

# NENANA GETS ARR FREEZERS

## VISTA Vol., Mayor, Editor Team Up to Get Freezer Vans

By TOM SNAPP

A VISTA volunteer, the mayor of the state's largest city, and an Eskimo editor teamed up to obtain for flood ravaged Nenana the means to preserve food from now until freeze up.

The result: two reefer type freezer box-cars are now parked at the Yutana dock near the Nenana train depot and beginning today Nenana people will begin filling them with silver

salmon and moose.

Ed Woulden of Sunrise Bakery in Anchorage sent up 100 freezer bags to the town to package fish and meats.

The problem of refrigeration facilities at the river town, hard hit by flood waters, was brought forth here Saturday by Vista Volunteer Frank Hoffman. Hoffman had worked with the Nenana people and attended a town meeting in which the need for either reefer highway vans or reefer boxcars was stressed.

When Hoffman felt that little was being done to obtain the freezer units, he brought the problem to Tundra Times Editor Howard Rock.

At first Rock was at a loss as to how to proceed. That is, until he thought of Elmer Rasmuson, mayor of Anchorage, and how he was able to get things done with the minimum of red tape.

"I also knew that he had made clear his willingness to help in every way possible in recovery from the flood," Rock said.

He sent this telegram:

"Nenana village needs a freezer van like Sealand uses for merchandise. Silvers are running now but too late to dry.

(Continued on page 6)

# VISTA VOLUNTEER, MAYOR, EDITOR TEAM UP . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

"Villagers would like van to store fish and other game until freeze-up only. Hope you can contact Sealand to see if van can be made available.

"Packing boxes would also be important. Van with self-contained power unit run by diesel or gas excellent."

When Mayor Rasmuson received the wire Saturday evening, he said he immediately called Russ Hoehn, manager of Sealand, and John Manley, general manager of the Alaska Railroad.

Sunday evening two freezer box cars were on their way to Nenana. On Monday Mayor Rasmuson contacted Rock to tell him the good news. As phones were still scarce as hen's teeth, Rock went to the University of Alaska where he talked by phone with Rasmuson.

At first information had been relayed to Rock that the boxcars were refrigerated but were not able to freeze foods. Jack Shuttleworth, manager of Sealand here, was contacted and he dispatched a reefer van to Nenana. On arrival there, however, it was

found that the van was not needed and it was returned to Fairbanks.

"We regret that the breakdown in communication resulted in this unfortunate mix-up," Rock said.

Norman Suckling, Mayor of Nenana, said Railroad Manager Manley called him Sunday and asked if there was a need for the reefer cars.

"I told him I would look around and call him back. I determined there was a real need for them and Manley said he would have them on the train that night."

They were set up Monday and Wednesday they began to be put in use.

Much has been accomplished in the last three weeks in rehabilitating the city. The Corps of Engineers using Office of Emergency Planning money has done much repair of flood damage in the village including rehabilitation of the Native Hall.

The Red Cross is going forward to build seven homes for displaced families. Most of the families are from the native village.

Land has been obtained by lease from the city of an area on Fifth Avenue between "C" and "D" streets that formerly had been reserved for a park.

The city's power plant was knocked out by the flood but power has been obtained from Usibelli at Healy with a tie-in at Rex. A number of wells have been found to be contaminated and water for drinking is still being transported from Clear by tanker truck.

A number of the businesses have reopened, but the lodge is still closed and a rooming house is only open partially. Only one of the village's three bars has reopened.

Many of the homes are without heat because furnace motors were burned out during the flood.