

A pretty bumpy ride

Editorial Comment

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Looking back through the news of the year, it was a pretty bumpy ride, but that's the way it goes when you're breaking trail.

There is so much going on here, that's never been done before, and we should take some real pride in what's being accomplished here.

I spend a lot of time filling this space with what's wrong with our corner of the world and maybe not enough congratulating the ones who have made positive changes here.

The town's mayor, Peter Clarkson ran unopposed in last October's election and it's not a wonder. This guy works so much, I wonder sometimes if he has a clone.

While the job is only paid for half a position, he does the work of three.

Peter is everywhere, all the time. I run into him at all the places he should be, like council and at the usual ribbon cuttings, but he's also selling tickets, working on the greenhouse or showing tourists around town.

Nellie Cournoyea is another who works tirelessly for her people and for the entire Delta.

Nellie was instrumental in getting this giant pipeline deal moving and it can't be easy to wake a giant who's been asleep for 25 years.

Nellie worked hard and long days on that deal and many others and she's still at it. When you dial the IRC after hours, it's always Nellie answering the phone.

When a feast is being held, organizers call on Nellie for a couple of char or some muktuk. When she travels out, she returns laden with fabric, beads and notions that can't be bought here.

The pipeline is a huge deal and sewing notions maybe not so huge, but knowing that she gives her time and energy to make someone happy makes them all seem equal.

Fred Carmichael is another omnipresent force here in the Delta.

Another who is there for all the stately functions that go with the job, I've also seen Fred behind the scenes, sharing his time to celebrate a birthday or visit with an elder. Taking over from Nellie on the pipeline has been a courageous gesture on Fred's part and he was thrown a curve ball on his first pitch from federal Natural Resources Minister Herb Dhaliwal.

He's shrugged it off and soldiered on, as he has had to do with other controversies that erupted last year, but Fred's been a rock.

I know there are times when he'd much rather be on the stick of his Cessna than fighting with DIAND or calming quarrelling chiefs, but he perseveres for his people, because that's what good leaders do.

These are the traits that history writers look for in the pages of their books and all the bickering back-biters are always forgotten.

Selfless sacrifice is what good leaders are made of and we have three in this town, but we have dozens of others whom aren't recognized as leaders, but certainly do more than their part in other areas.

The precious handful of people running our sports programs and volunteer agencies are equally important and their hours are long.

I'd love to thank them all here, but I'm running out of space.

You know who they are and make sure you let them know how much their efforts are appreciated.