

MATANUSKA VALLEY

61 30 N. Lat.

149 15 W. Long.

PIONEER

By
"MATANUSKA MAID"
Products

Vol. I

Palmer, Alaska - January 23, 1936

No. 23

GOOD FIGHT PROMISED IN OUR BEAUTY QUEEN CONTEST

The election of a Miss Palmer to represent our community at the Fairbanks Ice Carnival has gotten off to a good start and the votes are piling up rapidly at the various business establishments where tickets are procurable.

We have delayed getting the paper out until we could get further rulings on mooted questions. Because Anchorage listed widows among the nominees there were those here who refused to interpret the word 'single' as it appeared in our contest instructions from Fairbanks to exclude previously married women.

The wire in answer to our inquiry has just arrived and states that widows and married women are ineligible.

The list of nominees in the order in which their names were submitted follows.

The Misses Virginia Berg, Vivian Stoddard, Fay Stoddard, Bernadine Reitan, Doris June Hermon, Betty Hermon, Janet Borges, Lorinda Ward, Helen Barry, Inabell Irwin, Margaret Snodgrass, Marcellene Venne, Kathleen Cornelius, Beatrice McNally, Lorraine McKechnie, Peggy Johnson.

Hold her! A mistake! Alice Smith should appear between Marcellene Venne and Kathleen Cornelius. There, that's easier than writing the whole stencil over again.

Let's all get behind this contest. Let's show Fairbanks that Palmer is an up and coming community.

On Sunday at noon, by order of the Chamber of Commerce Beauty Contest Committee, the nominations will be closed and the five highest contestants will compete for final honors, it being decided that by that time the race would be boiled down to that number. All votes cast up to that time will apply, but from then on only the five named will be eligible. This, the committee feels is the fairest manner of handling the contest.

Final votes will be counted at the big dance scheduled for Saturday, February 8. Don't forget, it is to be Palmer's biggest night, with an excursion from Anchorage and the well-known Serenaders will be along to furnish the music.

Be there, and enjoy the new community hall dance floor.

R. F. D. ROUTES A POSSIBILITY

At a recent council meeting Mr. M. D. Snodgrass made a motion that residents of the valley get out a petition for two Rural Free Delivery for the district and at the meeting held Jan. 21, Mr. C. C. Erix and Don L. Irwin, who had been appointed a committee on the proposal, submitted the petition together with the proposed routes.

All colonists and old settlers are urged to sign these petitions which can be found at the Post Office, the Trading Post, and at the office of the PIONEER.

Phil O'Neill is in receipt of telegraphic word that his brother Harry was burned to death and his wife and child injured in a fire at Juneau this morning.

His fortune seems to be dogging the footsteps of the O'Neills. It was only about a month ago that another brother, Ed, was frozen to death at Valdez. Three weeks ago Phil entered the hospital here suffering from intestinal flu and was sick enough to lose about 20 pounds in ten days.

The sympathy of the entire community is extended to Phil and Mrs. O'Neill in this present bereavement.

Wind that came in gusts estimated as reaching a speed of seventy miles an hour caused damage that will delay progress on the new Knappa River bridge a week or ten days.

The wind, with nothing to get its teeth into except skeleton frames and cribbing, toppled the big donkey rig over onto the bar and swung the unfinished span four feet out of line, pulling anchor bolts loose from the pier. Work had been suspended and no one was hurt.

A new and distinct whistle signal will soon be announcing fires, so if you should hear what sounds like a gigantic automobile horn just at quitting time some noon soon don't be alarmed. It will be a test.

Two large Foamite rigs on wheels have just arrived and are now ready for use, parked at present at the garage.

THE MATANUSKA VALLEY PIONEER

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From a colonist we learn that Paul Jahr (who recently 'pulled the pin' and has gone scurrying back to his former home in Saint Louis Co., Minnesota) made a canvass of the colony in an attempt to get a number of families to return in one group, his argument being: "If a bunch of us go back together it will be easier to get reinstated on the relief rolls."

The fear that there might be some difficulty in obtaining county aid was no doubt engendered by the October wire from Col. Westbrook to Col. Hunt, which we published, and which read:

"Any additional colonists desiring return should understand that under the rules of WPA they are not eligible for employment under Works program and that Federal relief their status will be discontinued in November."

The interesting part of this whole thing is not that Jahr feels it will be necessary to justify his return in order to bring pressure on county and state agencies, but that he INTENDS GOING BACK ON RELIEF.

We have no idea just what kind of treatment Saint Louis County relief clients get, but it must be pretty good if one will 'throw over his shoulder' the chance he has had here and return to it. It must be much better than that experienced by other colonists here. One woman, with tears in her eyes, said not long ago: "Are we ever glad for the chance to work for what we are getting. Why, this is the first winter our kids have gone to school with warm enough clothing, and come home to enough good food to eat."

Personally, we feel that little harm has been done through Jahr's attempt to influence others.

Those who refuse to do their own thinking; who will let the disgruntled suggestions of another decide such important issues as the matter of sticking or quitting, can be of little good to the community.

Neither of these elements is desirable. The first is troublesome, the other too weak to make much of a go of it up here.

Do your own thinking. Oftentimes your future happiness depends upon whether you do or not.

DATE STILL UNCERTAIN FOR
PRESIDENT'S BIRTHDAY BALL

Palmer, like every other city throughout Alaska and the States, is to aid in that most worthy charity, the support of President Roosevelt's hobby, the proper treatment and care of those stricken with infantile paralysis.

Proceeds from our dance here will go in to swell the fund collected by dances all over the country on the President's birthday.

Due to the fact that there is a possibility of there being a delay in laying the floor in the new Community Hall it is not certain that the President's Ball can be held on the scheduled date, January 30.

However, Mr. Leo Jacobs, ARRC architect, has promised to let the committee chairman know on Monday next definitely whether the floor will be ready or not.

If the floor is to be down in time announcement will be made by telephone to the various camps, by posted notices, by Station KFQD and the committee composed of colonists and members of the Palmer Democratic Club will begin to function.

If, on the other hand, Mr. Jacobs says definitely that the floor will not be ready another date will be set and details given in the next issue of the PIONEER.

Howard Lyng
General Chairman

FOREIGN MONEY HEADS NORTH

That the eyes of the world are turning to the northland is becoming an increasingly apparent fact.

Tonight's radio brings us the news that African Gold Fields, Inc. one of the world's largest mining concerns dealing in frontier holdings, is invading the Carmack area in the Dawson country.

The report states that the company has fifty miles of placer creek gravels under option. Even to prospect such a quantity of ground means the spending of large amounts of money. If dredging operations are undertaken it will mean the spending of much more.

From all indications the entire northland is attracting outside capital in such quantities that it will be nothing short of a miracle if Alaska doesn't step over the threshold into a decade of greater prosperity than she has ever known.

Money will open Alaska as frost opens a chestnut burr, and the golden kernel of her mining resources are sufficient to cure a number of the ills from which Uncle Sam is now suffering. Alaska hasn't been prospected. Not even scratched.

COLONY ORCHESTRA ASSURED FACT

At last we are to have an orchestra of our own. With four pieces to start with and plenty of talent to draw from Palmer can look forward to a real organization of music makers that will be available for all functions.

At present the orchestra is made up of Hank Laako on the piano accordion; John Hermon, guitar; Bob Higgenbotham, traps; and Father Sulzman, saxophone. Frank Ring is to be incidental soloist. Other colonists will no doubt from time to time also add their talents to this group which is already practicing each night at the Community Hall.

SUGGEST A NAME - WIN THE PRIZE

Now we have to get a good name for our musical organization and it is up to the colony group to supply it. Get the old thinker going.

Elsewhere in this issue is a coupon to be filled in with the name you think best. Put your own name and Tract number in the spaces allotted and mail or hand it in to the PIONEER office.

The contest is open until noon of March 1st, only colonists are eligible to compete, and the prize for the best name, awarded by the committee of judges: Don L. Irwin, Rev. Father Sulzman and Jack Allman, will be free yearly ticket to all dances where this orchestra plays. Ticket will include man and wife.

Get busy! Think up a snappy name and win a worthwhile prize. Remember, we're going to have lots of dances once the Community Hall is finished.

NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE!

There will be a Settler-Colonist meeting for those residing in District #1 at the Ray Wilkes home (Tract 12) in the afternoon of Sunday, February 2nd for the purpose of discussing matters relative to the Council Meeting to be held February 4th.

Ray Wilkes

Don't forget the Legion meeting at Reverend Bingle's home next Tuesday. The women will be there with coats and after business is over there will be a feed and social get-together.

I submit as a name for our new orchestra: *

NAME..... *

Submitted by..... *

Tract..... *

A WORD IN TIME SAVES NINE PIECES OF CLOTHING FROM YOUR LINE

These are Victor Johnson's words, and they are well taken in view of what has happened out at Tract #97 recently. Here's Vic's letter.

"Last Thursday night we looked out of the window and saw a fellow taking down the clothing from the line, not stopping to take a piece at a time, but grabbing off line and all, intending to make a complete haul.

I raised the window and he took off through the woods in haste.

Previous to this we had six garments taken from the line and this was the second offense.

I respect the fine Alaskan Open Door Tradition, but am convinced there is one sneaky thief in the valley and am waiting for him to return."

Victor Johnson.

Nervy cuss to invade the Tract where 6 school teachers live, making just that many more chances of being detected. Kinda foolish, too. Might not have been anything 'cept school ma'am's unmentionable on the line.

Seriously, though, sneak thievery is one thing we don't want her in the valley. Alaska has been comparatively free from this type and let everyone do his utmost to catch or identify any culprit attempting to steal, no matter how minor the theft.

Lineman Farrin has brought in the telephone call list from the booth at the road junction just north of the Butte Section. It has been punctured with six .22 rifle balls. The 'phone line had been shot out on both sides of the booth within a mile either way. Footprints in the snow showed that two men had participated in this piece of vandalism.

It doesn't seem possible that anyone could be so thoughtless as to deliberately destroy such important communication as the Butte line, but someone certainly did.

It would take a visitation of just providence to properly punish such a person. He should suffer a most painful accident, and have to bear that pain for hours upon end...all because it would be impossible to reach the doctor because of the wilfully destroyed line.

Sourdough Sam says some folks have no more right to own a gun than a baby to own a razor.

In a recent mail we received a copy of "Nuggets of the Northland" from our old friend Clarence L. Andrews. It is a mighty fine little anthology of northland verse and we like especially the sub-head which reads: "Eaned from the Gravels of the Past."

With Clarence Andrews the gravels of the past are rich in memories and knowledge of out-of-the-way places in our great northern territory. Mr. Andrews was perhaps the first archeologist to realize what a fertile field Alaska offers in the study of past civilizations. He owns a mighty fine collection of early utensils, both hunting and household, and, with the possible exception of James Wickersham, is Alaska's most enthusiastic bibliophile.

In "Nuggets of Northland" is a short verse by Andrews' old friend Captain Whitlam. Many of the colony group will remember the genial skipper of the 'North Star,' and will enjoy these few lines so typical of his humorous philosophy of life.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

In Northern Zone the raging bear,
Protects himself with fat and hair,
When snow is deep and ice is stark,
And half the year is cold and dark,
He still survives a time like that,
By growing fur, by growing fat.

In polar regions waste and wan,
Man is ever crowding on,
A puny, feeble, little lubber,
He has no fat, he has no blubber.
The scornful bear sat down at ease,
To see the stranger starve and freeze,
But lo! the stranger snook the bear,
He ate its fat and wore its hair.

These deeds, Oh Man, which thou
committest,
Proclaims survival of the fittest.

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E. N. KLING MANAGER

Charley Ruddell dropped in to tell us that he was sick and tired of being asked about returning to the States. Seems there has been some talk that he was about to 'pull the pin' and he is burned up about it.

"When I get ready to leave I'll come out and say so," says Charley.

FOR SALE: A 32:20 Police Positive Special Colt revolver with 6 inch barrel, walnut grip and 80 shells. Just as good as new. \$20.00. See it at the PIONEER office.

When ordering anything from the States, don't forget to include shipping directions. John Kirsch ordered some washing machine parts worth \$1.50 and weighing 2 pounds. They came freight with \$3.57 charges. By mail it would have been 24¢. Remember: up to 12 pounds it is cheaper by post; from there to forty, by express; and above that send by freight.

THE BIG DANCE - Sat. Feb. 8th.

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carries the only complete line of drugs and drug sundries in Palmer.

...our new shipment of 1936 Kodaks and all the accessories will soon be in. Ask us for details and prices. If you're troubled with poor pictures, bring in your camera and let us offer suggestions.....

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