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RURAL CAP'S

# Village Voices

Healthy People, Sustainable Communities, Vibrant Cultures



Kwethluk elementary students enjoy friendship time after school



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## Message from the Board President: Moving Forward with Energy Solutions:

### Consumer Lessons Learned from Juneau's Energy Crisis



Andrew Ebona,  
RurAL CAP Board President

by Andrew Ebona

It seems all too often that it takes a crisis to wake people up to simple things. In Juneau, the 'crisis' came in the form of an avalanche earlier this year on April 16 that effectively knocked out Juneau's electricity. The avalanche damaged a transmission line to Juneau's hydroelectric project forcing the utility to rely on costly diesel fuel to produce electricity until it was repaired. This resulted in immediate increases in electricity costs.

It became clear to Juneauites that we needed to do something fast. We put into motion conservation practices and discussed ways to become more energy efficient. We turned off the lights when not needed, took shorter showers, turned down the thermostat, hang dried the laundry, and changed our light bulbs to compact fluorescent lights (cfl's). These are not new energy conservation tips, and we found in a short amount of time that these measures saved us money! Many rural Alaskans have been practicing these measures for years, and for those of us who haven't been...these lessons can help others.

We learned lifestyle changes; we began tracking the number of kilowatts appliances use much like the keen eye on the daily rise in gas prices, we gave up using those that wasted energy and

ones that we had otherwise taken for granted. We turned to candles. We found we could make do with a lot less, and that the rewards were substantial. Businesses too worked to reduce electricity use by 30%; they turned off their lights, unplugged appliances, and reaped the benefits in cost savings also.

Our leaders took action too. 100 Native leaders and energy experts gathered in Juneau's Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall this month for the T&H Central Council and Sealaska-sponsored Southeast Alaska Native Summit. The purpose of the Summit was to discuss the many energy options and resources available, and to identify short and long term solutions to curtail the dramatic increases in energy costs and impacts on the local economies.

The Summit participants are keenly aware of the connections of affordable energy and lower cost energy to the ability of businesses to compete. Equally as important, they know villages are still the heartbeat of Alaska and that economic development and employment opportunities are critical for people to remain in them. The commitment of SE leaders to find solutions that work at the local levels and move their plans forward for cheaper affordable energy will assist in perpetuating a lifestyle that makes Alaska what it is. ●

## Simple Energy Saving Tips For Alaskans

### Humidity-Related Tips

- Inside moisture level should be between 40-50%—less than that is too dry (bad for your health) and more than that is too humid (bad for health and can cause house to mold). *For about \$10 you can get a hygrometer (humidity gauge) to measure the humidity level.*
- To decrease humidity:
  - Use exhaust fans in the house (bathroom or kitchen, for example) or open windows a bit.
  - Don't hang clothes inside to dry.
  - Cover pots when boiling water or cooking.
  - Don't disconnect the dryer vent.
  - Don't put a pot of water on the woodstove unless it's not humid enough inside.
  - Avoid bringing firewood inside the house to dry.
  - If there is condensation or ice in corners of a wall, then cold air is probably coming in and turning the humidity into water—need to fix insulation and/or caulk around cracks and joints.
  - If there are whole walls or big sections of walls with ice on them, then those parts of the walls are probably missing insulation behind them.

### Water-Related Tips

- Install a low-flow showerhead (two gallons per minute)—it will save in the electricity used to heat water, and save on the water bill.
- If you have an electric hot water heater, wrap the sides of the hot water tank with a special insulated blanket (available at most hardware stores at reasonable cost). Don't insulate the tank of a gas water heater as it is a fire risk!
- Insulate hot water pipes, *especially within the first six feet of the water heater.*
- Keep the hot water set to 120° F—cooler or hotter than that may waste electricity.
- Turn the electric hot water heater off. *If you have a gas water heater, set it to "Vacation" or off (relight upon return). If you have an oil water heater, turn it off.*
- Take a shower instead of a bath—showers use about one half the water.
- Be conservative with water when washing dishes by hand—fill a sink or bowl instead of running the water.
- Fix faucets if they start to drip!

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David Hardenbergh,  
RurAL CAP Executive Director

Message from the Executive Director:  
*Living within our Means:  
The Key to Personal Finances &  
Sustainable Government*

by David Hardenbergh

Recent news about the national and global economic situation is filled with gloom and doom. As our national economy spirals into a recession, we hear more and more reports of declining property values, rising unemployment, increases in bankruptcies and foreclosures, falling stock markets and consumer confidence in a tailspin.

The meltdown of the home mortgage market and freeze up of credit has led some to refer to this as the greatest financial crisis in the US since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Americans across the country are worried about losing their jobs, their homes and their savings.

Although economies and markets historically operate in up and down cycles, understanding how we got ourselves into this particular fiscal mess is one of the keys to preventing it from happening again. I recently heard one of the most concise and articulate explanations of our national economic situation from a most unlikely source: a television interview on the Late Show with David Letterman. In it, former President Bill Clinton described how the rise in speculative real estate investing through derivatives and leveraging combined with sub-prime mortgage lending made possible by deregulation created the perfect storm conditions which resulted in the current collapse of financial markets.

The factors responsible for creating this crisis are too complex to be easily attributed to a single source such as "Wall Street greed." So at the risk of oversimplification, let me propose that one of the underlying causes of this crisis is that individually and collectively, we Americans have been living beyond our means.

In his classic novel *David Copperfield*, Charles Dickens writes, "Annual income, twenty pounds; annual expenditure, nineteen pounds; result, happiness. Annual income, twenty pounds; annual expenditure, twenty-one pounds; result, misery."

The average American household has more than \$8,000 in credit card debt. Far too many Americans expend more than 30% of their income on housing, which contributes to a phenomenon known as "house rich, cash poor." Limiting housing expenses to 30% of income, however, can be almost impossible in rural Alaska when home energy costs alone can quickly swallow up the majority of a family's monthly income.

When we apply the concepts of "living within our means" and "living beyond our means" to the finances of our state and federal governments, it reminds me of the opening line of another Charles Dickens novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

For the State of Alaska, high oil prices over most of the past year have left our state coffers overflowing with revenue. It was the best of times. Although recent declines in the stock market have decreased the value of the Permanent Fund from over \$40 billion a year ago to about \$30 billion today, this still leaves us with a savings account that is the envy of every other state in the union. When divided by our current population of about 680,000, the equity share of the Permanent Fund for each man, woman and child in Alaska comes out to an average of just over \$44,000. Not a bad nest egg!

Let's compare that to our individual share of the federal government's finances. It was the worst of times. Instead of adding to a national savings account, the federal government over the past eight years has been spending more money than it's been taking in. The amount of that overspending in a given fiscal year is referred to the budget deficit. When you add together the running total of our past annual deficits and annual surpluses, the cumulative total is known as the national debt.

The US recently set a record for which none of us should be particularly proud. The fiscal year 2008 budget deficit rose to an all time high of \$454.8 billion. Talk about living beyond our means! Even as a percentage of GDP (gross domestic product), this budget deficit is the highest we've seen since just after World War II.

For anyone even remotely interested in the concept of fiscal responsibility, the story of the national debt is even more unsettling. It's so bad that the digital display on the national debt clock in New York City recently ran out of digits as the debt climbed over the \$10 trillion mark. Let's type that one out to see just what \$10 trillion looks like: \$10,000,000,000,000.00. If we were to divide this debt by the roughly 305 million Americans in the country, our individual share comes out to about \$33,000 each. What would Charles Dickens say about that?

Separate from the difference between our state government's savings account and the federal

government's debt, we also know that the Alaskan economy is somewhat disconnected from other national economic trends. We have Dan Fauske at the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation and local financial institutions to thank for the fact that Alaska never did become fertile ground for the kind of predatory sub-prime mortgage lending and subsequent foreclosures and decline in property values that now plague much of the country. With our oil-based economy, cold climate, vast distances and high transportation costs, Alaska experiences a disproportionate impact from changing energy prices than the rest of the country.

While high oil prices may be a blessing for state revenue and the oil and gas industry, they have devastating impacts on remote rural communities where the energy burden (percentage of household income spent on energy) is highest among low-income families. For years RurAL CAP has been advocating and implementing energy conservation measures as a way to create sustainable communities. But what else should we do in these times of economic uncertainty? Well here's what I'm doing:

- Live below my means.
- Live well below my means.
- Spend less than I earn and learn how to invest the difference.
- Pay off credit cards in full each month.
- Maintain cash reserves equal to 3-6 months of household income.
- Pay cash for used vehicles and drop the collision insurance.
- Limit housing expenses to a sustainable portion of income.
- Only consider a fixed mortgage (preferably a 15-year with 20% down).
- Develop a good investment plan and stick with it, especially when markets decline.
- And finally, stay healthy—eat well and exercise every day.

It's when times are toughest that following a disciplined financial plan is most important. ●

## Alaska Weatherization Agencies

**Alaska Community Development Corp.**  
1517 S Industrial Way, Suite 8  
Palmer, AK 99645-6791  
(907) 746-5680 / (800) 478-8080 (Toll Free)  
(907) 746-5681 / (800) 478-1530 Fax  
email: [ltice@alaskacdc.org](mailto:ltice@alaskacdc.org)  
[www.alaskacdc.org](http://www.alaskacdc.org)

Service Area: *Mat-Su Borough, Kenai-Peninsula Borough, Copper River Valley, Southeast Alaska (except Juneau), Kodiak, Bristol Bay, Prince William Sound, Aleutians*

**Interior Weatherization**  
122 First Avenue, Ste. 600  
713 15th Ave, Fairbanks, AK 99701-6116  
(907) 452-5323 / (800) 478-5323 (Toll Free)  
(907) 452-1433 Fax  
email: [knichols.iwi.@alaska.com](mailto:knichols.iwi.@alaska.com)  
[www.interiorwx.org](http://www.interiorwx.org)

Service Area: *Fairbanks/NSB, Road System: South to Cantwell and East to Delta Junction*

**Municipality of Anchorage (MOA)**  
557 E. Fireweed Lane  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503  
(907) 343-4881  
(907) 343-6831 Fax  
E-mail: [ChordMI@muni.org](mailto:ChordMI@muni.org)  
[www.muni.org/cdbg/weatherization.cfm](http://www.muni.org/cdbg/weatherization.cfm)  
Service Area: *Municipality of Anchorage*

**Rural Community Action Program, Inc. (RurAL CAP)**  
PO Box 200908  
Anchorage, AK 99520-0908  
(907) 279-2511  
(907) 278-2309 Fax  
(800) 478-7227  
(800) 478-6343 Fax  
E-mail: [rlee@ruralcap.com](mailto:rlee@ruralcap.com)  
[www.ruralcap.com](http://www.ruralcap.com)  
Service Area: *Western Alaska, Northern Alaska*

**Juneau Office (Rural CAP)**  
PO Box 32139, Juneau, AK 99803-2139  
(907) 790-3499  
(907) 790-3676 Fax  
Service Area: *Juneau*

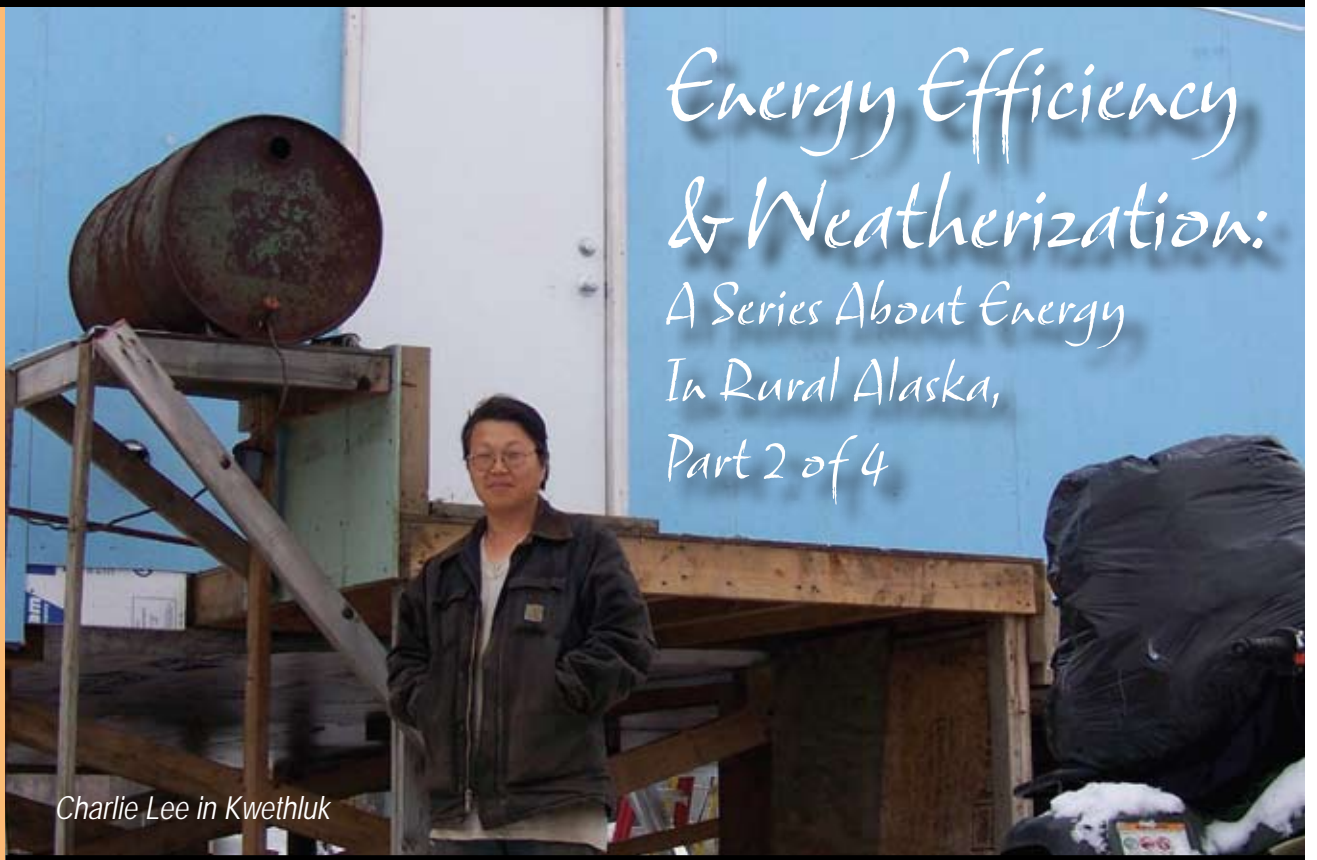
**Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)**  
Fairbanks, AK 99701-4871  
(907) 452-8251 x 3419  
(800) 478-6822 x 3419 or x 3483  
email: [walexander@tananachiefs.org](mailto:walexander@tananachiefs.org)  
[www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org)  
Service Area: *Interior Alaska*

*John White of Nightmute stands outside his recently weatherized home*



## Weatherization Process:

1. Energy assessments with blower doors
2. Raise foundations of homes
3. Wrap homes—consists of putting insulation on the walls, roof and floor
4. Other miscellaneous repairs/enhancements to exterior/interior



*Charlie Lee in Kwethluk*

## Energy Efficiency & Weatherization: A Series About Energy In Rural Alaska, Part 2 of 4

*by Angela Gonzalez*

Weatherization works. It lowers the costs of electricity and home heating and makes more household money available for other basic necessities that keep local economies alive. It provides more safe and affordable housing. It reduces energy consumption and improves housing quality with efficient heaters, more insulation, and reduced air leakage. It improves health benefits through improved indoor air quality, lower carbon monoxide levels, controlling moisture and mold, and eliminating drafts and cold spots. It increases fire safety with more smoke detectors, fixing unsafe stove pipes, installing exit windows and repairing or replacing unsafe furnaces. It provides local economic benefits through training and jobs for local people.

Alaska received a huge \$200 million increase in Weatherization funds from the legislature this spring. The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation is responsible for administering Weatherization programs in Alaska through the five primary agencies: RurAL CAP, Alaska Community Development Corporation, Interior Weatherization, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and the Municipality of Anchorage (see list on this page). With the large increase in funding this year, AHFC's five weatherization providers were expanded to include the 15 Regional Housing Authorities.

Income eligibility requirements were expanded from 60% of median income to 100% of median income. Priority is still given to elderly, disabled, and families with young children, under 60% of median income.

Charlie Lee built his two-story home in Kwethluk in 1998. There are 7 people living in his home, including Charlie, his wife, and their five children. Their home was in the process of being wrapped on October 13. Lee says, "Putting insulation on the floor and ceiling makes a big difference." Between last November and February of this year, Lee paid \$3,500 to heat his home. He did not expect his home to be weatherized, so he has been gathering driftwood all summer to prepare for a long winter with high fuel costs. During the winter, Lee uses 8-9 sled loads of wood to heat his home. Before weatherizing his home, Charlie said, "the wood stove and oil stove were both running to heat my house. This year, I haven't had to do much burning so far." Charlie says weatherizing his home has "cut down his heating expense by half, because now the oil stove is good enough to heat the home."

The RurAL CAP weatherization program began in June in the downtown area of Kwethluk and worked on homes in the uptown area in October. Lee's home is located in the uptown area, near homes that were built by the Association of Village Council Presidents. Lee expressed gratitude for the program and said, "I was worried this year. Earlier this year I got a lot of driftwood to prepare for the winter. I feel much better now."

It generally takes a crew about a week to work on one home, depending on the size and amount of work needed to weatherize and rehabilitate them.

When four people are breathing normally in a home for three days, they will exhale five gallons of water. Where does the air go if the home is not properly ventilated? Moisture goes into the ceiling and walls. When the insulation gets wet, it does not do the job of insulating. Mold and mildew can build up to unhealthy levels and may result in health problems.

The RurAL CAP weatherization crew also installs air vents that automatically vent the house when the home reaches a certain humidity level. This eliminates moisture that may get into walls and ceilings and rot the wood, causing mold and mildew. Mold and mildew can lead to health issues, like pneumonia and asthma. Charlie has two children in his home with medical problems. Having a properly ventilated and warm home are important for his children.

Robert Reekie is the on-site supervisor of the RurAL CAP weatherization crew in Kwethluk. Robert said when the energy assessment was done with the blower door on Charlie's home, it reflected how leaky his home was. A blower door is a powerful fan that mounts into the frame of an exterior door, and tests the home's air tightness. Reekie says, "If residents receive energy assistance, then they are already qualified for the RurAL CAP weatherization program."

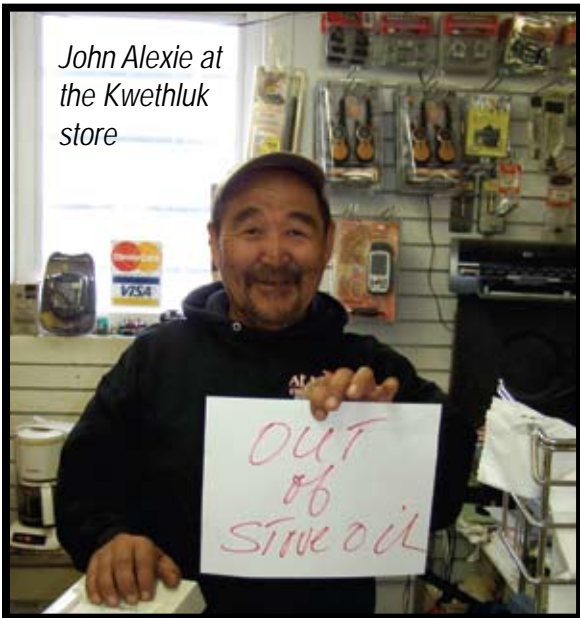
John Alexie is the former mayor of Kwethluk. Alexie's roof was about ready to cave in. Alexie said, "Every time it rained, it would rain inside too." Alexie said weatherizing his home would cut his fuel in half and will save a lot and already makes a noticeable difference. Alexie has seven people living in his home. The weatherization crew found mold in the walls and ceiling. Alexie said, "There is no more rain in my house!"

Alexie works part time at a store in Kwethluk where stove oil is sold. Having an energy efficient home in Kwethluk is ever more important now because the store recently ran out of stove oil. The community was expecting a barge delivery with stove oil, but it could not get there because of an early freeze. Kwethluk will likely have to fly the fuel in, resulting in much higher fuel costs. Homes that have been weatherized properly won't be as hard hit as those homes that are not weatherized. Many homeowners have wood stoves for back up or to run at the same time when it gets cold.

The RurAL CAP weatherization crew works in conjunction with other agencies locally and regionally to improve homes. Kwethluk Tribal Resident Council, Inc. (KTRC) will paint Alexie's home. Weatherization funding does not pay for painting the interior of the homes and other "cosmetic" improvements. RurAL CAP received a Housing Preservation Grant from USDA Rural Development and matching grant from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to address some of these items on a limited number of homes. In the past several years, RurAL CAP partnered with KTRC to provide some of this additional funding.

RurAL CAP estimates homeowners save about 40% on fuel costs after having their homes weatherized. Many of the homeowners receive energy assistance (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP) from the state to help pay for electricity and heating fuel. The weatherization improvements stretch the energy assistance funding to the family for most of the winter.

Often times there are delays in program services as a result of construction challenges. A barge delivering gravel to Nightmute was recently grounded, and ice was building up around it. While this barge was not delivering supplies for the



John Alexie at the Kwethluk store

weatherization project, it speaks to the challenging nature of getting supplies to remote rural Alaska.

Stoves and heaters run more efficiently with properly insulated homes. The Nightmute weatherization crew is completing 29 homes this season and the crew expects to be done in mid-November, weather-permitting. About 250 people live in Nightmute, 16 miles south of Toksook Bay. One of the crew members actually helped to weatherize his own home, and he has already noticed less cold air drafts. Nightmute is near the coast, and high winds are common. The community does not have running water; instead, water is delivered to homes. Homes are connected by board walks.

Elder John White had his home weatherized, and said, "Its pretty good now...warm." White's furnace would start automatically when the temperature inside the house went down. The furnace is noisy, and he notices that his furnace does not come on as much now that his house is more efficient. Like other people in the region, White gathers drift wood in the summer to prepare for the winter. Last year, someone stole his stove oil. White's grandson lives with him in his house.

Joseph Post also had his home weatherized, and said, "when it was windy outside, we could feel the breeze." Five people live in the Post home. The mother of two-year-old William says she learned how much cleaner the air could be with the air vent. William has had pneumonia in the past. The Post family had been trying to get a home for awhile now, because the home is old and showing wear. The current home was built in 1979. The 30-year-old windows and siding were rotten. They added on to their home, and had air leaks where the add-on was connected. With their home weatherized and warmer, they can now remain in it.

Ruby Tribal Council Chief Billy McCarty, says, "We've been burning more wood for years now, and the only time we leave the monitor on is when we travel. We have to get a lot of wood to break even." Ruby residents say they have the highest kilowatt rate in the region at \$1.20 per kilowatt hour and are currently experimenting with the use of hydropower from the Yukon River. It may take a few years to realize the benefits.

Weatherizing homes makes them more energy efficient and has health benefits as described above. Many people are moving out of rural Alaska because of the high cost of energy. Energy in rural Alaska is getting more expensive, and weatherization and other energy conservation measures are even more critical than ever. Weatherization can help in the short-term while Alaska works on long-term solutions. ●

## Alaska Regional Housing Authorities

### Aleutian Housing Authority

Aleut Plaza, 4000 Old Seward Hwy, Suite 202  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
(907) 563-2146 • (907) 563-3105 Fax  
www.aleutian-housing.com

### Association of Alaska Housing Authorities

4300 Boniface Parkway, Anchorage, AK 99504  
(907) 338-3970 • (907) 338-4904 Fax  
www.aahaak.org

### AVCP Regional Housing Authority

PO Box 767, Bethel, AK 99559-0767  
(907) 543-3121 • (907) 543-3933 Fax  
www.avcphousing.org

### Baranof Island Housing Authority

PO Box 517, Sitka, AK 99835-0517  
(907) 747-5088 • (907) 747-5701 Fax

### Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority

PO Box 995, Nome, AK 99762-0995  
(907) 443-5256 • (907) 443-8652 Fax

### Bristol Bay Housing Authority

PO Box 50, Dillingham, AK 99576-0050  
(907) 842-5956 • (907) 842-2784 Fax  
www.bbha.org

### Cook Inlet Housing Authority

3510 Spenard Rd. Suite 201  
Anchorage, AK 99503-2745  
(907) 793-3000 • (907) 793-3070 Fax  
www.cookinlethousing.org

### Copper River Basin Reg. Housing Auth.

PO Box 89, Glennallen, AK 99588  
(907) 822-3633 • (907) 822-3662 Fax  
www.crbra.org (under construction)

### Interior Regional Housing Authority

828 27th Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99701-6918  
(907) 452-8315 • (907) 456-8941 Fax  
www.irha.org

### Ketchikan Indian Community

2960 Tongass Avenue, Ketchikan, AK 99901  
(907) 228-5233 • (907) 228-5286 Fax  
www.kictribe.org

### Kodiak Island Housing Authority

3137 Mill Bay Rd., Kodiak, AK 99615-7032  
(907) 486-8111 • (907) 486-4432 Fax  
www.kiha.org

### North Pacific Rim Housing Auth.

8300 King St., Anchorage, AK 99518  
(907) 562-1444 • (907) 562-1445 Fax  
www.nprha.com

### Northwest Inupiat Housing Authority

PO Box 331, Kotzebue, AK 99752-0331  
(907) 442-3450 • (907) 442-3486 Fax

### Tagiugmiullu Nunamiullu (TNHA)

PO Box 409, Barrow, AK 99723-0409  
(907) 852-7150 • (907) 852-2038 Fax

### Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority

PO Box 32237, Juneau, AK 99803-2237  
(907) 780-6868 • (907) 780-6895 Fax  
www.thrha.org



## Weatherization Construction Challenges in Rural Alaska:

- Weather - high winds & cold weather
- Storage for materials
- Labor pool (locally, regionally or statewide)
- Temporary office space (need phone/fax)
- Transportation (Getting supplies to remote areas)

Nightmute residents attempt to aid a grounded barge

# Bartering & Subsistence in Alaska

*Learning to pick high bush berries in Huslia is an important cultural activity  
Photo by Eleanor Yatlin*

by Angela Gonzalez

Like other indigenous people around the world, Alaska Natives have traded traditional foods, plants, and other supplies for centuries. People along the coast traded their delicacies with people from inland, and up north people traded for items from the south that they did not have access to. Seal oil for bear grease, herring eggs for salmon strips, berries for muktuk. While dog sleds and boats gave way to snow machines and air travel, the trading traditions continue today.

Helen Roberts, originally from Ambler, moved away in 1981 and now lives in Anchorage. She still maintains close connections with family and friends in the villages. She has a friend who goes ice fishing in Kotzebue for sheefish and tomcods. Roberts says, "When my friend comes to town, I cook a steak dinner for her in exchange for the fish."

People are eager to talk about the kinds of foods they like to eat and share the many ways to prepare traditional foods.

Roberts enjoys eating white fish eggs, and says, "When we catch white fish in the fall, we have a different way of hanging the fish. We keep the eggs in the belly, and eat the dried eggs." Roberts acquired the taste for herring eggs from southeast Alaska when she went to school in Mt. Edgecumbe High School in Sitka. She described the way herring eggs are caught using spruce tree branches, "The herring release their eggs, and the branches catch them."

Roberts says, "We like baked fish with seal oil." Most people who live off the coast or inland get seal oil from villages along the coast.

Helen also stated, "People from Barrow send me muktuk—cooked or frozen. I trade paniqtaq for muktuk." Paniqtaq is dried white fish or dried caribou meat.

Roberts' mother, Minnie Gray, lives in Ambler, but spent a couple weeks in Anchorage in October. Gray's family used to get reindeer hide and meat from herders in the summer, and says, "Herded reindeer was the only meat we used to get in the

summer. The reindeer hide is tough, and was used for sinew for leggings." Mukluks are winter boots, with the bottoms made of waterproof material and tops or 'leggings' made from the hide of caribou, reindeer or other animals. Subsistence foods were not the only thing people traded. Minnie Gray remembers that when she was 12, a man from the interior traded her sheep skin mittens for a pair of beaver skin mittens.

Amelia Hecker, originally from Kiana, visited Minnie Gray for lunch. They feasted on paniqtaq, muktuk, rendered bear fat, carrots and Cup-O-Noodle soup. Gray described how they still dig up roots, and put them in bear fat or seal oil. They call it masru in Inupiaq, and also refer to it in English as Eskimo potatoes. She also said they store and flavor bear berries in seal oil.

The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) released a book earlier this year entitled Traditional Food Guide for Alaska Native Cancer Survivors. It was published by the ANTHC Cancer Program for Alaska Native cancer survivors to have an easy-to-read resource about Alaska's subsistence foods. According to the guide, "With the mix of wild food available throughout our state, it is no wonder that traditional Native foods are shared through informal trade networks and exchanges between family and friends living in rural Alaska and their extended family living in more urban areas. It is not uncommon to trade a gallon Ziploc bag of salmon berries from the Yukon-Kuskokwim for some caribou or whale meat from the North Slope."

Because subsistence and traditional uses of fish and game are the foundation of Alaska Native cultures and well being, it is imperative to continue to educate Alaskans and others about why subsistence is still important today and into the future. Even during the times when other issues seem to be at the forefront, there needs to be an ongoing focus on subsistence.

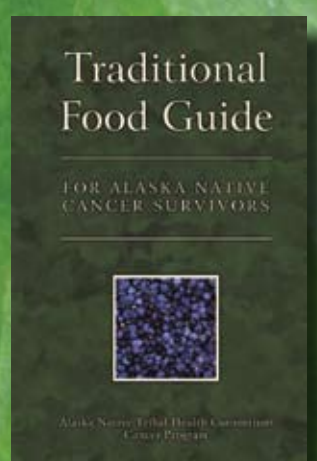
Olga Malutin, board member of the Kodiak Area Native Association, said, "For our people, subsistence is something that is our bread and butter. It's our culture. It's our soul. It's so many things beyond just sustenance." ●

*Amelia Hecker and Minnie Gray share lunch and their subsistence ways*

## Traditional Food Guide for Alaska Native Cancer Survivors

The food guide shows how subsistence foods are healthy, provide needed comfort, and help cancer survivors maintain a healthy diet before, during and after treatment. The book includes stories and quotes from Alaska Native people throughout the state, and information on more than 70 different foods from the land and sea. The guide is available for free for Alaska Native cancer survivors.

For more information about this book, visit [www.anthc.org](http://www.anthc.org) or contact Karen Mitchell at (907) 729-4491 or [kmmitchell@anthc.org](mailto:kmmitchell@anthc.org).





## Continued from page 2 Simple Energy Saving Tips For Alaskans

### Common (not inclusive) Subsistence Foods in Alaska

Beluga oil	Paniqtaq—dried fish or
Bear berries	dried caribou meat
Bear	Pike
Beaver	Porcupine
Black berries	Ptarmigan
Blueberries	Rabbit
Caribou	Rhubarb
Crab	Salmon
Cranberries	Salmon berries
Duck	Seal (meat & oil)
Geese	Sheefish
Grayling	Salmon
Halibut	Sourdock
Herring eggs	Spruce hen
Masru—roots or	Tomcods
Eskimo potatoes	Trout
Moose	Whale (meat & oil)
Mud shark	White fish and eggs
Muktuk—whale skin with blubber	

#### Editor's Note:

While researching for this article, we were reminded that the subject of bartering and subsistence foods is an expansive topic with many similarities and differences across Alaska. We would like to do follow-up articles in the future. If you have any updates or suggestions regarding these topics, please contact Angela Gonzalez toll-free at (800) 478-7227 or at (907) 865-7389, or via email at agonzalez@ruralcap.com. Thank you. ●

#### Refrigerators & Freezers

- Make sure that the inside refrigerator temperature is 38° F - 40° F.
- Make sure that the inside freezer temperature (or fridge's freezer compartment) is 0° F - 5° F.
- Clean the dust off **refrigerator and freezer** condenser coils once a month (on the back and/or bottom of the unit) – dirty coils make the appliances use more electricity!
- Make sure that the rubber strips around the doors fit tightly so air doesn't leak out of the fridge or freezer. Test by using a flashlight inside the fridge with the doors closed to see if there is any light that comes through when the room is dark.
- Make sure that the freezer or refrigerator is always almost full, even if you have to add containers of water to fill it up – a full freezer or fridge uses less electricity.
- If you have a manual defrost freezer, make sure to clean when frost builds up to ¼ of an inch – the more frost there is, the more electricity is used to keep the freezer cold.

#### Cooking

- Use pressure cookers and crock pots—they save energy compared to using a pan on the stove.
- Use a microwave—it uses less than half the electricity to heat items compared to a stove.
- Use a toaster oven instead of a regular stove or oven.
- Use the smallest pans on the smallest burners that you can when using a stove.
- Use a lid on pans when using a stove to keep the heat in while cooking.
- If you cook in the oven, use a glass or ceramic pan and turn the heat down 25°F lower than the recipe calls for—it will cook just as fast but use less energy.

#### House Heating

- Clean your oil stove or furnace filter every month—it really does make a difference in the efficiency of an appliance.
- If you use a woodstove, clean the chimney OFTEN (every 10 days during super-cold weather)—the stove will operate much more efficiently (for heating and indoor air quality).
- In winter, open the window shades during sunlight hours (to let heat in) and then close them when it is dark (to keep the heat in).
- DO NOT use your oven to heat the house—it costs a fortune in electricity and is dangerous.

#### Air Flow

- Check for large air leaks—in the house AND on the outside of the house—and fill them with caulk, foam seal, weather stripping, and/or thresholds. However, be sure your home has adequate ventilation. Things to check:

- around doors & windows
- cracked glass in windows
- around attic doors
- along ceiling-to-wall joints
- along floor-to-wall joints
- around electrical outlets and light switches
- around light fixtures
- around vents and dryer outlets

#### Electricity Conservation

- Use compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) instead of incandescent light bulbs everywhere possible (note that CFLs may not behave well in very cold areas like front porches)—CFLs cost ¼ of the electricity and can last a lot longer.
- Unplug appliances when they are not being used (TVs, DVDs, phone chargers, computers, printers, coffee pots, freezers, etc.)—or plug them into a power strip and turn the power strip off (is the same as unplugging the appliance from the wall).
- Turn off lights when you don't need them.

Compliments of the VISTA Energy Program  
Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.  
731 E. 8th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501  
(907) 279-2511 or (800) 478-7227. ●



Kotzebue Sound  
Photo by Carl D. Jennings

## Photos wanted...

Please continue to send photos of special events and activities in your community! It could be fishing, berry picking, summer construction projects, Elders, youth, scenery from your community, etc.

#### Minimum requirements:

- Photos must not be cropped.
- Photos must be of the highest quality possible (300 dpi or higher) for print.
- Photos must be submitted in digital format.
- Submitted photos give RurAL CAP permission to reprint in the *Village Voices* newsletter.
- No payments will be made for any photos used.
- Identify who is in the picture, what activity is

going on, where and when photo was taken, and who took the photograph.

- Include your name, address, phone and email address with your submission.
- Photos will be considered by quality and appropriateness.
- The photographer for selected photos will be acknowledged in the *Village Voices*.

For more information or to submit photos, please contact Angela Gonzalez at (907) 865-7389, toll-free at (800) 478-7227, extension 7389, or by email at agonzalez@ruralcap.com. Please call to make sure we received your email. ●

# Attention Alaska Native Writers!

The Alaska Conservation Foundation [ACF] seeks entrants for the **Alaska Native Writers & Storytellers Award**. ACF is an Alaska organization based in Anchorage, whose purpose is to protect and preserve the incomparable wildlife, vast wild lands, precious waters, and sustainable communities of Alaska. The *Writers and Storytellers \$500 Award* recognizes writing that raises public awareness of Alaska's unique lands, waters, and wildlife, and the Alaska Native cultures that are sustained by them.

If you are interested in submitting an entry, go to [www.akcf.org](http://www.akcf.org)—click on 'Grants and Awards', then 'Awards.' Entries for the *2009 Native Writers Award* must be postmarked no later than March 3, 2009, and may be submitted by email to [acinfo@akcf.org](mailto:acinfo@akcf.org) or by mail to:

*Alaska Conservation Foundation  
Awards Committee  
441 West 5th Avenue, Suite 402  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501*

The next issue of RurAL CAP's Village Voices will feature an interview with Susan Cohn Rockefeller, who is an ACF Board member and the funder of the *Native Writers Award*. ●

# Calendar

November is American Indian / Alaska Native Heritage Month  
For more information, please visit [www.alaskanativeheritagemonth.com](http://www.alaskanativeheritagemonth.com)

**BIA Providers Conference**  
December 1-4, 2008  
Egan Center, Anchorage  
Call (907) 271-3518 for more information.

**Parents As Teachers Training:  
Issues in Working with Teen Parents**  
January 20-21, 2009  
RurAL CAP

For more information or a registration form, contact Melissa Pickle at (907) 865-7345 or [mpickle@ruralcap.com](mailto:mpickle@ruralcap.com)



*Weatherization efforts in Nightmute's community of 250 will reduce energy costs while improving health and safety issues too*

View RurAL CAP's Village Voices online at [www.ruralcap.com](http://www.ruralcap.com).  
To receive the Village Voices for free, join our mailing list by contacting RurAL CAP at:

**Village Voices**  
Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.  
731 East 8th Avenue  
PO Box 200908  
Anchorage, Alaska 99520  
(907) 279 - 2511 main phone  
(800) 478-7227 toll-free in Alaska  
[info@ruralcap.com](mailto:info@ruralcap.com)  
[www.ruralcap.com](http://www.ruralcap.com)

David Hardenbergh, Executive Director  
Sarah Scanlan, Editor  
Angela Gonzalez, Communications Coordinator

Alisha Drabek, Design and Layout  
Photos by David Hardenbergh and Angela Gonzalez



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731 East 8th Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

