

# Publisher's Notes

## ALASKA MEDIA UNDER FIRE

The Alaska Press Women, an organization calling themselves "Top of the World Writers" held a conference this past weekend. The Conference was entitled "Alaska Media: Morals and Methods."

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The most interesting panel discussions, workshops, and speakers, and there was enough substance to the conference to attract just about everyone in the print media.

The most interesting panel discussion was about "Editors under Fire: Decisions and Deadlines," and many editors and publishers from well known newspapers in Alaska were sitting on the panel, where they could have been under fire.

An intriguing question asked by the moderator of the panel was "if your newspaper were a person, what would that person be like?" The panel was incidentally all male, almost all White, and at least three of them were from the big city daily newspapers.

The panel members were to describe his newspaper as a person, age, gender, characteristics, etc. The answers given were intriguing and somewhat on target, depending on your perspective.

The *Anchorage Times* was "past middle age," successful, with one foot in the past, and striving to catch up with the changing times, while the *Anchorage Daily News* was "the new kid on the block, also aggressive sort of pushy, liberal, and successful."

The *Seward Phoenix Log* came across as the hometown boy doing well, and the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* was "male, white, and making money, and the *All-Alaska Weekly* was political and quite proud of its motto, which is "for the cause that lacks assistance, for the wrong that needs resistance, for the future in the distance, and the good that we can do."

There was more discussion, about morals, about the need for privacy or what newspaper should be doing to recognize the privacy of individuals, and there was some discussion about ethics.

The *Anchorage Times* is owned as most Alaskans know by Robert Atwood, a long time Anchorage advocate, and the *Anchorage Daily News* is owned by the McClathry Corporation, a newspaper chain based in California.

The *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* is a employee-owned business based in the Interior, and the Fairbanks *All-Alaska Weekly* is owned and operated by Tom Snapp, a long time friend of the *Tundra Times*.

The *Seward Phoenix Log* is owned, published, and edited by Edgar Blatchford, who is a Seward "hometown boy," with just the right amount of wry humor typical of small town editors.

Our historical research tells us that editors during the early part of this century were routinely tarred and feathered, and some were shot on the street corners of Middle America by irate readers so this panel of newspaper people were let off easy by simple being put "under fire."