

# First annual ANC conference to be Feb. 13-14

by Paul Swetzof  
for the Tundra Times

The first annual Alaska Native Coalition conference/workshop will be held Feb. 13-14 at the Sheraton Hotel in Anchorage.

## OPINION

This will be a great time for villagers to come to Anchorage as it coincides with Fur Rondy, a statewide health conference Feb. 6-8 and other meetings and events important to Alaska Natives.

The keynote speaker will be Justice Thomas Berger, who was commissioned by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference to travel to every region in Alaska to listen and record the feelings and aspirations of Alaska's Native people. He also held a series of round table discussions of the issues facing all of us.

Berger traveled to more than 60

villages and fish camps over a two-year period. The end result was recorded in the book, *Village Journey*, which most agree is the only study which has ever reflected the true feelings of Alaska Natives.

Workshops will include:

- Hunting and fishing rights — subsistence.
- Tribal courts.
- The Indian Child Welfare Act.
- Indian Reorganization Act and traditional Native governments.

•Advantages and disadvantages of state chartered governments, including how to dissolve a state chartered municipal government.

•Other topics of vital concern to Natives villages.

Resolutions will be made by consensus at each workshop, and these will be voted on by the full conference at the end of the second day.

Resolutions which are supported by conference participants will not be ignored; they will be promoted and acted upon as priorities of ANC.

The conference workshop is free of charge to all village representatives.

Native village governments and non-profits are free to send the representatives of their choice.

Any Alaska Native is welcome and encouraged to attend. Those who are not participants will be charged \$95 for admission. This will help offset a portion of the conference costs and will assist in keeping participation in the hands of those directly affected — Alaska Natives.

MarkAir and Alaska Airlines are both offering special fares for Fur Rondy. ANC is working on an additional "conference discount" for conference participants, as well as discount hotel rates.

Villages also may wish to contact the closest Bureau of Indian Affairs area office to request funding for travel expenses.

ANC exists to serve and promote, including lobbying, the tribal interests of Alaska Native villages/tribes. Member villages vote for the Executive Committee and determine ANC's priorities.

Any Native village government or council and village nonprofit may

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become a member, free of charge by submitting a council or board resolution to the following address: Alaska Native Coalition c/o Native American Rights Fund; Attn: Paul Swetzof; 310 K St., Suite 708; Anchorage 99501.

The Rural Alaska Community Action Program has sent conference registrations to most, if not all of the village councils and nonprofits in the state. You may also register by sending your name, the village name and the organization you are representing.

Each village may send as many people as desired. There is no registration or admission fee for participants.

Those who want information may call David Hardenburgh or Jeanine Kenndy at RurALCAP at 279-2511.

See you at ANC.