

'Trapper' J. Sackett Picks Up Roll Forms

"I've been trapping just a little ways out of Huslia and I've caught five weasels, two martens, one mink, and one beaver."

That was State Rep. John Sackett of Huslia talking with a twinkle in his eye as he came to Tundra Times office to pick up enrollment forms to give out to his people in Huslia.

"I've trapped about two miles away at the most," Sackett added. "There's lots of fur back home this winter. Local hunters are trapping quite a bit and they're getting foxes, mink, marten, wolves, wolverines, lynx, otter and beaver."

Rep. Sackett has been confined to his home village this year due to serious illness of

his mother, Lucy Lawrence. Until about two weeks ago, Mrs. Lawrence was hospitalized at the Virginia Mason Hospital in Seattle.

She is now back home but has not fully recovered. Due to her illness, John has been managing the family store, the Lawrence Trading Post for several months last year.

"I've had to miss some of those important meetings," Rep. Sackett said, "but I'm happy that they have gone along so well."

Sackett is the member of the Land Claims Task Force of the State Rural Affairs Agency.

"Bill Hensley told me that the last Drafting Committee meeting in Anchorage came

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out pretty well although he said he had some trouble keeping it going smoothly at at times," he said.

Rep. Willie Hensley of Kotzebue is the chairman of the Land Claims Task Force Drafting Committee, a body, along with the State and the Interior Department, that is charged with drawing up a bill. The group met in Anchorage a week ago.

Hensley had said earlier that the meeting had not gone as well as he had wished. He indicated the representation from the Interior Department was hesitant about getting in line on certain matters.

"The honeymoon is over now and we're getting down to brass tacks," Hensley pointed out.

Sackett said that he had been called to Fairbanks to attend a "legislators meeting" on December 29.

"When I arrived, I found out it had been cancelled and this after I paid my way over and back," he said.

He said, however, that it gave him a chance to shop for merchandise for the family store.

"We had run short on some things and those guys down there are hollering for sno-go parts," he said.

Rep. Sackett fingered the stack of enrollment forms in his hands sent to the Times office by the Alaska Federation of Natives.

The forms are to be filled out by the native people up to one quarter degree of blood for record in a roll in the event compensation for land settlement becomes available in the future.

"I've been planning to go to Kaltag and other villages down there and I bet I would need a thousand of these to pass around," he said.