low. Weather permitting, low-level displays will be visible overhead from Utqiagvik to Fairbanks and visible low on the northern horizon from as far south as Anchorage and Juneau.

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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STRUGGLES CONTINUE

Ice Dogs losing streak intact after loss to Janesville at Big Dipper.

SPORTS
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SOURDOUGH JACK:
"I have a workin' man's Ph.D."



FLY THE FRIENDLY ALASKA SKIES



An airplane takes off from the Fairbanks International Airport as Mount Hess and Mount Deborah in the Alaska Range rise above the horizon Friday afternoon. ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER

Obama blocks drilling in Arctic

By Matthew Daly
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration is blocking new oil and gas drilling in the Arctic Ocean, handing a victory to environmentalists who say industrial activity in the icy waters will harm whales, walrus and other wildlife and exacerbate global warming.

A five-year offshore drilling plan announced on Friday blocks the planned sale of new oil and gas drilling rights in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas north of Alaska. The plan allows drilling to go forward in Alaska's Cook Inlet southwest of Anchorage.

The blueprint for drilling from 2017 to 2022 can be rewritten by President-elect Donald Trump, in a process that could take months or years.

Besides Cook Inlet,



An oil transit pipeline stretches across the tundra to the flow station at the Prudhoe Bay oil field on Alaska's North Slope during 2007. The Obama administration is blocking new oil and gas drilling in the Arctic Ocean.

AP FILE PHOTO/AL GRILLO

the plan also allows drilling in the Gulf of Mexico, long the center of U.S. offshore oil production. Ten of the 11 lease sales proposed in the five-year plan are in the Gulf, mostly off the coasts of Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Alabama.

Confirming a decision announced this spring, the five-year plan also bars drilling

in the Atlantic Ocean. "The plan focuses lease sales in the best places — those with the highest resource potential, lowest conflict and established infrastructure — and removes regions that are simply not right to lease," Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said. "Given the unique and challenging Arctic environment and industry's

declining interest in the area, forgoing lease sales in the Arctic is the right path forward," Jewell said.

The decision follows an announcement last year by Royal Dutch Shell PLC that it would cease exploration in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas after spending nearly \$7 billion. The company cited disappointing results from a well drilled in the Chukchi and the unpredictable federal regulatory environment.

Despite that, industry representatives reacted bitterly to the latest announcement, calling the decision blatantly political.

"The arrogance of the decision is unfathomable, but unfortunately not surprising," said Randall Luthi, president of the National Ocean Industries Association, an industry group.

DRILLING » A3

Mayor, union chief at odds despite talks

PSEA director says 'no interest' in Matherly's contract proposal

By Kevin Baird
KBAIRD@NEWSMINER.COM

Fairbanks city officials met with Jake Metcalfe, executive director of the Public Safety Employees Association, on Thursday in Anchorage to discuss the contract dispute between the city and the Police Department, according to an email that was sent Thursday from Metcalfe to some City Council members.

During the meeting, Mayor Jim Matherly, who was accompanied by Chief Financial Officer Carmen Randle, proposed a 5 percent pay raise for Police Department employees plus a \$2,000 Christmas bonus for each employee.

"I asked him that in return for that proposal, did he expect the PSEA to drop its lawsuit? He responded that while this was only a proposal, he hoped PSEA would drop the lawsuit," according to Metcalfe's email.

CONTRACT » A3

Trump settles lawsuit over his 'university' for \$25 million

By David Kelpper and Elliot Spagat
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO — For more than 6 years, Donald Trump fought hard against a civil lawsuit in which former customers of his now-defunct Trump University accused him of fraud.

Less than two weeks after being elected president, he agreed to a \$25 million settlement.

"We definitely detected a change of tone and change of approach" after the election, plaintiff attorney Jason Forge said when the agreement was announced Friday.

About 7,000 students

would be eligible for refunds if U.S. District Judge Gonzalo Curiel approves the settlement. Under the terms, Trump admits no wrongdoing in settling two federal class-action lawsuits in San Diego and a civil suit brought by New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman.

The agreement came 10 days before jury selection was scheduled to begin in San Diego in the oldest case, which was filed in April 2010. The complaint accused Trump University, which wasn't an accredited school, of defrauding students who paid up to \$35,000 a year to enroll

in programs that promised to share Trump's real estate secrets.

Trump denied the allegations and said that he would not settle. He told supporters at a May rally that he would come to San Diego to testify after winning the presidency.

TRUMP » A5



INTERIOR

ConocoPhillips to sell Kenai gas plant

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KENAI — ConocoPhillips is looking to sell its Cook Inlet natural gas plant. The Houston-based energy company on Thursday announced that it is putting its Kenai LNG plant up for sale, Alaska's Energy Desk reported. ConocoPhillips spokeswoman Amy Burnett said

the company wants to focus on operations in the North Slope. "Our efforts to market the plant are consistent with our company's efforts to regularly review our assets to ensure we are optimizing our portfolio," Burnett said. "We believe the plant is a strategic asset that offers good opportunities for the right buyer."

The plant operated for six months in 2015 and Burnett said the plant has not exported gas in 2016 because of market conditions but it is still operational and could start exporting again. The Kenai plant, which includes a dock and loading facility, was the only export facility of domestic liquefied natural gas in North America for nearly 50 years.

This is the second year ConocoPhillips has looked to sell Cook Inlet assets. In 2015, it put its natural gas production assets up for sale. Hilcorp purchased ConocoPhillips' North Cook Inlet field in late October. The company also sold its stake in the Beluga gas field to the city of Anchorage earlier this year.

OBITUARY

Avelynn Mae Marney

Avelynn Mae Marney, 2 ½ years old, beloved daughter of Scott and Rachel Marney passed away Oct. 29, 2016, from complications connected to her life long battle with spina bifida. Avie entered this world on May 7, 2014, and despite her illness she brought with her so much joy that it spilled out on everyone she met. She was and still is a true gift from God.



Marney

In Avie's short life, it was amazing how her life impacted so many. Her bright smile and sweet spirit made her irresistible. In the first few months of her life, all odds seemed to be against her, but she constantly defied the odds. When she was just months old and had already been through three surgeries, multiple tests and hours' worth of doctor visits it was evident that Avie was an overcomer. It was amazing how many times she challenged what the doctors predicted. It was said that she probably wouldn't walk but she did. Even at her early age her 'can do' attitude was a testament to her strong character.

Avie's life was full. Her therapy included swimming, horse-back riding and gymnastics. She enjoyed every one but no activity surpassed the time we spent together as a family. We loved without restraint. Each day with Avie was an adventure filled with as much love as we could all hold, and our hearts have been forever changed because of her. Our precious little girl is without a doubt safe in the arms of Jesus, and she has left an indelible mark on the hearts of so many. We all grieve with broken hearts, as, for now, we no longer are able to hold her in our arms. But we do not grieve as those without hope for we know that we will be with our sweet Avie again. Someday, when we join her in our heavenly home, she will gleefully run into our arms, unencumbered with the struggles of her earthly body, and she will be so excited to share with us all of her favorite spots throughout the hills and valleys of Heaven.

Avelynn leaves behind many loved ones: her father and mother, Scott and Rachel Marney; grandparents, Lonny and Michele Marney, Patrick and Jeannine McIntyre, and Sheila Miller; uncle Matthew Marney (Katie); aunt Jennifer Kennedy (Dan), aunt Danielle (Dan) Peters, aunt Christina (Keith) Noske, and her cousins, Dylan Marney, Hailey Robinson, Madison Kennedy, Evan Kennedy, Alexandra Pepper, Cody Peters, Ella Peters, Lindsay Peters, Addalynn Noske and Harrison Noske; and her great-granddad, Raymond Marney (Barbara).

Please join us as we remember and celebrate the life of our little angel at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 20, 2016, at First Presbyterian Church, 547 Seventh Ave., in Fairbanks. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in Avie's memory to Camp Li-Wa, 590 Wigwam Way, Fairbanks, AK 99712 where she spent so much time riding horses.

Please visit www.legacy.com/obituaries/newsminer to sign an online guest book.

Obituaries are provided as written by the family of the deceased or by a funeral home. Obituary submission guidelines and pricing information are available online at www.newsminer.com/site/forms. Or call the News-Miner at 459-7572 for assistance.

IN BRIEF

State's jobless rate holds at 6.8 percent

JUNEAU — Alaska's unemployment rate stood at 6.8 percent for the third

month in a row in October. This follows an adjustment in the rate for September. In a release, the state labor department says the rate for September, which preliminarily had been reported at 6.9 percent,

had been revised down to 6.8 percent. The preliminary seasonally adjusted rate for October compares to 6.6 percent in October 2015. According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment remained

at 6.6 percent from October 2015 through the first four months of this year and has slowly inched up since in Alaska. Nationally, last month's unemployment rate stood at 4.9 percent. *From wire reports*

CONTRACT

Continued from A1

"I told the mayor and Carmen that this proposal did not come close to making the Police Department employees whole, nor did it all deal with, or recognize the astronomically increasing health care costs being completely borne by Police Department employees for the past five years. I also told them because of that, I could not in good faith recommend to our membership that they accept the proposal." Matherly and Randle disagreed with Metcalfe about the city's ability to payout

the contract in question, and a debate ensued, but the two parties did not come to an agreement. "I told the mayor I would notify the members of the proposal and get back to him," according to the email. "I can say with certainty there is no interest in the mayor's proposal," Metcalfe said in the email. According to Metcalfe's email, Matherly made it clear he was not making an offer because he lacks the authority to do so. The Alaska Labor Relations Agency ruled Fairbanks committed a labor relations violation when the City Council approved a collective bargain-

ing agreement with the PSEA in August 2014. Then-Councilman Matherly motioned to reconsider the contract. Matherly had concerns about the cost of the contract, which included a 36-hour work week. During a meeting in November 2014, the council voted 6-0 to reject the agreement. The city appealed the agency's ruling to the Superior Court, denying any wrongdoing. In September, a Superior Court judge ruled the City Council was not a public employer so the disputed contract never was ratified. On the other hand, according to the ruling, the City Council act-

ed in bad faith by taking a couple of months to reject the contract. The ambiguous ruling did not order the city to pay-out the contract either. Since the Superior Court ruling, the PSEA has appealed to the state Supreme Court. City Attorney Paul Ewers has filed an appeal to meet deadlines, but he will need the City Council's approval to move forward with the appeal. The City Council will vote on whether or not to appeal the Superior Court ruling Monday night at City Hall. *Contact staff writer Kevin Baird at 459-7575. Follow him on Twitter: @FDNMeity.*

DRILLING

Continued from A1

"Once again, we see the attitude that Washington knows best — an attitude that contributed to last week's election results," Luthi said, referring to Trump's victory over Democrat Hillary Clinton. More than 70 percent of Alaskans, including a majority of Alaska Natives, support offshore drilling, Luthi said. The state's three Republican members of Congress also blasted the decision. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, said she was "infuriated" that Obama "has once again ignored our voices to side with the factions who oppose" offshore drilling in Alaska.

"Arctic development is one of the best ways to create jobs, generate revenues and refill the trans-Alaska pipeline," said Murkowski, who chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "Why the president is willing to send all of those benefits overseas is beyond explanation." As he prepares to leave office in two months, Obama has worked to build an environmental legacy that includes a global agreement to curb climate change and an ambitious plan to reduce carbon pollution from coal-fired power plants. He also has imposed stricter limits on smog-causing pollution linked to asthma and rejected the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada.

All of those accomplishments and others are at risk from Trump's presidency. Trump loathes regulation and wants to increase oil and gas drilling and the use of coal. Trump has said he believes climate change is a hoax and has vowed to "cancel" U.S. involvement in the landmark Paris Agreement on global warming. While he has been vague about precise policies, Trump is likely to seek to weaken or kill the Clean Power Plan, a cornerstone Obama policy meant to reduce carbon pollution from the nation's power plants as part of an effort to combat climate change. The decision to block Arctic drilling follows a decision this spring to block drilling in the Atlan-

tic. Republican governors in North and South Carolina back drilling off their states' coasts, as does the Democratic governor of Virginia. Jacqueline Savitz, senior vice president of Oceana, an environmental group, hailed the Arctic announcement and praised Obama and Jewell for "protecting our coasts from dirty and dangerous offshore drilling." Rejection of drilling in the Arctic and Atlantic "demonstrates a commitment to prioritizing common sense, economics and science ahead of industry favoritism and politics as usual," Savitz said. Nearly 400 scientists signed a letter this summer urging Obama to eliminate the possibility of Arctic offshore drilling.

BOWEN

Continued from A1

"It's not that he's bad — he ardently desires to do right, but he clearly can't," Beistline said. "The idea that he brought the girls back unharmed is

not true. They were harmed." Beistline noted the girls were not sexually assaulted but likely would remember the incident and suffer trauma from it for the rest of their lives. Beistline asked Bowen and his attorney to decide how they wanted to pro-

ceed, and after a brief recess Bowen told the judge he was "ready to serve 20 years to life." Bowen apologized to the girls for "harming them mentally and robbing them of something they can't get back." He also apologized to their parents.

"I'm a father. There's no way I could sit through what they did," Bowen said. Beistline sentenced Bowen to 160 months in prison and lifetime supervised probation. *Contact staff writer Dorothy Chomicz at 459-7582. Follow her on Twitter: @FDNMerime.*

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