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THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Lisi Misa
being first duly sworn on oath deposes and says that she is a representative of the Anchorage Daily News, a daily newspaper. That said newspaper has been approved by the Third Judicial Court, Anchorage, Alaska, and it now and has been published in the English language continually as a daily newspaper in Anchorage, Alaska, and it is now and during all said time was printed in an office maintained at the aforesaid place of publication of said newspaper. That the annexed is a copy of an advertisement as it was published in regular issues (and not in supplemental form) of said newspaper on

January 14, 21, 28/2024

and that such newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period. That the full amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is not in excess of the rate charged private individuals.

Signed Lisi Misa

Subscribed and sworn to before

me this 29th day of January

2024

2024-07-14

Notary Public in and for
The State of Alaska.
Third Division
Anchorage, Alaska
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
7/14/2024

Jada L. Nowling
ELECTRONIC NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF ALASKA
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 07/14/2024

AMCO Received 2.22.2024

WEATHER

Storm expected to dump snow on Valdez, Copper River Basin, snarl travel between Girdwood and Seward

Annie Berman
Anchorage Daily News

A major storm was forecast to bring heavy snowfall to parts of Southcentral Alaska beginning Saturday night and lasting through Tuesday, affecting travel along the Richardson and Seward highways this weekend.

The heaviest snowfall is likely to occur in Valdez, at Thompson Pass and into the Copper River Basin, which could see up to 4 feet of snow at higher elevations over the next several days, said Pam Pietrycha, a lead forecaster for the National Weather Service's Anchorage office.

"It's going to be a long-duration event," Pietrycha said Saturday evening, adding that Anchorage was expected to avoid the brunt of the storm, with several inches of snow forecast for the area Sunday night.

In Anchorage, a cold snap was expected to continue throughout much of the week, according to the weather service.

Here's how the storm could affect different parts of the region.

Heavy snowfall in the southern Copper River Basin

A winter storm warning was in place beginning Saturday afternoon and lasting through Monday for the southern Copper River Basin, with up to 50 inches of snow possible at the highest elevations.

Travel along the Richardson and Edgerton highways had the potential to become challenging and hazardous starting Saturday evening due to heavy snowfall, Pietrycha said.

"Right now, if you're headed towards the Richardson Highway, be prepared for weather to continue to deteriorate, especially if you're heading towards Glennallen and then dropping south, that's going to get pretty nasty tonight and tomorrow," she said.

Snow accumulations of 2 to 4 feet were possible along the Richardson Highway south of Tonsina while areas farther north between Glennallen and Paxson were expected to see less precipitation — closer to 6 inches of snow, according to the winter storm warning.

"Snow is expected to move into the Copper River Basin as early as this evening, remaining relatively light, and then increase in intensity into the overnight hours tonight," the weather service said in Saturday's storm warning.

Wind chills as low as minus 30 degrees Fahrenheit were possible, which "could cause frostbite on exposed skin in as little as 30 minutes," the weather service said.

The weather service advised drivers to carry emergency supplies such as food, water and an extra flashlight if they needed to travel in hazardous conditions.

Potentially 3-plus feet of snow at Valdez and Thompson Pass

Valdez and Thompson Pass were expected to see between 35 and 45 inches of snow beginning Sunday and lasting through Tuesday morning, with short periods of intense snowfall likely during that time period, according to Pietrycha.

Snowfall intensity was expected to be highest between Sunday morning and Monday evening, according to a winter weather advisory in place for the area from 1 a.m. Sunday to 7 p.m. Monday.

Pietrycha said the higher snowfall accumulation totals were likely in higher elevations.

Challenging Seward Highway travel starting Sunday

Travel along the Seward Highway south of Girdwood was likely to become hazardous beginning Sunday, Pietrycha said.

A winter storm watch is in effect Sunday evening through Monday afternoon along the highway from Girdwood to Portage, through Turnagain Pass and south to Seward, with light snow expected Sunday afternoon that would become heavier Sunday night into Monday morning.

Between 20 and 30 inches of total snowfall was expected, according to the weather service.

A bulk of the accumulation was expected to occur overnight Sunday into Monday, with more than a foot possible during that time.

Less snowfall in Cordova

Less snow was expected to land in Cordova beginning Saturday night into Sunday, due to warmer air that was expected to transition some of that snow to rain Sunday afternoon.

Up to a foot of snow was possible there before the transition to rain, the weather service said in a special weather statement.

AVIATION

Grounded Boeing jets are returning to the sky. Here's what to know if you're going to be on a 737 MAX 9

Associated Press

Boeing 737 Max 9 jetliners are carrying passengers in the United States again for the first time since they were grounded after a panel blew out of the side of one of the planes.

Alaska Airlines resumed a limited number of flights with its Max 9s on Friday. United aims to follow suit on Sunday, but a spokeswoman said the airline might use them as spare planes Friday or Saturday.

Those are the only two U.S. airlines that operate this particular model of the Boeing 737.

After seeing video of the frightening flight of a plane with a gaping hole in its side, passengers might reasonably be asking questions about safety.

The Federal Aviation Administration has detailed the process that airlines must follow to inspect — and if necessary, repair — the panels called door plugs, one of which broke loose on Alaska Airlines flight 1282 on Jan. 5. The plugs are used to seal holes left for extra doors on the Max 9 when an unusually high number of seats requires more exits for safety reasons.

FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker says his agency's review of everything that has happened since the accident, including gathering information about inspections of door plugs on 40 other planes, gives him confidence that they will be safe so long as the new inspection process is followed.

Why were the planes grounded?

Alaska Airlines grounded all 65 of its Max 9 jets within hours after one of the two door plugs in the back half of the cabin of flight 1282 blew away while 16,000 feet above Oregon. The FAA grounded all Max 9s in the U.S. the day after the blowout.

Even though none of the passengers were seriously injured, regulators acted quickly because the accident could have been far worse.

By a stroke of luck, the two seats closest to the panel that blew off the plane were empty when flight 1282 took off from Portland, Oregon. And the plane had not yet reached cruising altitude of more than 30,000 feet, when passengers and flight attendants might have been walking around instead of being belted into their seats.

Airlines found problems on other planes. Alaska CEO Ben Minicucci told NBC this week that "many" of the planes they inspected had loose bolts that are supposed to help secure the door plug to the airframe of the jet. United Airlines made similar similar findings.

What is being done about it?

The FAA is requiring airlines to conduct "detailed visual inspections" of the door plugs and other components, adjust fasteners and fix any damage they find before putting Max 9s back into service. The agency says the process was developed by what they learned from inspections of 40 grounded planes.

United says the process involves removing an inner panel, two rows of seats and a sidewall liner from the cabin. Technicians open the door plug, inspect it and the surrounding hardware, and make any necessary repairs before resecuring the panel.

Will people avoid the planes?

Alaska Airlines officials said Thursday that they have lost a few sales among people purchasing flights into February — a phenomenon called "booking away" in the airline business. They didn't say how many people have booked away from the Max 9, but they predicted it would only last a few weeks.

Minicucci, the Alaska CEO, said "at first, people will have some questions, some anxiety," but that "over time" confidence in the plane's safety will be restored.

Travelers returned to the Boeing 737 Max 8 after two of them crashed in 2018 and 2019, killing 346 people. In that case, Boeing had to redesign an automated flight-control system before the FAA would let Max 8s and Max 9s resume flying after a 20-month grounding.

Most people don't bother to look up the type of plane they are booked to fly, although there was an uptick after flight 1282. Scott Keyes, founder of the travel site Going, said once FAA clears the planes to fly — and if there are no more incidents — the public's memory will quickly fade.

How do I check what type of plane I'm on?

Airline websites typically now include the type of aircraft be used on a particular flight, but finding the information varies.

On American Airlines' website, the type of plane shows up right on the search-results page. On the United and Alaska sites, however, you will need to take one more step: Click on "details." On Southwest Airlines, you'll have to click on the flight number — it's in blue — to see the aircraft type.

Is flying safe?

It's much safer than driving and also safer than rail travel on a per mile basis, according to U.S. Department of Transportation figures.

Airline officials and aviation regulators like to point out that there has not been a fatal crash of a U.S. airliner since 2009. However, in the past year there has been an sharp increase in close calls being investigated by federal officials.

Is Boeing in trouble?

The FAA is investigating whether Boeing and its suppliers followed proper safety procedures in manufacturing the part that blew off the Alaska jet. That could lead to sanctions.

In addition, the FAA says it won't let Boeing expand production of Max jets until it's satisfied that quality-control concerns about the company have been resolved.

Rival Airbus has pulled far ahead of Boeing, beating the U.S. company last year in both orders and deliveries of new passenger planes. Boeing's latest crisis could make things worse. United CEO Scott Kirby says his airline will consider alternatives to the upcoming Max 10 because of uncertainty about when and whether the FAA will certify the plane, which is already years behind schedule.

ADN.com

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WNDJ, LLC is applying under 3 AAC 306.400(a)(1) for a new Standard Marijuana Cultivation Facility license, license #35546, doing business as No Limit, located at 300 W. Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK, 99503, UNITED STATES. Interested persons may object to the application by submitting a written statement of reasons for the objection to their local government, the applicant, and the Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office (AMCO) not later than 30 days after the director has determined the application to be complete and has given written notice to the local government. Once an application is determined to be complete, the objection deadline and application information will be posted on AMCO's website at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/amco. Objections should be sent to AMCO at marijuana.licensing@alaska.gov or to 550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1600, Anchorage, AK 99501 and Attorney Jana Weltzin, Esq at jana@jdwcounsel.com or 901 Photo Avenue, Second Floor, Anchorage, AK 99503.

ANCHORAGE

3 residential fires reported over 2 days in city

Anchorage Daily News

No fatalities were reported after three separate residential fires in apartment buildings and a trailer court occurred Friday and Saturday in Anchorage, according to the Anchorage Fire Department.

While the causes of the fires were still under investigation, a department spokesperson encouraged residents to follow safety protocols when using space heaters, including keeping them at least 3 feet from flammable materials and not leaving them unattended. Anchorage temperatures in recent days have topped out in the single digits and plummeted below zero at night.

Around 8:50 a.m. Friday, a fire was reported in East Anchorage at a mobile home court along the 700 block of Muldoon Road, the department said.

"Shortly after AFD's arrival, smoke was noticed coming from underneath the adjacent mobile home," the department said in a statement. Twelve units responded, both mobile homes were evacuated, and the department said it hadn't taken anyone to the hospital.

Later Friday, shortly after 4 p.m., another fire was reported at an apartment building on the 1000 block of Ingra Street. Sixteen units responded, and the cause of the fire is still under investigation, the department said. Residents were evacuated, with two referred to the Red Cross, and the fire department said it didn't take anyone to the hospital following that blaze either.

A third residential fire was reported Saturday morning just before 6 a.m. at an apartment building on Markle Loop, prompting 11 units to respond, the department said. Residents were evacuated from each unit of the building, located southeast of the Abbott Road-Lake Otis Parkway intersection, and seven were referred to the Red Cross, according to the fire department. AFD didn't take anyone to the hospital, and the cause of the fire remains under investigation.

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Anchorage Daily News - 01/21/2024

How to handle chatty airline seat mates

JUDITH MARTIN
MISS MANNERS

Q. Dear Miss Manners: Are there any rules of etiquette for speaking to strangers sitting beside you on a plane? I was on a long flight, surrounded by six people from the same party, but I was never even addressed by any of them.

I was seated in between two gentlemen. Two ladies were seated in the row ahead of us, and two more ladies were in the row behind. The six of them were conversing off and on throughout the flight, but for the entire time, I was treated as if I were not even there.

I sensed that trying to start a conversation with one of them would have resulted in polite rejection. After the flight landed, I could not help but feel a little let down because of all the conversation I had listened to but could not be a part of.

Was this dysfunctional behavior on anyone's part? Should one of them at least have said "How do you do?" to me?

A. Gentle reader: Most people, Miss Manners dares say, would have been grateful to be left out of such conversations — but not to be talked over, which is the point where your fellow passengers failed to meet the standards of civility.

This inconvenient separation of the gabby party would have provided a natural point of introduction. They could have asked if you were willing to exchange seats so that they could speak without disturbing you. Or you could have offered. This would have given you the opportunity either to agree or to introduce yourself to the group.

Q. Dear Miss Manners: I was invited to a birthday party at a local restaurant; it is a cuisine I'm not terribly fond of, although I can usually find something. I went because the guest of honor is a dear friend. However, I wasn't planning to eat anything and the restaurant doesn't have a liquor license, so I chose not to drink.

I finally gave in and ordered an appetizer because several well-meaning friends wouldn't accept my "Nothing for me, thanks" as an answer. (Don't get me started on the number of suggestions I received regarding wine and beer.)

What's ruder: Not eating at a restaurant because it makes others around me uncomfortable, or pushing me to order when I've tried to politely decline?

A. Gentle reader: The reason Miss Manners does not play the "Which is Ruder?" game is that the prize invariably seems to be the victor using the win to justify a third rudeness — be it repeating the original offense or rudely correcting the loser's manners.

Q. Dear Miss Manners: I have two sons, 17 and 21. I moved about five hours away from where they grew up. My 21-year-old had moved across the country and my 17-year-old decided to stay with his dad.

Well, within two weeks, both of them ended up moving in with me, and my home is very small. My husband and I decided to rent an apartment for them.

Neither one of them have a job, and when I go over to their apartment, they're lazily lying around a messy house and playing video games. I'm kind of at a loss with what to do. Do you have any suggestions?

A. Gentle reader: Board games?

Miss Manners, written by Judith Martin and her two perfect children, Nicholas Ivor Martin and Jacobina Marin, has chronicled the continuous rise and fall of American manners since 1978. Send your questions to dearmissmanners@gmail.com.

My girlfriend's attempts at TikTok fame are ruining our relationship. What can I do?

WAYNE & WANDA
LOVE TRACK

Dear Wayne and Wanda,

My girlfriend and I, both late 20s and mostly happy in our relationship that is leading toward marriage, are suddenly navigating the treacherous waters of her newfound obsession with finding some TikTok fame. It all started with standard random and innocent content, but now it feels like I'm a prisoner in her flailing reality show.

She has no "thing" that makes her stand out. Date night recaps, Netflix true crime reviews, dance routines du jour, and unfunny pranks — she does it all. And our once-private moments are now on public display (though not exactly to OnlyFans levels) like morning blanket pulls to wake me up for dad jokes or cold coffee for laughs.

Despite her best efforts and endless hours spent scrolling TikTok for inspiration and ideas to recycle, her content is not interesting, funny, or original, and even her friends cringe in sympathetic embarrassment or unspoken boredom at some posts. While I respected her perseverance and attempt to try something new and fun, I'm now frustrated that this isn't going anywhere and taking away from the genuinely important aspects of her life.

I repeat: Our life together is otherwise excellent. She has a fulfilling job and a fantastic circle of family and friends, and we share a love for soccer — the sport that brought us and many friends together many years ago. Yet, her current fixation eats up the time she once spent enjoying this life, or even intrudes on it as she turns it into "content."

I've expressed my concerns, aiming for the delicate balance between honesty and kindness. However, she's not getting gentle nudges. Now, I grapple with bursting her bubble and risk hurting her feelings or letting the spectacle play out for who knows how long to either a fiery train wreck or a quiet thud.

Should I stage a social media intervention, urging her to redirect her time and attention back to the joys of her and our lives? Or gently guide her away from the chase of virtual fame that I honestly don't think will ever come?

Any insights on this situation and how I should navigate the dance between dreams and reality?

Wanda says:

Since debuting in 2016, TikTok has taken the internet by storm, with no signs of letting up. Swept along in its mighty winds are a slew of content posters that range from the truly famous to the wannabe influencer to the downright obscure. Now and then, lighting strikes, catapulting some unknown teenager or housewife into the stratosphere. Perhaps its videos appeal to the short attention spans of today's content snackers who lack of appetite for longer viewing commitment. I've never taken to it, but there's no denying its allure.

TikTok, in a way, is like buying a lottery ticket, trying to write an award-winning novel or heading to Hollywood for a hand at acting: It's another version of the American dream, a venue where thousands and thousands will dip and dabble, and only a select few will strike gold. But that's the key: only a select few. Most people will only entertain themselves (and possibly annoy their significant others) as they churn out what is essentially generic and uninspired content that only a mother could love.

Your annoyance is understandable. And it's perfectly normal in a relationship — especially a comfortable, settled, longer-term and well-established commitment — that we've defined some behavior in our partner that is puzzling, perturbing or problematic. It becomes an issue when that behavior is harming one's self or the relationship as a whole. For instance, I am irritated when my husband hollers at the TV when his fantasy football players are underperforming, but in the grand scheme, it isn't hurting anyone.

Your girlfriend's TikTok enthusiasm isn't infectious, but it's hers, and it's appearing to bring her joy. Has it reached a level where it's truly negatively impacting your potential for long-term happiness? If so, then yes, it's time for straight talk. And I bet Wayne is full of ideas on how to approach that!

Wayne says:

Well yes, I do, Wanda. But first, I can't knock someone adopting an outlet (creative or otherwise) for expression, exploration, or simply getting a break from the draining stresses and routines of daily life. They can provide a healthy balance to a fulfilling existence. Also in agreement with you, though, is the recognition of crossing a line where engaging in that outlet turns into overindulgence or obsession that takes away from the day job that's paying the bills, leads to neglecting friends and loved ones, abuses people (for content and clicks, in this case), and gets into gray areas of health, secrecy, legality and morality.

Your girlfriend has quickly gone from seeing the line to straddling it to running over it and not looking back. A dose of reality needs to come from you, the person she should be able to trust, respect and appreciate the most.

Now, sometimes these outlets or hobbies turn into legit careers, and social influencers have created a new industry that is bringing in ridiculous money. But my biggest issue with your girlfriend is that she isn't creating anything that's engaging, different, or a form of expression that's genuinely her. Desperate reaches and uninspired rehashing of popular trends and successful templates from the real influencers that make her look like a boring hack. She's throwing her version of content against a fast-scrolling timeline and seeing if anything sticks. It's not. If you and her friends recognize it, and I recognize it, we know that savvy users sure as hell recognize it and can't scroll past it fast enough.

If I'm you, I don't lead with that, though. It will likely hit her where it hurts most — her creativity, self-expression and dream of fame. Take a lighter approach. Let her know that focusing on her phone is taking more and more time away from the quality of her life and the real-world connections with the people who care about her. Ask if she can dial it back to a spot where she can still watch and create content about her life, leave the influencer work to the pros (and they are pros), and still be present. If she can't, then maybe drop a few truth bombs: Her content isn't connecting, and she should deactivate and re-evaluate for a while to get a refreshed perspective on her life, social media prospects, and what matters to her.

Send your romance woes and wonderings to Wanda and Wayne at wanda@adn.com.

Dog detects gas leak at home, alerts owner

Sydney Page
The Washington Post

Chanell Bell

Kobe isn't usually a digger, his owner Chanell Bell said.

Chanell Bell had no idea that a major gas leak was brewing beneath her front yard in Philadelphia, but her dog, Kobe, seemed to know.

Kobe — a 4-year-old husky — dug a hole in the dirt outside Bell's rental semidetached townhouse in the Germantown neighborhood in mid-December. Bell, 28, was perplexed by his behavior.

"He's definitely not a digger," she said. "He has never just randomly dug a hole."

Although it was unlike him, Bell said, she refilled the hole with dirt and moved on. A few days later, though, Kobe dug another hole — in the same spot.

Bell, who lives with her 8-year-old daughter, was about to set up Christmas decorations on Dec. 21 and brought Kobe outside to accompany her. Soon, he started digging again.

"It totally threw me off," said Bell, who runs a small cleaning company and a vintage clothing business.

The dog stood beside the hole, his paws covered in dirt.

"Kobe, why are you doing that?" Bell asked her pooch.

He gave her a look — which she didn't interpret as a look of guilt or shame, but of pride.

"You know when a dog does something wrong, and he knows he did something wrong? He didn't give me that look at all," said Bell. "He was giving me a look like 'I did it, and I don't regret it.'"

Bell thought perhaps he did it for a reason.

The month prior, Bell had a small gas leak from her heater. Once it was repaired, she decided to get a handheld gas detection device to identify any other gas-related issues.

Since she had recently dealt with a gas leak, "my intuition told me to take the reader down there to the hole. I didn't expect to find anything at all," she said.

When put the reader by the hole, it "went off like crazy," she said.

Bell called Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW), and staff showed up to assess the situation. They told Bell the leak — which was caused by a rusting pipe — was "really serious," and even flipping on a light switch could have blown up her house, she said.

"I was shocked beyond words," Bell said, adding that gas was leaking from an underground street pipe, directly underneath where Kobe dug the hole.

In an emailed statement to The Washington Post, PGW said it "was able to locate and successfully repair the service line and make the location safe."

The statement also mentioned that natural gas is odorless, and for safety reasons, "PGW adds the odorant mercaptan to natural gas to produce a rotten egg-like odor for easy detection and public awareness."

Retired priest struggles with Catholic critique

AMY DICKINSON
ASK AMY

Q. Dear Amy: I am a retired Catholic priest. For the most part, I have enjoyed these late-life years, especially as the pace of life has eased up. However, one difficulty I've encountered stems from my years in active ministry. During one of my assignments, I got to know a number of families associated with my ministry. I have remained in contact with several of these families and have been invited to celebrate baptisms, marriages, and funerals. In recent years, two couples have invited me on a regular basis to have dinner with them. While I initially enjoyed these, a problem has emerged that involves one couple in particular. This couple decided to stop attending church services. I felt this was their decision to make and have never criticized or judged them for it. However, invariably during our evenings together they steer the conversation to their gripes about the Catholic Church. I've gone so far as to meet privately with them, letting them know how uncomfortable I am with their behavior during something I consider an informal gathering of friends. All to no avail. I usually end up leaving these dinners feeling angry and depressed. These folks have been great friends for many years, but I'm at my wits end trying to figure out how best to deal with the situation. Should I just give up and decline future invitations?

— Father Confused

A. Dear Father Confused: I can only imagine the pressure you might feel to always respond to uncomfortable situations in a way that basically protects others. Because you have retired from the formal part of ministry, it might not be necessary for you to be so discreet about your concerns when something bothers you. My point is that although you will always be a priest, you absolutely have the human right to react publicly to topics, behavior or comments that bother or offend you. If this happens again at a social occasion, you can say a version of, "Naturally, this is a very difficult topic for me, but I realize that my presence seems to trigger a discussion about the failings of the institution I've devoted my life to. I've mentioned this privately but I understand now that bringing it up is just too tempting to avoid, so I'll take this as my cue to say goodnight." This is also an issue you might raise with your own pastoral counselor.

Q. Dear Amy: Last year, I witnessed a tragic hit-and-run incident involving a car and a pedestrian. The pedestrian did not survive, and the incident deeply affected me. After learning the victim's name through local press coverage, I engaged in a brief email exchange with the organizer of an online fundraiser for the person's survivors. I've never met the deceased, but I've been seeking a deeper sense of closure and feel that paying my respects at their resting place would be meaningful. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to locate this information. Considering the sensitivity of the matter and my limited connection to the victim, I wonder if it would be appropriate for me, a stranger, to ask the friend of the deceased who organized the fundraiser about the burial location. I am committed to approaching this with utmost respect for the feelings and privacy of those close to the victim. What is your advice?

— Mourning a Stranger

A. Dear Mourning: I can imagine the deep sadness and lingering confusion you might feel after witnessing this crime. I also appreciate your concern and your stated desire to be sensitive toward the survivors. As someone who has experienced the sudden, violent and traumatic loss of a family member, I would vote "no" on any stranger seeking out the gravesite, even someone with your compassionate and respectful intent. However, there is no universal response to loss, and this victim's family might feel and respond differently. Reach out to the person who organized the fundraiser, and prepare yourself to accept whatever answer comes your way. I strongly urge you to see a counselor specializing in trauma in order to continue to process the longer-term effect of witnessing this terrible event.

Q. Dear Amy: "Looking" was frustrated by dating apps. I found it interesting that you didn't suggest seeking the help of a matchmaker: I am in the process of getting certified; professional human matchmakers can help people the apps leave behind. I've been happily married to my loving husband for almost 31 years. We met in a karaoke bar. Ha!

— I Love Love

A. Dear Love Love: This would make a great Broadway musical.

You can email Amy Dickinson at askamy@amydickinson.com or send a letter to Ask Amy, P.O. Box 194, Freeville, NY 13068. You can also follow her on Twitter @askingamy or Facebook.

Answer to today's L.A. Times Sunday Crossword

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AMCO Received 2.22.2024

Anchorage Daily News - 01/14/2024

LOREN HOLMES / ADN

Art Mathias, one of the leaders of the ongoing ballot measure effort to repeal Alaska's new voting system, delivers signature booklets to the Division of Elections Absentee and Petition Office on Friday in Anchorage.

POLITICS

Ranked choice voting foes file petition in quest to overturn Alaska's voting system

Iris Samuels
Anchorage Daily News

A group seeking to overturn Alaska's voting system on Friday submitted signatures to the Alaska Division of Elections, a necessary step in their effort to put the repeal question on the 2024 ballot.

The embattled opponents of ranked-choice voting — recently fined over $94,000 by Alaska's campaign regulatory commission — are seeking to use a ballot measure to overturn the state's open primaries and ranked-choice general elections. The system was approved via a ballot measure by Alaska voters in 2020, and first used in 2022.

It is now up to the Division of Elections and the lieutenant governor's office to count the signatures and verify they fulfill the state's requirements to certify the question and place it on the 2024 ballot. In an initial count completed Friday morning, election workers tallied 41,895 signatures.

The opponents of Alaska's voting system — who include Republicans disappointed by the losses of conservative GOP members in the 2022 U.S. House and Senate races — have been accused of bending or outright violating the state's campaigning laws in their quest to put the repeal question on the ballot.

The $94,000 fine imposed on the repeal campaign leaders earlier this month was for several violations, including for funneling the majority of their funding through a tax-exempt church they formed in Washington.

In the final weeks of signature gathering, the group leading the effort — Alaskans for Honest Elections — was accused of using an Anchorage church as the base for a paid signature-gathering effort, in violation of state laws. The allegations came from a pro-ranked choice voting group called Alaskans for Better Elections. That group has more recently raised concerns that signature gatherers provided misleading information to Anchorage residents in their quest to gather signatures in the city.

The pro-ranked choice voting group sent a mailer to Anchorage residents last month with a scannable code leading to an online form that can be used to withdraw signatures on the petition if it was signed "in error."

More recently, the group has been running ads on social media stating that "the people who might ask you to sign a petition to repeal open primaries and ranked-choice voting can't be trusted," and saying that "if you were misled into signing this petition," there is an online form to remove one's name.

Division of Elections operations manager Michaela Thompson said the number of people who requested to have their name removed from the petition will only be known after all the signatures are processed by the division.

Amber Lee, a communication consultant in Anchorage, said that she encountered a signature gatherer at the New Sagaya City Market in downtown Anchorage who told her the petition "was just to give people a chance to say if they liked it or not," and that it was separate from the petition to repeal the voting system.

Phillip Izon, one of the leaders of the group to repeal ranked choice voting and open primaries, said in a phone interview Thursday "that's not how we train our people at all, so that's a volunteer making a mistake."

"We don't tell anybody to challenge people or try to discourage or encourage anyone to sign our petition books," said Izon.

Rep. Zack Fields, an Anchorage Democrat who represents a left-leaning district in downtown Anchorage where the New Sagaya City Market is located, said in a press release Wednesday that "opponents of open primaries and ranked-choice voting are using misleading and false information."

Izon said his group relied on 700 volunteers to gather signatures, and only 3,000 of the group's roughly 42,000 gathered signatures were gathered by paid workers. Izon said he personally gathered 2,000 signatures since the group launched its effort in February. He said Friday that election workers rejected 10 out of the 650 signature booklets due to missing information.

The group's reliance on unpaid volunteers stands in contrast to the paid signature gathering effort by a group seeking to raise Alaska's minimum wage by ballot measure. That group spent more than $250,000 on paid signature gatherers to collect around 41,000 signatures.

The repeal group, Alaskans for Honest Elections, reported raising less than $150,000 since launching their effort in 2022, and only a fraction of that was spent on paid signature gatherers. Izon said Friday he does not intend to raise large sums from out-of-state funders to support the campaign, as ballot groups often do, even if the petition is certified.

The tally of nearly 42,000 submitted signature is above the minimum necessary threshold set at 10% of the votes cast in the last statewide election, or around 26,000. But the signatures must also represent a minimum percentage of voters in at least three-quarters of the state's 40 House districts.

Izon said the group had succeeded in gathering the minimum necessary signatures in all but four districts. The missing districts are Districts 3 and 4 covering Juneau and Haines, along with 39 and 40 covering the North Slope, Northwest Arctic and the Bering Strait region. Izon said signatures were collected up until the last moment — including signature booklets that arrived by plane from Dillingham just hours before they were submitted.

It is now up to election officials to go through the signatures and verify that they meet requirements — including that there are no duplicates, that they come from registered Alaska voters, and that they meet the geographic distribution requirements. Alaskans with experience in submitting ballot measures say that there is an unavoidable error rate.

The state has 60 days to determine whether to certify the repeal question.

NORTHWEST

Supreme Court will decide whether local anti-homeless laws are 'cruel and unusual'

Alaska is one of the 9 western states the decision will apply to.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court agreed Friday to review lower-court rulings that make it harder for cities in the western United States to prevent people from sleeping on the streets when there aren't enough beds in homeless shelters.

The justices will hear an appeal from the city of Grants Pass, in southwest Oregon, that has the backing of California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, as well as other Democratic and Republican elected officials who have struggled to deal with homelessness brought on by rising housing costs and income inequality.

The court's action comes a day after a panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed a lower-court ruling blocking anti-camping ordinances in San Francisco, where Newsom once was the mayor.

A separate 9th circuit panel ruled in the Oregon case that Grants Pass could not enforce local ordinances that prohibit homeless people "from using a blanket, pillow, or cardboard box for protection from the elements." The decision applies across nine western states, Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.

The two rulings, like a 2018 decision from the 9th circuit in a case from Boise, Idaho, found that punishing people for sleeping on the streets when no alternative shelter is available amounts to "cruel and unusual punishment" in violation of the Constitution.

Elected officials urged the justices to take up the case because they say the rulings complicate their efforts to clear tent encampments, which have long existed in West Coast cities, but have more recently become more common across the U.S. The federal count of homeless people reached 580,000 last year, driven by a lack of affordable housing, a pandemic that economically wrecked households, and a lack of access to mental health and addiction treatment.

"The Supreme Court can now correct course and end the costly delays from lawsuits that have plagued our efforts to clear encampments and deliver services to those in need," Newsom said in a statement.

Theane Evangelis, a lawyer for Grants Pass, said in a statement that the appellate decisions "are actually harming the very people they purport to protect."

Homeless people and their advocates say the sweeps are cruel and a waste of taxpayer money. They say the answer is more housing, not crackdowns.

"The issue before the Court is whether cities can punish homeless residents simply for existing without access to shelter," Ed Johnson, a lawyer for homeless people who challenged the Grants Pass ordinances, said in a statement. "Nevertheless, some politicians and others are cynically and falsely blaming the judiciary for the homelessness crisis to distract the public and deflect blame for years of failed policies."

Cities from Los Angeles to New York have stepped up efforts to clear encampments, records reviewed by The Associated Press show, as public pressure grew to address what some residents say are dangerous and unsanitary living conditions. But despite tens of millions of dollars spent in recent years, there appears to be little reduction in the number of tents propped up on sidewalks, in parks and by freeway off-ramps.

It's unclear whether the case will be argued in the spring or the fall.

GARY CORONADO / Los Angeles Times via TNS

An encampment in San Francisco's Tenderloin district in 2022.

ALASKA NEWS

Ways to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day around Anchorage

Anchorage Daily News

Martin Luther King Jr. Day will be observed Monday, Jan. 15, a day to honor the memory and legacy of Dr. King. You can celebrate during any of these events happening around Anchorage running through the holiday weekend.

MLK Citywide Celebration: 3 p.m. Sunday; West High School, 1700 Hillcrest Drive

This event is free and open to the public. This year's theme is "Shifting The Cultural Climate Through Cultural Sensitivity: It Starts With Me."

Community Conversation: Is the Dream Realized?: 7-8 p.m. Sunday; participate on Zoom

This community conversation hosted by the Alaska Black Caucus will be moderated by Dr. Cal Williams. This series is devoted to productive conversations about being Black in Alaska. Register to attend the event via Zoom.

MLK Day Free Legal Help: Noon-4 p.m. Monday, Mountain View Boys & Girls Club, 315 Price St.

This 15th annual event hosted by the Alaska Bar Association, Alaska Court System, Alaska Legal Services Corp. and local bar associations is an opportunity to consult with attorneys on a variety of topics. Alaskans can get advice on civil issues including family law, landlord/tenant, public benefits, employment law, probate or estate planning issues. Fairbanks, Bethel and Juneau will also be hosting sessions.

Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration in the Mat-Su: 1 p.m. Monday, Glenn Massay Theatre, 8295 E. College Drive in Palmer

The Mat-Su MLK Jr. Foundation hosts this free public event for the 22nd annual celebration. This year's theme is "Plant A Seed — Help The Dream Move Along." There will be music, and topics to be discussed include small business, labor, mental health and more.

"I Have a Dream" Solidarity Cultural Celebration: 5 p.m. Monday, Bettye Davis East Anchorage High School, 4025 E. Northern Lights Blvd.

This free event showcases Alaska's cultural performances while promoting the importance of voting. There will be performances from Sankofa Dance Theatre, Korean Drum Dance, Samoan Catholic Community Services, Western Alaska Yup'ik Dancers and Korean Martial Arts. Doors open at 5 p.m. with vendors showcasing goods and services. The program will start at 6:30 p.m.

Community Conversation — National Day of Racial Healing: Noon Tuesday; participate on Zoom

Tuesday marks the eighth anniversary of the National Day of Racial Healing. This conversation hosted by the Alaska Black Caucus marks the day where "individuals, organizations and communities across the country come together to explore common humanity and build the relationships necessary to create a more just and equitable world."

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FORECLOSURE SALE

January 19, 2024 at 11:00 A.M.
Boney Courthouse
303 K Street Anchorage, AK 99501

Property Address:
7710 Maryland Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99504
Lot Thirty-one (31) and the west one-half (W1/2) of Lot Thirty-two (32), Creekside Park Subdivision, according to the official plat thereof, filed under Plat No. P-327-A in the records of the Anchorage Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska
Single Family Residence
This property is not available for viewing prior to sale
2023 Assessed Value: $411,700
OPENING BID AMOUNT: $262,573.44
Cash or Certified Funds Only
Property is sold "as is, where is," no warranties expressed or implied
For more information contact William J. Simpson at 907-261-3374, Northrim Bank, NMLS #490464, servicing agent for AHFC
Sale date and bid amount are subject to change

PFLAG
(Parents and Friends of Lesbian & Gays)
Anchorage Chapter
Date: January 19th, 2024
Time: 6:30pm to 9:00pm
Location: Old Identity Center - 801 West Firewood, Anchorage
"PFLAG is proud to host a community meeting, to introduce the Board of Directors and share information about PFLAG."
We offer information about the LGBTQ+ community and ways which family & friends can assist. Also learn about the programs we offer and ways to get involved in the community.

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