



ICE CREAM FOR SALE — Northern Lights Restaurant, operated by business students at Selawik High School, sells hamburgers, hot dogs and French fries, but the big demand is for ice

cream says business teacher Chuck Johnston, left. The students are now constructing a larger home for their restaurant, a two-minute walk from the present building. — Photo by MARGE BAUMAN

Ice Cream Sells Big at Cold Below Zero at Selawik

By MARGIE BAUMAN
SELAWIK — Those folks who joke about selling iceboxes to the Eskimos ought to try peddling ice cream in the far north instead.

They might have made a fortune at it — had not the Eskimos already beat them to the punch.

As the chill factor pushes to 40 below zero in this Eskimo community just south of the Arctic Circle, high school students manning the Northern Lights Restaurant are selling ice cream like mad.

They've sold 150 gallons of ice cream in one month, says business education teacher

Chuck Johnston, whose students in Selawik High School own and operate Northern Lights Restaurant.

The only restaurant in this isolated village of 500 people, the Northern Lights grosses over \$1,100 per month with a steady stream of customers hungry for ice cream, hamburgers, hot dogs, potato chips, pizza, French fries and soda pop.

From the proceeds they pay rent on the small wind-battered building that houses the restaurant, purchase supplies and equipment for the business and pay the three per cent city sales tax, although Northern Lights

is a non-profit corporation.

The students, under the direction of Johnston, do everything from keeping inventory to the books, in addition to man-

(Continued on Page 6)

Ice Cream Sells Big...

(Continued from page 1)

ning the restaurant for service.

"Those kids can read contracts and order forms. They check the orders and if things don't come in, they write letters," Johnston said. "What they learn here will equip them to operate a small business anywhere."

For four hours each night, Wednesday through Saturday, two students double as cooks and waiters, while another works full-time behind the ice cream machine — vanilla, strawberry and black raspberry. The cones may be dipped with cherry-chocolate, banana or chocolate topping "and peanut butter dip is coming soon," Johnston said.

An old juke box in the corner beats out tunes by Paul McCartney's "Wings," the Archies, Led Zeppelin, Melanie, Credence Clearwater Revival and Tom Jones while the wind howls outside the door of the Northern Lights, piling up the snow in massive drifts.

Armed with a \$4,000 grant from Advocates of Indian Youth Empowerment of the Episcopal Church, the Selawik students are constructing their own new building for the restaurant — about four times the size of the present structure.

This is bound to mean bigger profits for the student businessmen and women, who started their unique restaurant last year.

One of the restaurant's strongest supporters is Jim Ede, the young, energetic school principal whose wife, Julie, teaches French and world literature at

the school. Strong support from an active village school board has helped make both the restaurant and the school program very successful, Ede said.

Selawik is the third four-year high school north of the Arctic Circle in Alaska. There are 88 students in the 7th-12th grade program — 98 per cent of them Inupiat Eskimo.

Support of the Selawik students in this venture extends well beyond the confines of the community. Executive director John W. Schaeffer of NANA Regional Corporation Inc. recently sent a representative of the Wells Fargo Bank of San Francisco out to Selawik to talk with the students about banking, its history and its place in their lives.

The speaker, investment officer Colby Cogswell of Wells Fargo, said he had as much fun as the students. It was, he added, a far cry from the business education classes he once taught at Northwestern University.

Beyond the local restaurant, Ede is working to insure the students with a better education that can help them operate small businesses for profit at home.

He has commitments from several businessmen to take on his students for further business training in the Anchorage area after they graduate and is looking for more. Significantly, this will mean they can come home again after school days and be a valuable part of the changing world of the north.