

Army Rescues Birch Creek School

FORT WAINWRIGHT, AK.

Youngsters at Birch Creek went to school Monday morning thanks to the Fort Wainwright based 12 Aviation Company.

Birch Creek, a village some 100 miles north of Fairbanks, would have been without a schoolmaster for probably three weeks if Edward Priest had not requested assistance from the Army.

Priest, on a resupply trip to Fairbanks, flew in on a float plane and was due to return on the same aircraft Saturday but Birch Creek froze up and the float plane was out.

The freeze wasn't firm enough to handle a ski plane and a three-week delay was estimated in getting the Birch Creek teacher back to his students. Since the tiny community has no landing strip, a helicopter was the only answer and the Army had helicopters at Ft. Wainwright.

Priest placed a call to Brigadier General C. M. Hall at 8:30 a.m. Sunday and a teacher-student reunion looked a little brighter.

Post S2/3 made arrangements and 222nd Aviation Battalion's 12th Aviation Company assigned Chief Warrant Officer 2 John C. Cooper and his UH-1 helicopter to lift Priest and more than a thousand pounds of supplies into Birch Creek.

Priest and his supplies were back home by 2:00 p.m. Sunday and it was school as usual Monday morning at Birch Creek.

Sorry kids!