

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

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ANCHORAGE

Criminal charges dropped against ex-policeman in assault case

Officer accused of punching, kicking a man on a bicycle in incident partly captured on camera.

Tess Williams
Anchorage Daily News

Federal and state prosecutors have dropped all criminal charges against a former Anchorage police officer accused of punching, kicking and unlawfully arresting a man in exchange for the promise he

won't seek a law enforcement job again. Cornelius Aaron Pettus, in a 2019 incident partly captured on camera, was accused of assaulting Samuel Allen, then 49, outside Allen's home after serving him a citation for riding a bicycle without lights, according to court documents filed in the case.

The charges against Pettus, which ranged from misdemeanor assault to civil rights violations and falsification of records during a federal investigation, were

dismissed by agreements reached in both state and federal cases.

Under the dismissal agreements, Pettus was required to resign from the Anchorage Police Department, surrender his law enforcement certification, and agree not to seek employment in the field in any state. He resigned in June.

Another Anchorage police officer present at the encounter, Deorman Stout, was indicted on a charge of tampering with public records. According to the

indictment, Stout "made a false entry in or falsely altered" a police report related to the encounter with Allen. The charge against Stout was also dismissed in exchange for his cooperation on the case, prosecutors say. He is still an officer at the department, an APD spokeswoman said.

A separate civil lawsuit involving Pettus is still active.

Allen filed that lawsuit against Pettus,

See **PETTUS**, A3

ALASKA NEWS

State wants to repeal law aimed at curbing health care costs

Doctors, medical association fear removal would expose customers to higher prices; major insurer wants it gone.

Annie Berman
Anchorage Daily News

State officials want to repeal a policy established nearly 20 years ago to protect Alaskans from surprise medical bills that's now being blamed for soaring health care costs in the state.

Some, like the Alaska State Medical Association and numerous physicians, say repealing the rule would remove an important consumer protection and could lead to higher health care costs for patients and fewer specialists, particularly in rural Alaska.

But one of the largest insurance companies in the state wants the rule to go, claiming that it has actually contributed to Alaska's high health care costs by incentivizing health providers to raise prices over time.

The Alaska Division of Insurance just finished taking public comment on the complicated piece of health care legislation known as the 80th percentile regulation.

That unwieldy label reflects the fact that the regulation requires insurance companies to pay 80% of the market rate for any health care service whether or not the service is

See **HEALTH CARE**, A16

SCOOTIN' AND SOARIN'



BILL ROTH / ADN

Millie Forbess leads Danielle Leader over a jump while competing in the seventh and final AMMC Racing Youth Snocross event of the season at the Palmer State Fairgrounds on Sunday, with a Colony barn and Matanuska Peak as a backdrop.

EDUCATION

Leadership issues spur Anchorage School Board to weigh charter school takeover

School district calls Family Partnership's governing committee 'fundamentally dysfunctional.'

Morgan Krakow
Anchorage Daily News

Anchorage School District officials are recommending that the district take over a local charter school and transition it

to a district alternative school because of leadership issues among its volunteer governing board that officials say have festered for years.

Many families and supporters of Family Partnership Charter School say dissolving the charter would change what they love most about the school, affecting their agency to make specific choices about their students' education.

Family Partnership is a kindergarten through 12th grade public charter school that has roughly 1,700 enrolled students. The school supports families in homeschooling their children, allows students to take early college courses and online classes, and facilitates field trips as well as workshops with other homeschooled students.

Like all district charter schools, Family Partnership is

governed by a body called the Academic Policy Committee, or APC. That governing board, according to a memo from the school district, has breached its charter, broken the law and "engaged in incessant infighting," and its conduct is "unprofessional, unproductive and does not support the mission of the Family Partnership school."

See **CHARTER SCHOOL**, A4

NATION

Daunting recovery underway in tornado-devastated Mississippi

At least 25 killed as massive storm hit with little warning late Friday.

Michael Goldberg
and **Emily Wagster Pettus**
Associated Press

ROLLING FORK, Miss. — Help began pouring into one of the poorest regions of the U.S. after a deadly tornado tore a path of destruction for more than an hour across a long swath of Mississippi, even as furious new storms Sunday struck across the Deep South.

At least 25 people were killed and dozens of others were injured in Mississippi as the massive storm ripped through more than a half-dozen towns late Friday. A man was also killed in Alabama after his trailer home flipped over several times.

"Everything I can see is in some state of destruction," said Jarrod Kunze, who drove to the hard-hit Mississippi town of Rolling Fork from his home in Alabama, ready to help

See **RECOVERY**, A16



JULIO CORTEZ / Associated Press

Ezell Williams cries while talking about the damage caused to his properties and those of his neighbors, on Sunday in Rolling Fork, Miss., where a tornado swept through the town two days earlier.

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ALASKA ACTOR TALLIE MEDEL ON WINNING BIG AT THE OSCARS AND GROWING UP IN KETCHIKAN'S ARTS COMMUNITY

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