

Editorial Comment—

A Great Banquet

The most recent Tundra Times annual banquet, we feel, and so did many other people, that it was probably the best one the newspaper ever put on. From the human side of it, it was easily the best. Everyone relaxed, chortled, guffawed and ate heartily. The fare of the evening, the broiled salmon, was tasty and appropriate. Tasty Native morsels enhanced the entree. "Someone gave me a lot of thin-sliced muktuk and I ate a lot of it," Fred Stickman, the famous letter-writer revealed.

The tasty fare seemed to have elevated the sense of friendship among the 1,000 plus banquet audience. One of the reasons, some said, was that the Natives were given the chance to say a few words more than in the past. The Native leaders who had this chance were more than equal to the occasion and their remarks were witty as well as appropriate. It was the most satisfying occasion and a great many people, non-Native and Native, concurred.

The way the annual dinner was staged, it was more thoroughly planned, thanks to the Tundra Times board members and the banquet committee. It went largely without a hitch. The seating was beautifully planned. This is never an easy work because protocol is always a knotty affair at such gatherings and this is in spite of the largest head table Tundra Times ever had in its series of banquets. Along with many subtables to accommodate the Native leadership, the occasion was a friendly affair.

It was the day for the Native leaders. It was their night of honor. It was a deserved tribute long overdue for without them the past and present effort for the betterment of their people throughout the wide-ranging land would not have been possible. They have been doing a great service in spite of the complex duties they have met and are meeting today. All of us are humbly grateful for this.

On top of all that, a combo of three Lower Kuskokwim Natives put out a very creditable music for the after-banquet dance—the first one Tundra Times ever staged. The women had an ample chance to show off their new dresses.

Another milestone has been set by the newspaper's annual dinner. We the staff members, the board of directors and the banquet committee, and many people who volunteered to help, are very grateful to serve the most deserving people we chose to honor. Such events have cohesive influences and the annual dinner did just that.

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