

Promising Venture Turns Sour—

Northwestern Natives Displeased with AVEC

By JAMES EDE

SELAWIK — The once helpful, friendly animal that promised an improved way of life to Alaska's Native villages has grown into a man-eating monster. This animal of such promise, AVEC (Alaska Village Electric Cooperative) has become a bureaucracy which now devours the people it was designed to help.

When the Alaska state rural legislators made a deal to fund AVEC to help provide power to the villages, they did not know what their subsidy plan would eventually do.

Instead of subsidizing the public utility in the normal manner by direct government subsidy, the state allowed the subsidy, to be made indirectly from educational funds.

Each village had a BIA or state-operated school which would have to pay originally \$2400 a month and subsequently increased to \$2835. This monthly payment is the same in January and June alike, no matter how many kilowatts are used whether the school is a one teacher school or a 10-teacher school.

There was no guarantee that AVEC would provide consistent service and schools and private consumers alike paid for service they did not receive.

The rate for the individual consumer in the village is seven times the rate for consumers elsewhere and for the school it can be 10 to 30 times higher especially in the summer months when no power is being used and the \$2835 is still paid each month.

In one community there are two schools. The private school which uses twice the power, pays half the price of the public school.

This is clear discrimination and an unfair practice apparently upheld by the Public Utilities Commission, appointed by the governor, whose members are obviously biased in favor of AVEC and do not recognize the consumers' rights.

These friends walk out of commission meetings with their friends from the AVEC board after ignoring the consumers' complaints of unfair treatment.

One of the biggest problems of AVEC is undoubtedly mismanagement. No wonder costs are exorbitant to the poor consumer. There is little or no maintenance with a band-aid approach. The local AVEC employees are poorly trained and so poorly paid it is difficult to hire competent people for this highly responsible job.

The village plant operators do not have spare parts on hand and in the unusual event that an AVEC maintenance man is sent in for repairs long overdue, he is not allowed to bring parts with him.

There is much waste of time and money because of a lack of coordination and direction from AVEC officials. The traveling employees of AVEC have a high turnover rate and apparently are underpaid and leave a long trail of bad checks in the villages.

Safety precautions by AVEC are few. There is little fire protection. AVEC plants are often too close to oil tanks. There are no dikes around oil tanks set on the tundra and frequent oil spills are ignored. The plants are not grounded, which interferes with radio communications for the village people.

Nearly every AVEC powered village in Alaska has a sad story to tell. In one village a large generator sat for a year not hooked up. Then AVEC complained the village had overloaded the for-

mer generator which was too small.

In another village AVEC refused to hook up the village until the SOS school signed a discriminatory contract, thus the whole village could not use a recently installed sewer system.

In many villages power goes off, schools freeze up, pipes are broken, motors are burned out in freezers, furnaces and other appliances, but AVEC is not responsible.

Many villages are growing and AVEC has had advance warning of the need for larger power plants. Their negligence in meeting the needs in time has caused much loss including fires, destruction of property, slow down and stoppage of construction projects, loss of school property, time and many personal damages to village people.

AVEC has no responsibility but everyone must pay their bills whether service is received or not. People are frequently billed for bills they have already paid, and when bills have been paid twice credit has not been received.

When complaints are made by village officials AVEC retaliates with reprisals. One village power plants were not repaired for 10 days last summer causing everyone in the village to lose all their summer meat supplies.

When an AVEC official arrives in a village he demands an immediate meeting with a city council. Then he proceeds to raise hell and treat the council as if they were stupid swearing and name-calling.

An official threatened one council with triple damages if anything happened to the generator he knew was overloaded and had had a year's notice to increase the demand for power.

AVEC has played favorites and sent mechanics to one village as a priority over another village to hook up power for a smaller village with a new high school being constructed for 10 students, while the high school with 115 students was bypassed.

This type of discrimination and treatments of AVEC bureaucrats is untenable to the people of rural Alaska. Threats and verbal abuse are not acceptable ways of dealing with any human beings.

No village names are mentioned here due to AVEC's system of reprisals. But many people in rural Alaska are extremely upset that the system is allowed to continue and demand that some action be taken against AVEC to protect the consumer and insure fair treatment to rural Alaskan power users.

Someone somewhere should care about the people of our village and many others are being exploited and cheated by AVEC. If the people of Alaska don't take action soon, the damages will increase and the discrimination continues and once again

a voice cries in the wilderness, "Let there be light." Villages should not have to live in darkness and cold while AVEC mismanagement runs rampant.

A legislative investigation should be made of AVEC and its insufficient unfair operation. The Tundra Times is urged to call for this investigation on behalf of victimized village people who are paying exorbitant rate for lousy service.

When the people who can least afford the high power rates must pay so much more for inferior service, there is a need for action and reform of this utility.

Barrow 'Whalers' Keep Winning

The Barrow Whalers hosted their second High School Basketball team in the history of the Barrow Schools. The Whalers played the Nenana Lynx on November 22 and 23.

After upending the Tri-Valley Vikings in two contests the weekend before the Whalers were again victorious by defeating the Lynx in both Friday and Saturday night games.

In the first contests the Whalers defeated the Lynx by the score of 59-53. Johnny Aiken was the leading scorer for the Whalers with 22 points, while Joe Simmonds added 15 points and Earl Aiken 14 points. The high scorer for the Lynx was A. Ketzler with 23 points. The score by quarters was:

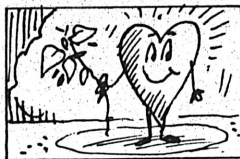
	Barrow	Nenana
1st	13	8
2nd	34	20
3rd	49	41
4th	59	53

The Whalers quickness and fine outside shooting won their fourth victory on Saturday night. The score was 73-65. Johnny Aiken was again high scorer for the Whalers with 32 points, while Earl Aiken and Joe Simmonds each added 18 points. R. Starr was high scorer for the Lynx with 18 points. The score by quarters was:

	Barrow	Nenana
1st	18	17
2nd	46	28
3rd	61	42
4th	73	65

The Barrow Whalers now have a 4-0 record. They now host Ben Eilson High School on November 25 & 26 and then take to the road on a two week trip that will originate at Nenana and finish up at the Kodiak Christmas Tournament.

Coach Schwebel.



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We pay highest prices for antique Indian, Eskimo, Aleut carvings or ceremonial objects. 2320 Dyke Road, Richmond, B.C. Canada.

HELP WANTED

Now accepting applications for Apprenticeship Cement Mason, Apprenticeship Outreach, 315 5th Ave. Fairbanks, Alaska. AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

HELP WANTED

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Galena, Alaska, available immediately. The Koyuk Development Corporation is looking for someone to aid in the development of new projects for villages in the Koyuk region. SALARY: \$800 - \$900 per month. CONTACT: Koyuk Regional Corporation, Box 26, Galena, Alaska 99741. Phone: 656-1238.

HELP WANTED

City Manager, City of Galena. First Class, General Law City in unorganized borough. Is in earliest stages of growth and development. Desire someone with high self-motivation and a willingness to settle in rural Alaska on a permanent basis. Salary negotiable. Contact City Manager, P.O. Box 12, Galena, AK 99741 or phone 656-1281.

HELP WANTED

NORTHERN COMMERCIAL COMPANY

603 D Street, Anchorage. Interviewing for parttime positions. Please call or stop by for interview, third floor personnel office. Please mention this advertisement when calling. We are an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

HELP WANTED

POSITION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

TITLE: Second Level Administration Assistant (Secretary) WHERE: Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc., Health Affairs Division, 1675 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

RESPONSIBILITY: Works under the general supervision of the First Level Admin. Asst. General office duties include: typing, copying, in charge of purchase orders for the division, making travel arrangements, etc. Will be required to occasionally attend meetings and take minutes. QUALIFICATIONS: Shorthand preferred. Typing at least 50. Some office experience.

SALARY & FRINGE BENEFITS: Salary DOE. Fringe benefits: 13 percent, includes paid group medical and dental.

CONTACT: Director, Health Affairs Division, Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc., 1675 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501 (274-3611 for appointment.)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: November 20, 1974

HELP WANTED

CIVIL ENGINEER

Graduate Civil Engineer or an equivalent degree required. Prefer 5 years experience in administration of civil projects. With emphasis on building construction. Work with design firm or a contracting firm will qualify. General knowledge of construction law desirable. Under the authority of the Director of Construction of his designee, to provide the administrative control of building construction projects. Must be competent to evaluate the technical, administrative, economic, and legal consequence of situations that develop during design review and construction; and to recommend to the Director preferred courses of action. May supervise the activities of one or more departmental technicians. Will be dealing on a daily basis with departmental personnel as well as outside consultants. Job position located on Fairbanks campus. Send complete resume to D. C. Moyer, Executive Director, Institutional Studies and Physical Facilities Development, University of Alaska, Box 95155, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701.

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NOTICE OF HAZARDOUS OPERATIONS

The University of Alaska, Geophysical Institute will be launching high altitude rockets from their Poker Flat Research Range, Mile 30 Steese Highway (Chatanika) during the period December 1, 1974 to December 23, 1974 from the hours of sunrise to sunset, plus or minus one hour. The danger zone includes the pie shaped area formed by a line bearing clockwise from 355 degrees True azimuth through 055 degrees True azimuth from the Poker Flat Research Range 175 nautical miles northward, plus that area formed by a circle one mile in radius around the launcher, and from the surface to 60,000 feet altitude above these areas. Pub: Dec. 4, 11, 18 & 25, 1974.

HELP WANTED

Position Description for: VILLAGE AFFAIRS, ASSISTANT

Primarily responsible to assist activities of the eighteen villages in the Bering Straits Region, and coordinating village planning with the BSNIC office related to ANCSA. Position functions under the general supervision of the Assistant Vice President, Village Affairs who provides instructions and assistance on a day to day basis. The position requires intimate knowledge of village life in the Bering Straits area, preferably with language capabilities. Extensive village travel is involved.

Send applications before December 9th, 1974 to the Bering Straits Native Corporation, P.O. Box 1008, Nome, Alaska 99762, Phone No. 443-5252 attention Chris Low.

FOR SALE

Billard Supplies: Bed Cloth, Spray Glue, Cds, Slip-on Cue Tip, Chalk, etc. Mayfair Sales, 1595 College Rd., Fairbanks, Alaska 456-4651.

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HELP WANTED

POSITION OPEN: Field Representative for the Alaska Native Commission on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Mini-Grants program. DUTIES: Coordinates and implements alcoholism activities in twelve regions and rural villages. Gives technical assistance and monitoring to village recipients of Federal grants. Audits records upon site visits for budgetary requirements. Develops direct lines of communications with village projects.

QUALIFICATIONS: High School Graduate. Graduate from accredited school on alcohol studies desired or two years experience in the field of alcoholism. One year management experience desired. Knowledge of rural Alaska essential. Extensive travel required.

SALARY: \$1,200 per month. Job Description available by contacting Alaska Native Commission on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, 528 W. 5th Ave., Suite 9, Submit resume and State of Alaska application. APPLICATION DEADLINE: Until filled.