

B-4 Tuesday, January 13, 1998

## Anchorage Daily News

### Cheers & jeers



**SMOKE-FREE:** A cheer to local merchants who refuse to sell cigarettes and other tobacco products to underage customers. The teenagers who write for the Daily News' Perfect World section tried to purchase cigarettes at seven different stores and struck out at all seven. If every retailer were so responsible, there'd be far fewer adult tobacco addicts trying to quit smoking.

Both youthful smokers and store owners are under increased scrutiny from state and municipal enforcers. In June, seven Anchorage businesses were cited for selling cigarettes to minors. State Attorney General Bruce Botelho promised that the sting operation was part of a larger effort to slow teenagers' use of tobacco and that the state would continue to push for police checks of businesses that sell cigarettes illegally. It looks as if increased enforcement efforts are working.

As Anchorage Police Officer Mike Livingston said, "... I feel, and the general feeling is now, that if we can keep kids from getting addicted to cigarettes, we can keep them from getting addicted to other drugs. Smoking should not be part of the educational process."

### Legislature lacks key parts

As the Alaska state Legislature assembles for the 1998 session down in "can't get there from here" Juneau, isn't it comforting to contemplate that the important business of our state is in the hands of such astute thinkers and statespersons who:

- Year after year, "fiddle while Rome burns" on the subsistence hunting and fishing issue until, by default, the feds take it over.

- Waste supposedly precious taxpayers' money on futile legal battles with the federal government.

- Supervise the steady deterioration of Alaska's education system from the Bush to Anchorage and from kindergarten through the University of Alaska.

- Can't devise any plan of any sort, short or long range, for any element of the Alaska Permanent Fund.

- Are so centered on partisan bickering and special interest politics that the essential business of the people, in general, goes begging.

We can see it already as the "lawmakers" posture and gear up to squabble over such monumental issues as excluding "good cigars and pipe tobacco" from the new tax enacted last year. Should happen, says House Speaker Gail Phillips, R-Homer. "It's a no brainer."

No brainer, indeed.....!

— Leroy Jeffery  
Anchorage

TO: K. Chaikin via overnight.

FR: TS

Is AK giving you this info?

TS: NO! Further, I can't "find" anyone in AK who will answer my letters of inquiry. Can "you" ask the AG or provide me with AG's address and I'll write to him?

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Thanks.

KC