

Inside Today UAF releases 2025-26 swimming schedule • Page B1

Urban growth: Stone Soup Garden continues to expand



By Jack Barnwell

A community garden on a half-acre lot in downtown Fairbanks has taken root over the past decade due to careful cultivation by Bread Line and its supporters.

TStone Soup now bears crops from starts donated by local farms like Calyspo Farm, Risse Greenhouse, Ann's Greenhouse and Plant Kingdom. Garden Manager Peter Miller oversees the seasonal urban crops.

The community garden is located on a half-acre lot at Lacey Street and Eleventh Avenue. Foundational Health Partners leases the parcel to Bread Line at no cost. Rows of raised planter boxes burst with leafy produce, maturing potatoes, summer bush beans, cabbage, kohlrabi, and even nasturtium, a colorful and edible flower.

Now, Miller will undertake a multi-year effort to transform the lot into

GARDEN » A6

ALL PHOTOS JACK BARNWELL/NEWS-MINER

Volunteers help expand Bread Line's Stone Soup Garden in downtown Fairbanks on Saturday. The effort included building new raised beds and planting the first perennials of the garden's "food forest."



(Above) Stone Soup Garden Manager Peter Miller spreads chive seeds in a planter box. (Below) Miller pushes top soil around a fruit tree.



Robbie Ramos tills topsoil for a new "food forest" expansion of the Stone Soup Garden in downtown Fairbanks on Saturday.



Fairbanks man sentenced to 63 years, 39 suspended, for 2022 shooting

By Haley Lehman

A Fairbanks man was sentenced Monday to 63 years with 39 years suspended in connection with a 2022 shooting on Fourth Avenue.

A jury convicted 38-year-old Daniel Steven Christensen of three counts of felony attempted murder, three counts of felony third-degree assault, and felony second-degree weapons misconduct following a four-day trial in May 2024.

Dean Howard, Brandon Voorhees, Daniel Dubia, and a woman were walking around downtown Fairbanks at about 4:30 a.m. on Aug. 15, 2022,

SHOOTING » A2

Appeals court upholds sentence for man in mother's 2016 killing

By Haley Lehman

The Alaska Court of Appeals has affirmed a 45-year sentence for a Tok man who shot and killed his mother in November 2016. The court remanded one probation condition back to Superior Court to clarify the term "drug paraphernalia."

Eli Joseph Simpson, 30, pleaded guilty in May 2022 to felony second-degree murder in exchange for a sentence of 20 years of active time. He also pleaded guilty to third-degree criminal mischief in connection with a riot that broke out at Fairbanks Correctional Center in 2017.

Simpson fatally shot his mother, 51-year-old Riba DeWilde, who suffered from mental illness, at her Tok cabin on Nov. 26, 2016. He told Alaska State Troopers that DeWilde had been sexually abusing him for his entire life and that he shot her to protect himself.

Superior Court Judge Paul Lyle sentenced Simpson in September 2022 to a composite sentence of 45 years with 25 years suspended.

Simpson filed his appeal in September 2024, claiming the sentence was excessive and challenging three probation conditions.

UPHOLDS » A3

Ballot initiative to decriminalize psychedelics in Alaska cleared for signature-gathering

By Yereth Rosen
ALASKA BEACON

A group seeking to decriminalize Alaskans' use of certain medicinal mushrooms and other psychedelics can start collecting signatures to try to put the question before voters.

Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom, who oversees the Alaska Division of Elections, said Thursday she has certified a statewide

initiative application that proposes legal but regulated use of certain natural medicines for therapeutic and traditional purposes. The sponsors may now start gathering the petition signatures they need to place their initiative on a statewide ballot.

The proposed initiative, titled the Alaska Natural Medicine Act, is modeled after an initiative in Colorado that voters in that

state passed in 2022.

Sponsors of the initiative are with Natural Alaska Medicine Inc., a nonprofit organization "dedicated to fostering charitable, educational, and social welfare initiatives that promote the safe and responsible use of natural medicines," according to its website.

The president of Natural Alaska Medicine Inc.

DECRIMINALIZE » A3



FLICKR/CREATIVE COMMONS

Psilocybe cubensis mushrooms and their gills are shown. This species is one of many within the *Psilocybe* genus that contains psilocybin.

GOOD MORNING



The weather

Cooler with rain, mainly early

High today58

Low tonight45

Sunrise: 5:50 a.m.

Sunset: 9:56 p.m.

WEATHER » A3

Aurora forecast

Active aurora activity forecasted. If skies are clear, active auroral displays may be visible overhead from Utqiagvik to Anchorage and Juneau, and may be visible low on the horizon from King Salmon and Ketchikan.

This information is provided by aurora forecasters at the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. For more information about the aurora, visit <http://www.gi.alaska.edu/AuroraForecast>



SOURDOUGH JACK:

"Maybe the community garden can expand all the way into the Polaris Building lot."