

# Cook Inlet potlatch hosts more than 500

The sixth annual Friendship Potlatch — sponsored by CIRI, The CIRI Foundation, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Southcentral Foundation and Cook Inlet Housing Authority — was held earlier this month at Romig Jr. High School in Anchorage.

The potlatch was host to more than 500 Cook Inlet Region Natives and coincided with the congressionally designated, "November 1990 — National American Indian Heritage Month."

This special designation for November is in honor of the value and contributions Native people have given America.

This year's entertainment at the potlatch included the Athabascan Fiddlers, Taheta Point Hope Dancers, Greatland Yup'ik Dancers, CITC Native Youth Olympics, Northern Lights Intertribal Pow Wow Club, Chitina Dancers and Singers, King Island Dancers and Singers, Alaska Heritage A Capella Choir, as well as the Guna Heen Dance Group.

Additionally, a traditional cloth ceremony and blanket toss were held. Besides an Alaskan Native Garment and Earring Judging event, Alaska artisans' crafts were displayed and sold.

Traditional Native foods, considered by many to be the highlight of a potlatch, were served in the afternoon. For the first time, organized activities were held for school age children.

After learning headwork, making an Eskimo yo-yo or Aleut hat, the



children were entertained by the Southcentral Foundation's Qiniqsitaag Puppet Theatre and storytelling by the Elders.



*Betty Mackintosh and daughter Breanne proudly wear traditional dresses at the potlatch, at left. Above, for the first time, arts and crafts activities were available for children. Coloring masks was a popular pastime.*

Photos courtesy Cook Inlet Tribal Council