



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA SINCE 1903

Inside Today

Republicans, Democrats make final push ahead of another Super Tuesday. » A9

GOOD MORNING



The weather.
Mostly cloudy with likely snow showers and highs in the teens and mid-20s.
High today25
Low tonight9

WEATHER » A9

Aurora forecast.
Auroral activity will be low. Weather permitting, 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.gialaska.edu/AuroraForecast>

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TODD PALIN

Former governor's husband injured in snowmachine crash.
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TOP SEEDS

Yukon, South Carolina, Notre Dame, Baylor No. 1 seeds in women's NCAA tournament.

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Geophysical Institute's HAARP studies Earth, space.

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SOURDOUGH JACK: "I consider myself a backyard scientist."



Borough to end air pollution tracking

By Amanda Bohman
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Kassel

As I am sure you are very aware by now, the Fairbanks North Star Borough is currently experiencing a fiscal shortfall ... the FNSB is left with no option other than to discontinue air monitoring as an official borough function."

Borough Mayor Karl Kassel

Fairbanks Borough Mayor Karl Kassel is ending a joint air quality monitoring program with the state, saving \$225,000.

The state will take over the responsibility, according to Denise Koch, director of the state Division of Air Quality. The testing is required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"If the borough is not going to run them, then the state will have to run them," Koch said. "They are federally required monitors. We will have to

figure out a plan."

Three employees of the borough's air quality office received layoff notices, effective June 30, but they could qualify for other municipal work, depending on seniority, under union rules.

Also, there is one open position in the borough air quality office and two new grant-funded positions that deal with a separate

air pollution monitoring program.

The monitoring takes place at three locations: the borough administrative center, the state office building and a fire station in North Pole.

Kassel notified the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that the borough is bowing out in a March 9 letter.

"As I am sure you are

very aware by now," the mayor wrote, "the Fairbanks North Star Borough is currently experiencing a fiscal shortfall. Due to these financially limiting factors, the FNSB is left with no option other than to discontinue air monitoring as an official borough function."

The state handles air quality monitoring in Palmer, Butte and Juneau

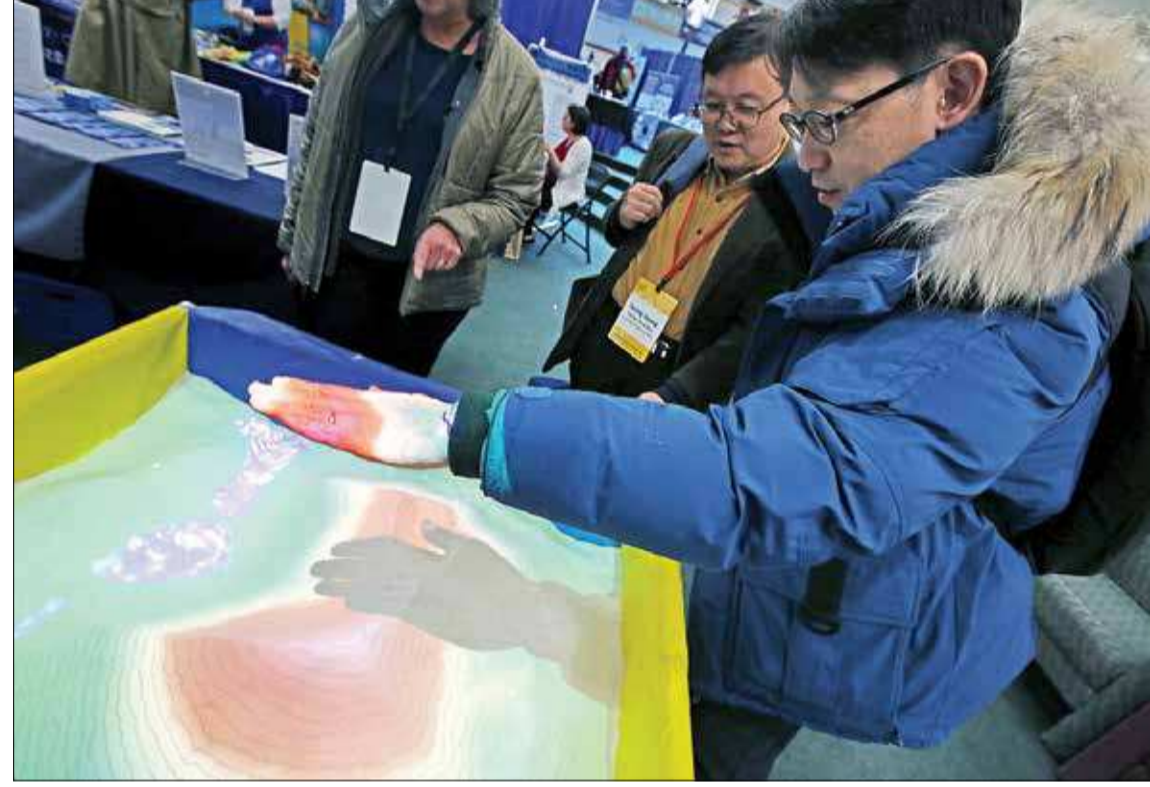
with no assistance from those municipalities, according to Koch.

The difference is that Fairbanks is a non-attainment area, meaning episodes of particulate pollution here violate the federal Clean Air Act.

The state provided \$125,000 a year for the joint monitoring effort

POLLUTION » A3

Arctic Science Summit Week



Ho Kyung Ha, of Inha University in South Korea, right, simulates a cloud with his hand to produce rain while checking out an Augmented-Reality Sandbox along with Seong-Joong Kim, of the Korea Polar Research Institute, second from right, at the Arctic Science Summit Week Exhibit Hall on Monday afternoon in the UAF Wood Center. An estimated 1,000 scientists, researchers, students, policymakers and business managers from around the world are in Fairbanks for the series of summits, assemblies and councils, which continues through Friday. ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER

Scientists, officials, researchers gather in Fairbanks

By Weston Morrow
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More than 1,000 scientists, government officials and industry experts have descended on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus to take part in Arctic Science Summit Week — an international gathering focused on the many issues facing the Arctic.

The first business meetings began Saturday, but the summit kicked into high gear Monday with a full slate of events and meetings from as early as 8 a.m. to as late as 10 p.m. Arctic Science Summit Week is an annual event put together by the Arctic Science Council and planned each year by a different host committee.

The summit takes place in a different country each year. Last

year, the conference was held in Toyama, Japan, and the year before that in Helsinki, Finland. This year, the 18th annual summit, will be the first to take place in Fairbanks, according to Kristin Timm, communications and outreach coordinator for this year's summit.

Along with the usual groups that typically attend the summit each year, hundreds of other visitors have made the trip to Fairbanks for the week to take part in several other related events that have been added to the agenda to coincide with the usual summit.

The Arctic Observing Summit, which takes place every other year, will take place at UAF today through Friday. The 2016 Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials Meeting will also take place in

Fairbanks, beginning today and running through Thursday. The Model Arctic Council, comprised of college students from Arctic nations, began Wednesday and ends today.

The Senior Officials Meeting serves as the major annual gathering of the eight-country inter-governmental forum, which also includes six indigenous groups as non-voting members and numerous non-Arctic countries under observer status. The Arctic Council discusses topics and sets guidelines regarding various Arctic issues, from carbon emissions and sea level rise to improving telecommunication infrastructure.

U.S. Senior Arctic Official Julie

ARTIC » A3

Senate passes operating budget

By Matt Buxton
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JUNEAU — The Senate passed a budget bill Monday with fewer pieces of creative accounting than the one passed by the House, but it contains one line the Legislature's legal advisers say is unconstitutional.

The Senate's budget for agency operations comes in \$243 million below the spending plan proposed by Gov. Bill Walker. Of that, \$100 million comes in the form of a general, nonspecific cut to the executive branch.

The Senate successfully pushed for a similar, but smaller, unallocated cut last session, leaving the decision up to Walker of just what to cut. Many meetings in the beginning of the session were spent figuring out just what had been cut.

Questions have swirled around the constitutionality of the move, which puts the Legislature's power of appropriation effectively in the hands of the governor.

Sen. Bill Egan, D-Juneau, requested a memo and used it as support for an amendment to reverse the unallocated cut on the floor.

"It doesn't say what we should do with \$100 million less. It doesn't say what we should do or stop doing at all," he said. "It doesn't let Alaskans talk to their government about what's a good idea or what's a bad one."

The memo itself was blunt in its review of unallocated cuts.

"Please be advised that, if the unallocated reduction remains in the bill, the courts would likely find the unallocated

BUDGET » A3

No extra security planned as Iditarod leaders near Nome finish

By Mark Thiessen
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NOME — No extra security is planned at the finish line of the world's most famous sled dog race, just days after a man on a snowmobile purposely drove at a high speed into two mushers' teams, killing one dog and injuring several others.

Nome officials on Monday said they plan normal security measures as this Bering Sea coastal community celebrates the end of the nearly 1,000 mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race across Alaska, an event Mayor Richard Beneville has compared to

"Mardi Gras with dogs."

"I'm alarmed and upset and saddened, but I don't think this is a cause for a movement," Beneville said Monday inside the Polar Cafe, which offers diners views of the frozen Bering Sea.

Beneville, wearing an "Iditarod" stocking cap, called the attacks on mushers Ali Zirkle and Jeff King an aberration.

Stan Hooley, the chief executive officer for the race, also said he sees this as a very isolated case. "I don't see that carrying over to the finish here in Nome," he said.

The winner is expected into Nome sometime early Tuesday

morning. Three-time winner Dallas Seavey was the first musher into the checkpoint in White Mountain, 39 minutes ahead of two-time winner Mitch Seavey, who is also his father. Brent Sass was third into the checkpoint, where mushers must take an eight-hour rest before the last 77-mile stretch to Nome.

The crash happened early Saturday morning near the checkpoint in Nulato.

Arnold Demoski of Nulato is accused of intentionally driving a snowmobile into Zirkle's team and then the team of four-time Iditarod champion Jeff King. One of King's

Iditarod finish »
Read up-to-date coverage on the News-Miner's website. » www.newsminer.com

dogs, Nash, was killed, and at least two other dogs were injured.

Demoski has said he was returning home from a night of drinking when he struck the teams. He was going about 100 mph when he crashed into King's team and about

IDITAROD » A3

