FULL Frame

Starvation Gulch, a fall tradition on the Fairbanks campus going back to 1923, was the inspiration of Charles E. Bunnell, the university's first president. Students built a mock town to serve as an entertainment facility by day and fuel for enormous bonfires by night. Bunnell wanted the fires to symbolize the passing of the torch of knowledge.

Students nicknamed the town "Starvation Gulch," an ostensible poke at the pioneers who first settled in Fairbanks. It became the official name of the annual festival and has served since then as an icebreaker of sorts to welcome new people into the college fold. Student groups build monuments that the chancellor sets alight to heat up the cold September night.

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