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Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Ada Deer addresses AFN Leadership Retreat in Dillingham, August 19.

Photo by Jeff Richardson

## Ada Deer:

# Native values for BIA management

by Jeff Richardson

For Bruce Babbitt, a three-week trip to Alaska was a baptism, an immersion into a lot of complicated issues new to the secretary of the interior. For Ada Deer, his new assistant secretary for Indian Affairs, the trip was more like a reunion with old friends; a checking up on work in progress.

Deer, a Menominee credited with achieving restoration of tribal status for her people, travelled to Alaska in the mid 1980s to address tribal leaders. She encountered a number of previous acquaintances during her visit last month.

Only in office since late July, Deer has moved aggressively to put Native concerns in front of her boss. She provided Babbitt with lengthy briefing memos on key tribal issues before his arrival in the state, and accompanied him for portions of his visit. At other times, she struck out on her own.

During a crucial get-acquainted session in Fairbanks with the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council (AIRC), Deer tried to get Babbitt to sit in. Though his schedule

didn't allow him to participate, Deer's efforts underscore the commitment she made throughout the trip to be an advocate for Natives.

"She made it clear she'd be an advocate for tribal rights to the greatest extent possible," said Julie Kitka, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN).

Babbitt and Deer made a two-hour stopover in Togiak to hear local grievances about the way the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs have handled removal of reindeer from Hagemester Island that villagers have been seeking to acquire. They've also requested that 50 of

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## Alcohol task force seeks testimony

Members of the House Alcohol Task Force have scheduled a series of public hearings to take testimony on alcohol related problems in Alaska.

"We want to find innovative ways to address these issues," said the task force chairman, Representative Brian Porter (R) Anchorage. "Considering our projected decline in state revenues, it's necessary to find ways to become

more efficient." The task force has been asked to provide the legislature with an overview of existing state policy, and to establish a strategy for the rational regulation of alcohol, along with deterrents for abuse of the product.

The hearing schedule is as follows: Tuesday, September 21, 9:30-4:30, Nome; Thursday, September 23, 1:30-5:00, Ketchikan; Friday, September 24, 8:00-11:00,

Ketchikan; Monday, October 4, 9:00-5:00, Fairbanks; and Wednesday, December 1, 9:00-5:00, Anchorage.

Testimony will be taken via teleconference in each region, and also may be submitted to the task force in writing. "It is my intent to present the legislature and the administration with some timely targets for future program enhancement," said Porter.

## Five students get Howard Rock scholarship awards

The Howard Rock Foundation has announced that five rural students will be receiving scholarships for the 1993-94 academic year.

According to Irmtraud Wiegel, president of the foundation, the recipients are:

Waska Charles, Emmonak, \$5,000 towards a graduate degree in education at the University of Massachusetts;

Myrna Van Hatten, Fort Yukon, \$2,500 towards pre-med classes at the University of Washington;

Curtis Ivanoff, Unalakleet, \$2,500 towards a secondary education certificate at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks;

Lorena Skonberg, Ouzinkie, \$2,500 towards a bachelor's degree in business/accounting at Western Oregon State College; and

Lenora Carpluk, Mountain Village, \$2,500 towards an elementary education certificate at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

The Howard Rock Foundation grant and scholarship program is administered under the auspices of the Community Enterprise Development Corp. The goal of the program as established by its board of directors is to "provide an opportunity for individuals who are

members of CEDC member organizations to apply for financial aid which will assist in the achievement of their college education goals and will eventually enable them to work in a career of improving the economic well-being of rural Alaska communities."

Scholarship applications are scored on a competitive basis and this year's selections were made from a list of — applicants.

Grade school teacher Waska Charles, the third resident from Emmonak to pursue an education beyond high school, decided to pursue graduate studies in education to help foster independence and self-determination among his Yupik people.

"There still is the haunting sense of the lack of ownership in the local educational institutions throughout these villages," he wrote to the scholarship reviewers. "Simply put, I feel it is about time we as the aborigines of our homelands take on the responsibility to go beyond our basic cultural survival skills and learn the new concepts of dealing with the rest of the world..."

Myrna Van Hatten, a wife, mother and medical social worker,

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### This Just In . . .

The Tundra Times Board of Directors is putting finishing touches on plans for the newspaper's annual banquet, scheduled for Saturday, October 16 at 7:30 p.m.

"We're making final preparations for a really fun and enjoyable evening," says Franklin Berry, chairman of Tundra Times. "We'll be having an auction, as we usually do, but we've also been talking with several well-known entertainers about scheduling their talent and hope to make an announcement soon."

According to banquet planning committee chair Toni Jones, tickets for the banquet are now on sale for the formal event, which for many years has been one of Alaska's premier social events.

Always held in conjunction with the annual convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives, the banquet began as an important source of revenue during the paper's early years under founding publisher and editor Howard Rock. Beginning this year, the board has decided that some banquet revenues will be dedicated to a new scholarship fund created to assist Native students interested in the newspaper business.

"We are committed to developing a professional cadre of Native writers, editors, graphic artists and marketing specialists who want to carry on the fine tradition of Howard Rock," said Franklin.

To purchase individual tickets or reserve tables for the banquet, call (907) 274-2512. Payment in advance will be required.

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