



RurAL-CAP

ACTION REPORTS



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Alaska Airlines urged to pay more attention to its passengers' needs

Regional director's meeting held

During the beginning of April, RurAL CAP sponsored a two-day session in Anchorage to review and discuss numerous statewide issues applicable to regional non-profit organizations to which RurAL CAP provides financial and technical assistance.

Central Office staff gave up-to-date reports on the Winterization Program, subsistence considerations, proposed Federal food stamp legislation, Head Start activities for FY 76-77, and Central Office/regional evaluations.

Regional Directors in attendance represented the Aleutian Planning Commission (Anchorage); Bristol Bay Native Association (Dillingham); Copper River Native Association (Copper Center); Gwitcha Gwitchin Ginyhyke (Fort Yukon); Kodiak Area Community Development Corp. (Kodiak); Koyukon Development Corp. (Galena); Mauneluk Association (Kotzebue); SEACAP (Juneau); Upper Tanana Development Corp. (Tok); and Yupiktak Bista (Bethel).

One highlight of the meeting was the presentation given on rural earth station construction in Alaska.

Robert Walp, Director of the State Office of Telecommunications, explained the functions of that office, past and present activities in coordination with the Alaska Federation of Natives Advisory Committee on Telecommunications, and possible earth station applications in the future.

The first 20 earth stations are to be in service by the end of April; the sites of the second 50 earth stations, which are to be constructed this year, were selected by the AFN committee

after considering a wide range of criteria in all regions of the state.

During the summer of 1977, 30 more stations (possibly 50) will be considered for construction in rural Alaska. Problems needing to be resolved are inadequate electrical power in the communities and ownership.

The Regional Directors were also asked to compile and prepare certain types of information/data for the upcoming RurAL CAP Board of Directors Meeting to be held in Cordova on May 12-14th.

Winterization happenings

With the Winterization Program coming to a close in the Copper River and Chignik areas, the staff of the RurAL CAP Energy Office would like to share some of the positive comments they have received from people involved in the program:

"Winterization has helped save 60% of the heat loss in my home. With a lot of children running around, in and out of the house, it sure is a great program for our cold Alaskan winters."

"I believe this to be a good program and feel this type of program should be encouraged

as a yearly project. It not only provides people who live in sub-standard housing with a means to improve their homes, but also provides employment for people in the area."

"The Winterization Program has meant a lot for me by insulating my home both on the floor and the ceiling. It has cut my fuel bill a lot. Hope to see this program go on in the future in the village, and other villages also."

"I think this program is really good! We've saved a lot of fuel bills. I know this place (my home) is a lot warmer than it was before. I'm sure the rest of them feel the same about this. I think the Winterization Program is the nicest thing to ever happen around here. Maybe we could get some storm windows to put on from inside. This would help."

"Thanks to winterization, my home is warmer this winter."

The RurAL CAP Energy Office is very happy to have received comments such as these showing some very positive gains in the program.

The Energy Office has developed an ENERGY CALENDAR which will be a mail-out to persons on our mailing list and especially to participants in our winterization effort. This is an important follow-up for energy conservation data. It is not yet ready for distribution, but should be within the next month. We would especially like to thank Chuck Orr for his assistance with the calendar.

Mr. O.F. Benecke, President
Alaska Airlines
Sea-Tac International Airport
Box 68900
Seattle, Wash. 98188

Dear Mr. Benecke:

As some correspondence between our office and yours has occurred during the past several months regarding the quality of air transportation in rural Alaska, and your Airline's provision of that service, I would like to share with you a recent personal experience which, I believe, exemplifies the treatment many of your passengers experience and which may explain the source of many complaints received by Alaska Airlines.

Yesterday, (Sunday, April 25th) I had reservations for your flight to Ketchikan, departing Anchorage at 9:50 a.m. Because I was ill, I called in at 8:00 a.m. requesting a change in reservations to the evening flight (5:30 p.m.) to Juneau, with a continuation of my Ketchikan travel to occur this morning. At that time your agent told me that I was confirmed on both flights.

So I went to the airport to check in at 4:30 p.m. The agent on duty then told me I had no reservation from Juneau to Anchorage, that the flight was full, and that I would have to standby, which I did, and didn't get on.

I then asked for reservations on this morning's 9:50 a.m. flight to Ketchikan, was informed that it was full and that I would be put on a waiting list. Later last night I called to see if I had been confirmed and was told that I wasn't on a list and that it would be senseless to try to get on the flight.

So I'm leaving, with luck, this afternoon, to spend the night in Juneau and to proceed to Ketchikan in the morning.

In my discussions with your agents, it was never hinted by them that ASA people might have made a mistake. It was suggested that I "didn't understand" and that I was fabricating the contents of earlier conversations. My efforts to seek relief for denied boarding were thwarted by the who contended that I wasn't denied boarding because I never

had a reservation.

I am not a liar, nor do I have special handicaps which may have led me to misunderstand your reservations agents. I resent the implication that I would falsely make a statement and I further resent the general attitude of your personnel toward the public. None of the agents with whom I discussed this problem ever gave any indication of caring whether I got to Ketchikan or not. For an airlines which is striving mightily to maintain its monopoly in Southeast Alaska, it would seem you might pay more attention to your passengers' needs—or, at least, not insult their integrity.

I renew my request for a reimbursement for the ticket price between Anchorage and Ketchikan.

And I look forward to discussing these and similar problems when we meet in Cordova next month with representatives of the Alaska Transportation Commission and the Civil Aeronautics Board.

Sincerely,
Philip J. Smith
Executive Director

PJS/so

cc: Jake Johnson, ATC
P.R. Steinman, III, CAB
Tundra Times

Poets corner

IF YOU NO LONGER HUNT
THE BEAR YOU ARE NO
LONGER A BEAR HUNTER

one man
writes
that
you cannot destroy
the
people
but
I hold
where
the people
surrender
their heritage
for
gold
or
oil
or
money
or
trucks
or
vinyl-siding houses
with
electric stoves
that
the people
eventually
destroy themselves

poetry by ROSS LAURSEN
(Viking-Comanche poet)

Subsistence question continuing at RurAL CAP

Work on the subsistence question is continuing at RurAL CAP. The January meeting of people interested in the issue pointed to the need for an effort that would present the views of those in the state who engage in subsistence activities to the policy makers whose decisions affect that lifestyle.

RurAL CAP accepted the responsibility of coordinating the effort to formulate a position statement from subsistence users. At that time action in Congress on Section 17 (d) 2 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act indicated that such a position should be presented by the end of this month.

At this time, however, indications are that major action on (d) 2 will not happen until the next Congress convenes. With this in mind, it was decided that a more thorough regional consultation effort would take place prior to a conference to subsistence users to adopt a united position.

Staff members of RurAL CAP and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, Division of Community Services, will be traveling around the state consulting with people in each region to arrive at

regional position statements on subsistence from the subsistence users themselves.

Efforts on the regional position statements are being coordinated through appropriate regional organizations.

A statewide conference is seen for early fall to adopt a unified position on subsistence, based on the regional statements, for presentation to all policy makers involved with the issue.

Any person or organization who wishes to present their views on the subsistence question should contact Nils Sara, RurAL CAP, P.O. Box 3-3908, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, or call 279-2441.



Man Is—The only animal that goes to sleep when it is not sleepy and gets up when it is.



Courage Is—Knowing what not to fear.