

Battle lines forming over subsistence issue

To the editor:

I read your paper faithfully and have watched with dismay as battle lines are once again forming over the subsistence issue.

My home is in rural Alaska. My neighbors and friends are both Native and white. Our community shares food, good times, sorrow and passing lives. Hunting, fishing and trapping are a way of life, a privilege, a spiritual experience.

Some people are born into the experience, some seek and find it; others let go of it and live in a more artificial world. It is a matter of choice.

My family has always hunted. I have always hunted. I moved to Alaska because I needed a closer relationship with the spirit of the wild. Anchorage was frustrating because I could not live where the wild creatures roamed. I could only visit, and each time I returned I felt sadness.

Eventually I made the decision to move into the wilds and live in the land and feel each day the rhythm of the streams, the wind and the earth.

The most important aspect of subsistence is sharing in the spirit of survival. It is the greatest gift one can give. It is a gift that is being lost because people are losing touch with

hunting, and they are not living directly from the land. I was lucky. My job allowed me to move into a wild environment.

Not everyone is so lucky. Many hunters in populated areas are trying to keep in touch with the ancient rites of survival by getting out of the city as often as they can to hunt. These hunters are brothers to hunters everywhere. They need what all hunters need, even though they may not be able to always explain why they need it.

It is an ancient link. It is the last thread of a tradition which was once as vibrant as the last pure forms of subsistence are today. It is a dying tradition unless we keep it alive.

Together, we have hope as hunters. We need each other. We must respect each other's differences. We must share our hunting experiences and teach our young people to hunt or we will lose our hunting tradition.

There is much to learn and much both sides can give to each other. The persons living among the resources can help those who live away from the resources better understand the spiritual link they feel.

The persons living nearest the

lawmakers can assist their fellow hunters by protecting the hunting tradition through the political process.

If we allow ourselves to be divided, something precious will be forever lost. Hunting and fishing are one of the few outdoor activities that both Native and non-Native Alaskans cherish.

It can be a bridge, or it can be a wall. Under our State Constitution it is a bridge. With the Legislature having the power to decide preferences, it will become a wall — a wall at first between urban and rural, but eventually between villages and families.

This is a bad wall because politicians can move it whenever they choose. This wall can be placed wherever future legislatures want to place it. Do you trust the Legislature to place the wall where it will protect you?

Will legislators in power 10 years from now act the same as those today? I do not trust the whims of elections every two years. That is why we must have the equal protection in our constitution.

Those who work to stop hunting are happy with this fight. They know we are weaker when we are divided. They are like the wolf which drives a

caribou away from the herd. It is only then the kill is made.

Only hunters can ever know hunting. Only hunters will fight to preserve their tradition as a spiritual experience. Only hunters will defend their tradition to the dying breath. I know. I am a hunter, and I feel the powers which move me before, during and after the hunt.

These are the powers that link me to all people and all living things. If hunter could meet with hunter, and all the attorneys, politicians and corporations be kept away, the sharing would begin and the fighting would end.

It is truly time for a hunters' council; it is truly time for unity. It is truly time to face each other, person to person, eye to eye, and work this thing out.

I, and many others I know, stand ready to assist all our hunting family in any way we can.

Who will step forward and join us in bringing hunters together? Let's start reversing this dead end course now.

Sincerely,
David Stancliff
Tok

Is ELF working as planned?

Dear Editor,

Hugh Malone recently stated that the ELF is working as the Legislature intended. If Hugh is correct (it would be a first), then the Legislature intended for the following to occur:

Forty-nine of 51 workers from Nordic-Calista's Drilling Rig 1 were laid off. The rig in question had been working virtually non-stop for four years. Plans to add an additional drilling rig in Kuparuk and another rig at Prudhoe Bay were cancelled.

The \$58-million, 25-well West Sak test was suspended. Billions of dollars of oil revenue to the state and associated economic activity are in jeopardy. The window of opportunity for efficiently extracting West Sak oil using Kuparuk's aging facilities is slowly closing.

About 150 new development wells were knocked out of BP's Prudhoe development plans. Not drilling these wells surely contributed to the rapid oil production decline in 1989, this year and in the years ahead.

The \$80-million Hurl State Project

was put on hold. About 100 construction jobs, \$6 million worth of mini-module work, and \$7 million in freight hauling was lost in Fairbanks alone. Nabors Alaska Drilling suspended plans to add 60 workers.

This represents an annual loss of \$5 million in wages and purchases from local businesses.

The West Sak project team is now only a fraction of what it was prior to ELF revisions. Engineers, geologists, and other professionals scrambled to find jobs; some left Alaska. Even if the negative tax consequences of Malone's ELF were lifted tomorrow, over 20 years of hands-on West Sak expertise is gone.

Wealth-generating jobs would be above current levels (as would oil production) if Malone's destructive ELF hadn't passed. In spite of reality, Malone continues claiming that all is well with ELF. I wonder if, in Malone's world, the sky is blue? I didn't think so.

Jerry Foster
Anchorage



Letters to the Editor

'Can't recognize the problem'

To the editor:

In light of the many ignorant remarks Hugh Malone has made recently in regard to ELF, tax adjustments, etc., he has proven once and for all that he is not even smart enough to recognize the problem, therefore he is certainly not smart enough to contribute to the solution.

Hugh firmly believes that if it costs the oil industry \$20 to produce a barrel of oil that sells for \$20, they should be perfectly happy.

Hugh's reasoning reminds me of the old story of the two guys, Hughie and Stevie, who grew watermelons.

During watermelon season, Hughie and Stevie would load their pickup truck with watermelons every morning and take them into town to sell.

Every night when they got home, Stevie would ask Hughie, "How much did we get for the watermelons today?" Hughie would respond, "\$1 apiece."

Stevie would then ask, "How much did it cost us to grow them?" Hughie would then reply "\$1 apiece."

After two or three years of this, it dawned on Stevie that they were not making any money so he relayed this information to Hughie.

After long and serious analyzing, Hughie told Stevie, "Hey, I finally figured out what our problem is: Next year we've got to get ourselves a bigger truck."

Jerry Celey
Anchorage

Alaska educators should apply for awards program

To the editor:

I spent most of a recent week evaluating proposals to a national awards program of the Ford Foundation and John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

These awards recognize outstanding innovations in state and local government, and the division I helped evaluate focuses on innovation in education. As an Alaskan familiar with some university and school district programs which might qualify, I want to make more Alaskans aware of this opportunity.

I encourage Alaskan educators to apply; much of what you are doing is more exciting than the proposals we reviewed.

The awards are given to existing programs. They don't fund start-up efforts. They look for:

•Novelty: really creative leaps in

viewing and resolving an educational dilemma.

•Significance: how important your problem is at the local and national levels.

•Value: how the innovation has served the clients.

•Replicability: how easily the program could be adapted for use in other areas of the country. This last criterion, however, is not heavily weighed at initial review stages. The first "cut" seeks fresh, effective ideas.

I especially encourage classroom teachers at all levels and teachers' aides to consider proposing your special programs.

The program is extremely competitive, although the first application form is an uncomplicated two pages. Paragraphs on this form should be clear, succinct and have all the virtues normally required by such applications.

Reviewers should be able to envision your program working and get excited by that vision. All division teams narrowed 1,550 applications to 250; the education group chose a dozen from 107.

Following review levels include a more thorough application form, program site visit and then semi-finalists present their programs to a panel at Harvard. It's an exciting process. The \$100,000 award can fund additional projects, and it's a very prestigious honor. I hope more Alaskans apply.

Information and application packets can be obtained from: Innovations in State and Local Government, Harvard University, 96 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138, or by calling (617)-495-0557. Preliminary applications are due in January each year. Good luck!

April E. Crosby
Brookline, Mass.

People are not alike. . .it should be that way

To the editor,

We are not alike; our thinking, our food, our symbols. Still we laugh and cry, our hearts beating together under one sky. We divide the earth and buy the earth and change the earth, but we cannot slice the sky.

We are ruled by fear. We fear each other because what we know is different from what you know, and we fear each other because we don't know what the other knows.

You have your way and I have mine. As I grow older I see that it should be that way. Deep in my soul I know I am still your sister, I am your family. And, as my fearful eyes look into your fearful eyes, I secretly thank you for sharing your sky.

Jeanie Greene
Inupiaq, Anchorage