

Letters to the Editor

"Sober Song" reflects positive spirit

Dear Editor:

Thank you for the wonderful issue "Singing the Sober Song". It's good to have so many people and communities involving themselves in the Sobriety movement.

Years ago, when the Blue Ribbon Commission started their work in getting the message of sobriety out, there was a motto attached to the movement, that motto was "Our Spirit Strong & Sober".

Sobriety is good. However, it

should be remembered that a sober mind and body enables people to be able to function in a healthy capacity, but without a whole Spirit, all is lost.

Traditional Elders speak of The Great Spirit, Creator, Maker of All Things and religions talk of God or Holy Spirit and AA refers to the Spirit as a Higher Power.

Alcohol and drugs weaken and shatter one's Spirit and could ultimately lead to death.

Sobriety should not become

a full time obsession or occupation. If we don't remember both personal and creator Spirits and fail to develop them, we miss the point.

I must also point out Spirit of the people. Remember how the village used to be? Good times, good memories of a healthy, thriving village. So, a third Spirit recognition, a good Spirit of the people. Village Spirit across Alaska today is damaged, but through sobriety and rebuilding of Spirit, the people again will survive and thrive.

The bottom line is: without the Spirit we're dead . . . literally.

Have a good day,
Theresa "Tiny" Devlin

Students learn the D.C. ropes

Dear Editor:

Democracy is not a spectator sport – for it to survive and flourish, we all must become involved. This is the message I heard from 513 high school students representing 77 Alaska high schools who recently participated in the Close Up Foundation government studies program in Washington, D.C.

For a full week, the students has the opportunity to develop a better understanding of our democratic process. By observing Congressional proceedings, question-

ing journalists and meeting with government experts, the abstracts of history and the process of governing were transformed into concrete experiences. In addition, students were able to share their views with their peers from other areas of the country.

Participants returned home with a deeper awareness of their responsibilities as citizens and the realization that a single individual can make a difference. Their enthusiasm for involvement in the democratic process is to be admired.

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Students learn about D.C. . . .

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The Close Up experience was made possible through the strong support of parents, teachers, and schools. Also, various companies and organizations helped make Close Up fellowships available to students in financial need. These sponsors include ARCO Alaska,

Inc.; Exxon Company, U.S.A.; and MAPCO, Inc.

On behalf of all of us at Close Up, I would like to thank all who made the experience possible.

Sincerely,
Melissa Williams
Alaska Outreach Coordinator