

FREE INCOME TAX PREPARATION COURSE

Internal Revenue Service Offers Course Aimed Toward Rural Areas

A free course in preparing an income tax is available from the Internal Revenue Service and will be offered in rural areas through RurAL CAP offices to villages or groups requesting it.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, known as VITA, is a course prepared by the Federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) which covers all necessary information required for low income people or those with uncomplicated taxes, who wish to file their own returns, or who want to learn more about income taxes in general.

The Southeastern Alaska Community Action Program (SEACAP) has been the first to request the course in response to a priority set on their work program for more information regarding income taxes.

Bob Flint, VITA Volunteer, who holds a BA degree from California State University in Chico, will conduct the initial course in the SEACAP region. He is hopeful that the program will generate enough interest so that it can be expanded next year.

All RurAL CAP regional offices are urged to contact villages in their areas to find people interested in taking the course so that dates may be set for the sessions. Ed Ness, Trainer for RurAL CAP, will conduct courses and said that IRS officials have agreed that the VITA course is needed in rural Alaska.

Ness, who holds a secondary teaching degree from Indiana State University, and is presently taking a public accounting course through the International Accountants' Society, has evaluated VITA as an excellent course which every taxpayer should take.

It is a two-day or three-night session course and all materials are furnished by the Internal

Revenue Service including a course book entitled, "Chart Book"; 1040 Blow-ups; and other training aids.

In addition to the VITA program, RurAL CAP and the Community Enterprise Development Corporation is co-sponsoring with the IRS, a special income tax information session especially for commercial fishermen in Alaska.

The session will be held on January 20 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or longer if necessary, in the Kenai Room of the Anchorage-Westward Hotel. The IRS will conduct the instruction and a representative from the Alaska Department of Revenue will also be available to answer questions. It is expected that Senator Gravel will attend the session.

The special income tax session for commercial fishermen will be the first one of its kind in Alaska. Travel expenses to attend the sessions are tax deductible for 1973.

Ness stated that plans were underway to carry the program to all rural areas and expressed the hope that much interest would be generated in the courses.

It is estimated that more than half of the returns filed are done by someone other than the taxpayer.

With these basic courses, people would have a better understanding of what is required, and especially for those who have uncomplicated returns, it may not be necessary to pay someone else to do it.