

Allakaket-Hughes Boy Scouts Enjoy Adventure Here



GETTING OFF THE TRAIN—Allakaket-Hughes native Boy Scouts have just gotten off the Alaska Railroad train at College, where the University of Alaska is located, after riding the train from Fairbanks, a four-mile ride.



'BOSSY' GETS ATTENTION—At the University of Alaska experimental farm, Bossy the cow got quite a bit of attention from the native boys of Allakaket and Hughes. They are more familiar with moose and caribou.

(Photos by Lael Morgan)

Allakaket-Hughes...

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to raise \$20 which is no mean assignment in a small village with little cash flow.

Was there looting and piracy? "No, but there was some coercion," laughs Oppenheim. "They were packing water and hauling wood. Two of them fed my 10 dogs for eight days while I was in the lower 48. And eventually everybody came up with the money."

Bishop William Gordon Jr. volunteered to pilot the Scouts to Fairbanks in his own small plane. The combined troops numbered 24 plus leader Albert Weeks of Hughes and Oppenheim, so it took several trips.

There were hold-ups because of bad weather and nobody got much sleep, but on Monday everyone had landed at last in Fairbanks.

"Then all sorts of wonderful things began to materialize," Oppenheim recalls. "Fairbanks Native Association found us housing at no expense in their Day Care Center. Eielson gave us a good tour plus a swim in their pool. COMPAS fed us as a gift. Alyeska Pipeline took care of out of pocket expenses and that isn't the first time they've helped our troop."

"KFAR gave us a great tour, even put a couple of the boys on the air and let them play disc jockey. We went through the NASA tracking station, Alaskaland, the University of Alaska Agricultural Station and Musk Ox Farm. The U.S. Army loaned us a bus with a great driver."

The youngsters particularly wanted to see the places where their parents shopped by mail. Lindy's gave them a good tour and passed out candy bars. They got rained out of Alaskaland one morning and on five minutes notice arrived at Penney's which was equally cooperative.

"They rode all the elevators including the freight elevator, explored everything including the heating system and were very impressed with a room full

of store manikins," Oppenheim reports.

Things weren't so friendly on the Alaska Railroad. The boys were charged \$1 for the four minute ride from Fairbanks to College but they decided the experience might be worth it. Only three of them had ever seen a train before.

Traveling with so many youngsters, aged 10 through 16, was not without problems, of course. There were occasional fist fights and one bloody nose (during a tour of the Tundra Times facility, alas) but self discipline was strong.

For example, three of the boys didn't pay attention to instructions on where to meet the bus after a movie at University of Alaska and showed up almost an hour late.

"They held court marshall on the spot and decided the three would have to buy ice cream for the entire group with a banana split for the bus driver!"

During the week-long stay, the boys averaged less than seven hours sleep nightly but woke up cheerfully each morning at 6:30 in their unheated sleeping quarters.

Asked to list what they liked least about Fairbanks, they put "Going to bed," almost unanimously. Alaskaland and swimming came out as favorite experiences and car and bus rides and television also scored high.

The troops left Sunday for two weeks of Scout Camp at Lost Lake where they'll be learning all they can about water safety.

"Last year a youngster drowned in our river and we don't want it to happen again," Oppenheim explains. "We want our Scout program to help Village life... something beyond the usual Scouting program."

It also seems to be making the lads of the Midnight Sun Council into some of the most sophisticated scouts in the nation. As of this summer they'll be equally at home on land, the tundra, the sea and the city.



NEWSPAPER COLUMNS—The youngsters are learning something about making newspaper columns from Diana Cartier, the newspaper's composer operator. At the top of the picture at right, is Father Ray Oppenheim, Scout Leader of the Allakaket Troop 111 Boy Scouts.



READING TUNDRA TIMES—Two youngsters of the Allakaket-Hughes Boy Scouts rest a moment while reading Tundra Times in the newspaper's office. The spirited youngsters were attentive and curious.