

# McGrath radio station signs on

The "On Air" sign lit up for the first time at McGrath's new KSKO public broadcasting radio station. At 6 a.m. on July 1 the AM station began its first broadcast day.

U.S. Representative Don Young was in McGrath to welcome KSKO to the airwaves and Gov. Jay Hammond wished the station good luck through a tape recorded message. Both Ham-

mond and Young stressed the need for a radio station in the Western Interior.

KSKO programming includes, "All Things Considered," "Community Calendar," "Trading Post," hourly news, weather, Bush messages, AFRN news and National Public Radio Programs.

Marty Branscomb, bookkeeper/secretary said the station has been well accepted and everyone is enthusiastic about it. She added, "You see kids walking around with earphones clamped on their heads." If they don't have earphones, they have radios in their pockets she said.

Although the station opened in July 1981 community members first applied for a radio license in 1978. General Manager Jim McCurdy began to actually build the station by working on

a transmitter site in August of 1980. McCurdy worked on the transmitter site during the winter and he said "it didn't flow too good during the winter" with the temperatures sometimes at minus 50.

The studio equipment cost \$200,000 and the transmitter generator plant was \$40,000. McCurdy said.

Staff members are Jim McCurdy, general manager; Chuck Hine, program director; Tammy Baumgartner, music director; Marty Branscomb, bookkeeper/secretary.

McCurdy said he and another member built the station by themselves. He also spent four years in Wrangell after building a radio station there and has worked at KRXA in Seward and KOTZ in Kotzebue.