

Anchorage Daily News Ceasing Rural Delivery

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

People in rural Alaska who like the feel of newsprint in their hands only have two weeks left to enjoy the state's largest newspaper. KMXT's Jay Barrett has more:

The Anchorage Daily News will be ceasing shipments to almost all parts of the Bush after the Sunday paper on December 28th.

Roger Weinfurter, the circulation director for the Daily News, says air freight costs are just too high to continue the service. He calls the decision unfortunate, but said the company spends 25-thousand dollars a month to ship the paper out daily. It's not something the paper wanted to do, Weinfurter said, but rather something it had to do.

Towns to where the paper is trucked will still get shipments, but most communities served by air will lose service. The exceptions are Fairbanks, Juneau and Valdez. He said oil companies pay to ship the paper to Prudhoe Bay.

Weinfurter

said Kodiak is one of the larger communities where service will end. Pat Branson said she will miss the paper every day:

-- (ADN 1 21
sec "I'm already experiencing
... there's a big difference.")

Weinfurter

said it was possible for the Daily News to subsidize shipments to the Bush back when there was a newspaper war with the long-defunct Anchorage Times, but with the cost of shipping today, it's no longer feasible. He said sending the paper to the Bush has been a money losing operation for quite a few years. About 15-hundred copies are shipped out daily.

Weinfurter

said providing almost the entire paper's content for free online at ADN dot com has not helped keep circulation numbers up for the printed edition.

Weinfurter

said individuals have a couple of options if they still want to see the paper. One is a mail subscription, and the other is a subscription to the electronic PDF version, not to be confused with the paper's web site. However, a first class mail subscription costs 2,080-dollars a year. A second-class subscription is a fourth of that, but the papers could take a week or more to arrive. The PDF subscription, where you can read each page just as it is laid out in print, is 10-dollars per month.

Branson

said the cost of a mail subscription was excessive, and that an electronic version is just not the same:

-- (ADN 2 21
sec "Well, I don' think ... is
a newspaper is a newspaper.")

The Daily

News is owned by the McClatchy Company, which, like the newspaper industry as a whole, has seen its share of financial woes lately. But Weinfurter says the decision to cease Bush deliveries was made in Anchorage.

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