

An Eskimo story: Piqualaq and the singing Polar Bear

By GRACE SLWOOKO

Once upon a time, there was a little boy who like to play with his toy kayak, at the water puddle, his name was Piqualaq. While he was playing one time, he heard some one singing a song, and it was repeating his name and his toy kayak. Then he jumped up to see who was singing, he looked here and he looked there and everywhere. He looked and looked but couldn't

find anyone. So he started playing again. The singing started playing again, "Kin-a qayaghwa-ghli Piquala-a-q qayaghwa-ghli, a-a-Piqualaq ya-a Piqualaq, Piqualaq."

The boy stopped his play and started looking for it again, but couldn't find anyone around. He ran here and there, but nothing was seen. But everytime he started playing, the singing would start. So he just left his

kayak and ran into the house crying. His grandmother asked, "What happened, Did you fell down?"

"NO," he answered while crying.

"What then, did you get hurt?" she asked more anxiously.

"NO," he answered.

"What made you cry then?" she asked.

"Someone is singing, repeating my name everytime I started playing with my kayak in the water puddle," the boy told his grandmother. When I look for it, it can't be found.

"Next time you go, take this comb along," the grandmother thoughtfully have him take her little ivory comb along. It was a

comblike ivory fork for grass. (the grass was combed with those little combs to make a wiping towel or a wash rag, those days. When grass is combed and worked together in hand, it makes nice wash rag. So it was this comb the grandmother gave to Piqualaq.) "When you hear the singing, throw this to your back over your head, while closing your eyes a minute and spit," she instructed him. (Closing the eyes while spit out with mouth was for some supernatural powers in those days out here on St. Lawrence Is. and Siberia before we know the powers the other nations showed us. In many stories this is done in time of extreme calamities or need.)

So, the boy got out to play again. While he was playing, the singing came on as before. And the boy throw his fork over his head as he close his eyes and spit, as instructed by his grandmother. He was startled by the sound of cry he heard behind the sand bank of the lake. What was that? Quickly he ran to see what it was. And he found out what it was. It was a polar bear, with a comb struck right over his eye, dead, behind the sand hill.

The boy ran in and told his grandmother. They just went out and butchered a huge animal, which have enough meat to supply them for a year and have a thick and heavy fur for a mat.

Rural interests...

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methods and that giving people a modern house does not solve problems of how to maintain and operate it with no cash income. Selling the houses only complicates the problem because purchase money has to come from other agencies anyway.

The bulk of urban and Fairbanks-area interests was presented by the Fairbanks Industrial Development Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce, the Town and Village Association, and the North Star Borough.

FIDCO emphasized its efforts to diversify the city's economy base to avoid the boom-bust cycle of the past based on a single-source economy. Petro-chemical, hydro-electric, and agricultural development are its greatest interests but a current concern is support for the opening of the pipeline haul road as the key to northern development.

Wally Baer represented the Chamber of Commerce and detailed Fairbanks' unprecedented two years of growth. He is convinced that with oil developments barely tapped and the local capital of the Native corporations, Alaska and particularly Fairbanks, has a permanent economic base for the first time in history.

Fairbanks' biggest problem now is that it does not control the timing of resource development and that its major detractors are Fairbanks people themselves.

When asked if he could say anything about the future quality of life for people as opposed to growth statistics, Baer replied, "we have been carried away with what we can do for people." With only 70,000 Alaskan taxpayers services are "limited by the number of people who can pay the bills."

Jerry Smetzer of the Town and Village Association said his organization tries to tie rural to urban concerns such as transportation, petroleum development, and community assistance programs. Funded primarily by the North Star Borough TVA has been qualifying for higher funding levels from the Economic Development Administration as well.

North Star Borough Administrator, Ron Garzini reported on a three-year flood control and recreational sites plan stating that unification of programs is the borough's major goal and that its assessed value is now stands at \$1 billion 63 million.

Nenana is engrossed in developing agriculture and has set up what Jack Coghill calls a "solid plan" from which to

move. The city is creating a Department of Agriculture and predicts major farm development by 1978. One development corporation will lease all the land from the federal, state and private sectors for a covenant of eventually selling it back to the farmers.



JACK COGHILL

A cooperative pool of equipment and an agreement that the farmers will pay for what they want without being taxed by the city are a few of the initial concepts which Coghill calls unique. He is optimistic and feels that one great potential of the plan is that there is no "human interference" because farming is new and land ownership problems are fresh.

Charles Forck, a homesteader involved in the Delta Area Planning study begun in 1974, countered Coghill's optimism by saying he is "skeptical and impatient." He sees a real conflict in the final phase of the Delta program when implementation is supposed to occur and the question of how land will go into private ownership must be resolved.

The planning process has been slow because development is going on at the same time and potential agricultural land is being sold for homesteads. He called for less speculation and more orderly development with less misuse of agricultural land. Blaming also the D-2 issue and a lack of commitment by the state administration to agricultural development, Forck said there will be no agriculture without land and "right now, no land is available. The job is not getting done."

Farmer Lee Fett of Delta Junction has organized the Alaska Farmers' Cooperative which is concentrating on marketing as the key to survival for Alaska's farmers. He reports 41 paid members who have formed committees to look into such things as the bison-beef cross, grain drying and storage, and utilization of waste heat from nearby pipeline pump stations.

He sees support coming from

the federal government for the first time and although wanting to utilize the talents at the University, his philosophy is "let's stop experimenting, let's start producing." Farmland Industries of Houston, Texas is looking over Delta Junction for a joint venture agreement to produce fertilizer and manufacture commodities within the state which Fett says may be the "shot in the arm" that is needed.

Planning efforts in Copper River, Wrangell Mountain and Upper Yukon areas were presented by Alan Epps of the Cooperative Extension Service and Bob Janes of the U. S. Forest Service.

Development is in the early stages with public input now being sought. The Forest Service says new national attention is being given to the potential of a forest products industry in the region. As to the conflict between prime forest land and prime farming land it was stated that the real conflict occurs when land is not used for anything.

BLM's case for opening of the pipelining haul road to public transportation was presented by Carl Jeglum. He explained the inventory program of the pipeline corridor that is now taking place, although much of BLM's planning for the road got stopped by preservationists who felt that by planning for its potential use, BLM was insuring the opening of the road to the public. Jeglum reminded the group that if the road is not open, the state is required to pay BLM back for the gravel it provided, a sum of \$2,800,000, and that the decision finally is entirely up to the governor.

The Council will meet again in Kotzebue in mid-October with possible topics being rural electrification NANA's reindeer industry, and regional governmental studies reports. New officers and directors were elected with Ted Freeman of the Soil Conservation Service taking over as chairperson for the coming year.

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Outgoing chairperson, Waring commented on the tone of the meeting at its end and admitted that the group is too diverse to exert any real clout or act as a lobbying force. Divisive issues have to be avoided.

The Alaska Rural Development Council is primarily a forum for improving communications between agencies, coordinating assistance to various programs and increasing awareness of rural resources and potentials.

From its beginnings as a group made up mostly of governmental agencies advising rural areas, Waring feels the Council is now involved in a mutual process and that the rural areas are telling the Council as much or more than it is telling them. "There is mutual education going on with more substance and potency at the bush level. With more bush management of resources, we are now dealing with peers."

He also admits that the term "development" cannot be defined by the group and that various contingents hold different philosophies. But Waring does feel that any "genuine" rural development taking place today is happening with the Native corporations as opposed to the unreal "sponsored" rural development of Alaska's past.

Young campaigns in rural areas

By BETSY BRENNEMAN
Staff Writer

Having just visited 22 Alaskan cities and villages in two weeks, Alaska's incumbent Congressman, Republican Don Young, rolled into the Tundra Times offices late last Friday looking crisp and tan in a seer-sucker summer suit but yawning with fatigue. Young, at age 43, is campaigning against a field of five Democrats, Norman A. Bailey, Allen D. Blume, Eben Hobson, Kevin "Pat" Parnell, and Donald R. "Don" Wright, in his 16th election since turning 30.

Most of his time this trip has been spent in the rural areas "listening to people and shaking hands" while Congress is on a three-week recess. He fished in Unalakleet and took third place in the wheelbarrow race at Napakiak's bicentennial celebration. People have been friendly and he says he's loved every minute of it. "My heart and soul are in the bush. It restores a great deal of faith in humanity when you get close to the earth." But there are serious

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