

'I may not agree with what you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it'—VOLTALRE

Editorial: **AFN marks 20 years**

This year marks the 20th anniversary of AFN. For two decades, our organization has been an effective advocate for Alaska Natives on issues ranging from social service needs to the passage and implementation of ANCSA.

Since its formation in 1966, AFN has been in a constant state of change. When first formed, we were an organization of the founding non-profit associations which fought the land claims battle. After the passage of ANCSA, we became an organization of the regional corporation representatives.

In 1977, the non-profit Native associations, which had been serving as a Human Resources Committee to the Board, indicated their desire to become full-fledged voting members. It was a change whose time had come.

Today, the AFN Board of Directors consists of the Land Claims Board, composed of representatives from the 13 regional corporations created by ANCSA, and the Human Resources Board, made up of representatives from the regional non-profit organizations around the state.

This year, delegates to the convention will decide whether the Interim Village Board, created last year to give the villages a larger voice in setting policy for AFN, will become part of the Full Board.

The theme of this year's annual convention, to be held October 16-18, is "20 years of Integrity Pride in Heritage, and Progress." That theme was chosen in recognition of AFN's contribution toward accomplishing those goals.

Other major topics for discussion at the convention include the 1991 amendments and a report on the activities of the AFN Committee on Tribal Government.

The need for change has become increasingly clear over the past few years; AFN needs to provide a voice for villages in policy decisions which affect all Alaska Natives.

There are great challenges facing Alaska Natives in the years to come. We will need all of our wisdom and strength as a people to face these changes with confidence. For two decades, AFN has been the organization which represents all Alaska Natives; our efforts are devoted to ensuring that it remains so.

This guest editorial was submitted by Janie Leask, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

Corporations assist newspaper

We'd again like to recognize some of the corporations that continue to aid us here at the newspaper. Ahtna Inc., NANA Regional Corp., Bristol Bay Native Corp., Aleut Corp., Cook Inlet Region Inc. and Chugach Alaska Corp. recently have pledged donations or are purchasing advertising. This assistance is greatly appreciated.

In addition, we'd like to recognize the Kuskokwim Corp., which has provided us with clerical assistance.