

# A birthing bed for ANS, other resolutions

Concern about the natural birthing process has promoted the Alaska Native Statewide Women's Organization to support a drive to get donations to buy a birthing bed for the federally funded Alaska Native Hospital.

The ANSWO at its annual meeting two weeks ago supported a resolution proposed by former maternity patient Lynn O'Connor of Anchorage who is seeking to raise \$9,000 to buy a birthing bed to be used in a birthing room at the Alaska Native Service Hospital in Anchorage.

The resolution approved by ANSWO called attention to the fact that the sitting or vertical position for birthing, which was used by women until white male doctors became involved in birthing, is more natural for women to give birth in.

The resolution states that the Public Health Service Budget is experiencing difficulties in getting money for maintaining regular programs much less buying extras.

Traditional healer Della Keats is honorary chairman for the fund-raising drive which is being conducted by O'Connor and Marilyn Pierce-Bulger, a

certified nurse midwife at ANS.

Contributions should be sent to Lynn O'Connor, 1917 Karluk, Apt. 4, Anchorage, Alaska. All contributions are tax exempt because they are being funnelled through the ANS Women's Auxiliary.

Other resolutions involving federal funding included a protest to rumored plans to eliminate federal funding for Community Health Representatives.

**\*(See Related Story)\***

Other resolutions:

- \* Requested that the Alaska Governor provide adequate funding to appoint a committee of women who are knowledgeable on a personal, day-to-day basis with domestic violence, to review all state laws that affect victims of domestic violence. That committee could include workers in domestic violence shelters and victims of such violence.

- \* Called for the immediate amendment of the Alaska Statute 12.25 to show that it protects the victims of violence.

- \* Endorsed Democratic gubernatorial candidate Bill Sheffield in his bid to become governor of the state. Sheffield appeared at a candidates' forum held for himself and Re-

publican candidate Tom Fink but Fink didn't appear, saying he had a hunting trip planned.

Sheffield told the convention delegates that he supports the current subsistence law.

- \* Endorsed the efforts of the Village Video Project on Family Violence and encouraged the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to pay for other village-oriented media projects.

- \* Decided to seek funds to develop and maintain a statewide Native Women's talent bank for hiring.

- \* Encouraged individual shareholders to develop advisory councils to institute and implement change in the regional and village corporations that would benefit all shareholders. The goal of the advisory council would be to develop mutual understanding between shareholders and their boards of directors.

- \* Resolved to become a politically active organization to encourage the accomplishment of goals of the ANSWO.

- \* Urged the University of Alaska and Alaska Pacific University to design and implement programs to allow women to receive university credit

for work experience and involvement in professional organizations.

- \* Demanded that the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Alaska Department of Education work with Native parents to plan for secondary education for Native students. ANSWO also urged that until plans for secondary education become formed that Mt. Edgecumbe Boarding School in Sitka remain open. The BIA has announced plans to close Edgecumbe at the end of this school year and said that any student there who has no high school in his or her village can go to a BIA school in the Lower 48. No other BIA alternative is proposed.

- \* Encouraged the women of all regions to work with their elders to implement the values of each Native culture so that Native people can take pride in their identity, can feel confident within themselves, can live within their cultural values and fulfill the responsibilities to their families and tribes.

- \* Recommended that rehabilitative programs be developed and implemented throughout the corrections system to provide counseling and education to men who beat their wives

and children.

- \* Invited the women of the 13th Regional Corporation to join ANSWO. The 13 Regional is made up of Alaska Natives living outside Alaska when the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was passed and who chose not to enroll in one of the 12 land-based, Alaska-located corporations.

- \* Asked the Department of Education to develop a program and seek funds for developing language and cultural heritage curriculum materials.

- \* Endorsed the establishment and identification of a research project on the effects of the passage of ANSCA on the Native cultures, languages, heritage politics and economics.

- \* Offered moral and vocal support to law enforcement, social services and programs dealing with sexual assault against children.

- \* Supported the efforts of the people of Goodnews Bay to regain control of the education of their children and future generations to come.

- \* Supported bi-lingual education as a requirement in Alaska school systems.

- \* Supported Inupiaq women of the North Slope in whaling activities.