

# Tanana Chiefs Workshops

Workshops, used for the first time this year by the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) meeting in Fairbanks, resulted in the following expressions:

**LABOR** — A feeling that rural Alaskans do not have an adequate opportunity to apply for jobs with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). A resolution was passed to support establishment of a BLM training base at Holy Cross. Another resolution would establish union halls in four sub-regional locations.

**HEALTH** — Showers, sewers, clinics, and accident prevention programs are needed in the villages. Also in need of improved services are the mental, medical, dental and health educational programs. Fires and drownings continue to take many lives. Health transportation needs improvement.

In a related matter, Jim Huntington, Galena, said he would like to see TCC do something about "growing drug problems in the villages" — a problem he feels villages haven't faced up to. "Anytime a problem is kept a secret, it gets more serious," said Huntington.

**FISH AND GAME** — Huntington told the convention that deterioration of these resources

continued. Waste in game meat might be stemmed, he suggested, by setting up check-in and check-out systems in the villages as a way of determining what a hunter has done with his meat.

**COMMUNICATIONS** — Sen. John Sackett sees the establishment of a satellite communications commission as the number one item that Natives should strive for this year, along with subsidization of communications construction in rural and urban areas.

And according to Sam Kito, the state doesn't have a plan to implement a satellite communications system between villages, even while equipment for the system is available. "We can't call from one village to another," said Kito. "We can't communicate."

**TRANSPORTATION** — A ferry system to provide mobility between Yukon River villages should continue to be pursued. The use of hovercraft, which require minimal draft design, should be investigated.

State Rep. Larry Peterson, Fort Yukon, said a feasibility study shows that a ferry system would bring an economy to the villages along the river, including employment and tourism.

**LEGISLATION** — On the

federal level, delegates agreed that TCC should oppose a current bill that would outlaw the use of certain kinds of traps. The feeling is that if such a bill should pass, it could be the beginning of legislation outlawing trapping altogether.

It's also felt that a cost of living factor, by regional location, should be included in revenue sharing, and that unincorporated villages should be eligible along with first and second class cities. A base payment of \$10,000 for all municipalities is being looked at.