

Letters to the Tundra Times

Hospital grateful

Community Relations Office
USPHS, IHS, ANHSU
P.O. Box 577
Mt. Edgecumbe, Ak 99835

Dear Editor

The Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital patients, the Patient's Christmas Committee, and hospital staff would like to thank all of the people and organizations that contributed to the Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital Patient's Christmas party. The party was held December 22, 1980 in the hospital's community health services branch classroom, with 37 patients in the hospital.

The program started with Christmas entertainment at 2 p.m. Included were the very popular Ga Ja Heen Dancers, solos by Paul Chulik, Albert Frank, Jr., Roberta Ross, a trio composed of Sophie Frank, Vesta Dominica, and Virginia Thomas who sang in english and tlingit, and a skit by some of the nursing staff. Following the entertainment was the Christmas meal, including a very good variety of Native foods that were donated. Next came Santa Claus with presents for every patient. All in all, it was a great Christmas party for the patients.

Prior to the program, opening remarks were made by Frank O. Williams, Jr., Chairman of the Committee, and Mr. Art Willman, Service Unit Director. Mr. Bill Brady was the MC.

Special guests, who also greeted, and shared with the patients were, Nelson Frank, President of Shee Atika, Bill Brady, President of Sitka Community Association, Frank O. Williams, Jr., President of Sitka ANB, Joni Lewis, President of Sitka ANS.

This event was a great success, made possible by the many organizations, and people who donated money, and especially the Native foods. on behalf of the Patients, the Committee, and the hospital staff we thank all of you, hope that you had a wonderful Christmas, and wish you the very best during the coming year.

Committee Members:

Frank O. Williams, Jr.
Virginia Thomas
Barbara Paugh
Grace Larson
Della Price
Evelyn Ramos
Ralph Brady
Stella Atkinson
Maybelle Williams
Lavina Adams

Mother wants son in Alaska

Governor Jay Hammond
Office of the Governor
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Mr. Governor:

I wonder if this letter will get to your office. I really would like for you to answer me.

My son was convicted and sent to jail in Fairbanks in 1974.

He was sent to Lompoc, California in 1975 and have appeared before the parole Board and was told that he wasn't ready to join society yet. I've seen two other people who did the same thing he did and are out already, and I am wondering why my son is still in jail. I question myself and wonder if Indians can kill Indians and whitemen can kill Indians and not pay for it, and yet, if an Indian kills a whiteman he pays for it body and soul and gets sent someplace where he can't get legal counseling and help from his family. My son has done nothing wrong his life besides to get drunk one night. I understand the legal services and public defenders are supposed to keep in touch with our people who are sent outside to another state. Why aren't they doing it?

I want my son back in Alaska. I want the public opinion on this. Why do the State and Federal agencies always do what they want to do and not listen to some people? I can't even see my son because he is 100 and 100 miles away from my home and I can't afford it.

As the Governor of Alaska, I want you to do something about it. I've met you twice now and each time I wanted to mention it to you but you were too concerned about education than you were about one persons problem. Maybe if you read this you will start investigating some things that goes on within your state that affect some people's life—such as mine.

(Continued on Page 14)

Letters to the Tundra Times

(Continued from Page Two)

Please answer my letter.

Sincerely,

Addie Shewfelt

Box 12

Fort Yukon, Alaska 99740

Examination of Watt

David & Dee Olin Hoffman
73 Slade Street
Belmont, Mass. 02178

Dear Editor:

I would like to wish you all a happy New Year and to tell you how much my wife and I appreciate reading Tundra Times while we are temporarily living away from Alaska. It helps us keep in touch with what is going on at home.

Today we received your December 17 issue which had a front page story on James Watt, the man Ronald Reagan has picked as Secretary of Interior. I thought I would write to pass on some further information about Mr. Watt which I came across

In your lead sentence, you state that Mr. Watt is "a champion of state's rights and a man who works for an organization which sometimes sues the federal government for excessive regulations." Your readers should also know that the organization which Mr. Watt heads, the Mountain States Legal Foundation, has been active in a movement to deny lower "48" Indians sovereignty on their own reservations. His appointment is being actively opposed by Indian groups as well as by conservationists and consumer groups.

On December 23, the New York Times ran an editorial on Mr. Reagan's cabinet choices which began with these words: "First, the worst: James Watt for Interior." The editorial continued:

"The job of Secretary of the Interior calls for the shrewd," sensitive balancing of the conservation and protection of public lands with the exploitation of their natural resources. To nominate Mr. Watt is to ignore balance and push the pendulum heavily toward exploitation... What is puzzling about his appointment is its apparent

political insensitivity. There are many conservatives whose appointment would not so inflame environmentalists."

A less objective and less complimentary appraisal of Mr. Watt was given by William Turnage, director of the Wilderness Society who called him "a joke" and "a caricature of an anti-conservationist."

By this letter, I do not intend to make judgements about Mr. Watt; it is much too early for that. I do however think that people should realize that a very new philosophy is coming to the Interior Department and that philosophy and its champion, Mr. Watt, could have considerable effects on the lives of Alaskan Natives.

People with further interest in Mr. Watt's philosophy, especially regarding Native rights may want to write to his legal foundation. That foundation's address is: Mountain States Legal Foundation, Denver, Colorado 80203

Sincerely,
David Hoffman
Dee Olin Hoffman