

Rural Areas Give Most to Africans

Kotzebue tops donations, follows Kenai's lead in adopting families, village

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Over half of the nearly \$400,000 raised so far by the Alaska Cares for Africa Now group was contributed by people in Alaska's rural areas, primarily Kotzebue.

"Donations from people in the Kotzebue area have been significant. Pat Simpson, who lives in Kotzebue and works for NANA, is coordinating the fund raising there," said Galen McCord the group's spokesman and an Anchorage volunteer.

A \$250,000 check was wired last Wednesday to World Vision by the Alaska group. In late November the Kenai chapter sent \$15,000 to fly two C-130 plane loads of grain to Ethiopia.

Fund-raising efforts for the African famine relief began last July on the Kenai Peninsula, then quickly spread throughout the state. A statewide telethon broadcasted on December 15 collected \$198,000 during a three hour period.

The donations are being sent to World Vision, a 31-year old relief organization with offices in 87 countries and 17 years dedication in Ethiopia. Around 80-percent of the money goes directly to the field, McCord said.

In a two to five year Adopt-A-

Village program the Kenai chapter is feeding some 3,000 members of the Vadoma tribe in Kenya. McCord said that Kotzebue is also thinking of adopting an African village.

Of the money collected \$114,000 is going to feed nearly 8,000 people for six months in Zimbabwe; \$36,000 to fund a refugee camp for six months in Mozambique; and, \$127,000 in emergency relief to starving people in Chad, Ethiopia and Mozambique.

"Perhaps because many people in the Bush, meaning those areas not generally accessible by road, can remember being hungry they have given very generously," McCord said.

Delta farmers have donated 25 tons of barley to feed people in Ethiopia but getting the grain there is posing a problem for project coordinators.

"We have a bagging problem with the grain," said McCord. "Right now it is in a Delta Grain elevator awaiting shipment to Portland, Oregon."

The Alaska barley can either be flown to Ethiopia or shipped, from Portland. Either way the cost of shipping the grain over such a long distance quickly adds up may cost as much to ship as to buy in Europe, said McCord.



The village chief family of Vadoma, Kenya, Africa, was among the 3,000 people that Kenai members of Alaska Cares for Africa Now adopted. Kotzebue members are considering doing the same in which they would be pledging to feed an entire famine stricken village for three to five years.

(Photo by Glen Herman)