

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

Turner series 'breath of fresh air'

To the editor:

Thanks to the *Tundra Times* for carrying the excellent series of articles on alcoholism treatment recently by Ernie Turner of Alaska Native Alcoholism Recovery Center.

The series on the "dis-ease" and recovery from the "dis-ease" was professional, positive, honest and hopeful; it was a breath of fresh air

after the *Anchorage Daily News*' "A People in Peril" series several years ago.

I trust that many people will benefit from the articles and your service to the community.

Bob Eaton
Brother Francis Shelter
Anchorage

Orre Drumrite offered wisdom

To the editor:

Orre Drumrite, the grandson of medicine people — medicine as you describe holy, physical healing and exorcism.

If you were to ask him today what he remembers as his earliest lessons, he would smile and say, "Walking through the woods at about 2 years old with my grandmother and listening as she spoke of life, the world, time and other stories of old."

Then ask Orre his saddest moment, he would tell you, "The sound of a cracking rifle that killed my mother; I have lived a long moment."

Ask Orre about education, history class, alcohol, drugs and military duty, and he would respond in the same manner. "I was taught to watch, listen and reason; never to ask questions except towards the sky. My mother used to say, 'Use your mind first. See the subject in detail.'"

"It was by this type of teaching that I compare lessons without a future. As for history class, there is more to learn in a handful of soil, a stream of water, the sound of the wind as it talks or sings, and there is so much more in the night sky."

"If you listen, you will hear the past going, and tomorrow keeps coming. I went into the Navy at age 17. I was on the *U.S.S. Lexington*."

For many years prior to this discussion, I did not see Orre until by chance, in Los Angeles, February 1981, in an Indian center lunchroom. I found him.

I spent the next two weeks with Orre and during those days, it seemed we talked 18 hours daily. The day I left him, he said, "Please don't leave me, I'll never see you again."

The following years, I searched for this silent warrior. True to his prediction, I did not see Orre Drumrite again. He left on my birthday, March 12, 1983, and was given a dignified burial on his reservation. He was my brother.

"The body leaves, but the spirit keeps walking with the wind — the parade of the spirits."

My understanding and concern for the homeless street Indian runs deep. The sound of a cracking rifle has echoed into my nights through the years.

As an orphan, I was put in a home along with my brothers and sister. By the age of 7, I wanted to run away. At the age of 8, I was ready to commit suicide. Loneliness hit a magnitude in my heart from which I refuse to heal because I reversed the effects to give me strength and a sense of humor.

Cowper opposes Bristol Bay oil development

To Jamie L. Whitten, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations:

As you know, the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee has included a moratorium on oil and gas exploration in Bristol Bay in its markup of the House appropriations bill.

I am writing to urge you to retain this important protective measure during the full committee's deliberations.

We anticipate that, given the upheaval in the Persian Gulf, Congress will carefully scrutinize any budget action that has the potential to affect our energy position. For your information, I have included a copy of my recent remarks before a hearing on national energy strategy conducted in Fair-

banks by Deputy Energy Secretary W. Henson Moore.

You will see that Alaska is now and will continue doing its share to contribute to the nation's energy security. We now provide 20 percent of total U.S. domestic production, have more offshore areas under lease than the entire OCS combined and have taken recent action to enable exploration and development of additional North Slope fields.

Bristol Bay is the only area where we have ever opposed oil and gas development, and we continue to oppose such development today.

As you know, the report accompanying the Fiscal Year 1990 appropriation to the Department of the Interior called for studies on contingency plan-

ning and response technology for the North Aleutian Basin, an assessment of the applicability of *Exxon Valdez* oil spill findings to a potential spill in Bristol Bay and an examination of the possible repurchase of the leases from Sale 92.

The conclusion of those studies is not expected until March 1, 1991. It seems logical to us that the moratorium should be extended through the next fiscal year to enable Congress to have the benefit of those studies before deciding whether exploration and development should go forward.

In our view, of course, the known value of the fish and wildlife resources of the North Aleutian Basin clearly

outweighs the low potential of the area's hydrocarbon resources, and that view is not changed by the present world situation.

For more than a decade, Alaskans have expressed their concern at risking this biologically productive area to the chance of an oil spill. We have consistently opposed oil and gas development in Bristol Bay and continue to believe that the best resolution of the matter is an eventual repurchase of the leases there.

Thank you for your consideration of my views on this important matter.

Sincerely,
Gov. Steve Cowper
Juneau

Letters to the Editor

A complaint about BBNC salaries

Dear Editor:

Shareholders of the Bristol Bay Native Corp. have not received a raise in quarterly dividend checks for many years. However, we have all seen employee salaries on a steady rise — some of which are close to six figures or over.

Here is a copy of a resolution which failed to pass by the BBNC Board of Directors in the last annual meeting.

It is a shame that the Board of Directors voted this resolution down. They were voting shares of stock in which the shareholders own. This is possible because most shareholders gave power to the Board of Directors by signing the BBNC proxy.

The resolution:

Now therefore be it resolved that the shareholders recommend to the Board of Directors of BBNC that before any raises in employee salaries or fringe benefits be considered that shareholder dividends be raised by a comparable amount.

Be it further resolved if for any reason the amount of shareholder dividends cannot be increased, a freeze be put on any increase in employee salaries or fringe benefits until such time an increase in dividends to the shareholders can be made.

Sincerely,
Ralph Angasan Jr.
King Salmon

• *Drumrite inspires gathering*

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It is from situations such as this that the homeless street Indian has escaped. He left his mistakes because his own neighborhood judged him to a level he would never be able to rise from. I have met people as great as Francis M. Two Bulls, and other war heroes now gone or struggling in the streets.

I have met educated construction workers, family people, other people I have known somewhere along the line who once worked in good paying jobs, but all put aside to avoid a phony way of life for them.

We must learn compassion and empathy. Those characteristics I have appreciated from my elderly aunts and uncles. Through my lifetime, they were the only ones to understand me.

As Native American Indians, we were given the drum, vapors of smoke and songs to communicate with our

Maker.

It has been 500 years since we as one people have celebrated, worshipped and given thanks to what we are and what has been given us.

It is in this unique dedication that the honor is asked of you to join the rest of the Indian nation on March 23, 1991, the first anniversary of "The Parade of the Spirits" which will be commemorated with drums, songs, prayers and feasting.

We pray to contact a thousand drums across the United States, to be synchronized with as many as possible in Canada, Mexico, Central America and South America.

This annual event is devoted to the homeless street Indian because he is our weakest and poorest.

Walk in peace,
Elizabeth A. Wells
Anchorage