



Integrity, Pride in Heritage, Progress

## AFN, Inc.

1675 C STREET  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501  
PHONE 279-4578

## Officers:

President — Roger Lang  
Chairman of the Board — Sen. John Sackett

# NEWSLETTER

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## RULINGS ASKED FOR ANCSA BENEFITS

### Trainees Graduate

The Technical Assistance Program started its second session of a 24 week Village Management Training Program at the Alaska Skill Center in Seward the week of February 4.

The program is based on basic training in areas of business management, office procedures and municipal planning, communications, personnel management, and other business related issues.

The training is structured around an open-ended concept that allows flexibility for the student in terms of his prior experience. It is hoped that a student will remain afterwards for additional training at the Skill Center, depending upon the need of his village.

The persons enrolled in the program are: Peter Galaktionoff from Unalakleet, Lloyd Nashank from Barrow, Dennis Adams from Koyuk, Fritz Aulie from Shaktoolik, Levi Sepilu from Savoonga, Polly Aleck from Chignik, Fred Washington from Levelock, Henry F. Henry from Eek, Joe Hinz from Eek, Eric Olson from Hooper Bay, Theo Mumchuck from Port Graham, Edna Brown from Nenana, Norman Henry from Chalkyitsik, William Alpiak from Karluk, and Marilyn Haakanson from Port Lions.

During the first session of the training program implemented by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act last spring, we are proud to announce the graduates from the course, which are as follows: Virginia Gene from Gakona, Herman Lestenoff from St. George Island, Merrill Nashoalook from Barrow, Victor Ashtenfelter from Seward, Roger Nichols from Kaltag, Miles Cleveland from Ambler, Virginia Douglas from Shungnak, Carroll Gray from Ambler, and John Topkok from Ambler.

The Technical Assistance Program expects the next session to begin approximately August and we will begin recruiting shortly before that time.

The selection of students for enrollment in the program will be based upon village and regional recommendations and comments. Although being a high school graduate or having a high school equivalency is not a requirement for acceptance into the program, the ability to read and assimilate semi-technical material will be necessary because of the documents included in the curriculum.

In addition, if the applicant does not have a high school diploma it is recommended that those students who are accepted take remedial reading and math as part of the course instruction to develop his ability in these areas in order to pass the G.E.D. test while at the Skill Center.

If there are any interested persons or any of the recent graduates need assistance please contact Paulette Charney at the AFN office.



Selawik Jr. High P.E. Class with No Gym to Practice.

## JOM FUNDS HELP VILLAGE RUN OWN EDUCATION

Selawik, an Arctic Circle community of nearly 500 people has decided that self-determination is their right and have chosen to run their school at the local level. Most people in Selawik have never heard the term local autonomy but they could give lessons in its meaning.

Anthropologists studies show that large groups of Eskimos have lived in this rich caribou winter grounds along the equally rich river and lakes full of sheepfish for at least 8,000 years. The Bureau of Indian Affairs started a school at the present site of Selawik in 1909. This school has grown from 34 students to over 200 at present. The school was controlled by the BIA until 1969 when the people of Selawik voted to become a State-Operated School in the hope of more local control.

The leaders of this up and coming Arctic Circle community have steadily been seeking more local control. When the village requested a high school in 1971, the SOS school system agreed they could have ninth grade only, but the already crowded school squeezed in both ninth and tenth graders whose parents were tired of sending their children miles away for an education. SOS reluctantly provided the additional teacher.

On the other hand letters to the commissioner and others promised the people of Selawik a million dollar school for their high school students. This building is scheduled for completion in December 1974.

Meanwhile, SOS determined that Selawik could add no new grades for the 1973-74 school year and must then send their eleventh graders away who had attended school at home the year before.

Boarding Home Programs did not take these students be-

lieving a program existed in Selawik. With over 20 eleventh and twelfth graders facing no prospects for education, as the necessity to once again leave home against their wishes did not appeal to them, last August, the local advisory school board President, Jonas Ramoth, took action.

The year before the school board had formed a Selawik Cultural and Educational Foundation which is a legal corporation under Alaska State law. This enabled them to apply for funds. A proposal was written and presented to the Johnson-O'Malley Review Committee representing the added funds needed for providing a quality education at home.

In response the JOM Review Committee approved a \$50,000 grant to hire additional personnel and buy supplies and materials to run a unique program especially for the Selawik High School eleventh and twelfth grades. Gordon Jackson, Alaska Federation of Natives Program Director for JOM funds is extremely pleased with the program.

In an annual meeting of the Selawik Educational and Cultural Foundation on Dec. 10 in the Selawik School Jonas Ramoth, Oran Walton, Nellie Sheldon, Laura Davis and Lawrence Larkin were elected to the SECF Board. Jonas Ramoth is president; Oran Walton, vice president and Lawrence Larkin, an 18-year-old high school senior is the secretary-treasurer.

Thus a high school student sits on the board for hiring and policy making for the education of Selawik young people. As the eleventh and twelfth graders are not officially recognized by the SOS system which refused to fund the program, the board has applied for status as a private high school to graduate its seniors.

## AFN, State Seek Decision Jointly

The Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc., and the State of Alaska are jointly seeking federal rulings from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The joint work is aimed at defining the income from benefits received by

eligible Alaska Natives as the monies are disbursed from the Alaska Native Fund to individual Natives.

For purposes of defining such funds, the Act stipulates that such funds will not be declared

as "income" for federal or state tax purposes, nor can the benefits of the Act (either the stock, the dividends, or distributions) be encumbered.

The intent of seeking such rulings relate to the eligibility of Alaska Natives to receive and in family assistance, and to dependent children, or other federally funded programs such as the food stamps program.

Commissioner Fred McGinnis joins the Alaska Federation of Natives, in viewing these cash benefits as special legislation as a result of the extinguishment of other rights. Because of the wording of the Act, and intent of Congress, such funds should not detract or replace existing programs.

To date, no serious opposition has been found to the views of AFN, Inc. and the State of Alaska. Meetings were held with federal officials both in the Seattle offices of Region X and in the San Francisco offices of the Department of Agriculture. Legal briefs representing the views of the State, and those of the Alaska Federation of Natives are being prepared at the present time.



President Roger Lang consults with AFN's National Attorney Ken Bass in Washington, D.C. before testifying against the formation of a 13th Region. The hearings were held before the House Subcommittee on Indian Affairs chaired by Congressman Lloyd Meeds on Feb. 4, 1974.



Rachel Craig, elected President of the Seattle Chapter of AFN, Inc., testifies against a 13th Region, also.