

# Some good, some bad, this year

As the year draws to an end we have cause to sit back and think of the accomplishments and shortfallings of the previous year.

The obvious choice for disappointment of the year was the tomfoolery that went on in the halls of state government in Juneau for six or seven months last spring. As usual no one got along but they got along even less than usual and virtually nothing much was accomplished but it was accomplished at great expense.

The one meager accomplishment of the Legislative session was the passage of a bill appropriating money to fight Hepatitis B. The disease has been around for decades, spreading silently among Alaska Natives but nothing was done about it until news reports highlighted the problem. Some well-placed help from Senators Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski got federal appropriations increased also.

Gov. Bill Sheffield got off to a baaadd start with immediate challenges of conflict of interest hurled against him when he made major concessions to U.S. Secretary of the Interior James Watt right before flying off to an oil company fund-raiser held in his honor and for his benefit.

He lost major friends in western Alaska who still view his administration with skepticism.

Sheffield did provide access to the rural areas of the state with the appointment of Emil Notti as his legislative liaison and Sandra Borbridge as a special assistant but in the views of many, that wasn't enough to forestall many problems.

He has recently furthered the personnel gain by appointing Notti as commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs and John Shively as chief of staff. Both men know how to work with urban and rural areas of the state and we feel the governor may get back on a good course by listening to them.

Although things have calmed down on the political front as it applies to subsistence hunting and fishing, we have been appalled by other matters concerning hunting and fishing.

Consider the battle of Interior residents who are told they cannot continue their age-old tradition of holding memorial potlatches because of game laws.

Consider the recent disclosure that the Department of Transportation is flagrantly destroying fishing habitat despite constant orders by the U.S. Corp of Engineers to stop.

We are heartened by the recent conference on public policy and education which highlighted many of the problems faced by Native students and parents trying to see that a quality education is obtained. We also look forward to the upcoming curriculum conference on Bush education.

We have looked back at the people we have met and spent time with on the course of our duties with this newspaper and we are glad that such people exist. It would be impossible to name all those people without inadvertently leaving some out so we will simply say 'you know who they are.'

We have much to be happy about and much to work on.

We hope it can be done in 1984. Happy New Year!