

# Villagers welcome the new Angoon Market Center

**O**n the 31st of July Angoon residents enjoyed the grand opening of its newest business establishment. Angoon Market Center, owned by Al and Sally Kookesh, has been a hit since it opened its doors. With hours from 7 AM to 11 PM, the market has served a steady stream of customers eager to purchase convenience store items.

The Kookeshs knew that Hinggit and Huda Central Council, the Native non-profit corporation serving the Southeast region, was marketing metal buildings constructed by a company called Van O Pruden. They negotiated the purchase of a new building and awaited delivery while they refined their fledgling retail store's business plan.

The Kookesh family owned prime waterfront property in Angoon which had all the makings of a perfect site for the new family business. Of course, most new businesses do not have the distinct advantage that accrues by virtue of having such an ideal location. For Al and Sally Kookesh, this was just another opportunity to do things right.

Al Kookesh has built his name well within business circles in his region. He's known for his contributions as a director for Sealaska Corporation during the past seventeen years and for his long time involvement with Angoon's ANCSA corporation. He earned a Juris Doctorate from the University of Washington after attending Mt. Edgecumbe High School and Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka.

Until recently Al served on the board of the Alaska Federation of Natives, and currently is on the Alaska Democratic Pu-

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ty Central Committee, the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority and the Alaska Native Brotherhood Executive Committee.

For all of Al's activities, Sally Kookesh is equally involved in her community. She runs the family owned Kootznahoo Inlet Lodge in Angoon and is also the Angoon agent for LAB Flying Service out of Juneau and Bell Air out of Sitka. Sally is involved in the local camp of the Alaska Native Sisterhood and has served as an officer of the Alaska Native Education Commission. Currently the chair of the Alaska Native Women's Commission, Sally is also a member of the Chatham School District board.

The Angoon Market Center is staffed by Al and Sally's many children and numer-

ous nieces and nephews. The pride in ownership of a local small business must be contagious, because these young people have done a great job of serving the customers and caring for the new store. And it didn't hurt to have as the store's manager, Jaeleen Kookesh, their daughter and a full-time student at Stanford University. Jaeleen, who was home for the summer, took charge of the new family business in much the same manner she takes charge of the basketball court. Renowned throughout Southeast as an extraordinary athlete, Jaeleen was able to transfer these leadership abilities to the business realm.

With Jaeleen returning to Stanford this fall, the door is now open for another of Al and Sally's children to develop their

business prowess and help take the business reins.

Angoon enjoyed some wonderful sunny weather this summer, accounting for the surprising popularity of ice cream treats and cold drinks. Sales were so brisk, the Kookeshs were forced to completely restock after only a week in business.

Commercial fishing aboard the FV Chenara Dawn has taught the Kookesh family the importance of taking great care with business ventures. These learned ex-



**The Angoon Market Center**

periences are translating into success at the Angoon Market Center. ■

*As reported by Larry Cooper, Juneau branch manager for National Bank of Alaska.*