

WEATHER | Chance of rain. High 49, low 37. B8.

Begich: Senate race not about Obama | A3

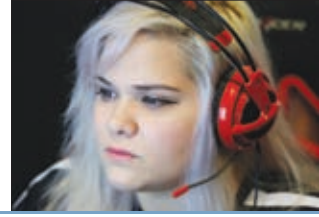
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YOUTH FOOTBALL

Juneau's Hawkeyes fall to East Anchorage, 28-8. B1.

NFL SUNDAY

Cowboys beat Seahawks 30-23. B1.



LEAGUE

Video gamers get scholarships. A4.

UNCONSTITUTIONAL

Federal judge strikes down gay marriage ban

State will appeal

By KATIE MORITZ
JUNEAU EMPIRE

Marguerite and Kimberly Crawford had just returned from a shopping trip at Costco when they got the news. They run Sunday errands like an average married couple, and now the state of Alaska must recognize

them as one.

Two days after he heard arguments in Anchorage, U.S. District Court Judge Timothy Burgess overturned a 1998 Alaska constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman. The case was brought by five-same sex couples who sued to force Alaska to recognize their out-of-state marriages.

The state intends to appeal the

ruling. Gov. Sean Parnell spokeswoman Sharon Leighow said in an email to The Associated Press. Parnell said in a statement Sunday that he must defend the Alaska Constitution.

"Although the district court today may have been bound by the recent 9th Circuit panel opinion, the status of that opinion and the law in general in this area is in flux," he said. Though she was optimistic that

the ban would be overturned, Kimberly said she was "completely blown away" by the news, which Marguerite received by text as they unpacked their groceries.

"It feels amazing," Marguerite said in the Imperial Bar, where the Juneau couple met with friends for an impromptu celebration Sunday afternoon. "There aren't enough exclamatory words to describe it."

The ruling

Burgess' 25-page ruling comes after a Tuesday decision by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that struck down same-sex marriage bans in Idaho and Nevada as unconstitutional. The 9th Circuit's ruling is binding in Alaska, and Burgess' decision followed suit.

"With this ruling, the Court hereby

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ONE HEART AND ONE SPIRIT



PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE SHOR | JUNEAU EMPIRE

Three thousand cranes symbolizing peace, harmony and remembrance donated to the Empty Chair Project, which will continue as an exhibit until the end of the month, are seen at the City of Juneau-Douglas Museum on Saturday.

Empty Chair exhibit will step out of the museum with documentary

By STEPHANIE SHOR
JUNEAU EMPIRE

The monthly "Coffee and Collections" presentation at the Juneau-Douglas Museum this month hosted members of the Empty Chair Committee. On showcase was an exhibit in remembrance of Juneau's Japanese-American residents interned during World War II.

Five members of the committee representing the Juneau High School Class of 1942 and 1943 gathered together nearly three months after the dedication of a memorial chair placed in Capital Park.

The memorial symbolized the empty seat left to honor John Tanaka on what would have been his graduation day in 1942. It was empty because soldiers had already taken he and his family to Minidoka



From right to left, Gary Chaney, Karleen Grummett, Marjorie Alstead Shakelford, Mary Tanaka Abo and Marie Darlin discuss the "Empty Chair" exhibit at the Juneau-Douglas City Museum on Saturday. The exhibit will be at the museum through the end of the month.

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Begich signs Outside money pledge

By BECKY BOHRER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JUNEAU — U.S. Sen. Mark Begich has signed a pledge calling for the rejection of Outside money in the Alaska race unless the funding source for the spending is disclosed and can be traced to a person or an established entity.

The pledge is from CounterPAC, which has keyed in on several states with contested House and Senate races, seeking greater disclosure in campaign spending. It called on Begich's GOP rival, Dan Sullivan, to sign on, too. Both sides would have to agree for the pledge to take effect.

But Sullivan spokesman Thomas Reiker said the pledge wouldn't stop Outside ad spending and called it disingenuous for Begich "to wake up and agree that the Outside groups who support his campaign should only have to disclose their donors" in the final weeks of the campaign. The election is Nov. 4.

Both campaigns have been the targets of ads from third-party groups in a race that could decide control of the U.S. Senate. Republicans need to pick up six seats to take back control, and they see Begich, a Democrat, as vulnerable.

Before Sullivan was the Republican nominee, he urged Begich to sign a pledge asking Outside groups to stop TV and radio ads supporting or attacking their campaigns. At the time, he and Begich already were the focus of such ads.

Under Sullivan's proposal, modeled after a pledge used by candidates in Massachusetts, if the ads didn't stop, the candidate benefiting from the ads would have to contribute half the amount of the ad buy to a charity his opponent chose.

Reiker reiterated the campaign's call for Begich to sign on to Sullivan's pledge.

Begich has called Sullivan's proposal a gimmick and noted that Sullivan supports the U.S. Supreme Court decision that allowed for unlimited spending by unions and corporations in political races. Begich signed a separate pledge earlier this year, striking at the idea of treating corporations in the legal system as people.

While Begich said he favors a long-term solution to election spending, his spokesman, Max Croes, said the CounterPAC pledge is in line

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Former soldier says he reported allegations

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANCHORAGE — A former Alaska National Guard soldier said he told his chain of command about misconduct in the Guard more than seven years before the federal Department of Defense issued a report detailing allegations of sexual assault, abuse of power and cover-ups.

But his superiors failed to act on his concerns, Lt. Col. Kenneth Blaylock told KTUU. So in 2010, Blaylock summarized and submitted them to the governor's office and Anchorage

police.

He said his concerns weren't taken seriously until he met investigators from the Department of Defense National Guard Bureau. He said he was labeled a crackpot by adjutant general Maj. Gen. Thomas Katkus.

"Essentially, anything I tried to bring forward after that was muddied because my name was attached to it. I had a lot of people who basically wouldn't talk to me, including in law enforcement," Blaylock said.

Blaylock was heading the recruit-

ment and retention division when he noticed the Guard was paying for the same advertising twice.

He said in 2007 he alerted the Guard's deputy chief of staff and personnel, Catherine Jorgensen, and Katkus (before he was promoted to adjutant general) of his suspicions soldiers were misusing recruiting and retention account funds.

"We only had one product for advertising, and yet we were paying for it more than twice. The money was going somewhere it didn't need

to go to," Blaylock said.

When asked to comment on the Guard's policy on credit card charges, a Guard spokeswoman sent this statement:

"We are redirecting our efforts from looking into anonymous and/or unsubstantiated claims that lack detail, and that we are unable to verify," wrote Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead. "There are a broad range of requests, and we feel it is counterproductive

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