

A dead university—

Alaska Methodist U

FAIRBANKS—Alaska Methodist University "is dead as a private university but nobody seems to know it," Brian J. Brundin, president of the University of Alaska's Board of Regents, said.

Current efforts in Juneau to keep AMU going "are absolutely wrong," he declared. "They are aimed not at saving private higher education but creating another public university. We don't need two public universities in Anchorage competing with each other."

Brundin was commenting on an AMU proposal, endorsed recently by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, that the private institution provide educational services under contract with the state.

Such an agreement, said Brundin, would result in "100% state funding of what has been in the past private education." For the past two years, he said, AMU "has existed almost entirely on state funding." It now

Governor's desk

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inventory of lands and adopting to changing times, technology or circumstances. . . rather than lands cast into a rigid system ordered by Congress;

11. checks and balances provided which assure neither national nor state interest could run roughshod over the other . . . rather than remaining at the whim of the moods of Congress to make future modifications as required.

However, our work on the D-2 issue is nothing but a thin whistle in a thick wind unless these concepts are supported by Alaskans and by Congress.

The informed Alaskan public has shown a positive interest in our initial proposal. For example, response on almost 1,200 questionnaires shows that well over half favor a permanent Alaska Land Commission; favor giving that commission authority over certain classes of federal and state lands; favor a cooperative management system, and favor advisory boards. In the 30 public meetings held, these concepts also received much support.

Alaska's congressional delegation has not as yet unified behind any D-2 proposal. Congressman Young's bill contains several concepts similar to mine, and I believe our ideas can be melded. Senator Gravel has testified in favor of a powerful land commission. Senator Stevens has shown concern that Congress not make hasty D-2 decisions. This concern is reflected in our proposal to allow an Alaskan commission to make careful land decisions when further resource information becomes available. Discussions held with congressional committee staff people and Sen. Henry Jackson have made me optimistic that Congress will welcome and give careful considerations to our proposal. Congress, too, feels the pressure of time coupled with the absurdity of making hasty, permanent land decisions over such vast acreage with so many congressmen having so little specific knowledge.

In the coming months, we will mold our initial proposals to reflect the excellent suggestions you, the Alaskan public, have made. The issue must have a package most Alaskans can support, or we'll be handed something most Alaskans will find far worse by contrast.

is operating on a greater percentage of state funds than the University of Alaska which relies on the state treasury for only about half of its operating funds, he added.

AMU no longer has the amount of private support needed to insure its operation "and if you fund it with 100% state dollars you dry up whatever private support still remains," Brundin said.

The freedom of choice for students, as between private and public education, is not maintained by converting a private institution to a public one, and, said Brundin, doing so may be unconstitutional.

"Our constitution provides that public funds may not be used for the direct support of any private educational institution," he said. "Public funding must be a public purpose."

Brundin said he planned to fly to Juneau and urge Governor Hammond to exercise the state's option, purchased from AMU last year, to acquire its facilities.

For a decade AMU "rendered a very important service as a private institution," he said. "It gave freedom of choice and it provided funds primarily from the Methodist Church that otherwise would not have been available to educate Alaskans. But that support is now gone."

The institution could continue to support higher education in Alaska, perhaps operating as an educational foundation, Brundin suggested. It might offer scholarships, finance the visits of eminent scholars, and encourage the arts, he said.

Accidents

Snow machine fatalities and accidents are rapidly increasing in Alaska, according to Department of Public Safety Commissioner Richard Burton.

"Snow machine fatalities to date this year are 250% higher than the total snow machine deaths in 1975 and 75% higher than the total snow machine deaths in 1974," the commissioner said. "In January and February of 1975 there were nine reported snow machine accidents. For that same period this year there were 13 reported snow machine accidents—a 44% increase."

Commissioner Burton said that the most common ages of those dying in snow machine accidents in Alaska since 1972 were between 21 and 30. Fifty percent of those snow machine deaths occurred in Alaska's southern and interior regions.

There are several major reasons for snow machine deaths in Alaska, according to Commissioner Burton. The top cause of snow machine deaths has been exposure due to an inoperative machine.

"Snow machiners, especially in Alaska, should always carry extra cold weather gear, clothing and food in case of emergencies, the commissioner said.

"Snow machines can suddenly become a lethal weapon if the operator fails to be on a constant look out for approaching hazards," the commissioner commented.

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Demmert to be director of IEP

William G. Demmert will be director of Indian Education Programs for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson announced recently.

Demmert, who is part Tlingit and part Oglala Sioux, is well-known in the Indian community as a top administrator of Indian education programs in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. He is the first deputy commissioner of Indian Education in the United States Office of Education (USOE), a position created in 1972 by the Indian Education Act (P.L. 92-318).

Demmert will assume this new position in the immediate future. In addition, during a transition period until the middle of June, he will complete

Most valuable ice in Alaska at nenana

The most valuable piece of ice in Alaska is 54 inches thick. That's the latest word from Nenana, the ice capital of the world.

First measurement of the Tanana River ice at the Nenana Ice Classic tripod indicates the thickest ice in history. The 54 inches is nearly a foot more than the normal 42 inches for this time of the year.

"A lack of snow cover and an extreme drop in temperatures earlier than usual is attributed to the heavy river ice layer," said Carol Phillips, manager of the classic.

"Temperatures zoomed to 50 and 60 below in early December—a month in advance of the normal extreme," said Mrs. Phillips. She said the snow cover at Nenana is only a few inches as compared to several feet in previous seasons.

What does all that mean in Alaska's favorite guessing game of predicting the ice break-up? Well, as usual it is anyone's guess.

For one thing the ice being thicker makes it stronger which could lead to a late break-up. Right at this time there is not much snow to melt and sweep the ice out either. That too could mean a late break-up.

There is still time, however, for a snow blanket to fall and protect the ice before the usual April 20 to May 20 break-up time.

The Nenana Ice Classic tripod is embedded in the ice about 30 feet from the riverbank. That is the site at which officials measure the famous ice.

Guessing the month, day, hour and minute of the break-up is a favorite Alaska springtime sport. Tickets on the classic are sold until midnight, April 5.

After that it's up to the river.

Roxy Brooks . . .

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4. Donna Gentry, Willow, Alaska—124:04
5. Blanch Brunk, Fairbanks—125:44
6. Linda Leonard, Fairbanks—128:12
7. Bea Posten, Sinona Creek, Alaska—137:70

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some tasks already undertaken at USOE.

"We are delighted to get Bill for this critical job in the bureau," Commissioner Thompson said. "The Indian community is moving into a new era of progress and achievement in which improved education programs are essential for success. We expect Bill to provide the leadership that is needed."

Demmert, 42, received his doctorate in education administration at Harvard in a special program for American

Indians co-funded by the BIA and USOE. While completing his studies at Harvard, Demmert worked as director of the Indian program at the school and served as a consultant to the U.S. Senate Education Subcommittee.

A native of Klawock, Alaska, Demmert earned his M.W. at the University of Alaska and the B.A. at Seattle Pacific College.

For 10 years, from 1960 to 1970, Demmert worked as a teacher, coach and school administrator in Washington and Alaska.

Teacher training . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

director of the cross-cultural program, explains the relocation of professors to the field provides close daily contact with the students and the environment. By being on the scene and in the rural schools, they are able to adapt their courses and teaching to the unique needs of bush education.

Although the curriculum differs from its on campus cousin, Dr. Charles Ray, dean of the UA Fairbanks School of Education, explains that the student will be certified to teach anywhere from Anchorage to Albany, N.Y. Ray added that the content is approximately equivalent but the methods differ.

Barnhardt said, "A lot of people ask how a student can spend four years in the village and have a college education. While he doesn't dispute the value of an informal interchange between students on campus, students on campus, Barnhardt points out it can be argued the campus-trained students have a field of deficiency."

Before the Native Claims Act and the formation of the Native corporations, Barnhardt

explains there weren't many local job options for Native graduates. With the new locally controlled school districts, it is expected there will be an even greater demand for professional Native educators.

Ray sees some danger in the reorganizational process. There could be "such a reaction against the estrangement of children from their parents" that rural schools could go too far the other way.

Including the graduate students, there will be 100 cross-cultural students taking UA Fairbanks courses this fall in some of the most remote corners of Alaska. It promises to be a historic fall with more Native teachers than ever and with village residents taking control for the first time.

The UA educators think the rural-trained teachers can make a significant contribution with their background in the traditional values of education as well as the values of the community. As the villages and schools in rural Alaska become more compatible, Barnhardt said, "People will be needed who know both sides of the road."

Dogs tell story . . .

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and rested then started for Swentna, Rainy Pass, Rohn River, Farewell, Salmon River, McGrath and Ophir. We were beginning to feel tired and our feet hurt even more, but the view was terrific around us.

The really bad part was that snowmobiles ran on our trail, and the weather was too warm and the trail was slowly melting away. We ran past Bear Creek, Poorman and finally rested at Ruby, because after Ruby we could cross the Yukon River.

We rested for 24 hours while Emmon repaired his sled. We feasted and decided among ourselves how we would win the race. You see at the beginning of the race, all of the dogs drew straws to decide who would pull his musher

into Nome.

We went to Galena, Nulato, Kaltag and Unalakleet . . . We had lots of fun. We ran to Shaktoolik and when we got there, we got serious and raced to Koyuk, Elim, Golovin, White Mountain and Solomon.

That was nothing. You should have been with us when we ran into Nome. It was neat. All the people shouted and screamed, flashbulbs were popping all over and we couldn't see.

People wanted to touch us and get our autographs. Actually, we got kind of embarrassed when Nugget was sent back to Anchorage, and Hairy stepped on Iditarod's tail. We were all filled with pride and we were very happy for the "Great Emmon Pete."



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