

# Shivley has long history of service to Alaska

by **Jim Benedetto**  
Times Editor

John Shively has had a long history of service to the people of Alaska. Although his actions in the Fairbanks state office leasing affair and the much-publicized investigation that followed have been problematic for him, on balance he has been a dedicated and tireless public servant, and should be remembered for that service.

Shively first came to the State of Alaska in 1965 as a young VISTA volunteer. The VISTA program, an integral part of the federal government's '60s war on poverty, sent 25 volunteers to various villages in Alaska from Anaktuvak Pass to Point Hope.

Shively served with VISTA for three years, two in Bethel and Yakutat, and one as a VISTA supervisor. In Bethel, John concentrated his efforts on the young people there, working with the Team Club and devoting his energies to reforming kids who had had scrapes with the law.

Local governments in the bush were poor and not too well organized in the '60s, so Shively served served with the Yakutat ci-

ty government as a sort of unofficial city manager. He assisted in the procurement of needed grants and services for the city.

In 1968, Shively spent the year working on Office of Economic Opportunity programs, assisting both the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation and the Norton Sound Health Corporation in their setups. In fact, Shively wrote the grants which got those organizations off the ground.

In 1969, John became deputy director of Rural CAP, ably assisting Byron Mallott. There he helped to restructure the Community Action Program. In addition, he did loads of work assisting people in getting their Native allotments, and providing information on the Land Claims.

In 1971, Shively became the executive director of Rural CAP, where he remained until December of 1972, when he became the executive vice-president for the Alaska Federation of Natives. For the next three years, Shively worked untiringly in the implementation of the Land Claims. It was also a full time job trying to sort out the Department of the Interior's nearly non-existent land selection

regulations.

In 1974, still with AFN, John helped put together what was called the Omnibus Bill, which was the first attempt to amend the original Land Claims Settlement Act. The Bill extended the deadline of eligibility for many people, and resolved some of the tax issues connected with the Claims.

In 1975, Shively began working for the NANA Regional Corporation, lobbying for the 'D-2' package, the forerunner of ANILCA. He also continued to work on behalf of AFN issues. Shively stayed with NANA until 1983, when he joined Governor Sheffield's administration.

Some of the major accomplishments that came to mind, Shively told the *Tundra Times*, were the administration's commitment to minority/female hiring, the protection and enhancement of the Permanent Fund, the addition of some semblance of reason to the state's budget process (helped along by shrinking oil revenues, Shively adds), and his work with Senator Sackett on behalf of a yet-unrealized computer technology education program for Alaska's

public school students.

Shively's resignation statement included a personal commitment to continue to work for the people of Alaska, to make the state

an even better place to live. Despite the events of the past few months, or perhaps because of them, the smart money is betting that's exactly what he will do.



*A mountain goat south of Potter Marsh scrambles down a bluff in search of moss and lichens.*

photo by Steve Kakaruk