

Editorial

A Case of Mistaken Banquets

We have a bone to pick.

Actually, that was the problem. There were no bones. Not even ones with tough overcooked chicken on them.

We refer in lingering amazement to the soiree held last Saturday night by the Alaska Federation of Natives following its annual convention to celebrate 30 years of existence. It was the talk of cafe breakfasts and airport lounges the next day as AFN delegates headed home.

"I couldn't believe it," said one woman waiting to catch a flight to Fairbanks. "Fifty dollars for a bowl of beans and a salad!"

Another acknowledged that it was a large salad. So large that she consumed only a portion of it so as to save room for the main course - which never came.

In an expansive gesture, guests were allowed to keep their log-decorated bean bowls, washed, dried and returned to the tables, as souvenirs. Judging by the next-day reactions we recorded, "cherish" may be too strong a word to describe the sentiment people attached to their bowls.

Which brings us to our beef, which is not that AFN has some explaining to do. That's between AFN and its guests. The problem is that some people seem to think this was a Tundra Times banquet.

Now, it's true, we used to hold a feast at about this time every year. But recently, AFN has opted not to include a Tundra Times banquet as part of its convention finale, scheduling its own fancy affair instead. So don't blame us for the beans and salad.

To avoid confusion, our banquets were the ones with meat. Sometimes a little dry, but enough to get you through the dance that followed.

Subsistence under attack

Subsistence is under attack from a different direction. This one under the guise of cruelty to animals and being fed by misinformation.

Proposition 3 would make it illegal to shoot wolves from the air. This practice is already illegal for the public. The problem is moose and caribou populations can remain depressed due to a large wolf population, making it more difficult to get the foods that are an integral part of subsistence.

The removal of the tool, and aerial hunting is a tool for predator control, would make it difficult for the state to boost populations of moose and caribou. As much as we may not like to agree with sport hunting groups, this is one time when we should unite to fight a greater threat. We urge you to get out and vote 'No' on Prop. 3