

# Fairbanks Native Welcome Center Plans Move

## New Center Location Will be 102 Lacey St.

The Fairbanks Native Welcome Center is planning a move to newer and larger quarters to house its expanding program of services to urban Eskimos and Indians.

"It's a lot nicer place," explains Center director Clara Carroll about the move. "Hopefully," she says, "we'll be in our new building by the end of the month."

Presently housed in a flood damaged, decrepit building which is due for destruction this year, the Center has finally found a new location.

When necessary alterations are complete, the Welcome Center will move to a former print shop and restaurant several blocks away.

"The place was recently the 'Burlap Bucket' restaurant, explained Miss Carroll. It used to be the 'Lettershop' (a commercial printing firm in Fairbanks.)

The new building, at 102 Lacey Street, will house a recreation room, play area and office space for the nine offices for programs already run by the Fairbanks Native Association.

The Native Association, which runs the Welcome Center, also operates employment, youth, job training and Native economic development organizations.

Last summer, the Fairbanks Native Welcome Center was one of four urban Indian centers in the country awarded grants as a "model center" to tackle problems of urban Indians.

The program is jointly sponsored by several federal agencies. Fairbanks is slated to receive over \$207,000 for this year, and is still awaiting the funds. Till they arrive, they cannot begin their planned expanded youth outreach, studies of urban Native problems and other programs.

Most of the new building will remain set up much as its former restaurant tenants left it. The large recreation room will maintain its chairs and tables.

"There will be space for a permanent arts and crafts exhibit and workroom," explained Miss Carroll. "We also have a play

area in the back for our pool table and space for all of the offices."

Recently, the Welcome Center received a \$35,000 grant from OEO. The grant was speeded up for this year to tide the Center over till the model center program is set up. They were in desperate need of money to pay operating expenses.

For the present, the Native Association is leasing the Lacey Street quarters, with an option to buy.

"We hope to be able to raise the money to buy the building," explained Miss Carroll.

Presently, the Native Welcome Center operates an arts and crafts workshop, emergency relief and counseling service, and may contract BIA employment services. It houses various Native activities, including an AA group, courses in Athabaskan languages and a youth activities program.

The Native Association has been handling recruiting for various manpower training programs, as well as operating its own economic corporation—DNH.

For the present, Welcome Center employees demonstrated their peeling walls, crowded and dark building, tiny antiquated bathroom, with obvious pleasure in the prospect of leaving it all behind.

"You'll have to use a flash," explained volunteer worker Stephanie Rogers, to the Tundra Times photographer. An amateur photographer, she takes many pictures of Welcome Center activities.

"There's so little light in here it practically doesn't register on the meter," she explained.

Young people at the center were enthusiastic about the prospective move. Plans are underway for an extensive youth program, utilizing the larger facilities.

The Native population of Fairbanks is plagued by alcoholism, bad housing, poverty and health problems. Hopefully, Native center will be able to become a real and constructive center for Native community life in a strange city.

## Youngsters from Villages—

## Problems of Boarding Students

Boarding parents, families at home, young people and educators grapple with the problems of boarding home students.

Coming to Fairbanks from small rural villages, places where all faces are familiar, a school as large as Lathrop H.S. can be threatening.

Here, crammed into a large modern building, over a thousand students go their own directions. In the crowd, the Native students can become lost.

Scattered in dozens of classes, drawn together by common interests, but living miles apart, Native students at Fairbanks' Lathrop H.S. usually stay apart from the rest of the school.

For many of them, coming from small villages, high school brings their first close contact with a white culture—in a white town.

In November, several of the Native students at Lathrop H.S. banded together in the Alaska Native Youth Association.

For most of them, this is their first school activity. Since early November, the club has tried to meet during lunch hours. It sponsored two school dances and an after school meeting featuring Joe Upicksoun, President of the Arctic Slope Native Association.

"Transportation is the major problem," explained Verna Westlake of Kiana, the group's treasurer. In her second year at Lathrop, Verna spent her first eight years of schooling in the village school at Kiana. Her village is in the Northwest area of Alaska, inland from Kotzebue on the Koyuk River.

"It's too much of a problem getting home after school (most students take the school bus and have no other way of getting home if they miss it) or going to evening meetings," she said.

For now, the group meets during lunch hour—but Lathrop has four staggered lunch hours. At any one time, half the students are in class—or should be.

Several of the group's officers agreed. Leonard Kriska of Koyukuk is the group's president. Robert Aiken of Barrow is vice president. Aileen Kubanyi of Fairbanks serves as secretary and

Verna Westlake of Kiana is treasurer.

Other officers are Gerald Pilot of Koyukuk, program chairman and Pamela Van Dyke of Beaver, the recreation chairman.

Gerald Pilot, the program chairman for the group, is on the lookout for prominent Native speakers to appear at an evening meeting.

It was Gerald who hunted around Fairbanks looking for speakers, spied out Joe Upicksoun—in Fairbanks for a meeting of the ad hoc committee for a Fairbanks Boarding School.

"I went around and asked Betty Magnuson (boarding home coordinator) if she knew anyone, and she told me," Gerald explained.

The program chairman, a resident of the village of Koyukuk at the junction of the Koyukuk and Yukon Rivers, transferred to Lathrop this year from Mt. Edgecumbe boarding school. He was a straight A student at Mt. Edgecumbe, a member of the National Honor Society.

"That was my club," Gerald explained.

As program chairman, his dream is to bring Byron Mallott to speak with the ANYA.

In the near future, the ANYA plans an exhibit of Eskimo arts and crafts. Bob Aiken of Barrow, their vice president, will put together the exhibit.

"I'll get the things from home," he explained. In Barrow, his grandfather carved ivory and can provide examples of Eskimo arts and crafts. Bob provided the decorating for the two successful dances ANYA has sponsored.

Three of the officers, all boarding home students, agreed they would rather live in boarding homes than a dormitory.

"In a boarding school, you have rules and regulations and curfews and all that sort of thing," explained Verna Westlake. Bob Aiken transferred to Lathrop this year from Kodiak, where he lived in a dormitory. Most of the students are bothered mainly by problems in getting together with their friends and complain about having "nowhere to go."

"They ought to have a place where we could go and play basketball," suggested one boy. The Native Welcome Center, which plans to move this month to larger quarters, conducts a program of youth activities which it plans to expand.

At present, it has only a pool table and a juke box for recreation—in a run-down tiny building downtown. Most of the boarding students live in the suburbs where houses are large and often miles from town.

For the officers, this year is the first time they have ever participated in a school club. They are learning quickly, Verna Westlake, the treasurer, already has a firm grasp on the finances of the group. The officers are enthusiastic and searching for ideas.

Mrs. Irene Cleworth, counselor for the boarding home students, serves as faculty sponsor to the native youth.

"At first," she explained, "we debated the idea of a segregated group. However, anyone who is interested can come to the meetings and join."

"The advisory board of the Boarding Home Program thought it was a good idea when it first came up, as long as it serves a purpose," she explained.

"It gives many of the students more of a feeling of self identity," explained Mrs. Cleworth.

"Whenever the ANYA no longer serves a purpose, we can drop it."

Meanwhile, according to their by-laws, the members of the Alaska Native Youth Association have pledged themselves to:

1. Promote a more active participation in the school we attend.
2. Learn more of the arts and crafts of our people.
3. Instill a pride in our heritage.
4. Promote better education opportunities of the Native Youth.
5. Provide recreational activities.
6. Create inter-st in political activities that would promote the general health and welfare of Native children and youth.

## Voluminous Pipeline Report Buries Impact on Natives...

(Continued from page 1)

no air pollution, the wilderness encroaches upon the doorposts of the small Native communities.

"The only identifiable negative cultural influence that could be associated with the implementation of the project would be a reduction in remnant hunting and fishing cultures that still characterize some Native groups," reports the Interior Department survey.

There would be at least two reasons for this reduction. The first reason is fairly positive.

"Generally improved economic conditions that would result from the production of oil and its related economic return would have the potential of considerably upgrading public services, health care, education and vocational training in rural areas."

Also, the report goes on, "the construction phase of the project would provide on-the-job vocational training to Alaska residents. Such improved opportunities might cause Alaskan Natives to leave the villages."

The other reason for a reduction in subsistence economy

would probably be the damages to fishing and wildlife which are inevitable if civilization, pollution, and oil spillage come to Alaska's wilderness.

Primarily, there will be effects from construction work on the wildlife in the areas. Some of these effects may be reversible once construction ends when the area loses its temporary population and noise and pollution incident to any construction project.

"Construction activity will have an adverse effect on the wildlife inhabiting the areas adjacent to the pipeline route by disturbing the normal behavioral patterns of those animals. These effects will be most pronounced on those wildlife which tend to be intolerant of human activities."

The very presence of above ground pipeline may disturb caribou migrations. "Oil pollution accidents" and the dispersal of "treated sewage effluent" into streams, lakes and rivers in the vicinity of construction camps will have an "as yet not completely understood" effect on

the wildlife, fish and environment.

"In general," the report concludes in its summary of negative environmental impacts, "there would be increased levels of pollution resulting from the presence of increased numbers of people."

"The reduction of wilderness area, wildlife habitat, and degradation of scenic values along the pipeline right-of-way, though all proportionally small, must be counted as environmental costs. There is a probability that some oil spills will occur even under the most stringent enforcement."

While most of the influence of environmental pollution is measured in terms of recreational aspects, little is said in the report on the influence of deceased wildlife, damage to the tundra and potential pollution in streams and rivers on the subsistence economy.

One observer pointed out the report fails to document the use of the Yukon fishery by Natives for subsistence.

In some villages, fishing co-

operatives are weakly beginning. Perhaps there should be more concern for the impact of the pipeline on the Native people, commented William Byler of the AAI in New York.

He suggested some kind of understanding or provision for an indemnity to be paid to Natives for oil spills if they destroy fishing areas—not just fines to be paid to the federal government.

The report documents positive as well as negative impacts of the pipeline. One requirement for any permit to be granted is that the "permittee" shall submit proposals to the Secretary of the Interior regarding recruitment, testing, training, placement, employment and job counseling of Alaska Natives.

The pipeline constructor will be required to create pre-employment and on-the-job training for Alaska Natives and to employ those who complete their training program successfully.

"Although some of the job opportunities created by the development of Alaska oil resources will be filled by people who

come to Alaska from other states, training programs for native Alaskans are expected to increase the number of jobs available to them," the document reports.

In addition, the report cited that Alyeska Pipeline has voluntarily instituted a program to contract with native owned and operated corporations to insure native participation in pipeline construction.

Yet, despite the benefits, the report agrees there will be some substantial disruption of the wilderness.

"It is clearly recognized that no stipulation can alter the fundamental change that development would bring to this area. Whether this transition is adverse or advantageous is a matter of value judgement."

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