

# Around the state...

The U.S. Congress is about to take a look at the divisive land issue which has pitted a corporation formed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act against an Admiralty Island village and its allies. The Shee Atika Corporation of Sitka has long sought to begin logging operations on a tract of land promised to it by Congress under ANCSA, but the people of the Native village of Angoon say the area is critical to their subsistence lifestyle.

The area is surrounded by wilderness. Lawsuits by the city of Angoon and the Sierra Club have delayed Shee Atika's logging plans for years. U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski of Alaska last week announced that the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs will be holding hearings on the dispute November 2, in Washington, D.C.

Murkowski, who will chair the hearing, is expected to invite representatives from the Department of the Interior, the Army Corps of Engineers, the city of Angoon, Kootznoowo Native Corporation, the Sierra Club and Shee Atika.

"It's time for Congress to take an objective look at the situation and decide whether corrective action is warranted," Murkowski said.

\* \* \*

A poetry reading and autograph-signing party will be held for Fred Bigjim and his new book "Sinrock," October 25 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Student Services Cafeteria of the University of Alaska sports complex.

Bigjim is returning to Alaska from Washington, D.C., Antioch College School of Law for the occasion.

\* \* \*

Among those attending this year's Alaska Federation of Natives Convention will be "Camino del Sol," a group of indigenous people from South America. Last year, a group of indigenous North Americans, including some Alaska Natives, visited South America. The trip north of the South Americans marks the next phase of that exchange program. All the participants are members of the Baha'i faith. Translated, their name is "Trail of Light." The visitors to Alaska will be sharing their culture, songs and dances with the Alaskans.

They first arrived in the state October 7 for a visit to Juneau. They will visit several villages before leaving. Participants include Andres Jachakollo, Aymara Indian from Bolivia, Mercedes Piquil, Mapuchi Indian from Chile, Vincente Curillo, Quechua Indian from Ecuador, Nicanor Torres, Quechua from Peru.

\* \* \*

The American Association of Suicidology will be holding its annual meeting in Anchorage in 1984 from May 2 to May 5. The Association has put out a call for programs, panels, workshops, and papers to be presented at the meeting. David, a Tlingit counselor and resource specialist at the Suicide Prevention Center in Anchorage, says that Alaska Natives have the highest suicide rate in the nation. David is encouraging participation from Alaska Natives and from service geared for Natives.

Applications can be obtained from the Suicide Prevention and Crisis Center offices located at 2611 Fairbanks Street, Anchorage. (907) 276-1600.

\* \* \*

A study on the Economic Status of Alaska Native Women was recently released by the Alaska women's commission. Some of its findings included: 35 percent of Native women in the labor force are under 25 years of age (24 percent of white women are). From 1970 to 1980, the numbers of Alaska Native women increased by an amazing 50 percent; 45 percent of Alaska Native women are now in the labor force, compared to a 50 percent national average, and 63 percent for white women in Alaska.

More Native women were moving out of service jobs into higher paying administrative support jobs. Native women living in regional centers sported higher incomes than those in cities or rural villages. The average annual income of Native families in Alaska in 1980 was 56 percent lower than for white families, yet Native families were more than twice as large. The proportion of women raising families is twice as high among Natives than among whites in Alaska.

\* \* \*

Lena Sours, a 101-year-old Inupiaq from Kotzebue and one of the foremost parka sewers in the state, is among those to be honored by the Alaska State Council on the Arts when Governor Bill Sheffield hands out the awards Friday, October 21, at 5:00 o'clock in the Fourth Avenue Theater in downtown Anchorage.

\* \* \*

The Bering Straits Native Corporation has signed a joint venture agreement with Northern Oilfield Services, Inc., agreeing in principle to organize a petroleum support service in anticipation of oil development in Norton Sound. BSNC shareholders living in villages throughout the region have joined with those in Calista in protesting oil-lease sales initiated in the area by former Interior Secretary James Watt.

BSNC President Charlie Johnson noted the high probability that oil will be developed in Norton Sound, regardless of local objections. "While one of our primary goals is the preservation of the natural resources that allow us to maintain our traditional subsistence way of life, we feel that participation in oilfield related services is the best way to insure that those resources remain protected," Johnson said.

\* \* \*