

Den Nena Henash - Our Land Speaks
Ut Kah neek - Informing and Reporting
Yupit Qanlautciat - The Way Eskimos Talk
Unangan Tunukun - The Aleuts Speak
Inupiat Paitot - People's Heritage

Subsistence keeps culture alive

To the editor:

Subsistence hunting and fishing are very important to the rural Alaskans. Most rural Alaskans are Native. Subsistence food is what we call Native food. These foods are what keep our culture alive. Without subsistence food our culture will die.

The Alaska Supreme Court recently decided that the urban Alaskans should be able to subsistence hunt and fish for food if rural Alaskans can hunt and fish for subsistence food.

I feel that the rural Alaskans should have the subsistence law because sub-

sistence hunting and fishing are the rural Alaskans' way of life.

If the state opened both urban and rural Alaskans' subsistence hunting and fishing, then there will be more of a chance for extinction of a species. If they turned over the subsistence law for rural Alaskans, then we will lose our rural Alaskan activities. The villagers would not be able to feed themselves without subsistence.

Sincerely,
Piama Konukpeak
Togiak

Alcohol is a problem for St. Paul

To the editor:

It is encouraging to read in almost every issue of your fine publication how many of our Alaskan communities are regrouping together to ban the sale and the use of alcoholic beverages in their respective communities.

It is equally encouraging to read the many articles of many fine people writing about the destructiveness of the abuse of this chemical on families as well as the community as a whole.

I also read with great interest and support how both the state and federal governments are working with these communities to support their decisions and further how the governments are working together with grants and other aids to help communities who label this as their number one community problem.

It is no secret that we here on St. Paul Island also have a major problem with the abuse of this chemical. Increased activity of bootlegging is causing major problems in our communi-

ty. A bottle sells for as much as \$150.

Premature death, financial problems, children showing up late for school or sometimes not at all and general social problems all contributed to the rise in the use and abuse of alcohol.

Where do we begin? The President's Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, the work of the Alaska Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and other regional and local organizations are all using state and federal monies. They are trying to find a solution to this epidemic, perhaps with some successes and often with people feeling frustrated because societies refuse to change.

With all these agencies and organizations gathering together to try to find solutions, I am wondering how the State of Alaska and the federal government could subsidize the sale of alcohol?

Is this the recurring phenomenon of speaking from both sides of the

continued on page three

Let the people vote on the Education Fund

To the editor:

As one of the people responsible for getting information to the public on the proposed Education Fund, I naturally took exception to your editorial suggesting that the proposal be killed before Alaskans have the chance to decide the issue for themselves.

However, beyond my job, I am a lifelong Alaskan who has lived in various communities and who is raising my young children here. I have a healthy familiarity with rural and Native issues through my travels and my writing for the *Tundra Times* and *Tlingit and Haida* publications.

What bothered me most about the editorial is that it does not serve your constituency very well. In fact, two re-

cent polls of more than 1,000 Alaskan voters show that rural residents favor the Education Fund proposal by a nearly two-to-one margin.

Rural Alaska, to a great extent, relies on stable state revenues to maintain its economies. Without a local tax base, rural communities will be hardest hit when state dollars start to dry up, particularly if remote areas lose legislative representation when districts are redrawn.

The Education Fund will assure that serious economic damage can be avoided as oil production continues to decline.

You use a technical argument about the undesirability of changing the constitution. You make the point several

times that it's up to the Legislature to arbitrate spending decisions. That legislative responsibility will not change because of the Education Fund.

It always will be up to the Legislature to decide how much is needed and how it should be divvied up. The Education Fund simply provides a steady, stable stream of income forever from which education funding can be drawn.

A recent University of Alaska report detailed the enormity of the impending budget gap: close to \$1 billion in 10 years. That hole is real, and it's three times bigger than what all individuals, businesses and non-petroleum sources pay in taxes to the state right now.

We could double our non-oil taxes

and only close the gap half way. Fact is, the Education Fund is the only mechanism on the horizon that will come anywhere near to filling that gap.

No one has ever said the Education Fund will solve all of Alaska's financial troubles. It won't. But it will go a long way in that direction, thus enabling remaining dollars to be used to support the other very important jobs of government you mentioned, such as resource management.

I say, let the people decide, not eight senators and not a newspaper.

Sincerely,
Laury Roberts Scandling
Office of the Governor
Juneau

Campbell explains his proposals for health

To the editor:

Through an unfortunate and inadvertent mixup by the Alaska Native Health Board and our schedulers, Jim Campbell was not represented at the governor's forum during the Alaska Native Health Conference Feb. 6 (originally scheduled for Feb. 7).

Your readers might wish to know about some of the observations Campbell and his representatives were prepared to discuss at this important meeting.

Among his recommendations:

- Family and other support networks are one of the most important components for the recovery from substance abuse. The Alaska Federation of Natives' sobriety project and the late Della Keats' traditional healing network are examples of locally developed programs the state should be promoting.

- The Alaska student loan program should encourage college graduates to return to their communities to work.

- The state should vigorously en-

force local ordinances that prohibit the sale of alcohol, including the confiscation of property used for bootlegging.

- State government should work with local communities to encourage appropriate economic development projects.

- Training should be provided at the local level in the operation and maintenance of village water and sewer facilities, providing both local employment and prevention of disease.

- Publicly funded housing should be

built with super-insulation and heat recovery vent systems, such as those built to Alaska Craftsman Home energy efficiency and air quality standards.

Campbell would like to hear more ideas from people in the Bush on how the state can do a better job in helping create a healthy village environment.

Sincerely,
Sally J. Suddock

Indians', Eskimos' image exploited

To the editor:

I was pleased to see Michelle Tremblay's recent letter in the *Anchorage Daily News*.

Her comments about how McDonald's advertising division exploited the image of Alaska Natives in those Superbowl commercials filmed in Homer are right on!

One would hope that in the future major corporate sponsors of such events as the Superbowl will have the cross-cultural sensitivity needed to satisfy their advertising agendas. Native Americans for too long have been the subject of too many comic strip artists, gag writers, comedians and commercial makers who continue to use the "gag" of Indians and

Eskimos behaving in stereotyped ways.

This exploitation of the image of Native Americans must be challenged and stopped. Bravo to Michelle Tremblay for speaking up! I second her motion!

Sincerely,
Rep. Kay Wallis
Juneau



• St. Paul Island

continued from page two

mouth? Working to find solutions to help people with the use of large sums of taxpayers' monies, on the one hand, and subsidizing organizations which sell alcohol to the same people whom they are supposed to be helping?

Example: our local Indian Reorganization Act organization, chartered under the laws of the federal government and supported by grants from the state, sells alcohol through its license to the local people of St. Paul.

It is perhaps the only IRA in the entire state, if not the entire country which still does this. If the sale of packaged alcohol isn't bad enough, we also operate a tavern to continue this problem.

Perhaps you do not have a solution to this question, but maybe our state representatives as well as our national representatives could provide a rationale for this dicotomy?

Thank you for your time. I am hoping to hear from anyone who might have an answer.

Father George Pletnikoff
St. Paul Island