



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA

Inside Today

Denali chef, Laura Cole, to be featured on upcoming season of "Top Chef." » A4

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Mostly cloudy. Patchy freezing fog in the morning. Highs in the lower 30s. Tonight: Mostly cloudy. Patchy freezing fog after midnight. Lows in the lower 20s.

High today30
Low tonight23

WEATHER » A9

Aurora forecast.

Auroral activity will be active. Weather permitting, active auroral displays will be visible overhead from Utqiagvik to Anchorage and Juneau, and visible low on the horizon from King Salmon and Prince Rupert.

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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BAND TOUR

Fairbanks native, Andie Springer, plays viola in Pink's band.

KRIS CAPPS
Page A3

...



WINNING STREAK

UAF rifle beats Air Force for third straight win.

SPORTS
Page B1

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SOURDOUGH JACK: "I'm highly qualified to be on a cooking show as a judge."



SPOTLIGHT · JOHN DEE MCDONALD



Mechanic John McDonald and his dog, Willy, pose next to McDonald's wood-hauler, a 1948 Studebaker on Tuesday. ROBIN WOOD/NEWS-MINER

Car collecting is a lifestyle for mechanic

By Robin Wood
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Anyone who attends local auctions or visits auto parts stores on a regular basis may be familiar with a lanky, gray stubbled man in glasses and a buffalo-fur vest accompanied by his constant companion — an airedale lab named Willy — and driving one of any number head-turning classic cars.

John Dee McDonald, 69, was born and raised in downtown Fairbanks. He spent part of his adolescence and early adulthood in California before moving back to Fairbanks for good in 1976 to work as a mechanic for Operating Engineers 302.

Today, McDonald spends much of his time buying, repairing and selling automobiles. A truly eclectic Alaskan, two model train sets circle old hood ornaments and coonskin and skunk-fur caps hang from the ceiling of his small 1940s cabin. Old photographs of his grandfather mining at 47 Below Bonanza Creek in Canada's Yukon Territory share wall space with cylinder heads. Outside, hundreds of license plates



John McDonald shares photos of his grandfather's gold mine at 47 Below Bonanza Creek in Canada's Yukon Territory.

John McDonald stops to talk about a 1930 Ford Model A Featon during a tour of his property. McDonald calls himself a "retro rodder" or a "hot rodder" as opposed to a restorer.



decorate his shop, cars stashed seemingly everywhere.

"Everyone that has old cars usually has one. Well, I can't get enough," he said.

When it comes to his fleet, McDonald considers himself a

MCDONALD » A7

Semi-tanker overturns, risks spill

By Erin Granger
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A semi-tanker overturned at mile 171 of the Richardson Highway on Friday. Alaska State Troopers from Glennallen responded to the accident at noon that day.

An investigation into the accident revealed that semi-tanker belonging to Big State Logistics was pulling loaded double fuel tank trailers northbound on snow-covered road when the rear tank trailer containing 4,000 gallons of diesel fuel slipped off the roadway and overturned.

Troopers stated that no diesel was spilled in the accident. No one was injured in the accident but the driver, Jeffrey Hill, a 52-year-old man from North Pole, was issued a citation for driving too fast for conditions.

This was not the first time a Big State Logistics semi-tanker has been involved in an accident that risked spillage. Earlier this month, the company agreed to pay \$43,000 to settle Environmental Protection Agency enforcement actions following three fuel spills also along the Richardson Highway.

According to EPA reports, these previous spills occurred in 2016 between Valdez and Fairbanks.

The spills ranged from 339 gallons to 3,571 gallons of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel, according to reports.

The EPA said the company quickly responded to the spills and cleaned them up. Big State Logistics has since agreed to no longer run double-trailer semis during the harshest winter months when road conditions are the worst and gave drivers discretion to not haul double trailers if roads were judged to be in poor condition during other months.

A double-trailer semi was the type of truck involved in the most recent overturn Friday.

Contact staff writer Erin Granger at 459-7544. Follow her on Twitter: @FDNMPolitics. The Associated Press contributed to this report.

California firefighters say they finally 'turned a corner'

By Sudhin Thanawala and Brian Melley
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SANTA ROSA, CALIF. — With the winds dying down, fire officials said Sunday they have apparently "turned a corner" against the wildfires that have devastated California wine country and other parts of the state over the past week, and thousands of people got

the all-clear to return home.

While the danger from the deadliest, most destructive cluster of blazes in California history was far from over, the smoky skies started to clear in some places.

"A week ago this started as a nightmare, and the day we dreamed of has arrived," Napa County Supervisor Belia Ramos said.

Jeff Wolf, with the El Dorado Hot Shots, out of Pollock Pines, California, monitors a wildfire from a mountain top Sunday in Oakville, California.

AP PHOTO/MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ

People were being allowed to go back home in areas no longer in

FIRE » A3

