

# Bering Straits Elders Conference set for February in Nome

The dates have been set for the Annual Bering Straits Elders Conference. It is scheduled for the last week in February. The focus of this years conference will be education. We have requested the school boards in the region to select two students from each village to accompany their elders to the conference. Kawerak's Elders Committee have discussed the gaps they see in the educational needs of their students and tentatively selected main topics for the conference. The primary focus will be on Identity. Speakers will be asked to discuss the importance of family relationships, tribes, naming and native values.

Over the last eight years an average of 250 - 300 elders attend the conference. The elders, speakers and others pay their own fares into Nome to attend the conference. The people do this at great personal expense, as all our villages and Nome are isolated and accessible only by air. We feel

their continued attendance speaks for itself.

During the week long conference the people of Nome host the elders. Businesses throughout the region and state donate their time and money to bus, feed and assist the elders. The conference success depends on the united efforts of all people concerned.

Speakers are invited to update the elders on any information that might affect their lifestyle. In turn the elders take part in daily group sessions when they supply us with historical information we request, such as place names; land use; animal migration and behavior; tides; currents; sea ice; rules for living; survival techniques; etc.

Once again we are inviting the Bering Straits Siberian Eskimo elders to join us. Some of the Washington dignitaries have shown an active interest in helping us. If we receive any information concerning this we will contact you.