

Letters

Legislators thank Governor Sheffield for leadership

The Honorable Bill Sheffield
Governor of Alaska
Pouch A
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Governor:

On behalf of the residents of Bristol Bay and all Alaskans concerned about the protection of our fisheries and subsistence resources, we would like to thank you for your determined stand in favor of a delay for Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Lease Sale 92, the North Aleutian Shelf.

In the face of much opposition from powerful adversaries, you stood up for the rights of the Bristol Bay residents and for the protection of their livelihoods. Also involved is the unfortunate precedent that would be set if the U.S. Department of the Interior were allowed to conduct OCS lease sales over the compelling objections of the affected states.

As you know, serious research gaps exist in the scientific and environmental data collected in advance of the proposed North Aleutian Shelf sale. In addition, some of the most severe weather conditions in the world are found in this region, conditions which make existing oil spill technology worthless. With almost the entire Bering Sea available to the oil industry for oil and gas exploration,

there is no reason why the proposed sale must occur at this time in one of our nation's most environmentally sensitive regions. We have an established fishing industry in Bristol Bay which provides the annual income for hundreds of families. One industry should not be imposed at the potential expense of another.

Your opponents on this issue have failed to recognize the state's valid concerns. Apparently, they have been operating under the assumption that if lease sales and drilling could proceed in the North Aleutian Shelf, they could proceed anywhere. We sincerely thank you, Governor Sheffield, for drawing the line.

The State of Alaska passed the first hurdle by securing from the U.S. District Court an injunction stopping the scheduled sale. Many more tests and challenges remain ahead of us.

Again we thank you for your leadership and for your support.

Sincerely yours,
Fred F. Zharoff
Alaska State Senate

Adelheid Herrmann
Alaska House of Representatives

Gay lifestyle responsible for AIDS?

To the editor:

I am concerned with the efforts of the Anchorage Out North Theater Ensemble to present productions depicting "Portraits of Gay American Lifestyles."

It is enough that Alaska is fighting the AIDS epidemic without supporting arts that encourage the lifestyle responsible for it.

The State Department of Education can not justify this grant while illiteracy statistics indicate that the teaching of reading would be the priority use of our tax dollars.

The National Endowment of the Arts, by its support, is promoting a life style responsible for the AIDS epidemic that ultimately will destroy multitudes of our people and is already usurping our finest medical minds and medicines.

I took my concern to our Legislators and received the following comments:

Senator Edna DeVries said that it is an

inappropriate use of public funds and that she would make every effort to see that this funding was deleted from the budget next year.

Senator Jalmar Kerttula and Representative Ronald Larson both indicated that they would take it up in Finance as one of the first places for a budget cut.

Representative Katie Hurley said that it was ok to promote these arts because everyone should have a "free" choice.

I encourage you to write your representatives. They need to know how you feel about this misuse of our trust and finances. We should hold them accountable for their decisions. (Contact your local Legislative Information Office for their addresses and phone numbers.)

Sincerely,
Paul Tigner

Reader thanks all who contributed to search

To the editor:

I want to thank all the people who helped us out last fall when we had our loss. Thank you for all the food, also, that was donated for the search and to those who helped with the cooking. We know it cost everyone lots of money and we want you all to know how very much you helped us. We're really going through a hard time and all your help and prayers really makes us feel better. On behalf of all the people of Hughes thank you to all of you in Noorvik, Shungnak, Anaktuvuk Pass, Selawik, Beaver, Ruby, Nulato, Galena, Tanana, Koyukuk, Kaltag, Allakaket, Bettles, Fairbanks, and everywhere else. God Bless you. Happy New Year!

Sincerely,
Joe Beetus

Alaska Natives can solve their own problems

To the editor:

It is indeed heartening to read of Senator Murkowski's concern for Alaska's longstanding alcohol-drug problems, and I fervently hope that the Juvenile Indian Drug and Alcoholism Prevention Bill will be truly effective in making the IHS and BIA more responsive to Alaskan Native needs.

While I agree that the federal government should see that funding is available, I believe that Alaskan Natives communities have what it takes to solve their alcohol-drug problems and must be allowed this responsibility. This is the essence of self-determination.

"Limited funding" is a perennial excuse for all our alcohol ills, yet the bitter irony is that not one cent is needed to stay sober.

Sincerely,
Ms. Clare Swan
Tribal Chairperson
Kenaitze Indian Tribe