

AFN Convention

Highlights

A showing of the handiwork of some 122 children and young people from the Bering Straits Region will highlight the second day of the 11th annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. to be held in Anchorage on November 10, 11 and 12 at the Anchorage Westward Hilton.

Parkas in seal and fur-trimmed cloth, ivory carvings, mukluks and baskets will be on display throughout the convention. All of these traditional Alaska Native handicrafts were made by children and young people in the Bering Straits region during this past summer as a part of an innovative program developed by the Manpower Division of AFN and carried out by residents of Savoonga, Gambell, Shishmaref,
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and Stebbins in the Bering Straits Region. Designed as a means of preserving traditional handicrafts, the program focused on the skills of the older residents of the area which were in danger of being lost as the younger generation sought ways and means of entering the rapidly spreading cash-economy in Alaska. Young persons were employed to learn traditional skills at the hands of the old "masters" in each village.

Although of fairly short duration, the project produced four matched sealskin parkas