

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



Owned, controlled and edited by Eskimo, Indian, Aleut Publishing Company, a corporation of Alaska natives. Published at Fairbanks, Alaska, weekly, on Wednesdays.

Address all mail to Box 1287, Fairbanks, Alaska, 99707. Telephone 452-2244

Second class postage paid at Fairbanks, Alaska 99701.

Eskimo, Indian, Aleut Publishing Co., Inc. Board of Directors, Executive Committee: Chris Anderson, Executive Vice-President and Chairman of the Board; Mary Jane Fate, First Vice-President; Betti Farni, Second Vice-President; Jim Immel, Treasurer; Jimmy Bedford, Assistant Treasurer; Toni Jones, Secretary; Daphne Gustafson, Assistant Secretary; Sue Gamache, Acting Editor.

Founded and edited by HOWARD ROCK, from October 1, 1962 until April 20, 1976.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Regular Mail (including Alaska, Canada and other states)	1 year \$15.00 6 months \$8.50
Air Mail (including Alaska, Canada and other states)	1 year \$35.00 6 months \$20.00

Member of the American Indian Press Association

Other Voices—

More Native journalists needed

As we continue to feel the loss of Howard Rock, it becomes imperative to examine even more deeply the contribution of this man to the field of communications. Beyond the social and political triumphs credited to his pen, the achievement of Howard Rock affords us a crucial lesson in the power of communication to improve the state of man.

Rock not only moved mountains with pen-strokes, he did so against discouraging odds. By virtue of his accomplishment, he demonstrated the absolute necessity of communication to human processes. He showed that adequate communication goes hand in hand with an understanding of social, economic, and political systems. And with understanding comes power, power to force those systems to benefit man, power to alleviate institutional oppression.

When Congress enacted the land claims act in 1971, many of the Native people who had been involved in the fight naturally became involved in the implementation of the act. But there were not enough of them. Since 1971, a multitude of programs administered by local, state and federal agencies and schools have been directed toward training Native people to fill positions in accounting, marketing, management, secretarial services, petroleum and other resource technology and education. The University of Alaska has moved to intensify its delivery of rural education. The Alaska Federation of Natives and the Alaska Native Foundation continue to monitor and diagnose the condition of Native people in the business and political world. Business and industrial firms generously grant scholarships to Native students to encourage their academic success.

This writer would never suggest that efforts to train Native people for business and industry are a mistake. However, one is prompted to ask: Where are the writers who will keep their fingers on the pulse of rural Alaska? Where are the journalists who can communicate with the understanding of someone who has experienced his subject matter first-hand? Where are the writers, photographers and newscasters who can watch the development of rural Alaska with a critical eye and keep their people informed of the choices confronting them?

It is not suggested here that no efforts are being made to train Native journalists. It is being asserted that too little is being done. Attracted by the lucrative rewards of a business career, students cannot be blamed for choosing business when the case for journalism is made so sporadically, so half-heartedly.

It would be well for Native students, government officials and educators to consider the legacy of Howard Rock. He proved the potential of skilled communication. He set an example of integrity, unselfishness and dedication to his people and his craft that cries to be followed.

—JRR



The Huchnom Indians of California believed that the world would float away if it wasn't anchored by a coyote, an elk and a deer!

Letters from Here and There

What era did we have igloos last?

April 11, 1976

Dear Editor:

Tell me when (era) we lived in an ice igloo last? If, we did—how come there is no mention of it?

I know my grandparents lived in a sod hut in Shismaraph

But, who came up with this Alaskan Eskimos living in ice igloos? Have you ever seen one?

Respectfully,
Ernest M. Vimmich
Fairbanks, Alaska
452-5343

Concern showed towards education of children

Box 71

Ouzinkie, Alaska 99644

April 6, 1976

Don Boselovic
Dept. of HEW
U. S' Office of Education
Indian Education
ROB 3
Room 3662
7th & D Streets, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20202

Dear Mr. Boselovic:

I will begin this letter by stating who I am and who I represent. I am a parent of four Native students attending school in the Kodiak School District. I am president of the Ouzinkie Advisory School Board and Ouzinkie Parent Committee for IEA programs. I am chairman of the Regional Education Board which is made up of the presidents of the Village School Boards and which is the regional parent committee for IEA and JOM programs. I am also a person who is concerned that Native children, as well as all children, receive a good education.

It is my understanding that the Regional Education Board, as a parent committee, has an active role in planning, development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of IEA and JOM programs. Our involvement in this program is clearly spelled out in the federal regulations, however, I realize that it is more clearly spelled out in the Self-determination Act than in the Indian Education Act.

I feel that your office is not recognizing the decisions of the Regional Education Board, specifically in the case of the Ouzinkie and Larsen Bay Cultural Enrichment Trips. Instead, your decision has been influenced by Walter Johnson's communications with you. Even though Walter Johnson is project manager (on paper) of the IEA-A program, he does not carry through with and understand the decisions and directions of the Regional Education Board in its role as parent committee.

He has only lived in Alaska for about a year and a half. He has only travelled to our villages once, possibly twice to some villages. As for Ouzinkie, he has

not been there once this year. It is hard for me to believe that he can understand or be concerned about the educational needs of the villages.

The members of the Regional Education Board and Village School Boards, on the other hand, live in the villages. We are aware of and concerned about the educational needs of our children. We also know that in order for any program to be successful, we must have a cooperative working relationship with the Kodiak School District. We realize that we need the expertise of the school district staff, however at the same time, they need our input in development of meaningful educational programs that are implemented in our villages for our children.

The Regional Education Board has been trying to do everything along with Walter Johnson and the school district, but to no avail. The school district does not recognize the federal regulations; it does not recognize the powers and duties of the Regional Education Board; and it does not recognize parent involvement in special programs such as the IEA-A program.

Now it seems as though we are losing the backing of the Office of Indian Education. By your response to our Cultural Enrichment proposals I feel you are being influenced by Walter Johnson in your decision. By this letter you will realize there is a conflict between the Regional Education Board and Walter Johnson in development and implementation of programs in our villages. His actions do not take into full consideration the needs of the Native children in the villages.

I am asking three things of you, Mr. Boselovic:

1. To reverse your decision on the Ouzinkie and Larsen Bay Cultural Enrichment proposals. We, as parents of rural Native students, feel this trip is an excellent exposure to a culture that must live under many of the same conditions as ours, such as island environment, Native affairs, western invasion, geologic conditions. At the time the students will be exposed to a huge urban area. Hawaii is similar to Kodiak in many ways and at the same time very different.

As you already know, Ouzinkie's deadline for contracting with the ATZ Travel Agency is today April 6 and it will be very difficult to make arrangements beyond this date. It is hard for me to get in contact with other five villages because of the poor Alaskan rural communications system that we have to live with. So I am not really sure if your reconsideration will help the others but will at the very best give the people a feeling that we are not shut out by all agencies dealing with education, from the borough school district all the way through Washington D. C.

I would like to have your response to this letter and in favor of the parent committees as soon as possible as I am going to arrange a meeting with the Regional Education Board, Borough School Board and Kodiak Island School District as

soon as I possibly can. I would like to have your response by this time.

There has got to be something worked out between the school district and REB soon. If all village proposals are rejected our Native children are going to lose a great deal as these programs will help them so much.

2. I would like to know how much recognition you give the decisions of the parent committee. The regulations call for the parent committee to have an active role in the program. What is your offices interpretation of an active role of the parent committee in the following five categories: Planning, development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring.

3. I would also like to know what role the school district has in the same categories plus one extra category—administration of the program.

I will be waiting for your quick response.

Sincerely,
Duke Delgado, Chairman
Regional Education Board

cc: REB Members
Frank Peterson, KANA
School Board Members
Matt Jamin, AK Legal Services
Senator Kay Poland
Rep. Ed Naughton
Marshall Lind, Commissioner
Pres. of State School Board
Gordon Jackson
Bob Greene, Supt'd KIBSD
Sen. Theodore Stevens
Congressmen Don Young
Sen. Mike Gravel
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Clarence Antioquia
Human Rights Commission
Walter Johnson

CLASSIFIED

HELP WANTED

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ALASKA PUBLIC OFFICES
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Alaska Public Offices Commission
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Anchorage, Alaska 99501

The Tanana Valley State Fair Association is seeking musicians who are interested in performing throughout the summer in various musical events. If you play an instrument and are wanting to keep in practice over the summer vacation, please call Rowena Currington at the Fair Office, 452-3750.