

Back on the Trapline

Ruby, Alaska

P.O. Box 2

February 24, 1975

Dear Editor:

When I was four years old, my father, Phillip Albert, Sr., moved our whole family out to BigMud, a trapping camp up the Novi River where we lived for a month while my father trapped beaver.

Living on the trapline back when I was four is now just a picture in a memory. I barely remember how it was, only a thing like our family being crowded in a small log cabin, eating beaver meat, playing in the snow and sitting on the bunk edge waiting for our father's return from checking the beaver sets by dogteam.

Since then, I have never been near a trapping camp.

I finished up the seventh grade at the Ruby State School. When I was 14 and 15, I attended eighth and ninth grades at Central Junior High School in Anchorage. I took advantage of all the art classes that were being offered because I have this thing about art. I finished my sophomore year in Tanana. I finished my last two years of high school at Service Hanshew in Anchorage where better art classes were being offered. I graduated mid term January 24, 1975.

Undecided about which way to turn from there I decided to join my family members who were trapping at Bering Slough camp located 47 miles up the Yukon River from Ruby.

The first few days I spent at the camp, I found life different and exciting yet nice and peaceful compared to city life. I recognized how much peace there is to think by; how much privacy and how nice it is to eat beaver meat cooked in the old time way like 14 years ago.

Right now, there are five of us out here, my oldest brother George, next oldest, Phillip, Jr., my oldest sister Barbara, myself and Howard, who is a year younger than I. We all plan to move back to Ruby in the middle of March sometime, by snowmachine and dogteam. Until then, I wish to enjoy learning to trap and take advantage of this nice life because it may be the last time I spend on a trapline in another 14 years.

I give credit to my father, who is now working up north, for making fine trappers out of Howard, Phillip, Jr., Barbara and George, and who taught them how to live off the land in the past three years, then left them to live and trap, since now they know how.

Sincerely,
Miss Varina Albert