

Letters to the Editor

Wolf Creek JCCC
Glide, Oregon 97443
Jan. 17, 1969

To: Howard Rock, Editor
Tundra Times
Box 1287, Fairbanks, 99701

To the Alaska Native Assn:

I take the Tundra Times and look forward eagerly to reading each issue as they arrive. Being an Athabascan from Rampart, Alaska, I agree intensely with what you people are doing for your people and for mine.

I do disagree, though, with one editorial which appeared in your paper which was entitled, "The Sad Exodus of Village Children to School," (Nov. 8, 1968). I do agree that we should not grasp babies in arms from clutching mothers at ages of 6, 7, & 8, even a little older.

Having taught at Chemawa, Oregon for 11 years before I left for a promotion and having had to leave home to enter high school at Eklutna, and after these years of experiences and opportunities which were not forthcoming otherwise, I wish to disagree with this particular editorial on these grounds.

Taking little children from their mothers' arms has happened in isolated cases in the distant past, but I am very much misinformed if this is happening now. The students we have been getting at Chemawa were young men and young women—teenagers who are reaching an age when it is time to cut the umbilical cord, if not the apron strings.

We know that in the not too distant past, our people, the Indians of Alaska and the Eskimos, very strongly distrusted one another. Through our high schools, such as they were, first Eklutna then Wrangell, Mt. Edgecumbe and the schools in the lower 48, they have learned to get along, to understand, and in some cases to love one another. This would not have come about, if we kept all our young adults home and tried to educate them in their isolation from the world.

Books and words of mouth do not, by themselves, bring education. We must SEE, HEAR, and EXPERIENCE new things. SIGHTS and SOUNDS are experienced by those who leave their mothers' bosoms and go forth and explore.

Though, I agree that there is room for improvement in our curriculum, our presentation and our staff at the Indian Schools in the lower 48, I strongly agree with the students who have been down here when they say, "My gosh! I would never have heard of this nor believed it possible, if I had not come down." Recently, Robert Converse on leave from Military training said, "Mr. Evans, my brother was smarter than I was in school. He went to school in Alaska and he doesn't know anything." They just do not have the opportunities for field trips that we have at Chemawa.

Although, I am not now a member of the staff at Chemawa, or any of the other schools where your children are sent, I very strongly believe that we, the people of Alaska, should try to keep these schools going for the better, easier, cheaper and more complete education of our children.

While doing this, though, since they are your schools for your children, you should be able to evaluate, recommend and plan the curriculum, activities and staff. I would like to help all I can.

Sincerely yours,
Charles J. Evans

Homer, Alaska
January 15, 1969

Dear Sir:

The excitement of the snowmobile race is down and I'd like to take this opportunity to ask if you'd help the Homer Volunteer Fire Department Auxilliary on their project.

We are collecting coupons (Betty Crocker) to purchase a fire truck for the Fire Department. We only need 5 million coupons values. Betty Crocker of General Mills has a special merchandise plan for groups to obtain more costly items by saving the coupons and getting a

credit of ½ cent per coupon value.

We are going to need all the help we can get. Would you find space in your paper to ask for help from your subscribers and readers? These coupons can be sent to the Homer Volunteer Fire Department Auxilliary; Box 433, Homer, Alaska 99603.

Many thanks from the Auxilliary and the Fire Dept.

Sincerely yours,
Betty Wilkins

(Auxilliary president
and coupon chairman)

Minto, Alaska 99758
January 20, 1969

Dear Mr. Rock:

I'm writing concerning the change in the name of our village. I am in favor of keeping the same name. I don't see why they have to have all this fuss over names for our village when it already has a name.

In the article you printed, you only have one man's opinion. If the name 'Chichalyu' is the new name for the village, the Caribou Tail might very well not like it and then do something about it.

I do not want it to be named after only one tribe when there is a mixture of tribes living here.

Sincerely yours,
Caribou Tail

Kaltag, Alaska
Jan. 20, 1969

Dear Editor:

On Dec. 30 the new village council members elected were:

George Madros, president; Leonard Silas, vice president; Margaret Rose Semaken, secretary; Richard Nicholas, treasurer; Albert Nicholi, council member.

They are to serve a term of one year.

Yours truly,
M. Rose Semaken