

Alaska Ear

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ON TARGET ... Once again, the University of Alaska Fairbanks Nanooks have won the NCAA rifle championship, making them Alaska's only NCAA champion in any sport. Alors, it's their sixth year in a row. Where's the ticker tape parade? For details, check the NRA Web site.

AND THE THIGHS AREN'T BAD EITHER ... Alas, Joe Bob's Chicken Palace ("Best Breasts in the West") has closed its Carson City, Nev., outlet. (The ones in Sparks and Reno are still reportedly doing fine.)

Joe Bob complained to a Nevada paper that his absentee landlord didn't yell loudly enough when the state started construction on a nearby freeway. Slowed traffic did his business in, he said.

"He didn't mention that the food sucked and that everyone in the place smoked five packs an hour," added an un-sympathetic Nevada newspaperman.

Anyhow, guess who Joe Bob's landlord was. Mark Begich.

The mayor and first lady Deborah Bonito are majority owners of something called Carson Hot Springs Resort, which leases space to other businesses (hot tub rentals by the hour, etc.), including, until recently, Joe Bob's Chicken Palace.

The Begiches head an investment group that bought the spa in 1999 and began major renovations, said Julie Hasquet of the mayor's office. It dates back to 1848, and the ads claim Gentleman Jim Corbett used to train there for his bouts. Check carsonhotspringsresort.com for thermal and massage therapy options.

OUT AND ABOUT ... Juneau barflies report Rep. Tom Anderson is playing in a band with lobbyists Paul Fuhs and John Bitney. The group, called Spank the Dog, plays every Wednesday in the bar at the Alaskan Hotel.

Seems safer than bowling, non?

* Anchorage barflies report a high-ranking Murkowski official raised eyebrows at Humpy's recently by pitching a public fit at a misbehaving boyfriend who was swigging beers with pals when he was supposed to be somewhere else.

* Former Mayors Sullivan, Fink, Mystrom and Wuerch were seen having lunch together Wednesday at the Village Inn. This can't be a good thing.

ACID RAIN ... Feral friends report the practice of holding the butt of Rep. Mike Chenault's sweet little puppy out a Capitol building window to do his doggy business has stopped. The little d'Ear wasn't paper trained and, well, you understand. Anyhow, Juneauites, who have enough trouble with dive-bombing sea gulls, expressed relief.

VERBATIM ... The following caption appeared under a photo in the March 3 edition of the Delta Discovery, one of Ear's favorite rural newspapers:

"Lt. Governor Loren Lieberman signs the resolution for the Denali Commission contribution for the Yuut Elitnaur-viat project in the presence of Bethel Mayor Hugh Short and Executive Director Janelle Vanasse."

Not only Jewish but a Democrat? Ah, Loren, we hardly knew ye.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER ... Scott Moran of the Alaska Wildlife Alliance took exception to Ear's recent description of protest letters from his brethren to the state Fish and Game board office as "hate mail." When Ear inquired, a board staffer defended the description, citing messages mentioning "angry citizens of the world" and a Benjamin Franklin quote about "well-armed lambs."

ON THE MOVE ... The powers that be over at KAKM/KSKA public broadcasting have booted Rhonda McBride again. This time, says Rhonda, it looks like it's going to stick. Earwigs will recall they tried to do it in 2002, when she hurt Dave Donley's feelings on "Running" by asking for a straight answer. Public outcry prompted them to rehire her.

The excuse this time is budget problems.

Rhonda says she officially finished up the Assembly edition of "Running" on Friday, but a couple of episodes of her interview show, "Consider This," are in the can and will run on radio over the next few weeks.

Fans can still catch her on Channel 2.

NOT MOVING ... Who was that nodding off until his own snore startled him awake at the "press availability" last week with David Sokol, CEO of MidAmerican Energy Holdings Co.? MidAmerican's own lobbyist, Ashley Reed. The reporters at the meeting were sympathetic, but not enough to keep their mouths shut.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE ... The Gavel-to-Gavel camera was on hold waiting for the House Finance Committee meeting to start when Cheryl Heinze, who was talking with someone off camera, suddenly broke into the YMCA arm motions.

According to Sen. Kim Elton's newsletter, her chief of staff joined right in. "Dancing is OK," Elton noted. "But The Village People?"

OOOPS ... An earwig cruising the AM dial caught Dan Fagan chatting about how friendly Anchorage people are. Fagan's theory went like this, more or less: "Maybe it's because so many people who live here don't have family here, so they're more outgoing and open to making new friends. Now, I'm from the South, and it's a lot different there. There's this real clan mentality."

Oh, darlings, it's just a giggle. Of course he didn't mean it that way.

CAN'T STOP NOW ... The lede on a recent Seattle Times story read as follows:

"The Znetix stock fraud trial got off to a slow start yesterday when defense attorney Robert Leen showed up late af-ter accidentally hitting himself in the face with a luggage cart."

CALLER ID ... A Juneau earwig reports coming home from his Murkowski administration job to find a long mes-sage on his phone from a guy who said he was running for U.S. Senate and hoped to see him at an upcoming fund-raiser. However, he never said who he was. Ear guessed Mike Miller, but no. The earwig said he recognized Tony's voice.