

# MICHAEL C. HARPER APPOINTED TO DCRA

## Congratulates Legislators

RurAL CAP is most happy to extend congratulations to the new legislators, especially to those who are former employees of the agency. The major objective and number one priority of the organization is the development of human resources.

It is felt that this aspect of the program has been successful with many people, most notable, of course, are those in the public eye such as Representatives Brenda Iita, Phillip Guy, Nels Anderson, Bob Bradley and Sen. Frank Ferguson.

Prior to working for RurAL CAP in the late sixties, Miss Iita, who lives in Barrow, had been Senator Gruening's secretary in Washington, D.C.

As director of RurAL CAP's Bethel area regional corporation, Phillip Guy of Kwethluk provided valuable input to the agency; and Nels Anderson was hired by the RurAL CAP State Board of Directors as deputy director, a position he resigned to become head of the Bristol Bay Native Association.

Bradley worked for the Southeastern Alaska Community Action Program as program development specialist in 1971 and six months later, the SEACAP Board of Directors employed him as executive director. Ferguson was director of RurAL CAP's Kotzebue office and resigned in order to run for office.

Lawrence Davis who was recently elected to the House of



MICHAEL C. HARPER, new Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

Representatives, is currently serving as chairman of the board for Kawerak, RurAL CAP's Nome office.

RurAL CAP is proud to have

their staff members emerge as leaders of their people to help, along with other things, provide legislation for rural areas and Native Alaskans.

## RurAL CAP Director Resigns Post for Job

Mike Harper, RurAL CAP's Executive Director for the last two years, has resigned his position to accept appointment as Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

Harper, who joined the RurAL CAP staff in 1971 as a Human Resources Planner, was hired as Deputy Director in 1972. In December of '72, the RurAL CAP Board hired him as Executive Director, a post he has held until he accepted the position with the state.

During his two years as RurAL CAP's Executive Director, the regional structure of the agency became stronger. In keeping with the CAP's philosophy of "putting the money where the people are," RurAL CAP is now funding 12 independent regional organizations.

A major personal victory for Harper occurred when Congress overwhelmingly passed legislation to continue the Office of Economic Opportunity and to keep it independent from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Since January of 1973, stated national administration policy has been to "kill" OEO and Community Action

along with it. Harper was very active in the national effort to retain a visible, independent, and strong federal commitment to continue the War on Poverty begun in 1964 under President Johnson.

Ironically, the compromise legislation (H-14449) passed Congress on the day Harper resigned.

In his letter of resignation to the RurAL CAP Board, Harper said, "... the mission of RurAL CAP, the people serving as directors of regional and statewide boards, the staff of the agency, and certainly the village people I have come to know, makes the job of Executive Director one of the most varied and interesting in the state."

Phil Smith, RurAL CAP Deputy Director, will be Acting Executive Director until the board meets to hire a new director, probably in early February.

## RurAL CAP—

## But Plans Continue

Operating under an almost congressional mandate to continue the Office of Economic Opportunity, RurAL CAP is gearing up for its 1975 program year.

At a meeting in Kodiak in September, the CAP Board gave the go-ahead for some major changes in the corporation's funding structure during 1975. Included in the changes are:

1. A merger was approved between the Upper Yukon Development Corporation and

Gwitcha Gwitchin Ginkye (3-G's) in Fort Yukon. The "3-G's" (Yukon Flats People Speak) will be the RurAL CAP region, directed by Nancy James.

2. Similarly, a merger between the Bristol Bay Native Association was approved. Trefon Angasan, Jr. is presently Acting Director of the BBNA.

3. In the Copper Valley/Tanana Region, two entities now receive the funding originally allocated to one development corporation. These are the Copper River Native Association, headed by Christine Yazzi, and the Upper Tanana Development Corporation, headquartered in Tok.

4. The North Pacific Rim Native Corporation, under the executive direction of Archie Gottschalk, will receive CAP funds for the first time, resulting from an effort to align boundaries in conformity with the Land Claims Corporation boundaries of Chugach, Inc. and Koniag, Inc.

Of the changes, Acting Director Phil Smith commented, "We're confident that these moves will go even further to strengthen the regional structures which were established six years ago. With other grants and contracts, the regions are becoming administratively sound and responsive to the needs of the people in the regions. With the OEO/RurAL CAP funding they can be effective advocates for their village constituencies. We think it's going to be a good year."

## For Old People and Those in Need

## Supplemental Security Income

### SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME FOR THE AGED, BLIND AND DISABLED

The U.S. Government pays monthly checks to people in financial need who are 65 or older, and to people in need at any age who are blind or disabled.

The payments, called supplemental security income, began in January 1974. The new program has taken the place of Federal-State programs of public assistance payments to people who are 65 or older or blind or disabled. But States still provide them with Medicaid and social services, and some States add money to the Federal payment.

#### WHO CAN QUALIFY?

People who have little or no regular cash income and who do not own much in the way of property or other things that can be turned into cash, such as stocks, bonds, jewelry, or other valuables, may get supplemental security income.

The aim of the program is to provide monthly checks, when they are needed, so that anyone who's 65 or older or blind or disabled can have a basic cash income — for one person at least \$146 a month, and for a married couple, at least \$219 a month.

This does not mean that every eligible person gets that much in his supplemental security income check every month. Some people get less because they already

have other income. Some get more because they live in a State that adds money to the Federal money.

#### THINGS PEOPLE OWN

A person who is single (or married but not living with his spouse) can have assets — things he owns, worth up to \$1,500 and still get payments. The amount for a couple is \$2,250. This includes savings accounts, stocks, bonds, jewelry, and other valuables.

Not everything owned counts as an asset. A home with a market value of \$35,000 or less does not count. And the Federal Government will not ask the liens on homes of people who get supplemental security income.

Personal effects or household goods also do not count as assets in most cases. Insurance policies or a car may not affect eligibility either, depending on their value.

#### INCOME PEOPLE HAVE

People can have some money coming in and still get supplemental security income.

The first \$20 a month in income is generally not counted. Income above \$20 a month (apart from earnings) generally reduces the amount of the supplemental security income payment. This includes social security checks, veterans compensation, workmen's compensation, pensions, annuities, gifts, and other income.

People who work while they get supplemental security in-

come can earn as much as \$65 a month without any reduction in their Government payment. The payment is reduced \$1 for each \$2 in earnings over \$65 a month.

For eligible people who live in someone's household — a son's or daughter's home, for example — the supplemental security income payment may be reduced. (To be continued in two weeks)

## Mauneluk Displeased with No. State

While other attention around the state is being focused on the statewide problems of telecommunications, the RurAL CAP region in Kotzebue, Mauneluk, is taking some positive steps to deal with problems they feel are being caused by the local telephone exchange, North State.

Mauneluk, and its executive director, Emie Norton (who is also Kotzebue's mayor) have formally requested that the Alaska Public Utilities Commission (APUC) revoke the certificate of public convenience and necessity granted to North Star Telephone Company, Inc.

The complaint contains a series of charges the more important of which are the allegations that North Star Telephone Co., Inc. has failed to maintain adequate and efficient services and facilities; during certain periods has required monies in excess of those authorized by the commission for the placement of

local exchange area calls from public telephones; has required security deposits for local telephone exchange service in exchange of the amount authorized by the commission; and has failed to restore service to facilities critical to public health, safety, and welfare within a reasonable time after interruption.

In a related matter, North State has filed a tariff revision with the APUC.

The proposed revision would increase the private line business rate in the Kotzebue exchange area from \$21 per month at present to \$30 a month; each business extension phone from \$3.50 per month at present to \$5.50 per month; and each residence extension telephone from \$2.50 per month at present to \$3.50 per month; and increase the public pay phone charge from 10 cents per call to 25 cents per call.