

"I may not agree with what you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it" —VOLTAIRE

Tundra Times



Indigenous People's Heritage
UV Kaktovik Inuit and Reporting

Tundra Times at the Way Up It's Talk

Dale Newt Hirsch Our Land Speaks
Unangax Tuvialuk the Alaskans Speak

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Howard Rock Editor and Publisher
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Editorial

We've received several letters and phone calls recently from people concerned about the fact that we run advertisements from liquor companies. They wonder how we can fight alcoholism and yet run the advertisements.

These people have every right to criticize us, and we are happy to see there are many readers who care enough to let us know how they feel.

In order to respond to you, we must divide the issue of whether we should run these advertisements into two areas.

First, we must stress that although alcoholism is the top priority of the *Tundra Times*, that does not mean we believe no one should drink. This newspaper is concerned about responsible drinking. There are some people who can handle alcohol. We would not tell these people they cannot drink.

On the other hand, an entire village may decide that the only way to deal with an alcohol problem is to ban alcohol throughout that village. We support villages that have done so and say to the villagers who are able to drink responsibly they will just have to give up alcohol for the good of the majority of the population.

We must accept the fact, however, that it is not politically feasible to ban alcohol in the state of Alaska or the United States as a whole. Given that reality, we tell those who cannot handle alcohol they must give it up entirely. To those who can handle it, we say they must drink responsibly.

The other issue the *Tundra Times* is facing these days is one of survival. We have cut every cost to the bone. Our staff has been reduced to four employees who receive no benefits for working here other than a paycheck. And our salaries are certainly not high.

Also, we've said it before: we make almost no long-distance telephone calls and we do not travel unless the cost is paid by someone else. Fortunately, we have very dedicated volunteers and strong support from some Native corporations.

Sadly, we still do not yet have enough subscribers to make this newspaper healthy. Until we do, we will be forced to accept these advertisements. Even with the revenue from them, our survival is currently in question.

Each full-page advertisement costs \$620. Each time you see a liquor advertisement, you are seeing \$620 go into the *Tundra Times* coffers.

At one point we encouraged people who were concerned about these advertisements to consider sending us their Permanent Fund Dividend checks and to encourage others to do so. Each check would be about equal to one advertisement.

Only one person sent us their check last year.

We must ask ourselves how much people want the *Tundra Times* and how much they are concerned about the issue of liquor advertising.

We would certainly welcome further comment and discussion on this issue.

The Tundra Times is 25 Years Old