

# RURALCAP'S ACTION REPORTS

RurALCAP



Partners for Progress  
with Alaska's Communities

The weekly newsletter of the NON-PROFIT, PRIVATE CORPORATION  
which serves rural Alaska in the battle against poverty in our state.

An information and education function of Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.



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## Families To Move Into New Houses

Homeowners in the new Bethel housing project were scheduled to begin moving into their new homes Wednesday, Jan. 22, but several technical problems are still holding up final approval of the homes and their transfer to the Alaska State Housing Authority.

Ben Marsh, coordinator for the program, said the contractor, Braund, Inc. of Anchorage, has said it will lease the houses to ASHA on a month by month basis until ASHA can sign an official contract with Braund.

Several changes have to be made on the inside of the homes, Marsh said, but families will be moved into the 14 homes just as quickly as they are completed, expected to be within two weeks.

Marsh said several things are holding up the signing of contracts for the homes: final house plans must be approved by the Technical Services Division at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); the contractor must provide a final cost analysis on the houses and ASHA may have to get another appraisal to verify that analysis; and the

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The new houses have been moved from the factory site to the other side of Brown Slough in Bethel. The houses shown above are in the "cluster" effect planned for the housing development.

## Bethel Dedicates Pre-Fab Plant, Some 200 Attend Ribbon-Cutting

More than 200 people - - many of them from Anchorage and Juneau - - gathered in Bethel Jan. 14 to dedicate the plant which will turn out prefabricated low-income housing for the Kuskokwim area and will provide job training for the men involved in building those houses.

The dedication was the high point of the project which has involved some 10 state, federal and private agencies and has already produced 14 homes for the Bethel area since construction began last summer.

Visitors to Bethel for the dedication got a first-hand glimpse at the new houses by staying in them overnight. The H-style houses were complete with water, electricity and heat for the visitors.

Ben Marsh, coordinator for the housing project and an employe of the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska, called the project a success and said "the whole project denotes increased attention to the plight of western Alaska.

"This group in western Alaska has been



Coordinator Ben Marsh Opened dedication ceremonies.

the last to enjoy the fruits of our Twentieth Century," Marsh said. The housing project is "a significant start," he said, but it should be extended to other parts of the Kuskokwim. Plans now call for 100 homes to be constructed this winter and another 100 next winter.

Acting Bethel Mayor Art Nicholson said the immediate purpose of the huge prefabrication plant is for mass production of prefabricated housing, but that when the project is completed, it will also become a multi-purpose center for the city.

The city of Bethel provided some land for project purposes and the prefabrication plant was funded by a \$595,000 grant and a \$126,000 loan to the city from the Economic Development Administration.

Val Cameron, regional director of the Economic Development Administration, told the audience just before he cut the ribbon in the new plant that "it took a lot of head knocking to get all these people together - - especially on the federal level." He gave much of the

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## Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

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## RurALCAP Sets Up New Task Force

Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurALCAP) has established an agency task force in an effort to more effectively coordinate various parts of its war on poverty, according to Larry Brayton, RurALCAP's executive director. Tim Kennedy has been hired as manager of the task force.

Kennedy has four project directors in the task force: Miss Sally Miner, Head Start; Mrs. Mary Gange, Operation Mainstream; Les Sheaffer, Special Projects; and Frank Peterson, outreach coordinator, as Hugh Nicholls' representative for the Community Service Corps (CSC).

Kennedy will meet with the task force on a regular basis in an attempt to coordinate, so each component knows what the other is doing. All information is passed to each project director. This will establish better coordination with the Regional Boards, RurALCAP's Central staff and all participating agencies, Brayton said.

Peterson is the key person, according to Kennedy. As outreach coordinator he will receive all information from the area community developers. The over-all goal is to begin the process of developing the regional boards through training and spinning off programs to the regional boards, who will eventually be responsible for the programs.

Beginning with the flow chart showing the flow of command, each individual will know to whom he is responsible. Task force members will examine the programs to decide in which of the new components the programs fit. The organizational chart will then be presented to the regional boards and RurALCAP's board so they can make suggestions for any improvements.

Jon Tetpon, a program specialist, will be working under Kennedy, but will be working in many different program areas. He will set up the training programs for the regional boards and RurALCAP staff. He will be working closely with Frank Peterson, the outreach coordinator.

Kennedy will take the task force's suggestions on the organizational chart and meet with Larry Brayton, executive director and Tom Echols, deputy director for administration of RurALCAP. These combined suggestions will then go to the regional boards where a decision will be made on the new plan, with the RurALCAP's Board of Directors' approval.



The persons shown above were among those who met for the Bethel Homeowners Association in Bethel Jan. 15. The 14 families expected to move into these first completed homes met jointly with the Bethel Housing Committee to discuss when they could move into the new houses and the terms for buying them.

## Homeowners Assoc. Meet in Bethel

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Legal Department at HUD must approve the final contract between Braund, Inc. and ASHA and ASHA's management contract with the Bethel Housing Committee.

Officials have estimated it will take a month or more to finalize the details and the contract.

The Bethel Housing Committee, made up of representatives of agencies involved in the housing project, is expected to incorporate within the next few weeks and assume management responsibilities, which include both defending homeowners rights and enforcing regulations, for the project.

The housing committee and the Homeowners Association, made up of families moving into the homes, met jointly in Bethel the night after the Jan. 14 dedication to discuss and chart their future.

Larry Brayton, executive director of

RurALCAP -- the agency responsible for organizing both the committee and the Homeowners Association -- said he believed the Homeowners Association should be given the major voice in any such corporation because "they are the ones who are directly involved."

The suggestion came after Brayton and two representatives from the Office of Economic Opportunity in San Francisco, Carl Shaw and George Irvin, all criticized the lack of involvement in early stages of the housing project of the low-income people who will benefit from the houses.

Irvin said the people had gotten the right to negotiate with ASHA on contract terms only after "you had to fight for it every step of the way. . . The people deserve the right to comment on the houses -- and not after they are built and they have signed a 25 year mortgage."

## Napaskiak Wins Special Recognition

The village of Nepaskiak this last week was awarded a letter of commendation and special recognition from the U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., and from Rural Alaska Community Action Program for successful completion of its community hall in 1967.

The village, just south of Bethel on the Kuskokwim River, built the community hall with its own materials and with money for wages from Operation Mainstream.

Operation Mainstream is funded by the Department of Labor, Bureau of Work Training Programs, and sponsored locally by RurALCAP.

The letter from the Department of Labor and special plaque from RurALCAP was presented to the village Jan. 15 by Mrs. Mary Gange, director of Operation Mainstream. Also at Nepaskiak for the awards ceremony were: Larry Brayton, executive director of RurALCAP; Carl Shaw, western regional administrator for the Office of Economic Opportunity, San Francisco; and George Irvin, field representative for OEO.

Mrs. Gange said the Department of Labor first became aware of the community hall project after a pictorial review of the project had been submitted to them.

The informal awards ceremony took



Mrs. Mary Gange presents an award to Alexi Nicholai of Nepaskiak.

place in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Isaih Egoak. Many of the men who had worked on the community building a year and a half before gathered for the event.

Mrs. Gange said the award "shows our pride in the work your people had accomplished, the training they had taken advantage of through your project and the community hall that was the product of their training through Operation Mainstream.

## OEO Defunds Fairbanks Agency

The Office of Economic Opportunity has announced the North Star Borough Community Action Program in Fairbanks, plagued by interagency problems, will not be refunded for 1969.

Carl Shaw, western regional administrator for OEO, made the announcement for Western Regional Director Larry Horan while Shaw was in Alaska last week. The decision was made only after several months of study on the agency's problems and of trying to strengthen the program.

The agency, which had applied for a \$303,000 grant for 1969, will operate on unexpended funds until Feb. 15. It must gradually phase out its employes and close the office by Feb. 15.

George Irvin, OEO field representative and one who has studied the agency intensively, said OEO is considering making single-purpose grants in the area in order to continue operation of the Head Start program, the Native Welcome Cen-

ter, the Hope Center at the hospital and a tutorial program.

Shaw said OEO may consider recreating an agency there in the future but that many changes would have to be made. He attributed much of the agency's problem to its inability to keep a permanent director and a board of directors with which it was hard to work.

Shaw said in some areas the people can get along better without OEO community action programs and their restrictions, forms and requirements.

"The single-purpose grants to Fairbanks would allow them more freedom" to develop on a stronger footing, he said.

Irvin said OEO is giving some thought to placing a community developer over the single-purpose programs which might be funded in order to work towards recreating the agency.

## State, RurALCAP Coordinate Aims

The Alaska Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity and Rural Alaska Community Action Program have taken a new step to increase knowledge of each other's programs and coordination of their efforts to aid Alaska's low-income people.

The move came at a CAP Directors meeting with officials present from the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, the San Francisco Regional OEO headquarters, RurALCAP and the Greater Anchorage Area Community Action Program. They met in Bethel Jan. 14.

An agreement reached between RurALCAP director Larry Brayton and State director Tom Mercer calls for a meeting at least once a week of representatives of the two agencies to discuss programs in both the planning and operation stages to avoid duplications and make better use of already existing programs. Mercer said his representative would be Mrs. Marcella Young; Brayton's will be Mrs. Elizabeth McCallum.

At the recommendation of Jon Buchholdt, director of the Anchorage Community Action Agency, the two directors also agreed to try to establish a monthly meeting of community action program directors, state OEO officials and state commissioners as another coordination effort. The first such meeting is expected to be scheduled in Juneau within a month.

The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity holds the power of veto over all OEO program grants which go to the Anchorage and Rural CAPs, but final decisions and enforcement of regulations rest with OEO. There are also representatives of the state on RurALCAP's board of directors.

Mercer said he believes his office must serve to assist in developing general policy for Alaska's war on poverty, to promote maximum feasible participation of the poor in such programs, and to work toward using already existent state resources and programs to assist in the war on poverty.

Carl Shaw, western regional administrator for the Office of Economic Opportunity, said OEO is not just community action agencies.

"The door is wide open for the state" to use its own resources to help fight the war on poverty, he said.

# Military To Transport Equipment

Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurALCAP) has received official approval of the U.S. Air Force sponsorship for the transportation of surplus heavy equipment to the Northern sectors of Alaska along the Bering Seacoast, RurALCAP's Special Projects Director Les Sheaffer said.

The Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) will provide transportation to Seward and on to Dutch Harbor near Unalaska. Alaska Puget United Transportation Company (APUTCO) will provide transportation to the villages along the seacoast from Dutch Harbor under contract with the U.S. Air Force using the military's COOL BARGE carrier.

The provision for the transportation clears up another hurdle in RurALCAP's efforts to get surplus military equipment to Alaska's villages, Sheaffer said. He stated there will be a saving of \$15,000-\$20,000 in transportation costs to RurALCAP. Any extra costs incurred will be the difference between military and total costs which must be paid by RurALCAP, along with any diversion costs.

The COOL BARGE carrier has a large crane that can pick up a "D" Cat from the barge to the shore and upon the shore. The COOL BARGE carrier will drop off equipment at the selected villages. There is no regular commercial shipping service available to any of these villages.

This type of delivery is a standard requirement for the COOL BARGE carrier. Funds to pay the cost of transportation will come from U.S. Government funds regardless of type of service used. Substantial savings to the Government will be realized by including delivery of this equipment by the COOL BARGE carrier delivery.

Sheaffer has released a revised list of those villages scheduled to receive equipment as it is available and on a priority basis. The equipment will be issued in that order. RurALCAP cannot guarantee delivery of equipment to all those listed. The equipment will be distributed according to the number of pieces acquired. If RurALCAP acquires 15 pieces, the first 15 villages will receive equipment; if 10 pieces, 10 villages will receive equipment; if 5 pieces, 5 villages will get equipment and so on.

The villages listed for *earth movers* are: Alaskanuk, Upper & Lower Kalskag, Elim, Unalakleet, Copper Center, Kwethluk, Tuluksak, Kotlik, Nulato, Hooper Bay, Kake, Kasigluk, Quinhagak, Kipnuk, Napaskiak, Larson Bay, Kivalina, Buckland, Kwigillingok, Tununak, Kodiak Island, Mt. Village, Pilot Point, Ivanof Bay, Angoon, Napakiak, Minto, Craig, Hydaburg and Tananna.

The villages listed for *trucks* are: Larson Bay, Hooper Bay, Kodiak Island, Buckland, Angoon, Pilot Point, and Craig. Villages for *freezers* are: Shungnak, Mt. Village, Kivalina, Tununak, Diomedes and Eek. Villages for *front end loaders* are: Larson Bay, Pilot Point, Craig and Angoon. Villages for *road graders* are: Elim, Unalakleet, Buckland, King Cove and Pilot Point.

This equipment is expected to arrive in the villages after the training of personnel has been completed. The equipment will be in Seward for repairs by the trainees on or about March 10. Training in maintenance and repair of the equipment will begin March 1 and will be completed about June 10. The training will be through the Department of Vocational Education under the direction of Mr. Ward.

# Bethel Dedicates Housing Project

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credit to former Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

Marsh said credit for completing the houses on schedule must go to the developer, Braund, Inc. of Anchorage. Dick Breeden was on-the-site supervisor of the project for the company.

Recognized during the dedication ceremonies were representatives of various agencies involved in the project, including: Tom Mercer, Office of the Governor; Jacques Norvell, Bureau of Indian Affairs; Col. E.L. Hardin, Jr., Army Corps of Engineers; Dan Ryan, Public Health Service, Office of Environmental Health; Carl Shaw, Office of Economic Opportunity, San Francisco; and Larry Brayton, Rural Alaska Community Action Program.

Also recognized were Clyde Courtnege of the Economic Development Administration; Dr. Betsy Tower, State Department of Health and Welfare. Sid Abrahams, Housing and Urban Development, San Francisco; and Gene Levens, Alaska State Housing Authority.

Others recognized included representatives of the Association of Village Council Presidents, Bureau of Land Management, Small Business Administration and the families who will be moving into the new homes.

RurALCAP's ACTION REPORTS welcomes news items and reports on Community problems, special projects and progress in all parts of rural Alaska where the war against poverty is being waged. Community workers are urged to send reports on any items of interest to this paper at the address listed below.

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