

ATHABASCAN

word of the week

The ice goes out as the sun and temperature stays up

This week was pretty eventful. My friends and I drove to Nenana on Sunday to check the condition of the Tanana River ice for the ice classic. It was pretty exciting to see the impact of continuous sunshine on the ice.

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Dennis Argall, the official clock guard and Nenana Ice Classic historian, pointed out the condition of the ice that indicated it was going to go out within days.

He said:

The ice is rotten: The texture is marked by old tracks, has dark spots and is full of puddles.

The shore ice came up: This is the ice that freezes solid to the bottom of the river along the shore. When it comes up, you can tell it's shore ice, because it is all muddy.

There are cracks in the ice — fissures between plates of ice.

There are open holes developing



Photo courtesy Susan Paskvan

More than 16 hours of daylight and a warm spring in Interior Alaska led to an early breakup of the Tanana River, causing the tripod to fall 7:39 p.m. AST Monday.

camera, trying to perfect my camera skills. I couldn't have asked for a better day to take photos: Double rainbow that ended at the Mears Memorial Railroad Bridge at Nenana, an eagle that flew directly overhead and Denali at sunset.

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In villages, community members gather at the river during break because we believe the river is a living entity that has a spiritual power. We offer prayers for a safe summer of travel, for blessing that the fish will be abundant and continuation of our traditional practices.

near the tripod — running water that continues to chew away at the ice.

It is raining upriver — will bring the level of the water up, causing it to float downriver, and

the river is clear of ice upriver.

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Sure enough, the ice went out the next day. Too bad my first ticket wasn't until Saturday. I've been experimenting with a DSLR

Phrases about springtime:

Hūlook'ūt te loo eedaah. In the springtime, the ice runs.

Hūlook'ūt te tleet-ey hoozoonh.

In the springtime, it is nice outside.

Hūlook'ūt te dets'en nok'endeyeyhtl.

In the springtime, the geese return flying.

Hūlook'ūt te delk'ehoo kk'ūdaa k'edelee.

In the springtime, the robin sings.

The Athabaskan Word of the Week appears every Saturday on page A3 of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. The words are provided by Susan "K'etsoo" Paskvan of Yukon-Koyukuk School District. She is originally from the village of Koyukuk on the Yukon River in Interior Alaska. She is Tleeyegge Hut'aane, which is Koyukon Athabaskan. She seeks stories and phrases from both Denaak'e (Koyukon Athabaskan) and Denak'a (Lower Tanana Athabaskan), which are languages spoken in the Yukon-Koyukuk School District region. Yukon-Koyukuk School District serves the villages of Allakaket, Hughes, Huslia, Koyukuk, Nulato, Kaltag, Ruby, Manley Hot Springs and Minto. The Board of Education places a priority on teaching the Native languages within the district.