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High 21; low 7

Developments to change face  
of ski resort town

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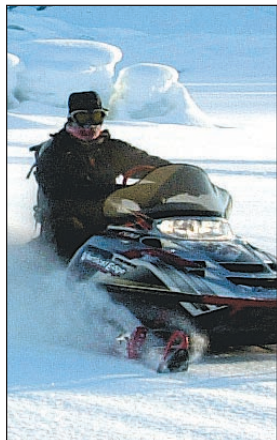
# Anchorage Daily News

Sunday, November 6, 2005

ALASKA'S NEWSPAPER

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## INSIDE



### HOT SKIS, BOOTS THIS YEAR

A new design for snowmachine skis from Ski-Doo is among the gear most lauded at the Snowmachine Tech Show.

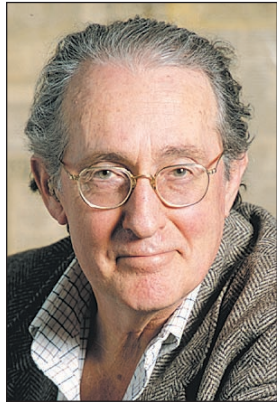
Outdoors, K-1



### SHIP ELUDES PIRATES

A luxury cruise ship with 151 passengers outran attackers off the Horn of Africa on Saturday.

World, A-10



### HAINES WINS TOP AWARD

Fairbanks poet John Haines won the Rasmuson Foundation's Distinguished Artist Award that includes a \$25,000 grant.

Arts, D-8

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## Alaskan tackles mental health care reform

**NEW CASE** ■ **GOTTSTEIN:** Member of prominent family confronts psychiatric establishment.

■ **API:** In his most recent case, Gottstein is challenging the court proceedings used to commit people to Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

By **LISA DEMER**  
Anchorage Daily News

Jim Gottstein has an obsession that has gobbled up his legal practice, his energy and some of his family fortune.

He wants to upend what he sees as a flawed and dangerous mental health system, and the son of the grocery store family has turned agitator to get it done.

Like most people, you probably think the wide use of psychiatric drugs has cut the number of lives wrecked by mental illness.

Anything but, Gottstein says. In fact, the rate of people disabled by mental illness has swelled almost sixfold since 1955, according to a spring 2005 article in the journal Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry.

"Literally, the system is nuts," he says. At 52, Gottstein is cultivating a national reputation in mental health reform. He has seen the system from the

*"We ought to at least have a system where the people that are helped by the drugs get the drugs and the ones that are not ... have another choice."*

— Jim Gottstein

See Back Page, **GOTTSTEIN**

### RIVERS AT RISK: THE YUKON



Dave Brown, a relatively new salmon fisherman who has set up camp along the Yukon River, pulls a king salmon from his net in early July.

Photos by **TOM BROWN** / Hartford (Conn.) Courant

# Rapid change

*Alaska's warmer weather threatens salmon-based ecosystem along the Yukon*

By **STEVE GRANT**  
Hartford (Conn.) Courant

**T**ANANA — On a warm evening this summer, with the sub-Arctic sun still high, about two-dozen adults and children gathered on the south bank of the Yukon River for a picnic supper, many miles from any road.

In the river were their boats, their nets and their fish wheels, lumbering contraptions fashioned of spruce and tamarack limbs that trap salmon as they migrate upriver. These were families and couples catching fish to preserve and sustain them through the long winter.

It was an idyllic evening, but the warmth in the air only underscored a new climatic reality in Alaska, one that threatens the way of life of these families.

Alaska is a much warmer place than it used to be, even if warm in winter means 30 below and not 60 below, and that change in weather is affecting everything from vegetation to the health of the salmon.

Climate change, whether caused by civilization's fuel-burning excesses or a natural shift in climate, is happening here on a scale not yet seen in the rest of the country. Even Alaskans who are



Ruth Althoff and her husband, Charlie Campbell, prepare king salmon to be smoked at their Yukon River fish camp.

not ready to blame the industrialized world for global warming agree that the Alaska weather is heating up.

Ruth Althoff, who, with her husband, Charlie Campbell, preserve their fish in a rudimenta-

See Page A-6, **YUKON**

### Today's report

**Every mile of river fishable. Every mile swimmable.** When the Clean Water Act was adopted in 1972, that was the goal — and it was supposed to be met by 1983. But after 33 years, we're not even close. Despite substantial progress and the billions of dollars spent, rivers are undermined today by some of the most intractable and insidious forces the environment has faced. Find out about some of these problems today in this Hartford (Conn.) Courant report.

- **SOUTHWEST:** Irrigation threatens the Rio Grande, Gila and Colorado rivers.
- **POLLUTION:** Mercury fouling the Connecticut River was not dumped; it drifted in from the wind. See Ideas, Page J-1

## Toxins fouling flooded region

■ **NEW ORLEANS:** Removal will be a huge, complex undertaking.

By **RANDY LEE LOFTIS**  
The Dallas Morning News

**NEW ORLEANS** — The Army Corps of Engineers is planning one of the biggest environmental cleanups ever attempted: scraping miles of sediment laced with cancer-causing chemicals from New Orleans' hurricane-flooded neighborhoods, The Dallas Morning News has learned.

Contaminants in the sediment include toxic metals, industrial compounds, petroleum byproducts and a banned insecticide, all at levels that signal potential cancer risks or other long-term hazards, a Dallas Morning News review of government test results shows.

The cleanup plans would involve crews using front-end loaders to scoop up contaminated sediment that Hurricane Katrina floods left in yards, playgrounds and other spots throughout the Greater New Orleans area. In some instances, protecting people might require steps less radical than removing soil, such as planting grass to cover contaminated yards.

It's not clear which remedy would apply in which neighborhoods, or how officials will decide. The plans have not yet been completed or made public, but were described to The Dallas Morning News by several sources familiar with them.

In all cases, however, the task would be complex and huge, with crews covering nearly an entire city and its suburbs while maneuvering around the remaining debris and damaged houses.

Concern about contamination is a major reason why the city is allowing residents from some of the most heavily flooded areas only the chance to check on their houses, not stay, said

See Page A-8, **CLEANUP**

### THE WALTON EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

## Wal-Mart puts smiley face on the shelf as it battles critics

*World's largest retailer turns to veterans of political campaigns, media experts to bolster image*

By **MICHAEL BARBARO**  
The New York Times

**BENTONVILLE, Ark.** — Inside a stuffy, windowless room here, veterans of the 2004 Bush and Kerry presidential campaigns sit, stand and pace around six plastic folding tables. Open containers of pistachio nuts and tropical trail mix compete for space with laptops and BlackBerries. CNN flickers on a television in the corner.

The phone rings, and a 20-something woman answers. "Turn on Fox," she yells, running up to the TV with a notepad. "This could be important."

Wal-Mart is taking a page from the modern political playbook. Under fire from well-organized opponents who have hammered the retailer over its wages, health insurance and treatment of workers, Wal-Mart has quietly recruited former presidential advisers, including Ronald Reagan image-meister Michael Deaver, as well as one of Bill Clinton's media consultants, Leslie Dach, to set up a rapid-response public relations team in Arkansas.

When small-business owners or union officials — also employing political operatives from past campaigns — criticize the company, the war room swings into ac-

tion with press releases, phone calls to reporters and instant Web postings.

One target of the effort is "swing voters," or consumers who have not soured on Wal-Mart. The new approach appears to reflect a fear that Wal-Mart's critics are alienating the very consumers it needs to keep growing, especially middle-income Americans motivated not just by price, but also by image.

The first big challenge for the strategy arrived last week with the premiere of an unflattering documenta-

See Page A-8, **WAL-MART**