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Final Edition

Anchorage Daily News

Sunday, April 12, 2009

BREAKING NEWS AT ADN.COM

Alaska's Newspaper

Stimulus funds pending as Legislature winds down



STATUS-QUO SESSION: Of 419 bills introduced, 9 have passed.

By SEAN COCKERHAM scockerham@adn.com

JUNEAU — With just one week left before the Alaska Legislature adjourns for the year, the conflict between Gov. Sarah Palin and lawmakers over taking federal economic stimulus money is the dominant issue left.

In fact, legislative leaders don't seem intent on doing a whole lot else this year.

Just nine of the 419 bills introduced have passed through the full Legislature so far, and while many more will pass in the frenzied final week, there is little desire to make major state policy changes in what Senate President Gary Stevens conceded is basically a session of preserving the status quo.

adn.com

FOR MORE: Read complete coverage and view photos of Gov. Palin at

adn.com/palin

There's still a chance that bills will pass increasing the state minimum wage, requiring parental notification when a teenager gets an abortion, expanding Alaska

children's health insurance for lower-income families and stopping the state, including the Permanent Fund, from investing in companies doing business in Sudan, the African country whose government has been blamed for genocidal killing in the Darfur region.

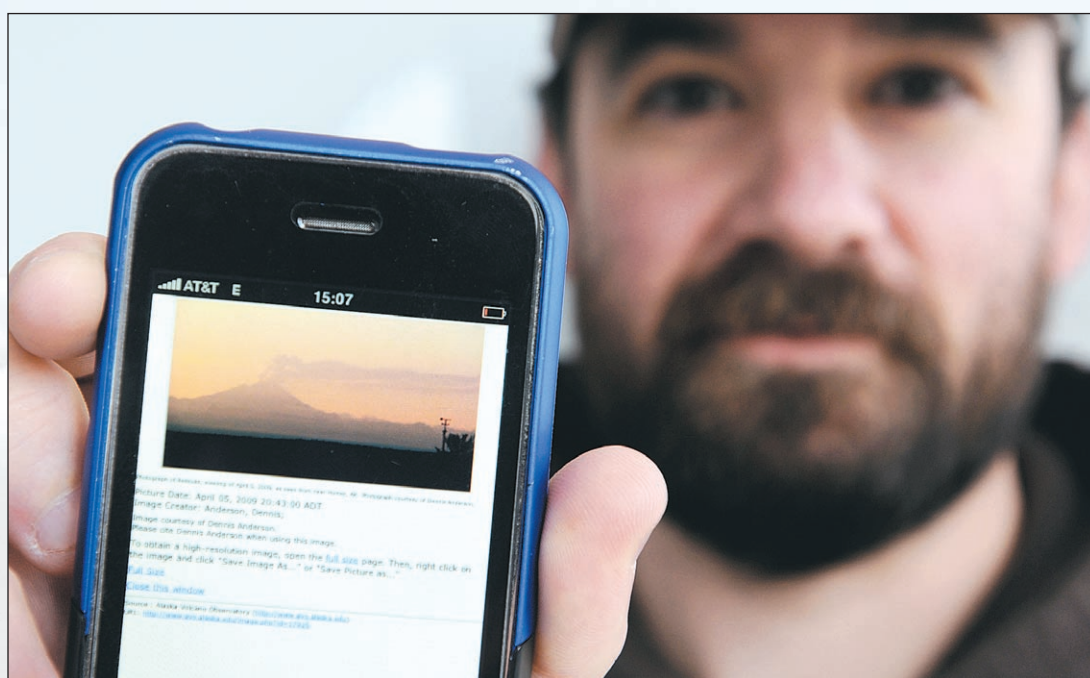
Legislators will also vote Thursday on approving the governor's appointees, in-

See Page A-8, LEGISLATURE

ALASKA VOLCANO'S FANS GET THE MESSAGE

Online eruption

With Facebook friends and Twitter tweets, Mount Redoubt makes it big-time on the Internet



ERIK HILL / Anchorage Daily News

Alaska Volcano Observatory tweets and Web site content such as this Dennis Anderson photo of Redoubt volcano are available on mobile devices. Ken Woods maintains the AVO Twitter page.

By KYLE HOPKINS khopkins@adn.com



PAUL SOUDERS / Daily News archive 1990 Anchorage glitters as a plume from Mount Redoubt stretches to the west in February 1990.

The cameras watch her every move. Thousands of strangers want to be her friend and thousands more follow her latest exploits hour by hour on their laptops and cell phones.

She's Mount Redoubt, Internet star. With her first eruption in 20 years, Redoubt volcano has reawakened just in time to ignite a new kind of media blitz — an explosion of immediate, online information that was hard to imagine just a year or two ago.

Within weeks, pages about Redoubt on Twitter and Facebook became some of the most popular in Alaska. Even those who dismiss such social networking sites as silly can follow near-hourly updates and scour photos of the eruption on the Alaska Volcano Observatory's own Web site, which saw traffic boom a hundredfold immediately after Redoubt roared to life in March.

And yes, Redoubt is a girl. It says so on her irreverent, unauthorized Facebook page, where more than 1,500 people have befriended the volcano. They write messages encouraging her — "I need a little more ash in my garden" — and cursing her: "I hate you ... just stop."

Others swap photos they've taken of the eruption and plead with Redoubt to cool it as each new explosion threatens air travel across the state.

"Shhhhh ..." implored Marianne Aplin, one of the volcano's Facebook friends in Homer. "Yes you're a big strong volcano, but why don't you take a little nap until my husband can get home?"

The Alaska Volcano Observatory has nothing to do with the slightly goofy Facebook page, which is written anonymously from the volcano's point of view and lists Redoubt as a Scientist who is "in an open relationship" and watches the Discovery Channel.

Instead, the AVO Web masters climbed on board the Twitter train — joining the army of people posting micro updates on their daily activities in 140 characters or less, readable on computers or cell phones.

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Keeping up with Redoubt

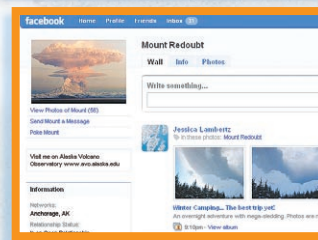
The volcano online



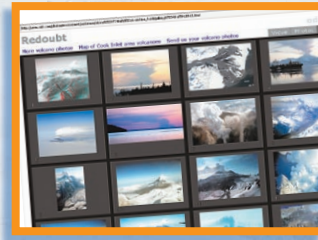
WHERE DO I FIND the latest info on what Redoubt is up to? The Alaska Volcano Observatory Web site: www.avo.alaska.edu/ (Look for the "last activity report.")



WHAT IF I WANT TO SIGN UP to have updates sent to my phone? The observatory's Twitter page, which also posts regular updates: twitter.com/alaska\_avo



I'M MAD AT/INTRIGUED by Redoubt and want to tell her so: Facebook.com www.facebook.com/people/Mount-Redoubt/1280503227 (You need to sign up for Facebook, then search for Mount Redoubt.)



SHOW ME SOME COOL PHOTOS from the latest eruption: The Daily News Redoubt gallery adn.com/redoubtphotos

Attack on ship sudden, violent

PIRACY: Mourning captured captain, crew members recall attack.

Daily News wire reports NAIROBI, Kenya — It began with a grappling hook coming over the stern.

Suddenly, a group of Somali pirates were firing shots in the air, setting off a violent struggle on a massive freighter that crescendoed with a crewman from Connecticut stabbing a pirate in the hand with an ice pick.

INSIDE

THE SHORES OF TRIPOLI: About 200 years ago, pirates from the Barbary Coast hijacked U.S. and European ships with impunity.

Page B-1

For 19 of the crew of the Maersk Alabama, the ordeal was coming to an end Saturday night as they pulled into a Kenyan port, where some publicly recounted their stories for the first time. Exhilarated by freedom, they also mourned the absence of Capt. Richard Phillips, whom they hailed for sacrificing his freedom to save them.

Phillips, 53, of Underhill, Vt., told his crew to lock themselves in a cabin and surrendered himself to safeguard his men, crew members said. He remained a hostage Saturday, floating in a lifeboat with his pirate captors in a tense standoff with U.S. warships.

"He saved our lives!" second mate Ken Quinn of Bradenton, Fla., declared from the ship as it docked in the resort

See Page A-8, PIRACY

Melting snow means gardening classes are packed

People looking to grow their own veggies

By JULIA O'MALLEY jomalley@adn.com

When Bonnie Parker and Lucas Rowley look out at their slushy back yard in Nunaka Valley, their minds fill with plans that have nothing to do with mowing the lawn in a few weeks. In their new world, grass is passe.

But kale, radishes and carrots are very, very in.

Parker and Rowley aren't alone. Maybe it's the buy-local food movement, the economy, or the spendy and sometimes questionable produce in Anchorage stores, but from the White House to Spensard, turning lawn into lettuce — and any number of other veggies — is a growing trend.

Locally, as the season begins, gardening classes are packed.

On Saturday, "Front Yard Farming for Novice Gardeners," a workshop taught by master gardeners at the Cooperative Extension Service, organizers planned for 30 or so students. More than 50 showed.

"People are thinking about 'How do I save money. ... How do I do things that are good for the environment?'" said Marianne Kerr, one of the presenters and a 4-H agent for the Cooperative Extension.

As many as 7 million more households in the U.S. will grow their own fruit, vegetables, herbs

See Back Page, VEGGIES



MARC LESTER / Anchorage Daily News

Master gardener Noel Nelson talked about starting seeds by using a light box at the Front Yard Farming for Novice Gardeners class Saturday.

Top Nation & World News

Fake POWs rake in more than respect

Many people are reaping sizeable government benefits by claiming to have been prisoners of war, but an investigation finds that their number far exceeds the number of real POWs. Page B-1

Wallboard made in China raises alarms

After the thrashing the U.S. took from natural disasters in recent years, contractors turned to cheaper, plentiful wallboard from China to rebuild. Now problems with that wallboard are raising red flags. Page B-1

WEATHER & INDEX

Anchorage Partly cloudy, snow showers High 38; low 26

Wasilla Mostly cloudy, snow showers High 39; low 25

Kenai Cloudy, with snow showers High 41; low 20

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