

Last (?) class graduates from Edgecumbe

By Bill Hess
Tundra Times

"If you can get up and be anxious to go about your day's work, you will have success," Lt. Gov. Steve McAlpine told what may be the last graduating class from Mount Edgecumbe Boarding

School last week.

McAlpine was Commencement speaker for the less than 60 graduating seniors, who may be the last class to walk to the tune of Pomp and Circumstance while they receive their diplomas at the boarding school.

As McAlpine was speaking, the U.S. Senate was approving a supplemental funding bill that included a provision to renovate Edgecumbe in preparation for turning it over to the State of Alaska for control.

But the day belonged in

Sitka to the seniors who had studied and laughed and lived at Edgecumbe, and McAlpine told them, "Every day I interact with people who have walked these halls.

"People come from the Bush and cities and from subsistence to high government. All play

an important part, whether they are senators or people providing for their families."

McAlpine told them that all is hard work and the future will depend on hard work.

Alaska is a place of opportunity, said McAlpine. "A lot
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Edgecumbe class graduates

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of people don't know where their next meal is coming from. People your age are being called on to massacre their fellow human beings for reasons no one knows.

"The most important thing all of you should know is do what you want to do."

Jake Lestenkof, area director for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, spoke briefly and said that the education program launched by the BIA 50 years ago "will end soon." Lestenkof is a Mt. Edgecumbe graduate.

Class valedictorian is Debor-

ah Okitkon. Salutatorian is Brenda Walunga.

The welcoming address was given by Benny Stevens, senior class vice president.

Awards were presented by Gill Truitt, assistant principal, and LeRoy Demmert, superintendent.

The invocation was given by the Rev. Michael L. Meier, Sitka Lutheran Church. The Mt. Edgecumbe Chorus with Anne Anderson director, presented two numbers.

For pictures and an expanded report on the Edgecumbe graduation, see the June 9 Tundra Times.