

# Adult Basic Education in McGrath and across the state

By FRANK KEIM

MCGRATH--We came gliding out of the misty sky, jerked down onto the runway, and heard the roaring jets brake us to a stop in front of McGuire's Tavern. We were in McGrath, and tonight (October 24) we would begin our Adult Basic Education (ABE) workshop for all of those in the villages of the Iditarod School District who were going to teach adults basic reading, writing and math. We would also train these teachers to prepare students for their General Educational Development (G.E.D.) tests.

Donna MacAlpine and I had organized the workshop together with Francis Mitchell who was

the Federal Programs Director for the Iditarod School District. Donna has presented the workshop before as a part of her duties directing the Adult Literacy Laboratory (ALL) project in Anchorage, and so she was bringing a lot of experience and expertise with her. I worked for Adult Learning Programs of Alaska (ALPA), a private non-profit corporation, and the four day session would be the first of several workshops we would provide in the Doyon region for training village teachers in the methods and materials of teaching ABE in the villages of the region.

Most of this wasn't new to ABE in Alaska. What was new was that we were giving the

workshop in cooperation with a school district, the Iditarod School District. And that's where Francis Mitchell came in. He coordinates the efforts of a group of Community Education Assistants who work in education-related projects in almost all of the villages in the District.

Since he and the Community Education Assistants felt that ABE and preparation for the G.E.D. were worthy educational areas for their energies, they were interested in the expertise and resources ALPA could provide in this field.

The workshop turned out to

be a good one--not too intensive like a lot of workshops I've been to, and yet it was one which kept everyone busy and thinking throughout. Comments were that, "I thought it was going to be boring, but it's not. I'm still awake." Amen.

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# **Adult basic . .**

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ALPA, as noted above, is a private non-profit educational corporation which presently handles the ABE and G.E.D. contracts for both the Doyon village region as well as the Fairbanks area. John Hulbert is its president, Frank Keim is coordinator for its village programs, and Sheila Gottehrer is coordinator of the urban program. ALPA's address is: Box 81402, Fairbanks, Alaska 99708. Its telephone number is: 479-6536.