

TCC 'Survival School' Initiated at Tanana for Boys and Girls

By MARY MOSES
Tanana Correspondent
The first school ever designed

to teach Alaskan Native boys and girls how to be better Alaskan Natives opened last week in Tanana.

Mitch Demientieff, president of Tanana Chiefs Conference, headed a multi-agency group of officials who flew to Tanana Nov. 7 for the opening ceremonies. The school was conceived last summer by Tanana Chiefs as an effort to teach rapidly dying Athabascan cultural heritage to Indian youth from villages throughout the Interior.

Called the "Survival School" because it will teach young people how to survive as Indians

within their own culture, the school was located in Tanana to offer a central spot with access to both traditional and modern ways of life. Clara Carroll of Tanana Chiefs heads the project. It is planned to take the form of four workshops, each six weeks long.

Among the officials attending the opening of the first workshop were Gordon Jackson, director of Johnson O'Malley Funds (where the Survival School gets its money), and Stanley Friese, director of Alaska State-

Operated Schools.

Emil Notti of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Georgianna Lincoln of the Alaska Native Center in Fairbanks, and Vivian Moore of the Center for Northern Educational Research were other guests.

Also attending were Bill Vaudrin, State Commissioner for Human Rights, Harold Napoleon of the State Department of Education, and Eddie Bergman, Athabascan Language Coordinator for State-Operated Schools and treas-

urer of Tanana Chiefs.

Richard Frank and Bob Jenks of Doyon Land Department and Kathy Adams of the Bureau of Indian Affairs also helped to open the new school.

According to Clara Carroll, the first workshop is slated to deal with winter-time cultural ways. Andrew Isaac of Tanacross, traditional chief over both Doyon and Tanana Chiefs, will teach Indian history.

Belle Deacon of Grayling will

(Continued on Page 6)

TCC School . . .

(Continued from Page 5)

teach basketry. Two others not yet named will teach Indian history, sewing and toboggan making.

Local teachers from Tanana, Buster Kennedy, Jake Starr and Charles Albert, will give instruction in trapping. Frieda Van Hatten and Shirley Lebeau, both of Tanana, are assisting Clara Carroll with in-classroom instruction and general management of the school.

Students for the first workshop were recruited from villages throughout the Tanana Chiefs area. Flora Sommer, Ida George and Marie Mountain came from Nulato.

Karen Nikoli hails from Kaltag. Allen Titus and Stanford Cleaver are from Ruby. Norman Sam and Sammy Adams come from Tetlin. Joyce Ward is from Ft. Yukon. Eugene Wright usually lives in Fairbanks. Effie Titus is from Minto.

Headquarters for the Survival School are in the basement of the newly-built St. James Episcopal Church in Tanana. Students are staying with various families throughout the community.

A covered dish supper was held at the Tanana Community Hall Nov. 7 after the official opening ceremonies, to allow the students and visiting officials to meet the local residents.

The covered dish supper was followed by a discussion of the land selection process, lead by Richard Frank and Bob Jenks. Approximately 115 members of Tozitna, Ltd., Tanana's village corporation, attended the discussion.