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This edition
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National Bank of Alaska

Resource Review

June 1993

A monthly publication of the Resource Development Council, Inc.

At their most formative age, children are inundated with information on why America must preserve its resources, but very little on why it must develop them responsibly

Seeking balance in resource education



Elizabeth and Cathryn Posey examine a collection of rocks included in the AMEREF Alaska Resources Kit, a "toolbox" of user-friendly ideas and lesson plans for teachers, as well as a dynamic hands-on program of activities for students. The kit is considered the heart of minerals and energy resource education in Alaska. Photo by Hal Gage

Thirty years ago, textbooks illustrated chemistry in terms of industrial processes. As mankind sent the first rockets into orbit around the earth, textbooks framed resource development in terms of national wealth, security, economics, and consumer products.

Today's books, however, illustrate chemistry and resource development almost exclusively in terms of environmental impacts. For instance, in Chemistry 101, case studies compare water samples in a stream above and below a factory's discharge.

New approaches emphasizing environmental awareness has revolutionized thinking among the nation's young. At their most formative age, children today are inundated with information on why America must preserve the earth's resources, but very little on why it must develop them responsibly. While this new trend might be pleasing to preservationists, others are concerned the pendulum has swung too far.

Fearing America may become a nation of consumers without producers, industry executives are concerned that schools are turning out "eco-warriors" with little or no understanding of mineral and energy resources and their essential role in society. In their judgment, much of the material directed at children — from comic books to classroom instruction — is filled with half truths and distortions. Meanwhile, school administrators and teachers are receiving more complaints from parents who claim their children are receiving more environmental indoctrination than education.

(Continued to page 4)



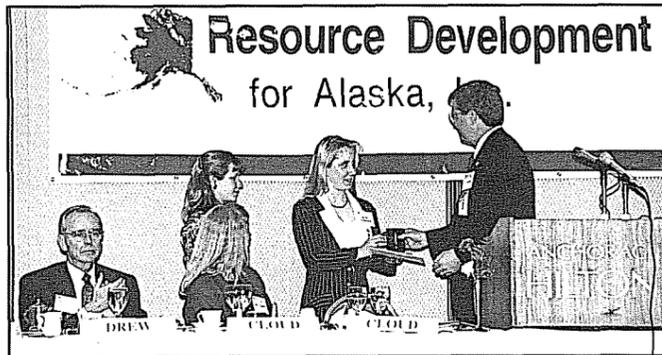
Guests at the NANA Regional Corporation table included Jim Campbell, Willie Hensley, Abbe Hensley, John Rense, unidentified student and Emma Walton, Science Coordinator for the Anchorage School District.

Annual Meeting dedicated to resource education

Photos by Aaron Weaver



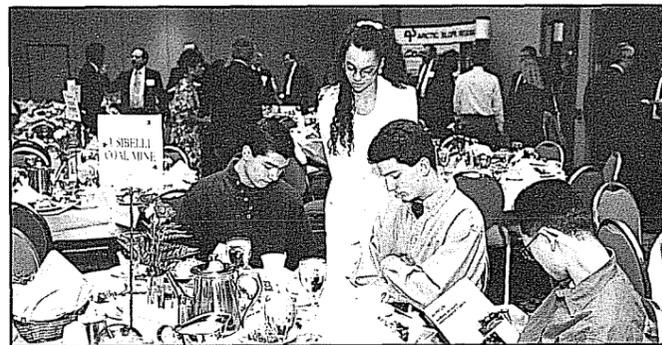
RDC Executive Director Becky Gay introduces keynote speaker Dr. Jim Drew to the AMEREF exhibit at the Annual Meeting lunch.



Service High School Junior Julie Stanczuk took top honors in the high school category of RDC's essay contest while her sister, Kathryn, a 7th-grader at Hanshew, had the best essay among junior high school students.



RDC board members (at far right) Kelly Campbell and John Forceskie visit exhibits on resource and environmental education programs.



A number of students and teachers attended the Annual Meeting lunch, which included exhibits on resource education programs.

The Resource Development Council (RDC) is Alaska's largest privately funded nonprofit economic development organization working to develop Alaska's natural resources in an orderly manner and to create a broad-based, diversified economy while protecting and enhancing the environment.

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Resource Review is the official monthly publication of the Resource Development Council. RDC is located at 121 W. Fireweed, Suite 250, Anchorage, AK 99503, (907) 276-0700.

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Writer & Editor
Carl Portman

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Resource use versus resource preservation

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from remarks made to the Alaska Miners Association's conference in Juneau April 22 and reprinted in the Voice of the Times on May 12.

By Dr. Jerome Komisar
President
University of Alaska

If the United States is ever to hope to pull out of its economic doldrums, indeed its economic decline, it is going to have to unleash the power of its people to use the great resources of this land we call Alaska. And use the resources of other parts of the nation as well. Not misuse them. Not plunder. Not destroy. But to work the land with the accumulated knowledge of the last century and with the respect natural beauty deserves. We need to have miners mine, and lumber mills cut wood, and oil and gas people do what they do best.

You would think that this proposition is self-evident — that instinctively a nation under economic pressure would let work happen. But that is not what is taking place. Instead, when it comes to the use of natural resources we are paralyzed, and the result is that industries essential to our national renewal are needlessly restrained.

The American economy is in trouble. Our national wealth has been tumbling for 20 years. Much of this has been the price of our victory in the Cold War, the value of which should not be underestimated. Our investments in national defense have chewed away at our nation's resources and absorbed much of our talent and our energy.

This is not a partisan observation. The leaders of our national political parties do not deny what exists although

they energetically argue the reasons and the cures. A national budget out of whack. A balance of payments plight that has transformed the single major international inventory of the first two-thirds of the 20th Century into the largest debtor of the final third. Behind the numbers is the real sacrifice, the erosion of the industrial base, a faltering medical system, schools unable to respond to fermenting needs, the futility of searching for work if you lack experience or an expanded education, crime, illiteracy and urban decay.

"Make no mistake about it, when a congress votes to padlock ANWR, or to increase taxes on mining, or to limit timber harvesting, or to increase the range and authority of regulatory bodies to stop development rather than promote careful development, it has nurtured increases in poverty, it has accepted increases in crime."

Is there any question that we are in bad economic shape? I am not referring to the transitory economic woe that comes with recessions, but rather a long run economic decline that if not turned around predicts political and social outrage. It is not simply that Americans will not be able to spend as much on consumer goods as other people, and will not live as long or live as well. These are comparative views, and being good is not as essential as being good.

The real threat is we are staring at an absolute, not just a realistic, decline. Real wages have gone down in this country since 1973. That is not comparative. What is most painful is how much this democracy we love so deeply will be strained if its per capita income continues to decline, its distribution further polarized, and far less resources and less zeal are available to care for the sick and shelter the homeless and take care of the children.

You do not extract yourself from long-term economic declines by putting unnecessary constraints on mining, on oil exploration or on harvesting lumber. We are an interdependent economy. What happens in the mines of Alaska affects the people in East Los Angeles. What happens in the oil fields in Prudhoe Bay affects the availability of housing in Chicago.

Make no mistake about it, when a congress votes to padlock ANWR, or to increase taxes on mining, or to limit timber harvesting, or to increase the range and authority of regulatory bodies to stop development rather than promote careful development, it has nurtured increases in poverty, it has accepted increases in crime.

I am not suggesting we begin to plunder the countryside and carve up every piece of ground and slice down every standing tree. Quite the opposite.

The environmentalist's greatest enemy is poverty. It is not affluence that cuts down the Brazilian rain forest, nor is it wealth that keeps cities from repairing waste removal facilities. It is persistent poverty and deep economic despair that wipe out our ability to build tomorrow, to save something for our heirs. It is social decay and violence that will ultimately pollute our streams, and contaminate our water, and destroy the wilderness we now cherish and protect.

We, fortunately, seem far from those destructive levels of impoverishment. But we invite those levels of poverty and environmental degradation if we fail to meet the essential needs of the poor that live in the inner cities, towns and villages across this nation.

We need to develop sustainable harvests where we can; we need to extract natural resources without endangering the land. And we can.

Those who are valiantly striving to preserve and protect our planet's natural beauty and its long-term ecological health cannot do it alone. For without the people who produce the jobs and develop the wealth and put bread on the table, there is no real protection. Historical experience should cause us to understand that at the moment we are in each other's hands; if we linger too long we will be beyond each other's mercy.

Productive legislative session for private-sector economic growth

by Ramona Barnes
House Speaker

The 1993 Legislative session marked a sharp and positive change in state spending trends: one that will have an impact on our state for years to come. We saw lawmakers with a pro-business and development attitude take control of the legislative process and put programs into place that will develop infrastructure in Alaska and set the stage for long-term jobs and resource development. It was a refreshing change for those who waited for years for the state to provide the support which makes private sector economic growth a reality.

The legislature moved to cap spending on social programs without harming those individuals now dependent on them. At the same time funds were spent on long overdue construction and maintenance projects.

During my first week as Speaker, I appointment an economic development task force. Chaired by Finance Committee Co-chair Rep. Eileen MacClean, this task force met throughout the session to identify legislation which promotes job creation. It will continue to meet during the interim and next session.

With the help of task force members, I was able to push through the House and Senate a sweeping energy policy bill which provides a total of \$125 million in grants and loans to build electrical interties between Healy and Fairbanks, Anchorage and Kenai, Sutton and Glennallen, and Swan and Tyee Lakes. These interties not only create hundreds of construction jobs for Alaskans, but they'll provide a reliable power grid that will provide a basis for future economic expansion. Passage of the energy policy bill is the result of a decade of effort, and will be seen by future generations of Alaskans as a key to this state's economic health.

We have been criticized by some in the media for overspending, and at the same time not spending enough for individual municipal priorities. This criticism is unfair. For the first time in years, spending on the operating budget dropped. Our budget is \$23.9 million less than it was in the last fiscal year and \$14.5 million less than requested by the Governor. We funded 217 fewer positions than requested by the Governor and cut legislative staffing costs by almost \$1 million.

While the Legislature curved spending on the operating budget, it also redirected capital budget priorities. The Governor asked for \$330 million in capital projects and an additional \$67 million for capital matching grants. We replaced his plan with one that totals \$300 million, including the capital matching grants. We fairly addressed the needs of all the regions in the state. Included in the capital spending plan are \$130 million in road projects for the central region, \$60 million for northern region roads, \$32 million for Anchorage International Airport, and \$82 million for a ferry for the Marine Highway. These projects, and others like them, will improve the transportation system while creating construction jobs for Alaskans.

The criticism leveled at the Legislature comes from those who lump the capital budget together with the school repair and Exxon and Alyeska criminal settlement spending packages. I believe it is important to consider each spending plan separately and to look at the funding sources. In the case of criminal settlements, the Legislature was simply a conduit for the money. If the legislature hadn't appropriated the money, it would have been spent by the Trustees. Projects funded by the Alyeska settlement were agreed to by the state in advance.

Alaskans asked for a plan to repair their schools. The Governor suggested that we spend most of the \$630 million

BP tax settlement for that purpose. We said no, and offered to spend \$200 million instead to address the most pressing life, health and safety concerns in our school and university buildings. We also negotiated a \$175 million school bond package with the Senate.

We are also working on legislation to address the Mental Health Lands issue. Representative Bill Williams, Chairman of the Resources Committee, is studying the issue in light of a recent court ruling.

We expect to continue work next session on legislation tightening up the "470" fund. This fund was intended to create a \$50 million pool to be used in the event of a large oil spill and was intended to set up regional oil spill response depots. It is to be funded through a nickel a barrel oil tax. The intent of the original law was to suspend collection of the tax when the fund reached \$50 million and to only reimpose the tax when the fund fell below that level. Yearly expenditures from the fund have kept it from ever reaching \$50 million. It is necessary to take the steps to fill this account so that in the event of a major spill, the dollars will be there to immediately respond.

A pro-development mining bill which was sponsored by Rep. Pete Kott of Eagle River (HB 213) was signed into law by the Governor earlier this month. In most cases it prohibits the closure of state lands of 640 acres or more to prospecting and mineral development. This bill is another example of how the legislature can work to make private-sector development more likely.

Legislative committees will meet throughout the summer and fall preparing for the next session. I strongly encourage members of RDC to take an active role. We in the House majority welcome your input. It is my intention to continue to create a positive pro-business climate in state government and I look forward to working with you.



Photos by Aaron Weaver

RDC welcomes new 1993-94 Board, Officers

Jim Cloud, a vice president of National Bank of Alaska responsible for equipment leasing and corporate finance programs, has been elected President of the Resource Development Council. Cloud was elected to the one-year term at the Council's Annual Meeting in Anchorage May 26.

Other new officers include Senior Vice President Dave Parish, Senior Public Affairs Representative for Exxon, and Second Vice President Elizabeth Rensch, General Manager of Analytica, Inc. Scott Thorson, President of Telida Properties, was elected Secretary, while Allen Bingham, a Partner in the accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche, was named Treasurer.

Cloud has extensive experience in commercial lending throughout Alaska and has held increasingly-responsible positions since joining NBA in 1976. He has been a member of the Rotary International since 1982 and is currently a member of the Anchorage Downtown Rotary Club. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Alaska Minerals and Energy Resource Education Fund (AMEREF) and is a past director of the Alaska Miners Association.

Cloud holds a bachelor of science degree in business administration and finance from the University of Montana at Missoula.

Newly-elected members of the Council's Executive Committee include Jacob Adams, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, Barrow, and Tom Williams, BP Exploration (Alaska), Inc., Anchorage.

New appointments to the statewide board of directors include Anchorage residents Robert Stiles, D & R Ventures;



In top photo, the RDC statewide Board of Directors meet before the Annual Meeting Luncheon at the Anchorage Hilton Hotel. Pictured above are the new officers, Jim Cloud, President, Dave Parish, Senior Vice President, Elizabeth Rensch, Vice President, Scott Thorson, Secretary and Allen Bingham, Treasurer.

Scott Thompson, Alaska Power Systems and Lee Wareham, Alascom. Other members include Ernesta Ballard, Cape Fox Corporation, Ketchikan; Lorraine Glenn-Derr, Department of Revenue, Juneau; Arvid Hall, Taiga Resources, Girdwood; Mayor John Harris, Valdez; Ken Pohle, Fairbanks Gold, Fairbanks and J.C. Wingfield, Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 375, Fairbanks.



Jim Cloud presents outgoing President Paul Glavinovich with a RDC "First barrel of oil" plaque in appreciation for his efforts over the past year.

AMEREF seeks balance and objectivity in resource education

Popular acceptance of AMEREF program reflects success with teachers and students

(Continued from cover)

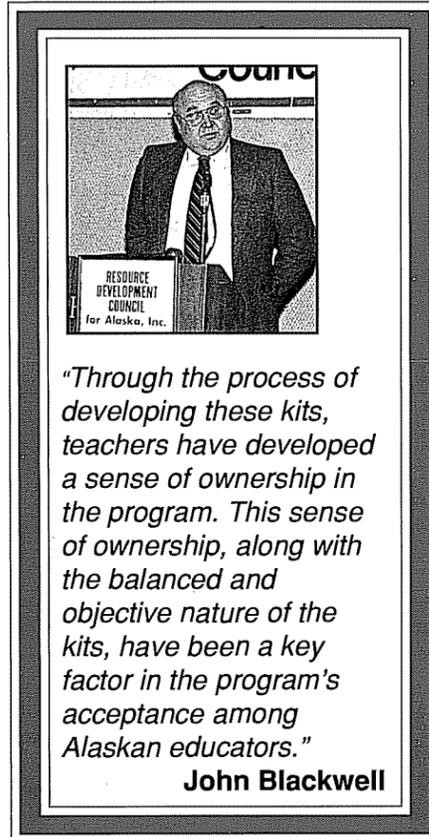
While environmental issues can be an important addition to any curriculum, they must be dealt with in an accurate and balanced manner. This is where the Alaska Minerals and Energy Resource Education Fund (AMEREF) comes into the picture.

"We want to maintain balance and objectivity when educating about critical environmental and resource development issues," said John Blackwell, President of AMEREF, a non-profit organization that provides Alaska schools with a non-biased natural resource education program.

For the past ten years, AMEREF has provided both public and private schools across Alaska with a unique resource education program that prepares students to make informed decisions about Alaska's mineral and energy resources. While dwarfed by the mere number of environmental education programs now hitting the schools, the continued popular acceptance of the AMEREF program reflects its success with teachers and students.

At the center of the AMEREF program is the Alaska Resources Kit. This Alaska specific, interdisciplinary set of lessons, activities and support materials provides students with information about Alaska's rich heritage with minerals and energy resources. The kit is a helpful "tool box" of user-friendly ideas and lesson plans for teachers as well as a dynamic hands-on program of activities for students.

"The Alaska Resources Kits are in great demand by classroom teachers, which shows me that there is a need in the school districts for the kind of information and curriculum AMEREF provides," said Jerry Covey, Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Education. "Having used the kits myself in the



"Through the process of developing these kits, teachers have developed a sense of ownership in the program. This sense of ownership, along with the balanced and objective nature of the kits, have been a key factor in the program's acceptance among Alaskan educators."

John Blackwell

Kotzebue schools, I know the quality of these materials, the training that goes with them, and the involvement of many classroom teachers in creating this curriculum," Covey said.

Speaking before the Annual Meeting luncheon of the Resource Development Council in Anchorage May 26, Covey noted that the AMEREF kits are "the heart of minerals and energy education in Alaska." He said they are probably the only balanced source for minerals and energy information designed for teachers and students.

More than 7,000 educators have been introduced to the kit through teacher training sessions, university credit courses and presentations. Over 150,000 students have been exposed to its materials. Some 1,000 kits are

now being used in all of the state's 54 school districts by more than 1,000 teachers.

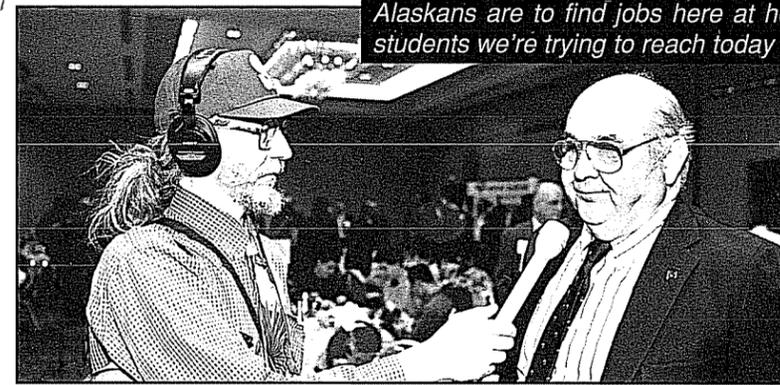
With coordination by the Alaska Department of Education and support of school administrators, educators throughout Alaska developed and continue to review, revise and use the kits. Scientists, individual miners and other resource managers provide relevant input and contribute their time in helping develop the kits.

A major element of the kit is the teachers' manual, which guides the instructional activities and use of the kit components. The manual contains 432 pages of copy-ready student text, activities, glossaries, maps and charts, annotated bibliographies and references. Dozens of lessons are distributed among manual's four modules: *Alaska's Mining History*, *Alaska's Geology*, *Alaska's Minerals and Mining*, *Economy/Ecology*. A new module, *Energy and the Environment*, is now in the drafting and review stage.

Blackwell, who now serves as AMEREF's President, is considered the founder of the organization and is credited with building the AMEREF program into what has become a dynamic partnership between the private and public sector in education.

In 1983, Blackwell inspired the Alaska Miners Association, the Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development and the Alaska Department of Education to seek a grant from the Alaska Legislature to partially fund a minerals and energy education program for Alaska schools. Teachers from around the state then conceived and wrote lessons and activities and selected resource materials for inclusion in the kit. Teachers further piloted, reviewed and revised the lessons to create the "classroom tool box."

"Through the process of developing these kits, teachers have devel-



John Blackwell to Alaska Public Radio reporter Steve Heimel: "We can't ignore the importance of resource education in our schools. If industry is to survive and young Alaskans are to find jobs here at home, it will be through the education process. The students we're trying to reach today will be making tomorrow's decisions."

Photo by Aaron Weaver

oped a sense of ownership in the program," said Blackwell. "This sense of ownership, along with the balanced and objective nature of the kits, have been a key factor in the program's acceptance among Alaskan educators."

AMEREF itself was formed to help raise funds necessary to complete the project, as production and distribution costs exceeded the initial legislative grant. Blackwell notes that AMEREF continues to raise funds to finance ongoing teacher training, necessary improvements and long-term continuance of the program. Funding for the program is spearheaded by the AMEREF board of directors and comes through private donations, grants and various fund-raising activities.

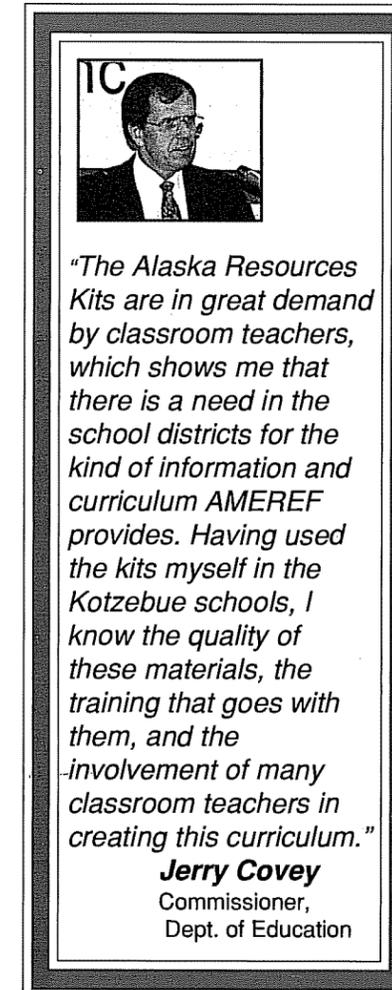
While the Resource Development Council has assumed administrative functions for AMEREF, the program itself is worked directly through the Alaska Department of Education. This union facilitates use of established lines of communication and existing organizational structures for statewide acceptance and support. Teachers continue to contribute actively as advisors, writers and trainers.

Blackwell and the AMEREF board are seeking funding for new kits and related teacher training and curriculum support.

With school enrollment increasing, Blackwell noted there is an urgent need for additional funds and personal involvement. "More kits are needed to satisfy demand from teachers," Blackwell said. "We have teachers screaming for kits and the waiting list gets a little larger each month."

In most schools, a single kit is shared among teachers, and many of the older kits need replacement. "The newer schools don't even have a kit," Blackwell noted.

"We can't ignore the importance of resource education in our schools," Blackwell said. "If industry is to survive and young Alaskans are to find jobs



"The Alaska Resources Kits are in great demand by classroom teachers, which shows me that there is a need in the school districts for the kind of information and curriculum AMEREF provides. Having used the kits myself in the Kotzebue schools, I know the quality of these materials, the training that goes with them, and the involvement of many classroom teachers in creating this curriculum."

Jerry Covey
Commissioner,
Dept. of Education

here at home, it will be through the education process. The students we're trying to reach today will be making tomorrow's decisions."

Dr. James Drew, Dean of the School of Agriculture and Forestry at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, is a strong supporter of the AMEREF program and believes additional K-12 curricula needs to be developed on resource development. At the RDC Annual Meeting, Drew suggested internships for K-12 teachers in resource development industries and agencies.

"Teachers need to know first hand about resource development in Alaska," Drew said. "They can then use examples from resource development to illustrate concepts in physical, biological and social sciences."

In a keynote address before 230 industry, government and education officials, Drew said Alaska's future is in the development of its natural resources.

"Is resource development good for kids?" Drew asked. "You bet! It pays for services and goods that would otherwise not be available. It provides jobs and creative opportunities for people. It provides the products we use in everyday life."

Drew's solution to the resource development controversy in Alaska is to "enhance a culture for resource development."

Education is the ticket, Drew said.

Editor's Note: AMEREF needs your help! Children need the facts about resource industries and the fundamental contribution they make. You can make a difference in promoting a general better understanding of natural resources and the public benefits they provide by contributing to the AMEREF program. Call Carl Portman at RDC (276-0700) and find out how you can advance resource education in Alaska.