

Den Nena Henash - Our Land Speaks

Ut Kah neek - Informing and Reporting

Yupit Kaniautciat - The Way Eskimos Talk

Unangan Tunukun - The Aleuts Speak

Inupiat Paitot - People's Heritage

## ***Natives must encourage education***

To the editor:

As part of the Alaska Federation of Natives' goal of "Shared Visions," we should and ought to encourage each other — young, middle-aged and old alike, especially the young people — to continue to further their education.

Whether it be Alaska Native corporation law, business law bookkeeping, accounting, politics, religion, traditional ways, etc.

This would give our younger ones a greater outlook on life and prepare them to set higher goals. And we need Native lawyers, businessmen and businesswomen, politicians, etc. to continue what leaders ahead of us have set.

This would be a true step toward self-determination and sovereignty.

Gordon Grover Riley  
Minto

## ***Sealaska shareholder complains***

To the editor:

This letter is in regard to my discontent on how the Board of Directors of Sealaska Corp. have been managing my monies and land. Now they send news on an agreement they made in regards to the 7(i) litigation against Sealaska by other regional corporations.

The 7(i) litigation written up in the latest *Sealaska Shareholder*, Volume 13, No.1, December 1988/February 1989, should not have happened, as the chief executive officer stated that the funds for this purpose were set aside and included in the last annual report.

There does not appear to be any reason for the Board of Directors to permit this to happen before finally agreeing to settle without further court appeals on the amount of \$14,865,000.

This is another example of mismanagement. When the timber prices were obviously below market value, timber harvesting should have

been suspended until sales would be profitable. A claim in the *Sealaska Shareholder* under discussion that they were responsible for a profitable timber economy is not reflected in any way but minuscule dividends to owners of the corporation.

Jobs have been created for thousands of non-shareholders, but not for the shareholder of 100 or more shares in Sealaska and village corporations. The only real benefit has been to top management of the corporation.

The claim of a strong viable corporation for the future of the shareholders through Sealaska Timber Corp. has been put on hold with still a threat for future litigations against Sealaska in respect to 7(i). It is not too soon for shareholders to think of new and promising directors for the Board of Sealaska.

Sincerely,  
Thomas G. Dalton  
Sealaska Shareholder  
Seattle, Wash.



## Letters to the Editor

# Hepatitis A is a threat

To the editor:

Enclosed is a letter I received last summer from the commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. Although the letter is now eight months old, it still serves to point out some of the serious health problems caused by lack of sanitation facilities in rural Alaska — particularly adequate water and sewer facilities.

The Department of Health and Social Services is predicting that there may be 30,000 new cases of Hepatitis A in the next year, primarily in rural Alaska. They have requested budget increases to deal with the predicted growth in cases, mainly for purchasing more testing kits.

It is clear that the spread of Hepatitis A is directly related to sanitation and personal hygiene. An adequate supply of safe water, together with a sanitary sewage

disposal system, would greatly reduce the incidence of hepatitis and many other infectious diseases.

The most successful state programs for dealing with these problems in the long run appear to be the Village Safe Water Program (for unincorporated communities and second class cities and municipalities) and the Matching Grant Program (for incorporated cities and municipalities.)

I would encourage your readers and community leaders to utilize the Village Safe Water Program to the fullest extent possible. I would also encourage them to write to their elected representatives, including the governor, to emphasize the importance of combating this serious health hazard.

Sincerely,  
Rep. Kay Wallis  
Juneau

# Villages need facilities

To Rep. Wallis:

Your letter to Gov. Cowper concerning Hepatitis A outbreaks in 13 Yukon Kuskokwim Delta villages raises a number of important public policy issues that I would like to discuss with you.

The first involves construction of sanitation facilities in remote communities. Several years ago, the Village Safe Water Program first developed a priority list of needed facilities using disease outbreaks as one of the most important criteria.

Priority lists in 1982, 1983 and 1984 were developed using data provided by the 12 Native regional health corporations. Unfortunately, capital funding for the program averaged less than a million dollars a year.

In recent fiscal years, a statewide needs assessment has served as our starting point in recommending sanitation projects for the governor's budget. Health is still used as an important criteria in evaluating possible capital projects. However, village sanitation needs far exceed the available capital funding. Even when funding is within reach, community leaders sometimes opt for projects other than water or sewer.

In order to receive funding, it is clear that not only must sanitation projects be a number one priority for state officials, but they must also be at the

top of the list for local leaders.

Thank you for expressing your support for the work of the Village Safe Water Program. We will do our best to continue helping to protect the health of rural Alaskans. As you know, there are far more problems than we can address with our budget resources; but we are committed to working with villages to solve as many existing problems as possible.

Equally important is prevention of problems such as the Hepatitis A outbreaks that your letter highlighted. Of course, safe water and sewer facilities are only part of the solution. Personal hygiene and household sanitation practices also are important. Construction of sanitation facilities, proper operation of those facilities and good hygiene practices are all needed in dealing with these serious health problems.

In summary, I share your concern about the continuing problem of Hepatitis A in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta. I will keep your comments in mind when reviewing our needs assessment and when advising the governor about the Fiscal Year 1990 budget.

Sincerely,  
Commissioner Dennis D. Kelso  
Department of Environmental  
Conservation  
Juneau