

## *The death of Roger Lang*

We are saddened that yet another Alaska Native leader has died. With the passing of Roger Lang — one of Alaska's best known, versatile and committed Native leaders — an important person is gone.

Roger was a lot of things to a lot of people, but one of his most endearing traits was his sense of humor. Being around him was downright fun. He always had a smile and a handshake for everyone. And he always left you smiling.

The Native community has sustained a loss with Roger's passing. He served the community in many ways, and he held a number of important positions.

He left a legacy through his work with the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Alaska Native Foundation, Sealaska, the State of Alaska and a host of other organizations.

Roger also was not parochial in his work within Alaska. He was concerned about all Native groups within the state. Nor did he limit himself to Alaskan issues. He worked with Canadian Natives, as well as other Native people throughout the Arctic.

Like many other Native leaders, Roger got his start with basketball. His love for this sport remained with him all his life.

The teamwork that basketball requires left its mark on this man, and it is teamwork that he always practiced.

This teamwork showed up in his important efforts on the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. He became a key figure in the passage of ANCSA and its implementation.

But Roger's desire for teamwork never made him afraid to speak out and voice his opinions. He was *never* one to remain silent if he thought he could contribute ideas or if he disagreed with someone. At the same time, he was always fair.

He was also a big supporter of this newspaper. Roger was on hand for many of the *Tundra Times* banquets, and he served as emcee for many of them — to the delight of anyone who attended.

Roger had one main goal from which he never wavered. He believed in unity within the Alaska Native community, and he truly believed that Alaska Natives should speak as much as possible with one voice.

He also believed in doing his homework. He did all of his own research and typing. Anyone who went into AFN or ANF late in the day when Roger was there would probably hear typing. He worked long and hard, and his work was always his own.

We all suffer through the death of anyone, but it is particularly sad that Roger died so young and that his last years were so painful.

We can only say that all of us are better for Roger's achievements.