

Editorial

**Happy Thanksgiving from the staff
and the Board of Directors.**

**A reminder to drive safe and
wherever you go for the holiday
season; be safe, healthy and
happy. We all have something to
be thankful for.**

The *Tyonek* decision was quickly followed by the *Venetie* decision, which has the ability to reshape Alaska as we know it.

The land and its administration, taxes and enforcement of all the rules that are empowered by the "Indian Country" status now belong to the villages. The only problem with this ruling is that it will now be quickly appealed by the state of Alaska.

The special conditions of Venetie make the case unique, mainly that the village did not sign ANCSA, but perseverance will pay off with the declaration of "Indian Country" for the rest of the villages around the state.

It is a very exciting time, but much work still needs to be done.

It will require a lot of work to get the implements of administration in place for those services that are now provided by the state. There should be negotiations with the administration for the takeover and administration of these services.

It is prudent to have a good plan to take over the services so a village would be prepared when the final decision finally gets through the system.

Another item: while these are great decisions, we cannot forget the Omnibus Bill.

This bill will address a great many subjects that will empower tribes despite the final appeals of the state in the *Venetie Ruling*.

Your voices need to be heard. The 105th Congress has a conservative majority. With the republicans maintaining the majority, their axes are ground for a large chop to the budget.

Minority programs, and consequently Alaska Native and Indian programs will get cut. It is up to all of us to protect those programs from undue attention from the axes of congress.