

LETTERS FROM HERE AND THERE

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cc: Rehder
Board File
School File
Tundra Times
Tanana Chiefs-Education Committee

Tanana, Alaska
P.O. Box 22
Dec. 10, 1973

Dear Editor:

We had a museum in the school room 7. We went up to Mission Hill. And we get old stuff from the Mission Hill. We have 71 people in the museum. Here is a lady. She like the museum. She talk to Mrs. Moses.

Your friend,
Loretta Joseph

Tanana, Alaska
Dec. 10, 1973

Dear Editor:

We had a museum. It was not a big one. We had 71 visitors in our museum. We had refreshments for the people. I wish I could see a real museum.

Sincerely,
Connie Dian Sommer

Tanana School
Room 7
Dec. 10, 1973

Dear Mr. Rock:

Our class made our own museum. We were like anthropologists. We went many places around town and found old things. People came and told us about them. We studied about history here. We looked in old books and papers. We took pictures. We drew maps. We put together a book about what we learned. Our teacher and some high school students helped us write the book. We read the stories on a tape. We had old

people talk on the tape, too. We had open house, 71 people came.

We would like to learn a lot more. We wish we could see a real museum. We wish we could talk to a real anthropologist.

Sincerely,
Curtis Erhart
Sandra Joseph
Nathan Guthrie
Henry Nicholia
Connie Sommer
Loretta Joseph
Cordell Grant
Percy Joseph
Gerald Nicholia
Darwin George
Mary Moses (teacher)

KOYUKON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, INC.

To: Chairman of the Energy Crisis
From: Mr. James Huntington, Regional Director
Subject: Energy Crisis in the bush villages of Alaska

Dec. 11, 1973

The Energy Crisis will put a serious affect on the bush villages of Alaska. A cut in gasoline could and will cause a lot of hardships for the people living in the bush villages.

Some say go back to the dog team. No one stops to think it takes at the best three to four years to raise a dog team that will enable the people to trap and haul wood. It takes two months of fishing with a fish-wheel to feed them, plus, you have to have gasoline to fish or without the gas there is no fish. It takes gasoline to trap with a snowmachine, otherwise, with no gas there will be no fur and no meat.

We have to have the gas to get the fish for the dogs so that the dogs can haul the wood to keep our houses warm.

If we use a snowmachine we will have to have gas to haul the wood, no matter what way you do look at the poor people of the bush. They will need the gasoline to keep the light going

or either live in the dark as they did a thousand years ago.

Another important matter to consider is the depletion of the salmon in the rivers of Alaska. The fish isn't there to feed the dogs like it use to be. The foreign countries have a monopoly on the fish that use to be the feed for our dogs. If there is no dogs to do the work of the snowmachines, then, it will mean we have to have gasoline for our snowmachines and outboard motors, or go back to living like our ancestors had lived hundreds of years ago.

The air taxi operators also need gasoline for their bush planes since there is hardly a day that goes by that a life depends on the operators of air taxis in Alaska. Even the larger airlines are cutting back. What is going to happen to the mail that is bringing in 80% of the staple food for the bush villages? There isn't enough barge lines to bring in food for the villages along the rivers of Alaska, so we do depend heavily on the airlines for the delivery of our staple food. The airlines deliver at least 50% of the needs of the bush villages of Alaska.

If we can have the same amount of gasoline we have had in the bush villages this year, then, we can manage it with the understanding that any newcomers will have to make their own arrangements as to their need of gasoline. We of the bush villages cannot make a living if we do not have gasoline.

They will have to take a good look at Alaska as it is and how it is going to be when the Pipeline impact hits Alaska before they start any cutbacks on the gasoline in Alaska. Some people can take a cut in stove oil but no one, especially in the bush, can get along without gasoline.

CC: Honorable U.S. Senator Ted Stevens
Honorable U.S. Senator Mike Gravel
Honorable U.S. Representative

Don Young
His Excellency Governor William A. Egan
Tundra Times

Nulato, Alaska
December 14, 1973

Dear Friend:
Mr. Howard (de) Rock:

Some fellows say I'm always lucky. But they don't know when I have tough luck. I was first one that got hit with the fuel oil and gasoline. My order didn't come on the barge. I call it 'Bad Luck.'

But on the other side, it's 'Good Luck.' I'm cutting wood now, keep me in shape. The gasoline part, I don't run around for nothing, like I used to run 28 miles to get liquor, now I order it. And far as meat is concerned, lot of meat and fish here, also lot of canned meat. That is all we had for years anyway.

All the freezers are full, also mine, even though I don't hunt or fish. They're are lot of good hearted people here. They're is not much notice with Sno Go like couple of years ago when all the school kids were fire fighting. Almost every one bought Sno Machine.

Seems like everytime I want to listen to the news over the radio, Sno Machine shoot by, and chain saw going both sides of my house. I use Swede saw, for exercise, just to save my chain saw from wearing. Hardly anyone use Swede saw any more.

Well Howard, I'd like to find out from you if Governor William (Bill) Egan buy the Tundra Times. The school principal here at Nulato wrote him a letter, but I don't see no answer. Next time I'll know better, I campaigned for him before last election.

We left Fairbanks with Fred Notti's plane. While he was campaigning for Carr, I was handing out Egan buttons. We went to Nenana, Bettles, Alatna, Hughes, Huslia, Galena, Koyukuk, Nulato, Kaltag, back to Fairbanks.

I got a letter from Ted Stevens, from Washington, D.C. He wanted me to sign me name with the union office in Fairbanks for the north slope to work. Here I'm writing all these years trying to keep the union out of the villages, which I can't do. The union build a road to the airport. They didn't even finish it yet, and left.

Now we have this 2 million dollar school building here. And the Indians here in the village cannot get a job, not one. It will be the same way on the North Slope. It's hard for me to work with White people. They watch me like a hog.

Because I out work them, and they don't like that I guess, also Indian. 47 years ago, I went to work for the Alaska Railroad at Nenana on the Steamer Davis. Working this long on all kinds of different jobs I should be good for something.

Bob Bartlett visited me here at Nulato 4 times, to see what we need. Years back we had 61 voters here at Nulato, and Bob got 60 votes, maybe thats why he always came here looking for me, but twice I was working for the Air Force on T.D.Y. Now Ted Stevens don't even come

here to see our village for himself.

I would like to know how you could sign your name and get a job. How could someone hire me when they don't even know me or see me. My age, etc. Well Alexander Steele, Koyukuk, Alaska - I have the same trouble here you have over there.

Wien Airlines was here with mail yesterday and the day before, going back empty. But a chartered aircraft came here, Koyukuk, Kaltag, Huslia, Hughes, Galena, instead of going with Wien, for the meeting in Anchorage, I guess.

Like you say, I don't know where they get the money from. Tax money, I guess. Alex, I worked 20 days this fall here. They took \$830 out of my checks, mind you, for 20 days. Last spring, I hauled 500 empty drums for school and last fall I Delivered 800 fuel for state school, thats over a month ago and I don't see one red cent or an answer, and I don't have one drum of fuel at my house.

Several guys ask me why I don't take a drum or two. I said: if I get caught I lose \$1500 and land in jail. So I'm still waiting for that big check. I'm still writing till I get that Land money that is if I live that long to enjoy it. I'm getting too old to enjoy anything, except when I'm working for wages or when I'm boozing it up, thats only few hours till I go to sleep.

With that \$830 I could support about 4 wives like years ago, and when the White man came here, the women's were doing all the work, and when the White man came, they thought they were going to improve it.

They showed us how to make Booze, and when we drink it they threw us in jail. They brought with them cards to gamble with, all kinds of sickness, diseases, etc. They improved it all right. Tax unemployment is killing me also.

They tried hard for me to buy trapping, hunting, fishing license, tax my boat o put number on it, so they can tax it later on also. The land my house is sitting on. They came here and ask me to record my house because they told me the government will take it away if

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they want.

I said the only way they could take it is over my dead body. I heard they have schools for making sleds, snow shoes, also trapping. There is a lot of good trappers around here, and good sled and snow shoes makers. But the hardest part is going out. Like going out to trap them, going out to get the birch

You have to take them out, whoever is going to school. They're 3 different kind of Birch. Good birch easy to bend, hard to break, and straight grain. And weak birch.

I just picked up the NEWS-MINER and I see where 75 teams for the Ididiard Race. Then I looked at my sled I just build. Just the right sled for that race. It's for sale.

Another thing that bothered me at Eielson Air Force Base where I worked, almost every building where I worked in. They're bunch of ladies working. Also downtown on Saturday ladies dring mail trucks, then Tanana Chiefs, Doyon, FNA, and AFN Anchorage. Whats the use to be married if my wife have to work I guess I'm a phoney that why I'm single I guess.

The reason I'm writing a long letter is I like your paper now. I see you have a lot of paper, and more news in your last paper. Keep adding more, also more cents, or daily.

Well Howard, looks like I am

going to have a 'Blue Christmas' again. I don't enjoy much of anything any more. Get a few Christmas cards from my friends, kind of cheer me up, then I hang them up by my bed. Well, best regards to all your staff.

Fred Stickman Sr.

Holy Cross, Alaska
December 14, 1973

Tundra Times
Fairbanks, Alaska

Dear Mr. Rock:

The students here have been reading with interest the exchange between Huntington and the Allakaket students. As a teacher I couldn't help but feel a pang of jealousy when I saw the students got their trip to Fairbanks. The jealousy was not directed at the children for the trip - but the fact that they got involved when we have been trying so hard to also become culturally involved and are having no luck.

Two years ago some SOS administrators visited Holy Cross and promised the village money for a crafts program (skin sewing, beading). The program was instituted and ran for the rest of the school year. The following year the school asked for re-funding of that program plus an additional program of leather, bone and antler working for boys. The village was given the run-around by SOS for several months (lack of money) before funds were finally reluctantly forthcoming.

The program costs very little compared to some of the really expensive programs going on around the state. It costs about \$800 a year to pay a small salary to teachers and the initial cost of supplies. The program becomes self-sustaining as goods are sold to buy new skins. This year the school board at Holy Cross wanted to add basketry to the curriculum.

This summer the hassle started again. SOS has no money for this program. We tried Doyon, No money. We tried U of A. No money for children - they'll only fund adult programs. We are not eligible for the language program under SOS nor are we a title school. So we keep plugging away trying to stay involved.

On the other hand, perhaps we should just be proud we have an almost sustaining program and are doing it ourselves. It means that the people who give their time and beautiful crafts to the kids do so completely on their own. But this isn't quite fair because their time is valuable and they, like everyone else, have to buy oil and groceries.

Sincerely,
s/ Regina Browne
Holy Cross 99602