



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA

Inside Today Outdoor summer concert season set to begin at The Blue Loon. » Latitude 65

Salcha couple found dead in plane crash

By Sam Friedman
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The wreckage of a plane missing since Monday was spotted Wednesday afternoon. The occupants of the plane, a longtime Salcha couple, were dead, according to Alaska State Troopers.

Searchers in about 20 planes had been scouring the region between Fairbanks and McCarthy when the wreckage was spotted. It was found 30 miles southwest of Fort Greely. Arrangements were being made to access the crash site today and the NTSB will investigate. No other details were available Wednesday night. Next of kin have been notified.

Art and Ann Ward's Sunday morning flight in their Piper PA-18 Super Cub

south of Fairbanks was supposed to take about 3 1/2 hours.

Art Ward, 64, had been a pilot since he was teenager and had made the flight between his Salcha home and his family's homestead near McCarthy many times, said Judy Stockton, a friend and neighbor of the Wards who is organizing a fundraiser to pay for the searchers' fuel costs.

The Wards left the Sewell airstrip near Harding Lake at 11 a.m. Sunday. Alaska's Rescue Coordination Center was contacted Monday morning.

The search effort included 10 good Samaritan aircraft operated by volunteer pilots and aircraft from organizations including the Alaska Air National Guard, the Alaska Army National Guard,

Art Ward poses in front of his Super Cub airplane earlier this summer.

PHOTO COURTESY JUDY STOCKTON

the Civil Air Patrol and the National Park Service, according to a news release from the Alaska Air National Guard. Two U.S. Marine Corps aircraft that were temporarily in the area on Monday also helped.

The Wards were known around Salcha for volunteering with the Salcha Ski Club and hosting events, Stockton said.

"They are absolutely the most giving couple that you could ever meet. They open their home for Christmas and Easter and any holiday. They have big cookouts and invite everybody," she said.



PLANE » A8

GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Today will be a pleasant, sunny day.

High today69
Low tonight52

Sunrise: 3:04 a.m.
Sunset: 12:42 a.m.

WEATHER » A7

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CLOSE CALL

Pilot car driver is saved after cabin fills with carbon monoxide while she slept.

KRIS CAPPS
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SWING AND MISS

Goldpanners bats go silent in 1-0 loss against Merchants.

SPORTS
Page B1

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SOURDOUGH JACK:

"Always sad to hear of a pilot gaining their wings."



HOME DELIVERY



A tree swallow feeds its chicks in a nesting box Wednesday afternoon in Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. There are 103 nesting boxes in the refuge, which are monitored by the Alaska Songbird Institute as part of a long-term study. There are currently 37 boxes with active nests, each initially containing four to six eggs, with the first hatch recorded on June 5. Chicks are banded at 11 days old, and are fully fledged at 16 days old. There are three species of swallows found at Creamer's Field: tree swallows, cliff swallows and violet-green swallows. ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER

Nenana Library closing, more liabilities revealed

By Robin Wood
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The city of Nenana is closing its library due to budget concerns.

A Tuesday night post on the city's official Facebook page states that library operations will cease after June 30 and asks residents to return all library materials immediately.

"We are profoundly sad to share that we can no longer fund the Nenana City Library. The City of Nenana is insolvent," the

Nenana residents have more questions than answers. » A8

post reads.

The post goes on to state that a budget passed by the city allows for "bare minimum administration and operation of water/sewer services" and references other financial obligations such as outstanding debt "to federal and state agencies and employee wages."

Contacted by phone on

Wednesday, Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Shaw said the Nenana City Assembly approved the 2019 budget at a special meeting Tuesday night and that copies of the finalized budget will be available July 1, the start of the new fiscal year.

It's unknown if 2019's budget is balanced, but documents reviewed by the News-Miner shed light on Nenana's liabilities and revenue.

NENANA » A8

Justice Kennedy's exit triggers epic Supreme Court clash

By Catherine Lucey and Lisa Mascaro
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Justice Anthony Kennedy's retirement is setting off a momentous confirmation battle for President Donald Trump's next Supreme Court nominee that is certain to consume the Senate, inflame partisan tensions and shape the outcome of the midterm elections.

All sides quickly mobilized Wednesday after Kennedy — a singular voice on the court whose votes have decided issues on abortion, affirmative action, gay rights, guns, campaign finance

and voting rights — sent shockwaves through Washington by announcing his retirement plans.

Trump said he would start the effort to replace Kennedy "immediately" and would pick from a list of 25 names that he updated last year. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell declared that the Senate "will vote to confirm Justice Kennedy's successor this fall."

With Kennedy's departure, Republicans have a longed-for



Kennedy

opportunity to tip the balance of the court. It already has four justices picked by Democratic presidents and four picked by Republicans, so Trump's pick could shift the ideological balance toward conservatives for years to come.

Republicans also have a chance to make judicial nominees a top campaign issue, which could help motivate conservatives and evangelicals to vote in November. The playbook worked in 2016, when Republicans rallied around McConnell's successful block of then-President Barack

KENNEDY » A5

Local unions, gov. respond to Supreme Court ruling

By Erin Granger
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The United States Supreme Court ruled Wednesday in favor of allowing public sector workers to stop paying certain union fees. Now workers unions in Alaska are reeling from the news and what this could mean for local unions.

In the Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees case, the court ruled that requiring Mark Janus, an Illinois child-support worker, to pay union fees violated his free speech rights and was therefore unconstitutional.

According to The Wall Street Journal, Wednesday's ruling stands to affect an estimated 5 million government workers in 22 states who could stop paying such fees, known as "fair share" fees.

"This is what we consider to be a terrible decision," said Scott Eickholt, business manager for the Laborers Union Local 942 in Fairbanks. "Really, it has nothing to do with free speech and more about attacking local unions."

Eickholt said his union expected the decision and has worked to prepare but possible effects remain unknown.

"I believe most of the unions have been preparing for this with our members. It's all really fresh and we're still just waiting to see," Eickholt said. "We have a smaller percentage of public employees in our union so the impact to us isn't as bad. We feel we have a pretty strong memberships and we'll be able maintain our members."

TK Kleiner, executive director of the Public Safety Employees Association, said this was not the result she would have wanted but one that she expected.

UNION » A5

