

*Kenai Peninsula Borough  
Alaska  
Proclamation*

**Whereas:** Before Alaska became a state in 1959 the Federal Bureau of Land Management had a program for people to settle in undeveloped, wilderness areas so that land could be developed for people to live on; and

**Whereas:** There were many requirements for each homesteader to get a patent on their land of usually 160 acres, such as residing on the property for a number of years, having a habitable house, clearing the land and planting 20 acres; and

**Whereas:** This is how the Sterling area was developed, with the homesteaders subdividing their property and making the subdivisions most of you now live in; and

**Whereas:** It took a certain kind of adventurous, hardworking person and family to meet these requirements because of the hard work and very little equipment to do it with; and

**Whereas:** There were very few roads in the Sterling area (originally called Naptowne) and these homesteaders with a limited amount of equipment, worked together, helping each other, to plow trails to their property. Some of the children and adults had to walk over 2 miles from their homes every day where they went to school; and

**Whereas:** Most of these homesteaders had no electricity, natural gas, phones or running water. They would use lanterns, generators, outhouses, wood for heat and carried their water from the Naptowne spring; and

**Whereas:** These are most of the pioneers of Naptowne that are the founding fathers of what is now called "Sterling:" Even Belnap, Jack & Ruby Bradford, Charles Browning, Morse & Patty Coursen, George Diggs, Charles Doser, Vernon Enberg, Nelson & Mrs. Eshelman, Arnold & Bee Farmer, Carlos Farmer, Louis & Gladys Fields, Hank & Trudy Fiske, Eugene Girves, Steve Gorlac, Francis & Lavon Hall, John & Elsie Handley, Thomas & Ma Harrison, James Hovis, Paul Huskey, Edgar Law, John & Aletha McFarland, Vernon McGee, Ray & Gloria McNutt, Otto Mertz, Martin Mesner, Cotton & Lorraine Moore, Leon & Grace Merkes, Lou & Kathy Morgan, Ralph Morgan, Leslie & Theresa Naff, Mike & Theresa Oberts, Walt & Laura Pederson, Alex Petrovich, Gerald Protzman, Jess & Nina Robinson, Jack & Bonny Rumley, Kirk Samsel, Blaine Saunders, Tyron Saunders, Charles Stiles, John Weaver, Eugene Weaver.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Charlie Pierce, Mayor of the Kenai Peninsula Borough in honor of these founding fathers, declare May 1, of each year:

**"Sterling Homesteaders Day"**



Charlie Pierce  
Borough Mayor

