

Nominee's Name: Ethel Faye Stoneman

Nominee's Maiden Name: Ethel Faye Hull

Nominee's Address: Deceased

Nominee's Date of Birth: January 22, 1927

Nominee's Date of Death: September 7, 2015

During what years did nominee live in Alaska: 1959-2015

**For what achievement/contributions is the nominee best known and for which should she be recognized?**

Being an unrelenting community volunteer in North Pole and Fairbanks, Alaska;  
Being a founding member of Ice Alaska, serving as their treasurer for many years, and volunteering at the event every year since it was started until 2014;  
Being the manager of the Fort Wainwright Credit Union from 1978-1994.  
She was an early female dog racer in Fairbanks.  
Being honored with a certificate from the 28<sup>th</sup> Alaska Legislature for her outstanding community involvement in North Pole and Fairbanks.

**Describe the nominee's achievements which have had significant impact in 1) Community and/or 2) Alaska and/or 3) National:**

As a pioneering Alaskan, who arrived in North Pole in 1959, Ethel has made numerous contributions to her community and to the state, albeit on a more personal community service level rather than on a grand state-wide scale. Ethel and her husband, Glenn Stoneman, were early homesteaders in North Pole, and helped establish the sprouting community. They both worked at Trans-Alaska Telephone Company, the first telephone company in North Pole. Ethel was always community minded and early on volunteered with the Junior Dog Musher's Association and the schools when her sons were students. After retirement, Ethel's commitment to volunteerism really took off. She was a founding member of Ice Alaska and served as their treasurer and as a regular ice park volunteer for many years. Ethel also volunteered with Samaritan Counseling, Santa's Seniors, the North Star Council on Aging, the Alaska Housing PAC Board, and was active with the New Hope Methodist-Presbyterian Church in North Pole. In her later years, Ethel could regularly be found at the North Pole Senior Center helping to prepare breakfast, serving on their board, or hosting activities.

Ethel's strong commitment to these community organizations was a factor in their success. She devoted untold hours to these groups in terms of attending meetings, participating in events, fundraising, baking cookies, or recruiting and organizing other volunteers. Having social service organizations like the ones Ethel supported had a big impact on North Pole and Fairbanks by being able to help those in need. Santa's Senior Center in North Pole fills a niche by providing a place for the elderly in the spread-out community to come together for a meal, to visit, to play games. It serves as a positive

antidote against isolation, which can easily happen as one ages in a cold and dark place. An organization like Ice Alaska, which has grown to an international event, has had an impact on Fairbanks both economically and socially. It brings money to town every March and is a great family fun activity in the spring when children are eager to be outside after a long winter of being cooped up indoors.

Ethel's volunteerism impacts the community by inspiring others to follow in her footsteps. The more people volunteer and reach out in their community, the more friendly and supportive the place becomes. Both through her professional and volunteer work, Ethel had friends everywhere. Friendship and feeling connected with people is part of what a sense of community is all about.

**What label/s best summarize the nominee's accomplishments/role (political activist, educator etc.)?**

Community volunteer; gardener; hunter; fisherwoman; advocate for senior Alaskans; food bank contributor; missionary; dog musher.

**Education and Training:**

Attended college at Western State Teacher's College in Gunnison, Colorado to earn a war-time emergency teaching certification.

Took accounting courses at the University of Alaska Fairbanks

Received professional training for Credit Union management

**Professional/Work History/Community Involvement:**

Ethel began her work career as a child growing up on a sheep ranch near the small rural town of Eckert, Colorado. Growing up on a farm, there was always work to do, including milking the cows, mucking out the stables, harvesting vegetables, washing dishes, and cooking for the large family of six children. In the summer, she earned some money picking cherries and packing peaches at nearby farms. All of this instilled in her a strong work ethic and determination to work at something until it was done. At age sixteen, Ethel obtained a chauffeur's license so she could drive the local school bus. After obtaining a war-time emergency teaching certificate, Ethel taught grades 1-3 in Uncomprahgre, Colorado for two years. She then worked as a waitress. After moving to Alaska in 1959, Ethel's first job was as the office manager for Trans-Alaska Telephone Company in North Pole, where her husband, Glenn Stoneman, was their Northern District Manager. She later worked as the collection officer for MUS utility company in Fairbanks and as an accountant at a local paint company. In 1978, she became the manager and CEO for the Fort Wainwright Credit Union. She retired from the credit union in 1994. From 1972 to 1974, she and her husband operated the Scottie Creek Lodge near the Canadian border, which required Ethel to be a jack of all trades from front desk clerk to housekeeper to cook.

Ethel has a long list of volunteer service to the communities of North Pole and Fairbanks, including helping to start Samaritan Counseling, Santa's Seniors, and Ice Alaska. With her financial management background, she served as the treasurer for Ice Alaska for many years. She also was an active and enthusiastic volunteer who manned

the ticket booth every year and whose friendly and persuasive personality made her a successful recruiter of new volunteers. Due to her declining health, 2015 was the first year that Ethel was not able to volunteer full-time at Ice Alaska. Ethel also served on the North Star Council on Aging, the Alaska Housing PAC Board, and was active with the New Hope Methodist-Presbyterian Church in North Pole. In her later years, Ethel could regularly be found at the North Pole Senior Center, including as one of the Breakfast Place cooks, as treasurer on their board of directors, and as a member of their gaming committee. She was always thinking of those less fortunate, and donated her home-made jams and jellies and canned vegetables to the Senior Center, the Fairbanks Food Bank, and St. Jude's Food Pantry. She also participated in a "read to children" program at Badger Road Elementary School.

In her earlier years, Ethel and her family had a dog team and she even raced in a few local races and once in the Open North American Race. She also loved to cross-country ski and got her sons involved in both activities. In keeping with the pioneering Alaskan lifestyle and having grown up in rural Colorado, living off the land was important to the Stoneman family. Ethel joined her husband and sons in their moose, sheep, or ptarmigan hunting expeditions and their fishing trips. Ethel was an avid berry picker and gardener; she grew both vegetables and flowers at her home on Badger Slough. She was known for her homemade jams and jellies and canned vegetables, as well as her fantastic raspberry patch.

**Honors/Awards Received:**

Queen of North Pole 2011.

Volunteer of the year several times on Ft. Wainwright.

She was honored with a certificate from the 28<sup>th</sup> Alaska Legislature for her outstanding community involvement in North Pole and Fairbanks.

Office of Mayor North Star Borough Declared Ethel Stoneman Day, July 16, 2014

Road in front of the Ice Alaska Park has been named Ethel Stoneman Way.

Credit Union Service Award Certificate for Patriotic Civilian Service \* the highest civilian award given by Department of Army

**If the nominee has been a role model for other women, provide specific examples of her influence:**

Ethel's devotion to her community, willingness to volunteer and work hard, and her no-nonsense and direct style made her a role model for other women. She lived a hard life, starting with riding a horse to school starting when she was six years old, living on a sheep ranch in rural Colorado during the depression, and homesteading in North Pole Alaska when there were few others living nearby. But, she never let any of this slow her down. Ethel did not tolerate negativity She always had a cheerful smile and happy attitude. She was not one to stand by when something needed to be done or said, and could be counted on to speak her mind. Nothing was an obstacle; there was always a way to figure out how to do it. She was a hard worker who seemed to not know the words "we can't do that," and believed that you just kept focused until the task was done. Ethel's never-ending energy and care for others was inspiring. She always had a project that she was working on, whether it was doing the books for Ice Alaska, helping

run a Junior Dog Musher's race, baking cookies, or cutting out pieces of colored paper for a display. She was even cutting out name tags for North Pole library days before her death. Ethel is a role model of the joys and benefits of community volunteerism, something that seems to be less important amongst our youth and in our communities today.

**Please include citations of written sources of information about the nominee you are aware of such as reference books, periodicals, websites, etc.:**

Obituary available on-line at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/newsminer/obituary.aspx?pid=175858308>

Hospice Legacy Oral History Interview with Ethel Faye Stoneman by Karen Brewster, June and July 2015. Available at the Oral History Collection, Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Profile in the North Pole Santa's Senior Center Newsletter available on-line at: <http://www.santaseniors.com/Senior-Spotlight/Ethel-Stoneman.html>