Editorial

Schaeffer to head Alaska ICC

We offer our heartfelt congratulations to Mary Schaeffer, who recently was named coordinator of the Alaska office of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference.

Schaeffer, who is originally from Kotzebue, has had a number of statewide and regional positions in the past. She was vice president of Maniilaq for a number of years and served on the Alaska Board of Education. She also served on the Northwest Arctic Regional School Board for 11 years.

Most recently, she has served as the patient liaison for Maniilaq at the Alaska Native Medical Center. She also has raised nine children.

Schaeffer replaces Dalee Sambo, who has left the post to go back to school.

Among Schaeffer's immediate goals for her new job is fostering better communication between the ICC and the Alaska Native community. Schaeffer said she hopes to work closely with the Native regional and nonprofit corporations, as well as the Alaska Federation of Natives and other organizations.

Her first official meeting in her new job will be Nov. 14, which will be an Executive Board meeting in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Canada. Also attending from Alaska will be Edna MacLean and Charlie Johnson, both of whom are members of the board.

The ICC was started in the 1970s by Eben Hopson of Barrow, who had a dream of uniting the Native people of the circumpolar regions of the world.

ICC President Mary Simon talked about that unity when she visited Alaska in September for the Northern Regions Conference, sponsored by Gov. Steve Cowper. Simon pointed out the fact that Alaskans, Canadians and Greenlanders are now finally being joined by Native people of the Soviet Union. Two ex officio members have been named to the organization from that nation.

Simon also talked about ICC's efforts to make the world's North a "zone of peace."

We believe the ICC has done extremely well in selecting Mary Schaeffer to lead the organization's efforts in Alaska. Schaeffer has the background and experience to work toward and achieve ICC's goals in the 1990s.