



**JUST A TRIAL RUN** — Visiting students from the village of Allakaket surround Carol Drake of the Tanana Chiefs Conference (center) as they try to see how many can fit on a snowmobile and sled at Compeau's store in Fairbanks.

Photo by MARGIE BAUMAN

## Allakaket Bilingual Students

By MARGIE BAUMAN

Nine bilingual students from Allakaket who wanted to get involved in the land claims movement are getting a big start ... thanks to the Tanana Chiefs Conference.

They spent the week of November 5 in Fairbanks, visiting the Tanana Chiefs Conference and Doyon, Limited, meeting all the people who work for their village on the regional level, and getting some novel side trips as well.

It all started out back in August, when James Huntington of Galena wrote an open letter to all Alaskan villages in the Tundra Times, urging Native

people, especially young people to get involved.

"Get involved and make yourself proud to be an Indian of Alaska ...," Huntington wrote. "We need at least 500 young men and women to help us administrate the affairs of our people throughout Alaska, so stop now and look at yourself. Do you really want to help your people or are you so full of bull that you can't see straight?" Huntington challenged.

He urged young people to immediately get involved and the answer, from the bilingual class at Allakaket was a positive one.

Thirteen students studying

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# Allakaket Students . . .

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English and Athapascan in their 7th and 8th grade classes said they would like to come to Fairbanks and learn more about the land claims. More than two months later, after another exchange of letters with Huntington, nine of the 13 students arrived in Fairbanks, with bilingual teacher Velma Simon.

The group included Sharon Sam Williams, Christine Williams, Sally Sam, Catherine Marie Hunzie, Emily Beigman, Valerie Williams, David David Jr., Rudy Moses and Morris Bergman.

They arrived on a Monday and after spending the day exploring the University of Alaska, where they bunked down, they called the Tanana Chiefs office and president Mitch Demientieff promptly assigned boarding home guidance counsellor Carol Drake to be their hostess for the week.

One of the things they liked most, when recalled later, was just getting to know Mitch. They really got a large charge out of Mitch." Demientieff and Tim Wallis, president of the DNH Development Corp., talked with the students in the Tanana Chiefs office. They also visited Doyon, Limited, meeting most of the staff there.

Armed with some updated information on what their region was all about, the students went off to see the town of Fairbanks. That part had its ups and downs.

They loved Penney's department store, especially the escalators.

They tired quickly of dormitory food at the University of Alaska, (but fortunately had brought a supply of dried fish and dried moose meat along).

They loved Coca Cola bottles, in fact any kind of bottles. (Most everything back home comes in cans).

They disliked Ryan Junior High and Lathrop High School because both were, by their estimates, too big. (The group said they'd prefer high school at Tanana or Nenana).

They loved the Harlan Clowns Uncles basketball game.

They were disappointed when it turned out the pet shop had lots of tropical fish — but no gerbils.

Six of the group left Friday, but bad weather delayed until Sunday the departure of the other four. There were a lot of things in the big town of Fairbanks that turned them on, but they were glad to be heading home.