



ROYALTY REIGNS AT POTLATCH — Twenty-one year old Nita Sheldon of Noorvik, was crowned Miss Fairbanks Native Association at the annual FNA potlatch held in Fairbanks last weekend. Nita, a junior at the University of Alaska, is researching the lost culture of the Kobuk area. She wore a native costume of rich furs and was crowned with a spotted sealskin crown.

— Photo by MARGIE BAUMAN

Great FNA Potlatch—

Great Varieties of Native Foods

By MARGIE BAUMAN

FAIRBANKS—Tanana Chiefs President Mitch Demientiff danced with the Nenana-Minto dance team and a University of Alaska beauty from Noorvik was crowned queen Saturday night at the height of the annual Fairbanks

Native Association potlatch.

On the sidelines, the crowd feted earlier on shee fish, muk-tuk, smoked salmon, moose, caribou, beaver and other Native foods cheered as the merriment went on and on.

It was, said potlatch chairman

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FNA Potlatch . . .

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Robert Charlie, quite a good potlatch, especially considering that the potlatch committee had only six weeks to prepare for the event which attracts hundreds of visitors each year.

Mingling with the crowd this year were U.S. Senators Mike Gravel and Ted Stevens, Emil Notti, president of the Alaska Native Foundation and residents of Careage North, like Bessie Solomon, who took a long time to get to the gymnasium to watch the dancing because so many people knew her and wanted to shake her hand.

And there was plenty of dancing to watch, from Olga and Oliver Amouak, who have performed Eskimo dances since the potlatch for FNA began, to Leonard Hamilton, who decided not to join just the Haida dancers, but several other groups as well.

Twenty-one-year-old Nita Sheldon of Noorvik, a junior at the University of Alaska doing research on the lost culture of the Kobuk area, was crowned Miss Fairbanks Native Association and accepted the title from last year's queen, Donna Demos-

ki of Galena.

Margaret Titus of Minto was named Miss Congeniality and second runner-up, with Rita Tageak of Chevak as first runner-up.

After the winners were announced the young women were mobbed for a moment by admirers who swarmed in to take their pictures.

Villagers attending the potlatch contributed so much food that there was actually plenty left over afterwards, Charlie said. They also contributed the songs and dances of the Arctic Slope, Interior, Southeastern Alaska and the Navajo Indians far to the south.

By midnight the gymnasium of Ryan Junior High School was quiet again; all but for the retreating footsteps as the visitors departed back to the far reaches of Alaska.

They carried with them the warm memories of good food and good fellowship, the smiles of friends and relatives of many years who gather annually in Fairbanks to be part of the big potlatch.