Why Did They Name It That?
by Jimmie Close

Chicken, Alaska: In the late 19th century, gold was discovered on the Forty Mile River in Alaska, just West of the Yukon border. Besides gold, there was an abundant number of ptarmigans (a type of grouse) in the area. Residents of the boom town that grew up after the gold strike wanted to name the settlement "Ptarmigan". But no one knew how to spell it, and "Chicken" was adopted as an alternative. Actually, the choice was not as strange as it may seem. The, as today, some in the area refer to the ptarmigan as the "tundra chicken".

Dutch Harbor, Alaska: I am told there is no town in Alaska named "Dutch Harbor". There is, instead, a body of water called "Dutch Harbor", where the first ship to drop anchor was Dutch. The town of Unalaska grew on the south and north shores of the harbor. When the postage service open a Unalaska branch on the north shore, it was named the "Dutch Harbor Post Office". Since then, many residents and businesses there adopted the name of "Dutch Harbor" as part of their address.