



# RurAL ALaska Community Action Program, Inc.

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## Newsletter

### OEO CHIEF VISITS ALASKA

Donald Rumsfeld, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity and Special Assistant to President Nixon, made an unannounced visit to Alaska in September.

Ruralcap Executive Director, Byron I. Mallott, disclosed that Rumsfeld visited Fairbanks, Tanana, Kotzebue, Nome, Unalakleet and Emmonak during his stay in the 49th state.

The OEO Director's brief two-day visit, which began in Fairbanks and ended in Anchorage where he stopped only to change planes, allowed Rumsfeld the opportunity to gain a first-hand view of poverty conditions in rural Alaska.

Mallott reported that Rumsfeld was pleased with the projects he saw in the several villages he visited, especially the CEDC fishing cooperative in Emmonak.

"It is my understanding," Mallott said, "that Mr. Rumsfeld has wanted for some time to visit Alaska where OEO has several major programs. Having accompanied President Nixon to the Western Whitehouse, he took the opportunity to come to Alaska. A brief visit was all the Director's schedule would allow at this time, and I hope that he returns. In this short time, however, I feel he gained valuable insight into the problems we face up here."

"I was pleased," Mallott said, "that Rumsfeld took the time out from his busy schedule to visit Alaska. His visit gave him a first-hand look at what is being accomplished here with OEO funds." I am sure he found the trip a worthwhile venture.

Accompanying Rumsfeld, besides Mallott, were two top OEO officials, Dick Chaney of Rumsfeld's personal staff and Thomas H. Mercer, Director of the OEO's Northwest Regional Office in Seattle as well as Ernest Brannon of the Alaska OEO office.

### HEAD START WEEK

Governor Keith H. Miller September 2 officially designated September 6 through 12 as Head Start Week in Alaska.

In a proclamation sent to Byron I. Mallott, Executive Director of the Rural Alaska Community Action Program which has 38 Head Start programs operating in rural Alaska, Miller said: "The Head Start program is a positive approach to self help and self-concept that brings out the individuality of the child and provides him with an opportunity to become involved."

Upon receipt of the proclamation Mallott said "this recognition by the state further serves to underscore the importance of the Head Start program in the education system of rural Alaska, and the extent of its impact in that area."

Ruralcap and its predecessor the Alaska State Community Action Program (ASCAP) have been involved in village Head Start programs since 1965, when federal Head Start funds first became available. The individual programs are taught in Native Dialects by villagers hired and trained by Ruralcap.

Mrs. Betty Scaman, Ruralcap Child Development Director said after reading Miller's proclamation: "Perhaps more than any other program Head Start has had a greater impact on the education system in the bush."

"Head Start," she continued "introduced the vitally important concepts of parent involvement, local autonomy and career development."

"We at Ruralcap has as our goal," she continued "the provision of a meaningful pre school program in the bush. Ruralcap Head Start, with Native villagers as teachers is a bridge between the Native culture and the modern world."

"In most villages," she concluded "at the age of six, the child has little previous experience with the English language of the discipline of school. Head Start provides an in between period which gently eases the child into this new world. As a proof of its success, BIA and State teachers have reported that children who have attended Head Start classes before coming to school seem better prepared."

In the proclamation Miller said "The Head Start Program was conceived basically to introduce the disadvantaged child of pre-kindergarten age into our society and through fundamental training enable him to compete with children of his own age level."

Miller called upon all Alaskans to "take note of the goals of Head Start and to support the efforts of the Head Start Staff to build good relations in their communities."

To kick off Head Start Week Mrs. Scaman and Baxter Wood Curriculum Director for the Ruralcap Head Start program, appeared on the Norma Goodman television show in Anchorage.

#### RURALCAP BOARD MEETING

The Ruralcap Board of Directors met in Anchorage August 28 and 29 for their quarterly meeting.

During the meeting the board heard reports from the State Policy Advisory Committee for Early Childhood Development (the State PAC met August 27) the Community Development and Human Resources Committee the Program Policy Committee the Personnel Committee and the Training and Technical Assistance Committee as well as the Financial Committee.

The Board also passed motions to allow commercial fishing on the Kuskokwim River for chum salmon to be regulated by the State Fish and Game Department to allow subsistence fishing time and adequate escapement to allow commercial fishing on the Copper River for Red Salmon to be regulated by the State Fish and Game Department that the board sign off the Petersburg Public Schools Title I project; and directed the Executive Director to secure information on the Legal Services Class Action cases.

#### PCC CONSULTANT TAKES BUSH TOUR

Bob Meresko Parent Child Center Consultant from Cleveland, Ohio recently made a tour of the Parent Child Centers operated by Ruralcap in Hoonah and Kotzebue.

During the tour Meresko was accompanied by Mrs. Betty Scaman Ruralcap Child Development Director Jim Irany, PCC Program Advisor from Anchorage Community College and Bill Parker Education Specialist for the State Economic Opportunity Office.

In Hoonah the group met with Village PAC Chairman Thomas Jack and the members of his Committee. In Kotzebue they met with PAC Chairman Ed Robb and members of the PAC there.

#### ALASKA STUDENT ATTENDS HOUSING SEMINAR

Alfred C. Nakak, 22, the regional Director of the Inupiak Development Corporation is the only Alaskan participating in an on-the-job training program sponsored by the National Urban Coalition, Columbia University and the Foundation for Co-operative housing. Ruralcap Executive Director, Byron I. Mallott announced recently.

The program is funded by the Ford Foundation and a total of 40 students from throughout the United States are involved in this year's activities, which began with a seven week seminar at Columbia University in New York City.

To conclude the program, Nakak and his 39 fellow students will receive four months on-the-job training in various federal, state and local agencies dealing with the implementation of housing programs in their individual areas.

The program is the only one of its kind in the country, and its main function is to train minority students as professional technicians to work with federal low and middle-income housing programs.

During the seminar and the following on-the-job training, Nakak was on a leave of absence from his position with the Inupiak Development Corporation, an incorporated Ruralcap regional center.

When he was in New York, Nakak was photographed by Time photographers and his picture appeared on the cover of that national weekly magazine.

#### FAIRBANKS WOMAN NAMED TO NATIONAL INDIAN COUNCIL

Laura Bergt of Fairbanks has been appointed to the National Council for Indian Opportunity.

She is a member of both the Fairbanks and Anchorage Press Clubs a former Miss Arctic Circle, and a member of the Cook Inlet and Fairbanks Native Associations.

Mrs. Bergt has chaired the World Eskimo Olympics and was on the board of directors for the Arctic Association for Retarded Children.

When she lived in Anchorage, she was on the advisory board of the Upward Bound Program. She is also a board member for the Alaska Crippled Children's Association and Hope Center in Fairbanks.

#### NELS ANDERSON TAKES OVER AS PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Nels Anderson, 31, a 1970 graduate of the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, assumed duties as the new Program Development Specialist for Ruralcap in September.

Anderson, who hails from Kanakanak, Alaska, replaces Gordon Jackson, who took over as Director of the Southeastern Community Action Program in Juneau, during August.

A sociology major at the U of A, Anderson is married. He and his wife, Dorothy, will reside in Anchorage along with their two children.

#### OEO FIELD REPRESENTATIVE TOURS ALASKA

Charles Sauvage, Field Representative for the Office of Economic Opportunity's Northwest Region X, in Seattle, recently toured a number of the villages in Northwestern, Southcentral and Southeastern Alaska.

Sauvage's primary purpose for this trip was to obtain a first-observation of the programs presently being administered by Ruralcap in rural Alaska.

Included in the tour were the villages of Nome, Shismaref, Wales, Golovin and Yakutat as well as a visit to Juneau.

The OEO Field Representative attended the board meeting for the Inupiak Development Corporation, a Ruralcap regional center, in Dillingham.

In Juneau, Sauvage met with Jerry White, Director of the State Economic Opportunity Office, officials of the Model Cities Program, a Gordon Jackson, the newly appointed director of the Southeastern Community Action Program.

#### RURALCAP SUPPORTS PALMER EDA PROJECT

Byron I. Mallott, Executive Director of the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, recently urged that the Economic Development Administration approve and fund an application of the city of Palmer for a \$72,000 EDA assistance grant to construct an extension of the city's water system to the Palmer industrial area.

In a letter to Clyde Courtnage, Alaska Economic Development representative for the EDA, Mallott said: "The objectives of the City of Palmer in the area of job development and skill training for under employed and unemployed area residents are consistent with those of this agency. The benefits accruing to Palmer area residents from the realization of the proposed project are numerous and should substantially assist the city in its efforts to attract industrial development to an economically distressed area."

#### GEORGE IRVIN REPLACES BARRY MORRISROE

George Irvin, recently replaced Barry Morrisroe as the Community Representative for Alaska from the Federal Department of Health Education and Welfare's Office of Community Development.

Irvin, formerly an OEO Field Representative, is a Cornell University graduate and will represent HEW for the three early childhood development programs in Alaska. His home office will be in Anchorage.

#### DON GOLDBERG NAMED AS ASSISTANT CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Don Goldberg, 28, a former representative of Educational Projects Inc. contractors for Head Start supplementary training in San Francisco, Calif., assumed duties as Assistant Child Development Director as of September 1.

Goldberg, who is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, and taught elementary school in Philadelphia, Pa. for a year and a half, replaces Howard Scaman, who resigned the position July 1.

Don and his wife, Barbara, recently moved to Anchorage. They originally hail from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Don also spent two years with the Peace Corp in Colombia.



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