

# FUEL CRISIS HITS ALASKAN VILLAGES

## Shortage Will Have A Severe Impact



LOOKING UP OLD FRIENDS—The annual Head Start Parents Conference in Fairbanks gave people an opportunity to get in touch with friends and relatives in that area.

## Head Start Parents Conference Held

The third annual Head Start Parents Conference in Fairbanks brought people from as far as Kake and Barrow to the Head Start Center on Ft. Wainwright in Fairbanks on Dec. 6-8.

The theme of the conference was, "Alaska is Unique," and Allee Mitchell, director of Child Development at Southern Texas University, outlined the special needs of children in Alaska. George Spivak, a psychologist from Philadelphia, spoke on behavior and thinking disorders in children, giving the parents and

Head Start staff ideas on how to handle children with behavioral problems.

More than 30 parents attended the three-day conference which was jointly hosted by the Greater Fairbanks Head Start Association and the Head Start State Technical Assistance and Training Office at Alaska Methodist University (STATO).

Mr. E.B. (Pete) Luttermoser, director of Program Operations for the Office of Child Development in Seattle, spoke at a banquet at the Officers' Club on

Thursday evening, and gave a brief history of Head Start in Alaska. The theme of Mr. Luttermoser's speech was, "You've Come a Long Way, Baby," and the Region X official had praise for the Fairbanks Head Start program.

Saturday morning saw Barry Morrisroe from the Office of Human Development conducting training of parents and staff in evaluation procedures. Leah Tolzin, from the Alaska Treatment Center in Anchorage, held a workshop on toys that parents could make at home. Other workshops were headed by Carol Johnson, director of Child Development of Alaska State-Operated Schools; Eva Kriger, Early Childhood Specialist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and Doris Williams.

The conference is an annual opportunity for Head Start parents all over the state to share ideas and compare notes about programs which are spread in 30 villages and two cities across Alaska.

## CAP Board Meets

Much concern about the energy needs of bush areas in the state was expressed by members of the RurAL CAP Board of Directors at their recent meeting. In a busy two-day session in Anchorage on Dec. 14 and 15, Loyd Hodson, manager of the Alaska Village Electric Co-Operative, told the board that regulations on fuel allocation must fully consider the unique situation of Alaska with severe weather and limited seasonal transportation for developmental activities. He said that badly needed programs for housing, schooling, water, sewer and all forms of proposed economic development will stop if adequate basic fuel and electrical power is not available. The major supplier of electricity in the village areas is AVEC, which covers the largest geographical area of any utility in the U.S., serving 48 communities across Alaska.

The board passed resolutions supporting the position of AVEC regarding energy needs in rural Alaska, and also in attempting to obtain new Rural Electrification loans.

The meeting was told to instruct the RurAL CAP regional corporations to be alert to fuel

problems in villages and immediately inform the central office of any problem, so that assistance could be rendered.

A representative from the Office of Economic Opportunity in Seattle, Charles Hodges, addressed the group, reviewing the OEO current situation. He commented that the regional office had approved the RurAL CAP grant application for 1974, and funds would probably be forthcoming in three-month increments on a continuing resolution from Congress, but he was not very optimistic about the future of OEO after June, 1974.

Regular housekeeping matters were taken care of, also a resolution was passed recommending that the State Legislature increase funding for education through the Foundation Act to meet rapidly increasing needs of rural primary and secondary education programs.

Two new board members were seated at this session: Patrick Barnes, special assistant to the Governor; and Walter Parker, representing the Alaska Municipal League.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held in Juneau, during February.

Fighting for their life line of communications, a way to earn their living, and in many cases where medical help is needed, their very lives, the people in outlying areas of the State are faced with more than the average inconvenience as the fuel shortage looms.

Jim Huntington, Director of RurAL CAP's Koyukon Development Corporation, has written the following letter as a plea for the 19 villages his agency serves. This office is located in Galena, on the Yukon River.

The Energy Crisis will put a serious affect on the bush villages of Alaska. A cut in gasoline could and will cause a lot of hardships for the people living in the bush villages.

Some say go back to the dog team. No one stops to think it takes at the best three to four years to raise a dog team that will enable the people to trap and haul wood. It takes two months of fishing with a fish-wheel to feed them, plus, you have to have gasoline to fish or without the gas there is no fish. It takes gasoline to trap with a snowmachine, otherwise, with no gas there will be no fur and no meat.

We have to have the gas to get the fish for the dogs so that the dogs can haul the wood to

keep our houses warm.

If we use a snowmachine we will have to have gas to haul the wood, no matter what way you do look at the poor people of the bush. They will need the gasoline to keep the light going

or either live in the dark as they did a thousand years ago.

Another important matter to consider is the depletion of the salmon in the rivers of Alaska. The fish isn't there to feed the dogs like it use to be. The foreign countries have a monopoly on the fish that use to be the feed for our dogs. If there is no dogs to do the work of the snowmachines, then, it will mean we have to have gasoline for our snowmachines and outboard motors, or go back to living like our ancestors had lived hundreds of years ago.

The air taxi operators also need gasoline for their bush planes since there is hardly a day that goes by that a life depends on the operators of air taxis in Alaska. Even the larger airlines are cutting back. What is going to happen to the mail that is bringing in 80% of the staple food for the bush villages? There isn't enough barge lines to bring in food for the villages along the rivers of Alaska, so we do depend heavily on the airlines for the delivery of our staple food. The airlines deliver at least 50% of the needs of the bush villages of Alaska.

If we can have the same amount of gasoline we have had in the bush villages this year, then, we can manage it with the understanding that any newcomers will have to make their own arrangements as to their need of gasoline. We of the bush villages cannot make a living if we do not have gasoline.

They will have to take a good look at Alaska as it is and how it is going to be when the Pipeline impact hits Alaska before they start any cutbacks on the gasoline in Alaska. Some people can take a cut in stove oil but no one, especially in the bush, can get along without gasoline.

Fuel prices in the rural areas have risen a great deal in some cases; for example, in the Bristol Bay area, a 50 gallon barrel of fuel oil now costs \$20 that used to be \$17. In Copper Center, a 50 gallon drum used to cost \$12, now costs \$14.95; in Juneau, fuel has risen from 36 to 44 cents per gallon. In Fort Yukon, 50 gallons of fuel oil used to be \$21.30, and now costs \$29; while in Bethel, a gallon of fuel has hiked from 28.5 to 33.3 cents per gallon. Kotzebue has has an 18 per cent raise in prices since October. In Galena, gas is up 22 per cent, at 68 cents per gallon, and heating fuel is up 14 per cent at 42 cents per gallon.

## Grant Awarded RurAL CAP

Annoucement has been made by Mike Harper, executive director of RurAL CAP, that the Office of Economic Opportunity has approved the 1974 grant application, and funds have been received for the first three-month period.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER—Allee Mitchell from Southern Texas University, addressed the Fairbanks Head Start Parents Conference on the special needs of children in Alaska.