

DRUM

Inupiaq: QILAUN

Siberian Yupik: SAGUYA

Central Yupik: CAUYAQ

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 25-29

ICC Executive Council Meeting • Anadyr, Russia
• www.iccalaska.org

August 24-27

The Arctic Imperative Summit • Girdwood, Alaska • www.arcticimperative.com

September 13-14

Arctic Council ACAP Meeting • Copenhagen, Denmark • www.ac-acap.org

September 17

Arctic Council PAME Arctic Ocean Review Meeting • Halifax, Canada • www.aor.is

September 17-19

Arctic Council SDWG Meeting • Reykjavik, Iceland • portal.sdwg.org

September 18-20

Arctic Council: PAME Meeting • Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada • www.pame.is

October 1-2

SAON Board Meeting • Potsdam, Germany • www.arcticobserving.org

October 3-5

Arctic Council AMAP Meeting • Stockholm, Sweden • www.amap.no

October 5-6

Arctic Council EPPR Meeting • Copenhagen, Denmark • eppr.arctic-council.org

October 8-10

Arctic Council CAFF Meeting • Anadyr, Russia • www.caff.is

October 18-20

Alaska Federation of Natives • Anchorage, Alaska
• <http://www.nativefederation.org/convention/index.php>



Photo by Jennie Williams Nain, Nunatsiavut

Next General Assembly in Nain, Nunatsiavut

By ICC Alaska Staff

ICC Canada announced that Nain, Nunatsiavut (Labrador) will be the location of the next General Assembly in 2014. Held every four years, the ICC gathers in a General Assembly where Inuit delegates from across the circumpolar north elect a new Chair and Executive Council, develop policies and adopt resolutions that guide the organization's activities for the coming four year term.

The General Assemblies are at the heart of the organization, providing opportunities for information sharing and discussing common concerns to address developments taking place in the Inuit homeland. The Assembly also provides an opportunity to celebrate a rich cultural heritage and strengthen the cultural bonds between all Inuit.

The location of the Assembly rotates between Alaska, Greenland and Canada and is always held in Inuit territory. This will be the first time that Nunatsiavut, the Inuit land claims territory in Labrador will host an Assembly. The Labrador Inuit Claims Agreement Act, passed in 2005, created Nunatsiavut and is the most recent and final Inuit land claims agreement ratified by the Canadian Government and Inuit.

Nain is the largest community and capitol of Nunatsiavut with a population of a little over a thousand people. The meeting will take place at the Torngasok Cultural Center, which is scheduled for completion by June 2014. There is currently only one small hotel in the community. Due to limited accommodations in Nain, the number of Assembly attendees will be limited to 313. In order to accommodate the Assembly, the organizers are looking into building another hotel and parking a cruise ship to house attendees. If necessary, a tent city will provide additional housing.

We look forward to the Nain General Assembly and will provide additional information as details become available. www.iccalaska.org

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President's Message

Jim Stotts

Nalukataq – What a nice day it was!

I just got back from my home town where I was lucky enough to spend a few days catching up with the goings-on in the village. For me, there's no better way to relax and de-stress than to just hang out with family and friends from my younger days.


I strongly recommend this to anyone that feels a need to reconnect to what's important.

Did I mention that I have 127 first cousins? It's true, no exaggeration. Big families are common in the north, although that's a statistic that's changing. Needless to say, every time I turned around I ran into another relative. That's the fun part: finding out who's got new kids or new grand kids; who's been lucky out hunting; and, of course, catching up on the local politics. All these little stories make up the history and fabric of the village. If you listen closely you will know if the community is doing well or not.

On Friday, five whaling crews hosted the last Nalukataq of the year. It was a fine day in Barrow, one of those special summer days in the high Arctic with blue skies and temperatures soaring to 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The dense fog stayed away out over the sea ice where boats hunted for ugruk (bearded seal) among the ice floes. I saw some young girls jumping from floe to floe like I used to when I was young.

People dressed up in their finest just waiting for a taste of the delicious delicacies being served to them by the successful crews. Several generations of families sat together in clan groupings to enjoy the feast and visit. I wandered among the throng of people seeking out my cousins and friends. I was not disappointed.

For those of you that don't know, the Nalukataq is an Inupiaq tradition celebrating a successful spring whale hunt. Barrow was blessed this past spring with a catch of thirteen whales. Imagine a big picnic down on the beach where everyone feasts on the best traditional food around. The whole town is invited including visitors and the occasional tourist lucky enough to be in town that day. The feast goes on all day.

In the evening, after supper, the fun begins in earnest with the Nalukataq. Imagine yourself being thrown sky high from an ogruk skin, sort of like a super trampoline. The concluding event is a good old fashioned Inupiaq dance. The drum beat so strong and infectious; you can't resist going out to dance. At the end of the day the people drift off to home and bed, happy, hopeful and rejuvenated again. What a nice day it was! 



Photos by Karo Heilmann Stotts

Canada and Alaska Host Language Workshop

By Chester Reimer

Indigenous representatives, linguists, and government policy-makers met at a research development workshop in Ottawa 18-20 June 2012 to determine how they could best collaborate in assessing the state of Arctic indigenous languages and find ways to promote their vitality across the circumpolar world.

The workshop was jointly developed and hosted by ICC Canada and ICC Alaska as part of a larger Arctic Council project titled "Assessing, Monitoring and Promoting Arctic Indigenous Languages." This larger multi-year project was approved by the Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) of the 8 Arctic Council countries at their meeting in November 2011. While the governments of Canada and USA are serving as the project's co-leads, they have asked ICC to administer and direct the project on their behalf.


The current project seeks to implement recommendations from an earlier Arctic Council-approved and ICC-led language symposium held in Norway in 2008, which called for bringing vitality to Arctic indigenous languages and to do so through various steps, including undertaking an assessment. As well, the project calls for a program of research, communications, networking, advocacy and action.

This Arctic Council languages project is unique in at least two ways. First, it is indigenous-driven. The steering committee is made up of the indigenous organizations with Permanent Participant status at the Council, with ICC serving as chair and as project director. Second, an assessment of indigenous languages right across the Arctic has never been done on this scale before. While it is a huge task, ICC is confident with the assistance of academics and the support of Arctic Council member states, it can be accomplished.

The Ottawa workshop brought together numerous academics from institutions such as the Alaska Native Languages Center in Fairbanks, various practitioners from organizations such as the Kativik School Board in Northern Quebec, Canada, and various other individuals such as indigenous PhD candidates from as far as Kamchatka, Russia. The workshop was also privileged to have three keynote speakers including Canada's SAO, Sheila Riordon, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) President and ICC Canada Vice President, Terry Audla, and Chair of Canada's National Committee on Inuit Education and former ITK President, Mary Simon. All three speakers underscored the importance of indigenous languages and the valuable work that is being undertaken through this initiative. The workshop was facilitated by James Arreak of Nunavut. The ICC Alaska delegation was led by ICC Alaska Vice-President Vera Metcalf.

The specific objectives of the workshop were: to develop a networking and collaboration platform; to create a framework for assessing languages vitality; and to agree on a methodology for communicating and sharing data among researchers and indigenous communities across the Arctic.

The workshop was undertaken through a combination of plenary presentations and break-out work groups that produced lively exchange. The discussions led to a way forward on all three objectives and formed the basis for a work plan and timeline moving forward.

The importance of indigenous languages to the Arctic region could not help but make the discussions emotionally charged. The dedication and commitment by all participants resulted in a very positive and productive event that was funded primarily by the USA's National Science Foundation .

The Tundra Book: A Tale of Vukvukai, the Little Rock

By Aleksei Vakhrushev

Have you seen at least one film devoted to the unique culture and traditional life style of the reindeer herders of Chukotka? What does humanity know about these people and their subsistence in the deep and wild tundra of the most northeastern part of the Eurasian mainland? What is the state of continuity of their ancient culture and traditional knowledge today?

We had many questions when the idea of making a documentary about Chukchi reindeer herders matured three years ago. Reindeer herding in Chukotka is experiencing a renaissance after a period of really hard times which lasted about 20 years.

Not so long ago, in the 1980s, at its peak reindeer herding in Chukotka employed over 41% of the rural population. Back then traditional life style was alive and the thread of continuity tied different generations together. However, with the advent of economic reform and market relations in the 1990s, reindeer herding declined drastically.

By 2000, the domestic reindeer population of the region had decreased almost six-fold from the period of 1966-1984. The real income of the people involved in herding reindeer declined over seven-fold and, on occasion, as much as thirty-fold. It is not surprising that many people involved in this sector of the traditional economy were forced to seek other means of survival. Naturally, they moved to areas where the situation was somewhat better, where they could feed their families.

The Government of Chukotka has made titanic attempts to revive reindeer herding in the region. As a result the population of the reindeer has steadily increased. But many elders, the real men of the tundra and the great keepers of traditional knowledge have died during the last 20 years and the number of reindeer herder teams has decreased.

We had to find an elder living in the tundra as before, with children and grandchildren, with the successors of an ancient

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What Does Salmon Mean to You

By Carolina Behe

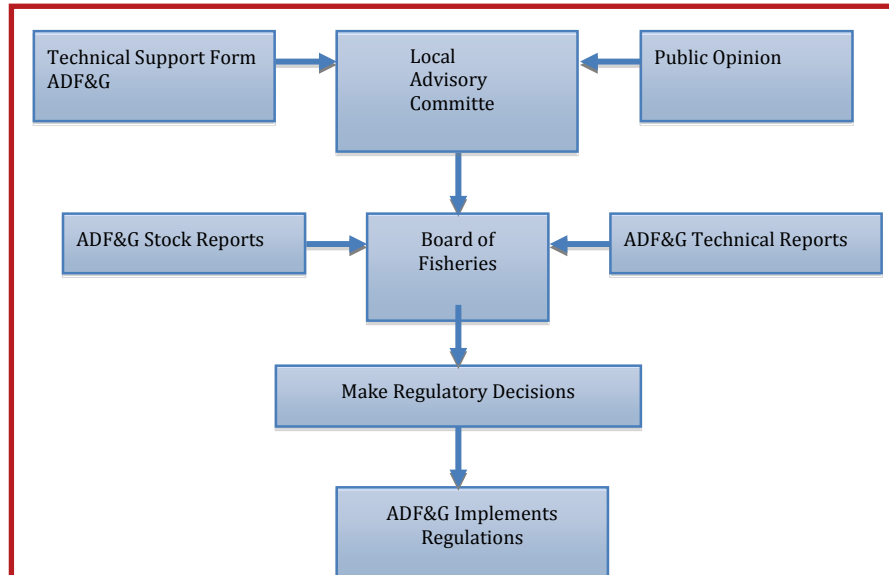
This is the third in a three part series on salmon and food security.

Chinook salmon in the Yukon and Kuskokwim River region are in serious decline, resulting in closures of commercial and subsistence fisheries. Fishermen are having their take and gear confiscated as they continue to engage in subsistence fishing, while State and Federal regulators try to maintain escapement goals. Myron P. Naneng, Sr., President of the Alaska Village Council Presidents (AVCP) has appealed to the government to declare a State disaster, while Inuit throughout Alaska are concerned and voicing frustration over the lack of say they have in decisions that lead to closures with a declining sense of food security.

A growing number of stressors impact Chinook salmon and these stressors are passed on to the people holding a cultural and physical relationship with the salmon. Increases in Pollock industry activities; increases in large scale commercial fishery activities; changes in temperatures, ice coverage, and pollution; decreases or increases in river water levels are all stressors that impact Chinook numbers. Leaving the question, what is required to obtain a consistent state of food security in an environment that's gaining multiple stressors every year?

Currently, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) sets their first priority as meeting escapement goals. Obtaining escapement goals is ultimately a conservation goal, ensuring that enough salmon reach the spawning grounds in order to have a sustainable

number return the next generation. The second priority is subsistence fishing. It is unclear what this priority means; to what extent do management schemes and government objectives allow ADF&G to truly make subsistence a second priority? When Chinook under go stressors such as over fishing and pollution in the Bering Sea; the overall population will experience a decline. This limits the number of fish entering the rivers resulting in more regulation on subsistence users along the rivers.



The Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) is tasked with overseeing state waters, while the US Wildlife & Fish (USFWS) oversees all federal waters. The National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) oversees the ground fisheries in the Bering Sea. As salmon are an anadromous species, NMFS affects subsistence salmon fishers through regulations placed on ground fishery salmon bycatch. The state managed species fishing regulation process begins with a local advisory committee. The advisory committee accepts input from the public and technical assistance from the ADF&G. The advisory committee offers recommendations to the Board of Fisheries (BOF), consisting of seven members appointed by the Alaska Governor. BOF sets the policy and direction of management for fisheries. The BOF receives technical reports, stock status, etc. from ADF&G and also accepts input from the public; this information is used to determine allocation of state managed species. The policy of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is to manage salmon runs to the maximum sustainable yield.

Community members have expressed concern over an expectation for subsistence users to carry the burden of conservation in response to bad management decisions while a priority is given to large commercial fisheries. Distrust of how decisions are made and under what priority has built-up over several generations. Frustrations voiced today are not solely targeted toward events occurring now, but on accumulative decisions that have brought the environment to the point it is at today. While state and Federal regulators are focused on meeting

government set goals, native Alaskans are focused on maintaining food security through a healthy environment while maintaining respect for the fish they depend on. On the surface regulators and subsistence fishermen's goals appear to differ, however both groups do not want to over exploit the species.

Understanding the various objectives and giving native Alaskans the opportunity to engage in true co-management may help avoid distrust and an unequal

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Chair's Message

Aqqaluk Lynge
ICC Veteran Dies
Charles Johnson
"Tumungnuk"
(1939-2012)

I was invited by the family to participate at Charlie Johnson's

memorial service in Nome last May. I have been close friends with Charlie since we worked together during the formation of the Arctic Council in the early nineties. Here are a few lines from my remarks at Charlie's memorial.

It was a matter of destiny that I would develop a close friendship with a person as far away as we were geographically. Closeness is not a matter of geographic dimension.


Friendship crosses all boundaries. Charlie was the human dimension of my work and my bridge to understanding why Inuit are so close intellectually, why we personally enjoy each other's company. And, of course, without the humor, the wisdom, and his generosity, the description of Charlie's life would not be sufficient.

Countless are the hours that we spent discussing the important political questions on travels we took together. Countless are the hours that we discussed books that we had read; the many e-mails that had been sent; the wonderful poems we had shared.

Charlie has now taken his last trip to the heavenly hunting grounds to the abundance of Nanoq, Aiveq and Ogruk. Tumungnuk has already taken the riverboat to the eternal fishing camp, where we all will join him and enjoy his company, when it's our turn.

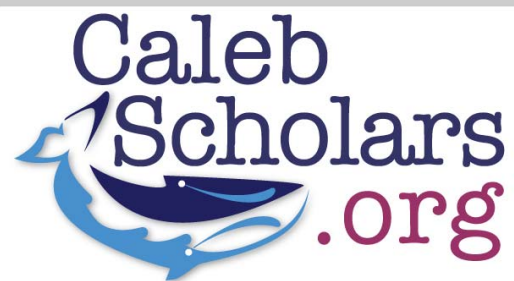
I'm so happy that I have known Charlie and with him Brenda and the rest of his family. I'm so thankful that I can look back, also to my own life, and see how lucky I am to have close personal relations to Alaska and Nome through his family.

Thank you for the life you gave us Charlie! Thank you for the humor that helped us overcome times with sadness in our lives. Thank you for giving me the strength to overcome the problems we encounter in our work. Thank you for giving all of us a reason to live with the love that you gave.

Charlie you were a gift to all of us. 



ICC's delegation in Moscow. Les Carpennter, Canada; Aqqaluk Lynge, Greenland; Mary Simon, ICC President, Canada; Charlie Johnson, Alaska. Photo taken from Inuit Tusaataat ICC #1, March 1990.



In remembrance and celebration of Caleb Lumen Pungowiyi; Kawerak was approached by the Oak Foundation in the summer of 2011 to administer the **Caleb Lumen Pungowiyi Scholars Program** for Alaska Native undergraduate and graduate students from the Norton Sound, Northwest Arctic and Arctic Slope regions to pursue degrees in marine conservation-related programs. For this inaugural scholarship application period, applications will be accepted through July 30.

Contact Löki Tobin, Kawerak Program Specialist for more information about the scholars program by email at cpp.spec@kawerak.org, toll free at 1-800-450-4341 or visit our website at calebscholars.org. We are on twitter & facebook (CalebScholars) and we encourage you to follow us or "like" us.

DC Food Security Roundtable a Success

By ICC Alaska Staff

ICC Alaska hosted a roundtable on food security in Washington DC in April. The goals of the roundtable were to direct attention to, and discuss the over-regulated nature of traditional food resources, which Inuit communities rely on.

Senator Murkowski and Senator Begich provided opening comments and thanked ICC Alaska for hosting the roundtable to begin the dialogue on food security issues. Senator Murkowski related food security to Inuit health and well-being and said, "Whaling, it certainly is not a sport, not just a food source, its more than that; it's an identity, a culture, a spirit that defines so many in Northern areas." Both Senators talked about the challenge they face in trying to help their colleagues understand the unique culture and way of life in Alaska.



Photo by ICC - Alaska

Agency representatives from the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Interior; and Indian Affairs and Commerce committee staff heard from Alaskan Inuit representatives from our four regions. They talked about the cultural and nutritional importance of our traditional food resources and called for greater cooperation and coordination among federal agencies responsible for management of our food resources in Alaska. The message was well received by government representatives in attendance and a commitment to continue the conversation was made.

The intent of the roundtable was to bring all federal agencies together in the same room to begin discussions on how to improve coordination of agencies that have authority over management of our traditional food resources in Alaska. We felt that it was a successful start towards improving coordination and cooperation.

ICC Alaska President Jim Stotts stressed the desire of Inuit to be active partners in sustaining our traditional food resources for generations to come, because doing so, promotes sustainability of our culture. He also said that management of food resources in Alaska has failed. He also encouraged improved working relationships between Inuit organizations and the federal government and said, "We came here to start a discussion with you that we hope will eventually lead to a management system that is fair for all of us."

A second meeting is planned for later in the year. Look for an update on this effort in future issues of DRUM. [Q](#).

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share of the conservation burden. A participatory approach would bring together Traditional Knowledge holders and regulators to identify and address management issues, allowing similarities in objective to be brought to the surface and offer new insight into management practice. The need for a participatory approach to co-management is becoming a larger focal point during Inuit conversations.

Last March, the AVCP hosted a convention on the "State of Our Salmon." This event brought State and Federal managers, salmon biologists and native Alaskans together to discuss the current state of salmon. The convention resulted in five resolutions passed by the AVCP Executive Board which address Chinook declines in western Alaska. Among the five resolutions is: a call for the establishment of an Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

for the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers; a call for at least one tribal seat on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council; and for the reduction of Chinook and Chum Salmon by-catch in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery and the Russian Economic Zone.

These three resolutions address a need for community members to be involved in decision making. An increase in native Alaskan authority will aid in creating stability, through the management of expectations and the maintenance of a healthy environment. Under a true co-management scheme the decision to close Chinook salmon fishing may have held. However, the result would be an empowerment for subsistence users to have some control over their fate and ability to base decisions, in part, on Inuit values. [Q](#)

culture. But there are precious few of them left. We had luck! In the middle of central Chukotka we met Vukvukai (72 years). He is an old man full of energy and wisdom, a real man of the tundra, whose life cannot be seen apart from the reindeer. Vukvukai is the most experienced and successful herder of the state reindeer herders company "Chaunskoye." He is the head of a reindeer herder team, which is part of an enormous state herd of more than 14,000 animals. Vukvukai is accompanied by his second wife Liubov' Kelet (70 years); his sister Sonya and her husband; his sons, Vladimir, Vitaliy and Alexei with their wives and children; and a few herders from other tribes.

The film crew consisted of: Aleksei Vakhrushev, Director; Vyacheslav Makaryev, Cinematographer; and Vladislav Nuvano, Scientific Advisor. Vladislav is a reindeer herder by birth with a wide variety of experiences from growing up in his father's herd. He speaks his native language, the Chukchi language. He was our translator and guide through the universe of the tundra people. Without him we couldn't have handled the task at hand.

The main purpose of our two expeditions, held during the changes of the seasons (winter-spring and summer-autumn), was profound immersion into Vukvukai's world. We felt we had to attempt to fix and save their world with our documentary. We had to give Chukchi reindeer breeders a chance to show their real life, to speak about their past and present, to speak openly with a heavy heart.

We lived in the same fur homes with the reindeer herders, ate the same food, worked together in the herd and camps day-to-day, and we filmed our common life. We filmed the main events of a year with the reindeer herders, their seasonal celebrations and rites which are carefully preserved by Vukvukai. We gathered absolutely unique material about these strong people living in a non-stop struggle for survival and well-being in the harshest weather conditions of Chaun-Chukotka. These people are genuinely happy because they deeply believe in the strength of tradition. The ancient culture of nomadic Chukchi takes care of them, so they preserve and live it.

We watched Vukvukai teach his grandchildren to manage reindeer, catch them and harness them to the sledge. The children's favorite activity is to ride the reindeer team. Everything connected with the reindeer is in the nature of a game for the children.

Vukvukai has used their enthusiasm for the natural sharing of his experiences, traditional knowledge, and the skills of his ancestors. That's absolutely great and the children are content and happy in the tundra.


Unfortunately, each September the children must leave their native land to attend school. They won't see their parents, for 10 months. This is an annual tragic day for Vukvukai, and for all reindeer herding in Chukotka.

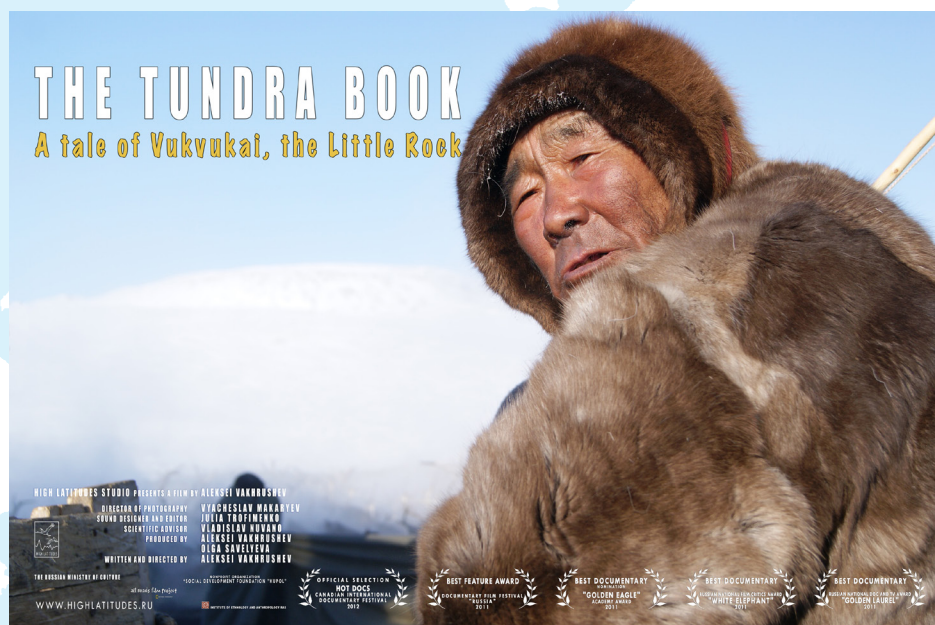
The noise of the departing helicopter finally stops and Vukvukai speaks. "This is the end. They get used to living in the residential schools, they won't work in the tundra, they don't want to. They will live over there. They'll become drunks or they'll end up in the grave. Just imagine, ten months of school and only two months in the tundra. It's like a prison. Why are they doing this to our children? The world has turned upside down. And finally they'll leave their mother, leave their father. You see, in this tent, in that tent, their children didn't come back. How will we pasture the deer? How will we survive? Who will become the next deer people? We'll grow old and there'll be no more reindeer. And I think that this land, all of this land, will become deserted. Everything will fall apart. Nothing will be left. No one will be left to breed the deer, if they keep taking them away to school. What for? It seems women are giving birth to children to just throw them away."

We filmed this dramatic speech of the elder, Vukvukai, and edited it for the ending of our full-length film, hoping to warn and inform people with power who can change the situation. The question is: To be or not to be? This isn't hypothetical for Chukchi reindeer herders, its reality. Their customs are vanishing; their life style is under the threat of disappearance!

The documentary, "The Tundra book: A Tale of Vukvukai, the Little Rock", has been screened throughout the Russian Federation and won many prizes. It won the highest Russian film award, The

Nike Award from the National Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences of Russia (Russia's equivalent to USA's Academy Award) for the 2011 Best Documentary Film. I used my director's thank you speech to tell the main problems facing Chukchi reindeer herders.

Aleksei Vakhrushev is the son of Tatiana Achirgina, the President of ICC Chukotka. .



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The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) representing the Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka. ICC Alaska, along with other members, strives to strengthen, protect, and develop Inuit rights in the circumpolar region.



Duane Smith, ICC Canada President presenting at the IPY conference. Gustaf Lind, Arctic Council Chair (on the far left) also participated in this panel. Photo by Kelsi Ivanoff.

Kelsi Ivanoff, Youth Representative on ICC-Alaska Board of Directors and Minnie Naylor, ICC-Alaska Project Assistant participated in the Northern Youth Leaders Program that brought youth throughout the circumpolar north to the International Polar Year (IPY) conference in Montreal last April. The program began before meeting in Montreal, where Kelsi and Minnie participated in online discussions on Arctic issues like traditional knowledge; and resource and economic development.

In addition to attending the IPY conference, they talked with high school students about Arctic issues and participated in panel sessions with various Arctic leaders throughout the week. We would like to thank Northern Youth Leaders Program for providing the opportunity for our youth to participate in the program, attend the IPY conference and network with other youth throughout the circumpolar north. 



Kelsi Ivanoff and Minnie Naylor at IPY Conference. Photo by Kelsi Ivanoff.