

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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May 2, 1969

Mayor Challenges School Equality

Phillip Carlson, mayor of Kake and a member of the RurALCAP board of directors, has started a drive to get state funds distributed to school districts on the basis of need rather than student population.



Mayor Phillip Carlson

Carlson said the State Department of Education has a constitutional obligation expressed in Article 1, Section 1 of the state constitution to provide equal opportunity for all its citizens.

"The State Department of Education has a history of confusing equal opportunity with equal distribution of funds," Carlson said. "The two are not synonymous because school district needs are not equal."

The mayor said he has asked Alaska Legal Services, an agency which provides legal help to the poor, to research the constitutional question as it pertains to distribution of school funds to see if court action might be feasible.

Giving more money to the poor districts, he said, would raise the overall level of education in the state.

Kake, located in Southeast Alaska on

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Kluckwan to Build Tribal House

The Southeastern village of Kluckwan has begun work on construction of a tribal house - community hall building which will allow them to share their Tlingit culture with tourists and visitors to the community.

Operation Mainstream will pay wages for workmen constructing the building, but the community will provide its own materials. Operation Mainstream, sponsored by RurALCAP, is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Mrs. Mary Gange, director of Operation Mainstream in Alaska, said the Kluckwan building is intended to provide a market place for Native arts and crafts, such as totems, silver work and skin sewing products. It will be a center for Indian dances, sale of Indian crafts and for community cultural activities such as story-telling and traditional festivities.

Kluckwan is located at Mile 22 on the Haines Cutoff Road at the northern terminus of the Alaska State Ferry System and thus is open to many tourists.

The hall will be a 40 by 26 foot log building.

Workmen have already begun work on clearing, leveling, and spreading gravel for an approximate 100 by 100 square foot

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RurALCAP Task Force Visits Bethel

The RurALCAP task force was in Bethel this week to meet with the agency's regional staff there and the Association of Village Council Presidents - the first of several scheduled trips to RurALCAP centers across the state.

The force met with personnel and members of the Native association in order to bring them up to date on plans to delegate responsibility for anti-poverty programs to the local development corporations and RurALCAP centers. They also offered to assist with any administrative problems.

The task force, a group made up of RurALCAP project directors, has been charged with developing a plan for orderly decentralization of responsibility and authority to the regional level. The task force has been given authority to guide actual RurALCAP program operation and administration during this interim period until regional autonomy

is reached.

RurALCAP intends to reach its goal of regional autonomy sometime in 1970 or 1971, thereby passing responsibilities and authority in budgets and programming from the central agency office to the 10 regional centers and boards.

The task force estimated in January that it would take about one year to train the regional boards and directors in the necessary skills for planning and administering their own budgets and programs.

The task force, along with Training Consultant Charles Harrison, coordinated the two-week training sessions just completed in Anchorage and Nome.

Frank Peterson, director of the Community Service Corps, is head of the task force. Other members are Miss Sally Miner, director of child development programs; Mrs. Mary Gange, di-

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Directors Meet Today

The board of directors of Rural Alaska Community Action Program is scheduled to meet today (May 2) in Anchorage for a special session.

Board members will review special conditions attached to the 1969 refunding grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity. Committee reports are expected on program policy, financial operations and personnel policy of RurALCAP.



Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

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RurALCAP Task Force
Visits Bethel

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rector of Bureau of Work-Training programs; and Mrs. Betty McCullum, director of Special Projects.

The group has also met with other agencies funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity - - such as the Alaska Village Electrification Cooperative and the Community Legal Services Enterprise Development Corp. - - to coordinate anti-poverty programs.

The task force has set the following organizational objectives to help make a smooth decentralization process:

1. Plan a timetable for the decentralization process.
2. Establish guidelines and procedures for implementing the plan. This should include a system of management control necessary for effective program operation and administration.
3. Coordinate all program activities including communication linkage within the agency.
4. Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of activities as determined by the statement of purpose.
5. Provide training to regional staff so they will be knowledgeable in the skills and methods of program administration and operation and to the regional boards so they will understand their duties and responsibilities in setting policies and establishing priorities.

Mayor Challenges

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Kupreanof Island, is a community of about 500 persons.

In a letter to the editor of the Petersburg Press printed recently, Carlson wrote: "The Native children in the villages are not getting an equal educational opportunity. These children are victimized by a rigid unwholesome formula for dispensing state funds to school districts. It is a formula oriented in favor of the affluent district, the district with the big vote."

Carlson said he thought it was good that some affluent districts could provide frills, such as swimming pools, for their students.

"But by building the pool they have demonstrated a lesser need for state monies than a district that cannot afford text books. The Department of Education is giving Alaskan children an exercise in unequal opportunity," he said.



Carl Heinmiller, second from left, sitting, recently signed a contract to carve the world's largest totem pole for the Kake Community Action Program. Present at the meeting were: sitting, from left to right, Kake Mayor Phil Carlson, Heinmiller, Frank Johnson, Charlie Jackson, Clarence Jackson and Reggie Skeek. Standing left to right, are Frank Murkowski, Rep. Ernie Haugen and Sen. Howard Bradshaw.

Carving Begins on World's Tallest Totem

Carving was expected to begin this week in Port Chilkoot on the world's largest totem pole.

The Kake Community Action Program contracted with Carl Heinmiller, totem carver from Port Chilkoot, to carve the 150-foot cedar log into a totem. The totem will later be permanently lodged in Kake

When asked why a community would want the world's largest totem pole, Kake Mayor Phillip Carlson said simply, "Uniqueness."

The totem pole project is part of a recreational program being sponsored by the Kake Community Action Program. The group has applied to the Farmers Home Administration for a \$15,000 recreational loan to help build the totem, a

community house, a playground and trails, but the application has not yet been approved.

Carlson estimated the carving will take Heinmiller and his four carvers about three months. The community action program specified a design for the totem. The finished totem is expected to be in excess of 130 feet, several feet taller than the current world record holder in Victoria, B.C. That totem is 127 feet, eight inches tall.

Carlson said the completed totem will be taken by Japanese steamer to Japan to be placed in the Alaska display at Japan's Expo 70.

After the Expo 70 exhibit, the pole will be returned to Kake, a community of about 500 persons on Kupreanof Island.



Chuck Harrison, training consultant



Paul Ventura, instructor



Robert Irwin, instructor

Regional Workers Train to Fight Poverty

BY LIZ GOSS

Within the next few months local anti-poverty workers in rural Alaska must learn to bear the full responsibility of its own anti-poverty programs. This is a big step.

These local workers have just completed two weeks of intensive training sponsored by Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurALCAP). This is only a part of RurALCAP's plan to equip them with the training and initiative they need to plan and carry out their own anti-poverty programs.

They are learning to work toward economic and social development in gen-

eral for their areas. Another training session will be held May 19 - 24 in Anchorage and Nome. Other In-Service Training sessions will be held throughout the year.

RurALCAP held this training session for the directors of regional action centers, area community developers and chairmen of the regional development corporations. The directors and developers are employees of RurALCAP while the corporation chairmen are volunteers, as are all board members.

After two weeks of training a tired William Johnson, commenting on the

training session, said, "I have a sense of motivation now and know what my objectives will be." Johnson is secretary-treasurer of the Bristol Bay Development Corporation. He said this will speed up the process of the centers operating on their own.

Christine Yazzi, in - take clerk at Copper Center said, "It has clarified what we are expected to do out there (in the regional centers).

In summing up reactions to the training, Kelly Simeonoff, Kodiak Center director, said, "I believe it has given us all a better idea of what is expected of us on a local basis where there may have been some misunderstanding before." He noted that each region represented now has a better understanding of how RurALCAP works, how it is structured and the degree of responsibility and authority the employees of RurALCAP have in their own regions.

Simeonoff continued, "A lot more went on in this class than just instructor training. The fact that so many different regions were represented, and the exchange of ideas and views has given us all a better understanding of each other's individual regions. We have become acquainted with many of the other federal agencies in Alaska who can help us in our fight against poverty."

Some of the subjects covered during this training session were motivation, performance, organization and leadership of supervisory training; The office of Economic Opportunity guidelines; guidelines and policy of RurALCAP; general and specifics about cooperatives; basics of accounting; management by objectives and effective communications. Three complete days were spent on this last subject. It was emphasized that we must be able to communicate effectively in order to achieve our goal in the fight against poverty.



Employees at the Anchorage in-service training found the sessions an opportunity for self-expression and an exchange of ideas. They also found them a lot of work and often tiring.

Board Meetings Are Scheduled for May

Rural Alaska Community Action Program has scheduled the following meetings during the month of May:

April 29 - May 1 - Alaska Village Council Presidents meet in Bethel.

May 2 - RurALCAP board of directors meet in Anchorage.

May 5 - 6 - Bristol Bay Area Development Corp. meet in Dillingham.

May 9 - 10 - Prince William Sound - Copper Valley Development Corp. will meet in Cordova.

May 19 - 24 - In-service training for RurALCAP employes at both Anchorage and Nome.

May 22 - 23 - Norton Sound and Bering Strait Inupiak Development Assoc., Inc. meet in Nome.

May 26 - 27 - Southeast Alaska Com-

munity Action Program (SEACAP) board of directors will meet in Kake.
May 27 - 28 - Koyukon Development Corp. will meet in Nenana.

Rumsfeld is Named New OEO Director

Donald Rumsfeld, Illinois congressman, was named by President Nixon last week to run the anti-poverty agency, the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Rumsfeld, a Republican representative, fought the creation of OEO by President Johnson in 1966 and opposed funding the agency. Rumsfeld said this does not mean he is against any government anti-poverty efforts, but believes there are better alternatives.

When President Johnson formed OEO as part of his War on Poverty, some of the choices offered by Republicans were proposals that old line agencies run the programs. President Nixon has followed that line with his recent order moving two key projects from OEO to other agencies - - the Job Corps to the Labor Department and Project Head Start to the Office of Education.

Rumsfeld indicates approval of such moves and sees the probability of more. Rumsfeld admitted everything may not work and that failures are to be expected. He said, "OEO will develop approaches and ideas that can be tested and made workable - - and if they cannot work, they will be stopped."

Upon Senate confirmation of the appointment, Rumsfeld will give up his seat in Congress.

Kluckwan to Build Tribal House

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lot for the building. The lot, which allows space for a parking area, was donated to the village by Clarence Hotch. Workmen have also hauled building materials onto the site.

Mrs. Dorothy Fossman, superintendent for the project in Kluckwan, said the lot improvement was made possible because of the assistance of the Department of Highways, which provided a caterpillar for work on the lot.

Victor Hotch was named by the village to serve as foreman of the project. The teaching of basic carpentry skills, under the supervision of experienced village carpenters, will be one of the main objectives, Mrs. Gange said.

She said many of the skills learned by workmen may be carried over in repairing their own homes and may eventually give the men enough basic knowledge and experience to obtain employment when opportunities arise.

In addition to the community hall project, Operation Mainstream will pay wages for workmen to install a chlorinator - - supplied by the Public Health Service - - for the water supply in Kluckwan.

Mrs. Gange said the wooden sewer and water pipes throughout the village were installed in the early 1900's and were last renovated in 1941. Leaky connections have created a serious contamination problem, she said.

Housing Units Slated

The Alaska State Housing Authority has announced it will build 100 living units for elderly and low-income families in Fairbanks this summer to help meet the critical housing shortage there.

Forty of the 100 approved units will be financed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for elderly or handicapped people who are 62 years of age or older. The other 60 units will be reserved for low-income families.

Fairbanks Mayor H.A. "Red" Boucher last week flew to Washington, D.C. to seek further help for the housing shortage. The mayor said the housing problem was a result of the oil boom on the North Slope. He also said the city had never fully recovered from the flood two years ago.

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