



Integrity, Pride in Heritage, Progress

AFN, Inc.

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Preside it — Sen. Willie Hensley
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NEWSLETTER

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Anchorage, Alaska

AFN WILL SPONSOR HEALTH SEMINAR

Problems, Successes Discussed

Tundra Times Annual Banquet in Anchorage

Plans for the annual Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. convention are progressing. One slight change has been made in the convention plans; and that is, the convention site has been moved from the Anchorage Westward Hotel to the Captain Cook Hotel.

Main speakers for the first day of the convention include: Gov. William A. Egan, Keynote address; Terry Miller, President of the Alaska State Senate, "The Legislature and Rural Programs;" Morris Thompson, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "Trust Relationship;" Byron Mallott, State Commissioner, Department of Regional and Community Affairs, "Pipeline Impact;" State Senator William L. Hensley, "Review of the Statewide Organization;" and Jay Rabinowitz, Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court, "Justice in the Bush."

The second day of the convention will cover: a general session in the morning dealing with discussions on "Manpower and Economic Development; and the afternoon

will be taken up with ceremonies on certification of the Alaska Native Enrollment and the Transfer of Funds to the Regional Corporations with the Department of the Interior officials conducting the ceremonies.

The social highlight of the convention will be the Tundra Times/AFN sponsored banquet to be held in the ballroom of the Captain Cook Hotel. The event will feature Sargent Shriver as guest speaker and the auctioning off of a painting by Howard Rock. The last day of the convention will see resolutions presented on a number of issues; mainly, health, education, and social services.

Response from the regional corporations has been very good, and it is expected that most, if not all, the regional corporations will be bringing in their respective boards for meetings to be held just prior to the convention. More information is available by contacting the AFN office or your regional corporation office.

The Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc., Health Affairs Division, announces that the Statewide Seminar on Rural Health will be Dec. 12, 13, and 14, 1973, at the Anchorage Westward Hotel. Each of the 12 regions, with the coordination of the Alaska Native Health Board, have selected five Native health leaders to be the primary participants to the seminar.

Planning for the Statewide Seminar on Rural Health has focused its efforts on comments by Native participants to an AFN-sponsored Preconference on Rural Health last April such as, "Since our last meeting, I have learned much about the health of Native Alaskans. In order to improve our health delivery systems, we must work together as one body for one nation of people. In order for us to work together efficiently, we must communicate. If the left foot doesn't know that the right foot took a step, how is he to know when to take a step also? Therefore we must keep in touch as a "Nation" to make any progress."

The seminar, a continuation of the April Preconference on Rural Health, includes issues and contents covering the State of Alaska's health obligation to rural areas, how the state establishes its health priorities, its contractual practices; Section 2(c) of the Claims Settlement Act, the inclusion of Native foods in public nutritional programs, and aboriginal medicine. The Native participants at the April Preconference stressed that a workable planning process for quality health care in Alaska's villages should start from the village to region to statewide and then to the national level.

The present planning process used by health delivery systems was severely criticized by the Natives since the planning of health priorities stem from, for example, Washington, D.C. and then filtered down to the villages: "By the time any health program reaches a village, sometimes the program is unappropriated at the village level," one Native participant complained. The April Preconference brought out the fact that millions of dollars are being spent by health resources in Alaska which affect the health of the Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts without any consultation with the Native consumers on how the funds will be spent.

The ultimate goal of the seminar is:

1. To acquaint the Native health leaders with current and on-going health resources (federal, state, military, and private sectors being major health providers); and

2. To explore health planning strategies conducive to that region in order to begin the process for the health services rendered.

Five separate workshops will be held throughout the seminar, each workshop to be headed by a moderator. The moderators

will be Clifford Black, of the Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission; Dave Hutchinson, director, Comprehensive Health Planning; George Irvin of Anchorage; John Shively of AFN, Inc.; and Sen. John Sackett of Doyon, Limited.

At the April Preconference, the Native participants stressed that statewide, regional or village planning affecting the lives of Native people should include traditional Native values, and with respect for the Native cultures. The Health Affairs staff of AFN, Inc. has carried this desire through by making arrangements to hear words of wisdom from various Native elderly people at the beginning of each day during the seminar. The Native elderly guest speakers include Traditional Chief Andrew Isaac of Dot Lake; Eskimo Medicine Woman Della Keats; John Apangalook of Gambell; and the colorful and fiery Frank Degnan of Unalakleet.

Health agency representatives to the seminar include Commissioner Fred McGinnis, Department of Health and Social Services and his various division heads. On the federal level, invitations have been sent to Dr. Emery Johnson, director of Indian Health Service in Washington, D.C. and Dr. John Lee, Area Director for PHIS in Alaska; and Bernard Kelly, Seattle Region X Director for HEW and his assistants. Alaska State Legislators on the Interim Committee on Health Care, Social Services, Mental Health Delivery Systems chaired by Rep. Helen Berne have all agreed to attend the seminar. Tom Whittington, the recently appointed Study Project Director for Section 2(c) of the Land Claims Settlement Act, is scheduled to address the seminar participants on its plans on how this study will affect the health care of the Alaska Natives.

The Hon. Ernest Gruening has recently confirmed that he will be the seminar's Keynote Speaker on Dec. 13 starting at 11 a.m. Gruening, a long-time advocate for civil rights in the earlier days to and after statehood will be honored by the Native people for all of his efforts for a better and unified Alaska. The renowned, nationwide figure recalls in the 1940's tearing down signs saying "No Natives Allowed" from various business firms throughout Alaska. His emphatic view of the people in Alaska, whether they be Caucasian, Indian, Black, Eskimo, Aleut or Filipino, has been to treat everyone as people.

Throughout his governorship and representing Alaska in the U.S. Senate and as a private citizen, this man has fought successfully on behalf of the Alaska Natives on legal and moral rights to be first-class citizens and to take part in the mainstream of America's first dreams for a free America. Gruening, born on Feb. 6, 1887, is a graduate of the Harvard Medical School, Class of 1912. He practiced medicine

for a short while and moved on to a journalism career. He served as Alaska's first Governor from 1939-1953. He was the first Alaskan to introduce a bill on the Claims Settlement Act. His keynote address will cover a variety of issues and arrangements are being made to present him a special token in honor of his work for a better Alaska.

Additionally, students from all over the state will be there as observers with the thought that any kind of planning effort sponsored by any Native group should include the young people as planning will be taken over by them. Student representatives include two from Mt. Edgecumbe, some from the Alaska Methodist University, University of Alaska, and various other schools. AFN now has six health corporations out of the 12 regions that are delegate agencies of their respective regions to deal with matters that relate to the goal of quality health care.

Caleb Pungowiya, Director for the Norton Sound Health Corporation, will make a comprehensive presentation on his corporation's experiences in having the ultimate say-so on how the health delivery systems are operated in that area. The Navajo Nation's Health Authority representative from Arizona is included on the agenda to share their experiences with Native Alaskans. The Navajo's are rated high for successfully running, on a policy-making level, their health programs. The congressional delegation have also been invited to attend.

The outcome of the seminar will be assessed by the Native State Legislators to see whether the needs expressed during the seminar warrant a legislative package for rural areas in Alaska. Additionally, the members of the Steering Committee for Section 2(c) of the Land Claims Settlement Act which calls for a study of all federal programs affecting the Natives have also been invited to attend.

The Health Affairs Division staff are Carl Jack, Director, Frank Peterson, Brenda Itta, Corinne Dennis, and Evelyn Stine Donovan; with Jim Hahn, research planner for Norton Sound Health Corporation, who is on loan to AFN to establish health resource files to be utilized by the Native participants.

— Brenda Itta

AFN NEWSLETTER

The AFN, Inc. Newsletter is available for the price of a subscription of the Tundra Times. For ten dollars annually, the Tundra Times offers this feature, as well as stories by our own writers, village correspondents, and stories by our correspondents in Juneau and Washington.

A ten dollar check or money order to the Tundra Times, Box 1287, Fairbanks, will begin a one year subscription.

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to your own people . . .

who have
the same aches and pains.



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