

Native women meet

For the first time in the history of the Alaska Federation of Natives conventions, Alaska Native women organized an official caucus.

Spearheaded by Sandra Borbridge and Maxine Reichert, more than 100 women attended three separate meetings to discuss ideas and map a plan of action for the 1977 convention. The outcome of the three meetings was the appointment of Rosita Worl as chairperson of an eight-member steering committee.

Three resolutions were drafted and brought before the convention resolutions committee. Only one was passed out to the convention floor. That resolution, which passed the convention, authorizes an Alaska Native woman caucus chairman to be appointed to the planning committee for the next AFN convention.

At a special meeting held at the Travelodge in Anchorage, members of the caucus heard a variety of speakers, including State Rep. Lisa Rudd (D-Anchorage) and Barbara Lewis, grand president of the Alaska Native Sisterhood. Topics included education, discrimination against women, employment, status of race among Alaskan Native women, child birth and the vivid pressing issue of battered wives.

The intent of the caucus of Native women was to increase the impact of women on the convention. Caucus supporters feel certain that more Alaskan Native women will become more visible in the future on a statewide basis. To date there are two corporate presidents who are women, acting president of Chugach Natives, Inc., Mary Gordaoff, and recently-elected Christine Yazzi of Ahna, Inc.