

## RurAL-CAP

## ACTION REPORTS

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## CAP BOARD ELECTS JACKSON PRESIDENT

RurAL CAP  
Testifies

Recently the National Marine Fisheries Service put out proposed regulations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. These regulations would attempt to define what "traditional Native Arts and Crafts" are, in order to implement the Act.

After supporting advocacy efforts against the proposed regulations in hearings in Nome and Fairbanks, the RurAL CAP staff presented the following testimony at the hearings in Anchorage, last Friday:

"In most circumstances, it is customary for an individual testifying to effusively express appreciation for your taking your valuable time to hear comments on regulations which you have proposed. I submit that in this instance, it is incumbent upon you to gratefully express your appreciation to the many Alaskan Natives whose testimony you have been hearing. Perhaps your apologies would be more appropriate.

"These regulations are an injury added to the original insult of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. They would constrain artistic expression, they would subject Native artisans to the spectre of Big Federal Brother hovering over their shoulders, they would impugn the basic integrity of America's First Citizens, they would paternalistically impede the development of viable, sustainable commerce, and they would be yet another imposition of the myopic will of the government on the lifestyles and freedoms of an embattled minority. Why? Why is that the promulgation of proposed regulations is invariably harmful to the American Citizens for whom the regulations are supposedly drafted?

"Why is it that interpretations of statutes and regulations are invariably designed to rob, rather than protect, the rights and prerogative of the Native people?

"Why is it that we're sitting here in Anchorage, far from the coastal people whose lives and livelihood and lifestyles these regulations will most directly and negatively affect? Why are you not in Wainwright and Hooper Bay, and Kotzebue and Shishmaref?

"Why is it that real freedom for Alaska's rural people must be bought at the price of continuous protest?

"Unless I am greatly mistaken, the object of the Marine Mammal Protection Act is to protect marine mammals, not to obliterate a lifestyle. I'm confused now that we are discussing regulations which ignore the former and accelerate the latter.

"Sometime ago, in response to a different threat from a different direction, the RurAL CAP Regional Directors made an attempt to define "subsistence." After considerable discussion, we arrived at the following:

"Subsistence is a basic human right or full, unrestricted, utilization and protection of any or all available resources in order to sustain and guarantee physical, environmental, and cultural survival.

"The basic subsistence of



JAY HAMMOND speaks to RurAL CAP Board with Ellen Lang, and Walter Simeonoff to the left.

## Future Communications Need

In a letter to RurAL CAP, Phil Smith, deputy director, the governor's Office of Telecommunications has requested input from the rural areas regarding future need for communications in the bush.

A similar letter was mailed to a number of state and federal agencies, as well as to many Native organizations.

In commenting on the effort by the governor's office, Smith stated, "I think this is a positive development. One of the problems in the past has been that there is no comprehensive needs

China consists of rice. The basic subsistence of Western Europe and urban America is the cash market economy.

"Alaska is unique. Here the subsistence values of the Western culture are in open conflict with the unique subsistence values of indigenous Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut populations. These subsistence values are still vital to our 50,000 Alaskan Indian, Aleuts, and Eskimos, as they have been for countless thousands of years, as they will be for hundreds of years in the future.

"Only in Alaska, in all of North American history, does the opportunity exist to protect the basic human right of subsistence for all citizens.

"We believe that Western and traditional values can live side by side; but just as Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts have no right to destroy the cultural values of the White Man, neither do White Men have a right to destroy the cultural values and lifestyles of Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts.

"Note that we didn't define subsistence as a war against an encroaching economy or a conflicting lifestyle. We didn't define subsistence as a struggle against proposed regulations. We defined it as a basic human right. In an attempt to revitalize an awareness of that right, these comments are made today.

"Finally, if these thoughts sound combative, I owe you an apology. They are not designed to declare war; rather, they are designed to prevent it," stated Phil Smith, deputy director of RurAL CAP.

assessment available to the governor. Therefore, the state has no document against which to evaluate the acceptability of the RCA plan."

Expressing hope that the governor will hold off on judging the plan, now before the FCC, he continued:

"Until such time as a comprehensive assessment of the needs of rural consumers, in such areas as telephones, broadcasting, education, and health is completed, it is premature to comment on the technology. We have to know what we want a system to accomplish before we accept the hardware to do it."

Smith went on to say, "I certainly applaud the active advocacy of such individuals and organizations as Sam Kito, the Alaska Federation of Natives, Lillie McGarvey of the Native Health Board, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and the many others who are impressing the state decision-makers with these concerns.

ARCHIE  
DEMERT DIES

The RurAL CAP community was saddened last Tuesday to hear of the untimely death of Archie Demmert, director of SEACAP since August.

Mr. Demmert was a widely-known and highly-respected educator throughout the state, and only recently had taken over the job of community organizations and advocacy for his people in Southeast.

Responding to the news, RurAL CAP Executive Director Mike Harper commented:

"We are shocked and saddened to hear of this tragic and untimely occurrence. Although he had not been with the organization long, his good spirits, deep commitment to people, and zest for life served as an inspiration to all of us.

"Archie's presence and sympathetic concern touched the lives of all who were privileged to know him. His life has proven to us all that one man can make a difference. Our hearts go out to his family."

Jonathan Solomon  
VP, Ellen Lang Again  
Secretary-Treasurer

The RurAL CAP Board of Directors held their 10th annual meeting in Kodiak, at which time, they elected Gordon Jackson as their new president, Jonathan Solomon of Fort Yukon as vice president, and Ellen Lang of Sitka was re-elected as secretary/treasurer.

Jackson is no newcomer to the 27-member board, having recently served as vice-president, and at one time, executive director of the Southeastern Alaska Community Action Program (SEACAP) in Juneau; and also worked for RurAL CAP. He is presently vice president of Human Resources for the Alaska Federation of Natives.

Gov. William A. Egan addressed the board, speaking on

The North Pacific Rim Native Corporation, headed by Archie Gottschalk, will meet with poverty groups in those areas to discuss problems they face and develop local community action councils, and to help them organize into effective councils of their own.

One of the responsibilities of the RurAL CAP Board of Directors is to select lay members of the Alaska Legal Services Board. Having received recommendations from areas concerned, Ms. Brenda Itta from Barrow was chosen to have a seat on the Legal Services Board, with Tim Towark, also of Barrow, to be an alternate.

Action was tabled to replace an alternate for the Southeastern seat, pending receipt of further information.

Regular business included approving of the agency's 1975 grant application to the Office of Economic Opportunity. Charles Hodges, Alaska representative from the OEO Seattle office, spoke optimistically about the future of Community Action, and indicated that there should be some word from Washington, D.C. about the middle of October.

A resolution was adopted requesting that the Governor's Office of Telecommunications hold off on the RCA proposal until a needs analysis has been completed that the RCA plan be made public so that the consumer input could be obtained.

Another resolution supported the request to the Copper Valley Tanana Development Corporation for adequate telephone service to villages in their region and another supported their request for assistance from appropriate agencies in trying to take care of pipeline impact related problems.

Another resolution urged that the University of Alaska approve Associate Degree Programs for approximately 500 para-professional teachers in the rural areas.

The two-day meeting was saddened by the death of Archie Demmert, executive director of SEACAP, and although he had been with the agency only a short time, he was well-known and highly respected. It is felt that his passing will be a great loss not only to RurAL CAP, but to the entire State of Alaska.

Some visitors to the meeting included Whittier Williams, John Sackett, Reed Stoops, Susan Murphy, Wayne Morse, Tommy Frost, mayor of Kodiak.

New members seated were the Rev. Charles H. Eddy of Anchorage for the Alaska Christian Conference, and Miss Bonnie R. Adams of Beaver, boarding home student in Fairbanks; as youth representative.



GOVERNOR WILLIAM A. EGAN speaks on issues of the day.

issues of the day, and showing great concern for problems of the rural areas. Jay Hammond also spoke on current matters of interest, although, at a different time.

It had been hoped to have a panel discussion between the two gubernatorial candidates, but this was not possible, due to their conflicting schedules.

In regular business conducted by the governing body of RurAL CAP, a third Parent-Child Center was approved for Tok, to service the Copper Valley/Tanana Regional Development Corporation area, and the New Upper Tanana Development Corporation Region.

Also approved, was a merging of the Bristol Bay Area Development Corporation with the Regional Health and Native Corporations in that region; and the Upper Yukon Development Corporation with the Gwitcha Gwitchin Ginhkye (3 G's - "The Yukon Flat. People Speak") of Fort Yukon.

It was felt that one of the advantages of the mergings would be to coordinate services of the non-profit corporations. A new corporation was accepted to serve the Chugach Region which includes Port Graham, English Bay, Tatitlek, Valdez, Seward and Cordova.