

**TODAY**

**GOING AHEAD!**

**SAVING TIME BEGINS**

**March 11**

Saving time begins today. If you have not already done so, be sure to set your clocks ahead one hour.

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**INDEX**

A3
D1
F1
E8
E8
E7
A8,B6
word E2
B2
A4-5
C1

# BULL'S-EYE

Nanooks win  
8th national rifle  
title in front of  
hundreds of fans

By MARGARET FRIEDENAUER  
Staff Writer

**M**ore than 1,000 people turned out Saturday to the NCAA Rifle Championships at University of Alaska Fairbanks, the largest crowd ever for the national event.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks won the championship again, their eighth title in nine years.

Perhaps those most surprised by the crowd were the athletes themselves.

"You're not really paying attention to what's going on behind you, so I wasn't really aware until I turned around," said senior Kristina Fehlings of the University of Nebraska. "It's really neat. I was taking pictures just of the crowd."

Fehlings said the largest crowd she remembers at a previous rifle event was last year's NCAA championships in Colorado that brought in 200 spectators.

"And before that, there weren't any crowds," she said.

One spectator in particular raised eyebrows. Several visiting athletes were surprised when Gov. Sarah Palin was introduced during the awards ceremony. She earned a hearty laugh and applause when she touted her interest in hunting and rifle sports.

"I see a gentleman with a (National Rifle Association) hat over there," she said addressing the crowd. "A man after my own heart."

In an individual, mentally challenging sport, where the least amount of movement and action from an athlete earns the highest marks, rifle sports were never known for being spectator friendly. But new technology has allowed the intensity of the sport to cast a net over the crowd and draw them into the suspense of competition.

Instead of paper targets, on which the crowd had difficulty seeing the accuracy of the shooter, the championship event used equipment that could register each shot from each competitor and project



Eric Engman/News-Miner

**CHAMPS** — The national champion University of Alaska Fairbanks rifle team hoists their trophy into the air during the NCAA 2007 Rifle Championships on Saturday afternoon at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Patty Center. From left are coach Dan Jordan, Matthias Dierolf, Matt Rawlings, Chris Lejon and Patrik Sartz. For more on the championships, see Sports, Page C1.



Eric Engman/News-Miner

**ALASKA TIES** — Tennessee Tech air rifle shooter Erica Burnham, left, is congratulated by her grandparents Delores and John Burnham of Tok after she competed in the air rifle event during the NCAA 2007 Rifle Championships. Burnham grew up in Tok and shot for the Tok High School rifle team before going to college in Tennessee.

the results on large screens for spectators. The accuracy and score for each shot was displayed seconds after it was fired and it was easy to follow

the progression of the competition. Paper was also used to register each shot as a sort of hard copy of the competition.

Associate athletic director

for UAF, Patrick Lee, said the university upgraded equipment, like the electronic tar-

See RIFLE, Page A7

## Palin axes Fo spring funding

By STEFAN MILKOWSKI  
Staff Writer

**JUNEAU** — Shooting to save million in operating expenses across the state, Gov. Sarah Palin cut \$30,000 from her budget proposal for maintenance and operation of the public spring in Fairbanks.

The drinking water supply has been provided as a service to the community but isn't a "core function" of the Department of Transportation, reallocated in her budget amendment removing the funding. Palin released her amended proposal on March 1.

Howard Thies, director of maintenance and operations for the DOT's northern region, said Friday he just got the word and was still trying to figure out what happened with the funding. The DOT has generally just paid for the maintenance of the spring out of its general fund budget.

"I don't know where it's at," he said. Last winter, the DOT spent \$65,000 repairing the spring, he added. Sen. Joe Thomas, a Democrat from Fairbanks and member of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee, said he was also surprised by the cut.

See FOX, P

## Leaders running into the wind

Brutally cold headwinds slowed mushers on Yukon River Saturday

By KEVIN KLOTT and CRAIG MEDREDA  
Anchorage Daily News

**EAGLE ISLAND** — A bitter, searing wind barreled down the Yukon River Saturday, pounding both the dogs and men leading the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Dogs battling their way up the trail from Grayling leaned into the 25 mph blow. As windchill temperatures pushed toward 30 degrees below zero, mushers tried to stay low and find what shelter they could behind their sled bags.

"You have to keep a ... attitude ..."

See IDITAROD, Pa



## City tax problems have complicated history

Part 2 of 2

By CHRIS ESHLEMAN  
Staff Writer

Early last summer, 75-year-old Nelson Miles hit the street with a mind to squash the city's property tax and force lawmakers — who rely heavily on property taxes for city revenues — to create a sales tax.

Almost a year later, city lawmakers find themselves without a sales tax and with only a shell of last year's property tax. The Fairbanks City Council decided in January to ask voters for almost two years to study a long-term tax solution. Ballots are being mailed to registered city voters this week.



we don't have to discuss that," long-time Fairbanks City Councilman Jerry Cleworth said last week.

The six-member council faces a budget shortfall that rivals some smaller communities' entire annual budgets in size.

After learning of the shortfall last October, council members first tried to implement new taxes. When problems arose, they turned next to potential savings, eyeing for elimination a program that supports nonprofits and promotes Fairbanks as a tourist destination.

More recently, council members have said cuts to fire and police protection

## Art of ice

