

HB

6

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*
* DELIVER TO: LHSCHES
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* ORIGINAL
* SENT: 02/19/91 TIME: 09:58
* FROM: LTCCFBX
* SUBJECT: 91-02-054;FS;H.HESS;2-18-91
* PRINT DATE: 02/19/91 TIME: 10:21
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SUBJECT LINE TO READ: TC NO.;FL/FS;SHORT SUBJECT;DATE

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T/C NO: 91-02-054
DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 1991
SPONSOR: HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES CMTE.
SUBJECT: HB 18 AND HB 6
MODERATOR: CHRISTI
SITE: FAIRBANKS

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FINAL STATS

TESTIFIED

NAME/REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE	BILL NO.
1. WALLY CARLO,	1918 CENTRAL AVE FBX 99709	456-3589	HB 6
2. ANDREA GELVIN,	PO BO X83967 FBX 99708	479-2883	HB 6
3. DOTTIE ENGLUND,	208 RAMOLA FBX 99709	479-2901	HB 6
4. HARK BERTILRUD,	1949 GILLIAM FBX 99701	452-1921	HB 6
5. TED CHARLES,	122 1ST AVE. FBX.99701	452-8251	HB 6
6. DON THIBEDEAU,	802 22ND AVE.FBX 99701	452-2976	HB 6
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

OBSERVED

	NAME/REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE	BILL NO.
1.	JAMES MATTHEWS,	1072 MCGRATH FBX 99712	457-3537	HB 6
2.	PAT WALSH,	PO BOX 81914 FBX 99708	452-2955	HB 6
3.	FRED PRATT,	PO BOX 72981 FBX 99707	NONE	HB 6
4.	LUCY CARLO,	122 1ST AVE. FBX 99701	452-8251	HB 6

5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

TESTIFIED: 6
UNABLE: 0
OBSERVED: 4
TOTAL: 10

START TIME: 8:27 A.M.

END TIME: 9:42 A.M.

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* DELIVER TO: LHSCHES
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* ORIGINAL
* SENT: 02/19/91 TIME: 09:35
* FROM: LTCCMAY
* SUBJECT: 054 FS H HESS MRG/FAM 2/19/91
* PRINT DATE: 02/19/91 TIME: 10:20
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SUBJECT LINE TO READ: TC NO, ; FL/FS; SHORT SUBJECT; DATE

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T/C NO: 91-02-054
DATE: 2/19/91
SPONSOR: H HESS
SUBJECT: HB 18 MARRIAGE/FAM THERAPISTS
MODERATOR: CHARLOTTE
SITE: MAT-SU LIO

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CORRECTED FINAL STATS

TESTIFIED:

NAME/REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE	BILL#
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1

OBSERVED:

NAME/REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE	BILL#
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1	BOB IRVINE	320 E PAULSON	WASILLA 99687	373-2411	HB 18
2	VIVIAN FINLAY	POB 872433	WASILLA 99687	373-6006	HB 18
3					

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TESTIFIED: 0
UNABLE:
OBSERVED: 2
TOTAL: 2
START TIME: 8:30 END TIME: 8:45

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* DELIVER TO: LHSCHES
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* ORIGINAL
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* SENT: 02/19/91 TIME: 09:18 *
* FROM: LIOCMIL *
* SUBJECT: 91-02-054;BL2;TRUST,2/19 *
* PRINT DATE: 02/19/91 TIME: 10:20 *
* *

T/C NO: 91-02-054
DATE: 2/19
SPONSOR: H HESS
SUBJECT: HB 18 HB 6
MODERATOR: JUDY

BRIDGE LIST

- 1. JNU
- 2. FBX
- 3. NAT
- 4. BAR
- 5.
- 6.

EMAI: LIOCMIL
BACK-UP PHONE: 561-1199

* DELIVER TO: LHSCHES *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/19/91 TIME: 09:48 *
* FROM: LIOCBAR *
* SUBJECT: 91-02-054;FS;HB18;2-19-91 *
* PRINT DATE: 02/19/91 TIME: 10:21 *
* *

SUBJECT LINE TO READ: TC NO.; PL/FS; SHORT SUBJECT; DATE

T/C NO: 91-02-054
DATE: 02-19-91
SPONSOR: HOUSE, HESS
SUBJECT: HB 18, HB 6
MODERATOR: PHYLLIS
SITE: BARROW

FINAL STATS

TESTIFIED

NAME/REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE	BILL NO.
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

OBSERVED

NAME/REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE	BILL NO.
1. DEBBIE HILDERBRAND/BOX 249, BARROW		852-2557	HB18
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

TESTIFIED: 0

UNABLE: 0
OBSERVED: 1
TOTAL: 1

START TIME: 8:50 A.M.

END TIME: 9:40 P.M.

HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

DATE 2/19/91 JOINT _____

TAPE # 10 JOINT _____

TIME CALLED TO ORDER 8:37 (am/pm) TIME ADJOURNED 9:42 AM

ROLL CALL:	PRES	ABST	TIME ARRVD	JOINT MEMBERS PRESENT:
Rep. Patrick Carney	✓			
Rep. Georgiana Lincoln	✓			
Rep. Bettye Davis		✓		
Rep. Cheri Davis		✓		
Rep. John Gonzales		✓		
Rep. Mark Hanley	✓			
Rep. Mary Miller	✓			

AGENDA:

BILL NO.	SHORT TITLE	ACTION TAKEN
HB18	Marriage and Family Therapists	
*HB 6	Approp: Long-Term Care Facility-Fairbanks-11 Million	

OTHER:

Rep. Max Greenberg HB18

Rep. Mark Boyer HB6

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

2-19-91

(7)
Date Referred: January 21, 1991

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Finance

Date of Committee Action: 2-19-91

The HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES Committee considered:

HB 6

HOUSE BILL NO. 6

APPROP: LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY-FAIRBANKS

"An Act making an appropriation for a long-term health care facility in Fairbanks; and providing for an effective date."

- RECOMMENDATIONS:
- be replaced with _____ [] the same title
 - _____ [] a new title
 - [] have attached amendments(s)
 - [] do pass
 - [] do not pass
 - [] no recommendations
 - [x] individual recommendations
 - [] additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s): (Dept)

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date)

[] fiscal impact _____

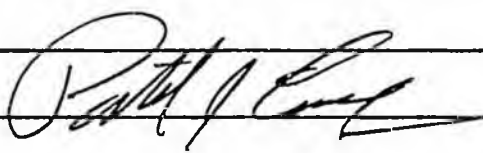
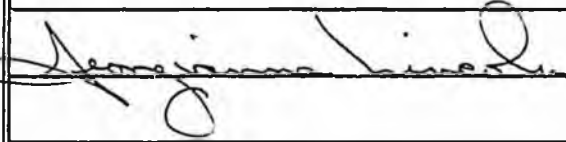
[] fiscal note(s) _____

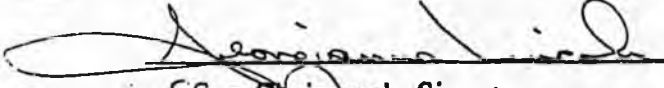
[] zero fiscal note _____

[] zero fiscal note(s) _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

	Check appropriate column:	Do Not Pass	No Rec	Amend
				
	Mary Miller		✓	
	Mark Stanley		✓	
				


CG - Chairman's Signature

Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE
MARK BOYER

VICE-CHAIRMAN
HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE



FAIRBANKS

1098 LAKEVIEW TERRACE
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701
(907) 456-6473

JUNEAU

P.O. BOX V
STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 465-3466

House of Representatives

To: Rep. Georgianna Lincoln, Co-chair
Rep. Pat Carney, Co-chair
Health, Education & Social Services Committee

From: Rep. Mark Boyer *MB*

Date: February 5, 1991

Subject: Scheduling of HB 6

I am requesting that you schedule at your earliest convenience a hearing for HB 6, an act making an appropriation for a long-term health care facility in Fairbanks.

This bill would appropriate \$11,000,000 for the construction of a replacement facility for the Denali Center nursing home, the only long term care facility in interior Alaska.

Denali Center is owned by the Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation. It is old and run down. The Hospital Foundation determined that it could no longer support the existing structure, which is wrought with asbestos and other structural problems, and decided to close down the home. An immediate outcry of public support for Denali forced the Foundation last spring to postpone the closure for one year pending a financial solution.

The Foundation established a task force to complete a needs assessment, solicit community financial and in-kind contributions, and request state assistance. The City of Fairbanks appears willing to donate the land, and a modest amount of local contributions have already been received. It is important that the state make a financial commitment this year so that we can avoid the disruption that would occur should Denali Center close.

Long-term care is a statewide need. I appreciate your consideration of HB 6.

FAIRBANKS 20B

- SPONSOR STATEMENT -

The NEW DENALI CENTER Project

A community partnership for quality long term care
for the people of Interior & Northern Alaska.

FOUNDATION MEMBERS

Steve Stephens, *President* David D. Rasley, *1st Vice President*
James Matthews, *2nd Vice President* Harry Porter, *Treasurer* Joe Faulhaber, *Secretary*

Ron Arter
Walter Carlo
Edward K. Christiansen
Douglas Colp
Jeff Cook
Leland D. Corkran
William H. Doolittle, M.D.
Conrad G.B. Frank
Andrea Gelvin
Keith Gianni, M.D.

Dennis Green
Janet Halvarson
Mike Kelly
William W. Mendenhall
Ouida Paden
Richard Seifert
William G. Stroecker
David Swanson
Karen Porter
Dale Yoder

DENALI CENTER TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Walter Carlo, *Co-Chair*
Jeff Cook
Margaret Cox
Gordon Depue
Dottie Englund
Andrea Gelvin
Andy Harrington
Jim Hayes

Jim Matthews
Ouida Paden
Karen Perdue
Karen Porter, *Co-Chair*
John Sackett
Ann Swift
Carol Switzer

Denali Center is ...

- a private, not-for-profit nursing home facility owned by *The Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation, Inc.* and operated by *Lutheran Hospitals & Homes Society*.
- not just "an old peoples home", it is home to infants, children, and adults who need skilled care - that is, short-term to long-term resident nursing home care.
- a place that serves people who are too sick to live at home, but too well to need a hospital environment.
- a regional facility serving Interior and Northern Alaska with over 40% of the residents coming from villages outside of the Fairbanks area.
- a facility where payment for resident's care is :
 - 80% - Medicaid (State of Alaska)
 - 10% - Medicare (Federal)
 - 6% - Other insurance
 - 4% - Private pay

Denali Center Case Statement

Randy Huffman's hairline has receded over the years, the "man from Mars" tattoo on his left forearm has faded to a light blue, and he's lost a bit of weight. His family teases him about getting old, even though he is only 32. They talk and joke with him but aren't sure he can hear. They sit at his bedside and encourage him to get well, but doctors aren't sure he ever will.

Huffman, 32, has been comatose for more than 13 years, since the day his snowmachine collided with a truck on Eagle Avenue. Six months later, his family checked him into Denali Center. "Before this, I thought the nursing home was just for older people," Phyllis Sheets says. Today, it is her son's home, until he recovers. "That's what we keep hoping and praying for, really," she says.

Denali Center is a not-for-profit nursing home located in Fairbanks. It is owned by *The Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation, Inc* and operated by *Lutheran Hospitals & Homes Society*. It serves people from all over the state with over 40% of its residents coming from rural Alaska. The present facility needs replacement. It is old and poorly designed and current residents are not adequately served nor will it serve the community in the future. The people of the cities and villages of Interior and Northern Alaska deserve better.

The Center was built in 1969 and operated privately as, *Careage North Nursing Home*. In 1983 the Hospital Foundation bought the facility to prevent its closing. The Foundation has since contributed over \$3 million dollars to purchase and improve the existing Denali Center.

Denali Center provides care not only for the elderly, but also for infants, children and adults who need medical care. Denali Center cares for people who are too sick to live at home, but too well to need a hospital environment.

Residents range in age from one to one hundred. Their needs are as varied as their ages; they are too old to live independently, they need daily medical attention, they need rehabilitative care after an accident, or they are too feeble to be cared for at home. Without Denali Center, many people would be forced to leave the state, leave family and friends, to seek skilled care. Denali Center is a vital part of health care services in interior Alaska.

Eighty percent of the facility's residents are Medicaid supported, 10% receive Medicare, 6% other insurance, and 4% are private pay. In other parts of the nation, there are more private pay patients partly because costs of nursing home care are lower. However, throughout the nation very few private insurance policies cover nursing home care.

We need a new nursing home. Today, Denali Center is an inadequate facility. There are often three people to a room and up to six people who must share a bathroom. There isn't room for a resident to have a family gathering, a small birthday party or even a private medical consultation. There are no personal care areas for medical diagnosis or to administer medication. The staff doesn't have a break area or place to prepare for work.

A resident at Denali Center has only 80 sq. ft. of personal living space, or 250 sq. ft. of the total building space. Each resident has only a 2-foot by 21-inch closet to store all personal belongings. Nationally many nursing homes offer 400-650 sq. ft. per resident of total building space.

The present building is nineteen years old and is of 2"x4" construction. It is crowded and inefficient to operate. The activity room also serves as a dining area. Activities are disturbed three times a day when the staff sets up for and cleans up after meals. Residents must go outside to board the van for transportation to doctor appointments and other activities. For some residents this is a hazardous situation especially in extremely cold weather. Storage space isn't sufficient for housekeeping equipment, kitchen goods, and medical supplies. Because of asbestos in the walls and floors, remodeling is not possible.

We need a new facility. Our residents need adequate outdoor space and common areas for social activities. A location near the hospital would allow for the sharing of existing dietary and laundry services and mechanical systems. This would provide better service and more efficient facility operation. We need a specific program to address the needs of nursing home residents suffering from Alzheimers disease.

As the population ages nursing home services will be in greater demand. The Fairbanks North Star Borough population over 65, is projected to quadruple in the next ten years. By the year 2010 there will be 22 elderly people for every 100 working age persons. We can make a difference today and plan for the future. Working together, we can build a new Denali Center.

The Problem....

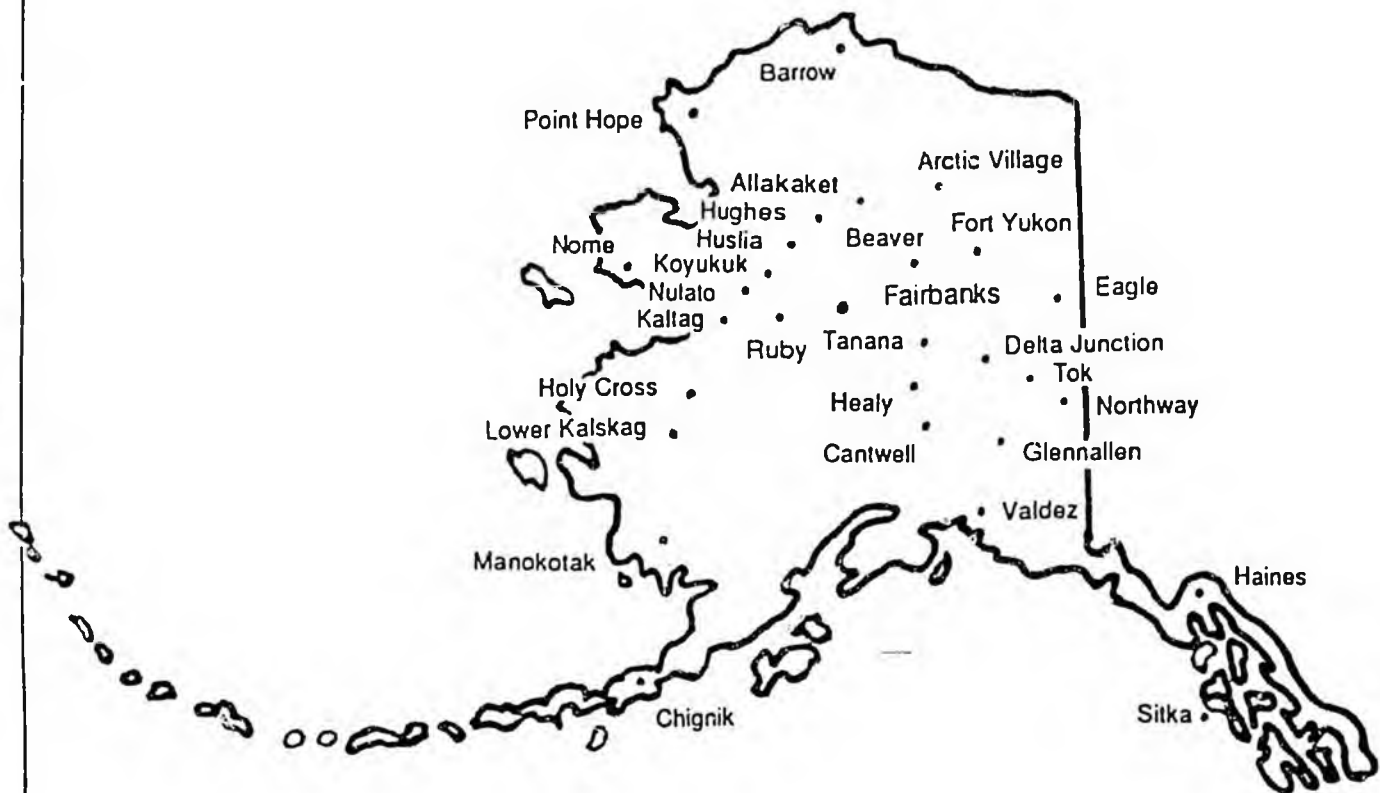
- **Denali Center is an inadequate facility:**
 - there are often 3 people to a room
 - up to 6 people share a bathroom
 - there is little space for activities
 - there are only two private rooms
 - there is no private space for a family gathering, telephone calls, a medical consultation, a birthday party
 - no personal care areas to administer medication, for diagnosis
 - no space for staff preparation work or break areas
 - it is an old, poorly designed building
 - the physical plant is 19 years old
 - it can not be remodeled because of asbestos in the walls & floors
 - there is major heat loss because of the 2x4 construction
 - building does not meet 1990 building standards
 - inability to equip better telephone service & access for residents
 - there is not enough room to stock medical and housekeeping supplies and inadequate storage for kitchen goods.
 - no transportation entrance for residents so they can board the van inside
 - not enough room for rehabilitation services
 - the activity room is used as a dining room 3 times a day

- **Denali Center provides 80 sq.ft of personal space per resident or 250 sq.ft./resident total building space.**
 - most nursing homes provide 400 - 650 sq.ft./resident total building space.
 - the ONLY storage space for resident's personal belongings is a 2'x21" closet

- **Nursing home services will be in greater demand as the population ages.**

- **The needs of the Fairbanks area and the surrounding communities of Interior and Northern Alaska are not being well served by the existing Denali Center.**

**This a statewide project.
Denali Center residents come
from all over the state...**



What We Need...

- **A new facility that provides the following:**
 - a capacity to serve not less than 80, but not more than 100 residents
 - privacy in the residents rooms
 - adequate outdoor space
 - common areas for social activities
 - a culturally sensitive design
 - comprehensive rehabilitation services & equipment with easy access
 - structural design to enhance delivery of services
 - flexible design able to readily adapt to expansion of services
 - accommodations for staff work areas and break areas
 - specific design components to address the needs of the terminally ill
 - a location that would be conducive to sharing existing services & systems
 - specific design components to address the needs of residents suffering from Alzheimers disease who qualify for nursing care. This could include the design of a specific program area dedicated to this purpose.

The Task Force heard testimony that non-medical services for Alzheimers patients were sorely needed. Many Alzheimers clients would be served by assisted living and other available community support such as adult day care and specialized foster care. Currently, funding is only available for nursing home care of Alzheimers patients with other medical problems. This is an area that needs further investigation.

- **A further exploration of an 'assisted living' facility with a capacity of 25-50 units.**

This could be a campus approach or a separate site. Assisted living is a level of residential care less intensive than a nursing home. It provides an intermediate step from one's own home to the nursing home, and vice versa.

- **The problems will not diminish with time.**
As the population ages, these services will be in greater demand.
- **The present facility was poorly designed by the original owner.**
As a result, remodeling the facility would not resolve many of its problems - and it would cost nearly as much as a new facility. There is asbestos in the walls and floors.
- **Nursing homes play a crucial role in reducing health care costs.**
By providing a cost effective alternative to lengthy and unnecessary hospitalizations.
- **There is wide community support for a new facility.**
Some of the Fairbanks community groups and state-wide organizations that have passed resolutions in support of a new nursing home facility in Fairbanks:
 - Alaska Federation of Natives
 - AARP - American Association of Retired Persons
 - Arctic Alliance for People
 - Delta Chamber of Commerce
 - Doyon Limited
 - Fairbanks City Council
 - Fairbanks Native Association
 - Fairbanks North Star Borough
 - Fairbanks Retired Teachers Association
 - Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce
 - Interior Alaska Economic Development Council, Inc.
 - Main Street Fairbanks
 - Midnight Sun Lions
 - Tanana Chiefs ConferenceIndividual contributions are made regularly
- **A capital campaign drive will begin by the Task Force**
This is to raise money for a new Denali Center. The City of Fairbanks has donated land that is being recommended to the architect as a priority site.
- **A new Denali Center will cost approximately: \$12.8 Million.**
We are requesting \$10.8 million from the State and will raise \$2 million locally.

Our Plan....

"Partnership for Progress "

Capital Campaign for Denali Center

- We began, through the Hospital Foundation, the process of hiring an architect/engineering firm for design and cost information.
- We will identify & pursue sources of Federal support
 - Federal program support
 - Grants
 - Other funds
- We will identify & pursue sources of State support
- We will identify & pursue sources of Local support
 - City / Borough
 - Businesses
 - Individuals
- We will identify & pursue sources of Corporate support
- We will identify & pursue sources of Foundation support

Support is there...

The following groups have passed resolutions or made contributions in support of a new Denali Center in Fairbanks:

Alaska Federation of Natives

AARP - American Association of Retired Persons

Arctic Alliance for People

Delta Chamber of Commerce

Doyon Limited

Fairbanks City Council

Fairbanks Native Association

Fairbanks North Star Borough

Fairbanks Retired Teachers Association

Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce

Interior Alaska Economic Development Council, Inc.

Main Street Fairbanks

Midnight Sun Lions

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Individual contributions are made regularly

Our History...

1968 *The Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation, Inc.* was formed as a community not-for-profit organization to ensure that residents of Interior and Northern Alaska would have access to the very best health care possible.

This group set about the monumental task of conceptualizing, designing, raising the money for and building *Fairbanks Memorial Hospital*.

1972 The hospital was built.

This was achieved through very active and generous community support and a contribution from the state of Alaska.

1980 A new wing was constructed for Fairbanks Memorial Hospital.

1982 The private-for-profit nursing home in Fairbanks, *Careage North*, was going to close its doors. The Foundation purchased the facility and renamed it *Denali Center*.

1988 Remodeling of the third floor at Fairbanks Memorial.

1990 Addition to Fairbanks Memorial of the MRI - "Magnetic Resonance Imaging", a state-of-the-art diagnostic tool.

1990 Decision made to build a new Denali Center. The present nursing home is an inadequate facility to meet the needs of the residents.

Through prudent fiscal management by the Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation the present health care campus has appreciated in value. It is the largest private employer in Fairbanks and provides quality services to the people of Interior and Northern Alaska.

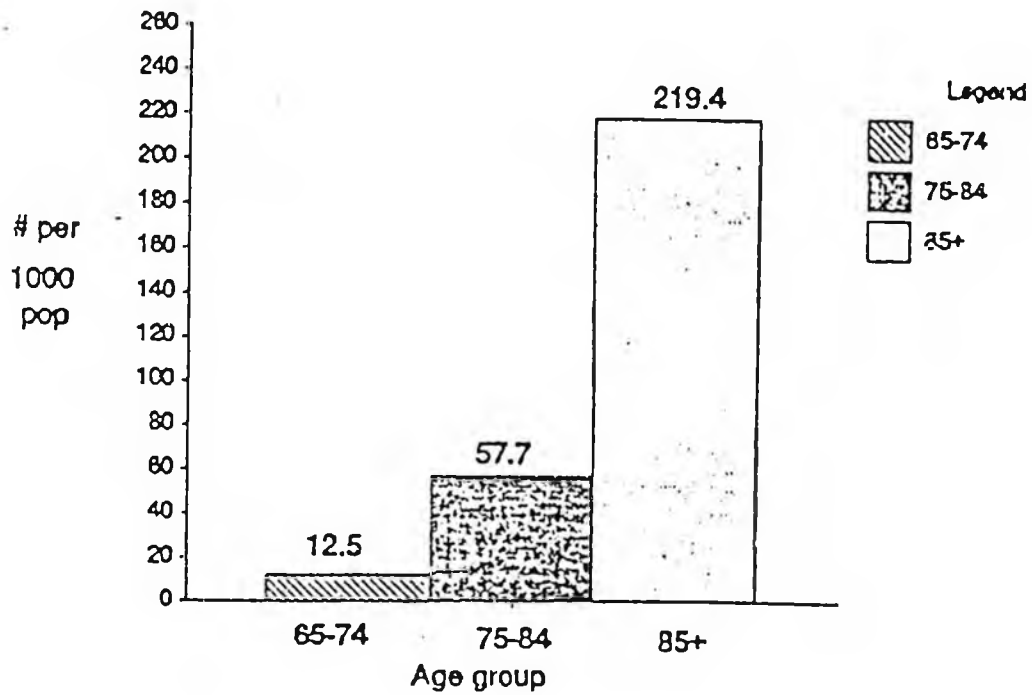
The debt-free facilities have provided Alaskans with the lowest hospital rates in the state and among the lowest nursing home rates.

Trends to Watch...

- Demand for long term care is rapidly increasing
- By year 2000:
1/2 of the elderly will be age 75+
- By year 2010:
there will be 22 elderly persons for every 100 working age persons
- By year 2030:
1 in 3 people will be 55 or older
- In the past two decades, the older population grew twice as fast as the rest of the population:
 - 65+ group grew by 56%
 - under 65 grew by only 19%
 - between 1980-86, Alaska had over 50% increase in elderly population.
(Alaska & Nevada had the largest % increase nationally. In 1986, Alaska had the smallest number of elderly - 3% of population.)
- The 85+ population will quadruple between 1980 & 2030

National Nursing Home Use Rates

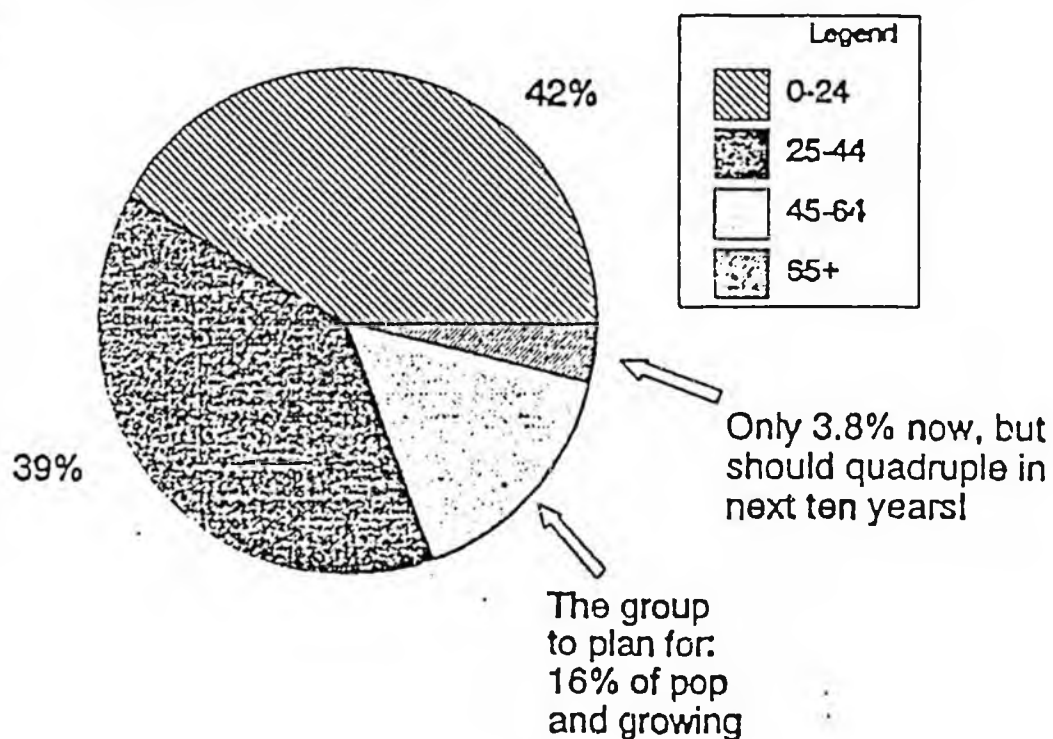
(per 1000)



Source: Rural Health Coalition

Fairbanks North Star Borough Population by Age Group

% by age group 1988



Sunday, September 16, 1990

Editorial Opinion and Comment of



Daily News - Miner

"Independent in All Things . . . Neutral in None"

Other opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of the Daily News-Miner.

'New' Denali Center

Anyone interested in the future of long-term nursing home care in Fairbanks should make plans to attend a meeting Monday night at 7 p.m. in the McGown Room on the first floor of Fairbanks Memorial Hospital.

The Denali Center Task Force is looking for suggestions on plans for a new nursing home in Fairbanks.

Earlier this year, the Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation voted to close Denali Center in August because the Gillam Way building is dilapidated and there is no money to replace it. Most of the patients have their bills paid by the government, but the payments to the center are not large enough to allow the hospital foundation to pay for a new building.

The nursing home has three patients to a room and options for care are limited. The 67 patients range in age from 35 to 101 and have a variety of needs that cannot be met in the current facility.

Some patients are recovering from accidents. Others have illnesses or disabilities that require continuing treatment. All are being cared for in the only long-term facility in the Interior.

After the foundation announced plans to close the center, people from throughout the community rallied to Denali Center's cause and persuaded the foundation to reverse its decision and to keep the nursing home going at least until next spring.

This summer the foundation established a 13-member task force that is hustling to study the nursing home needs in our community and prepare a fund-raising plan by the end of the year.

A review of community needs is now under way and is expected to be completed this month. Monday's hearing is to gather comments from the public about the priorities for long-term health care.

Over the next few months, the task force will focus on what kind of services should be offered in the new Denali Center, where the home should be located, how big it should be and other key issues.

By the end of the year, cost figures should be available to the community along with a proposal on how to raise the money. The effort to raise money will begin early next year. Most likely the campaign will require a combination of state and federal dollars, local contributions and corporate donations.

Karen Porter and Wally Carlo co-chair the task force. Others on the task force are Jeff Cook, Gordon Depue, Dottie Englund, Andrea Gelvin, Andy Harrington, Jim Hayes, Jim Matthews, Ouida Paden, Karen Perdue, Ann Swift, and Carol Switzer.

These 13 volunteers represent a good cross-section of the community. They are all members of the hospital foundation.

The best way for you to have a voice in the future of Denali Center and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital is to join the foundation as well. All it takes is \$10 a year. Send a check to the Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation at P.O. Box 1396, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707.

The challenge may be as great as the mountain the nursing home is named after, but with strong community support, the new Denali Center can become a reality.

Daunting challenges of the other Denali

By ANDY HARRINGTON

Many and varied are the tales that have been written about the challenges of Denali, some good, some not so good. These tales refer, of course, to Denali the mountain.

But there is a different Denali in our Interior, which is presenting us with a different set of challenges.

We almost lost this Denali a few months back, when its governing board (the Fairbanks Area Community Hospital Foundation) determined that it was just

not feasible to keep it open and functioning. This issue dominated the headlines for a few days, then the Foundation reversed its decision and things seemed to quiet down. That's unfortunate, because quiet is not what's needed right now.

This story, of course, has to do with Denali the nursing home, and its challenges are no less demanding than those of the mountain.

Foremost among these are the challenges that face the residents at Denali, whose day-to-day lives are much different from those of

most people reading this. Walking down the hall for a Denali resident can be as daunting a challenge as scaling the Wickersham Wall would be for John Q. Public. It takes a certain kind of inner strength, which most of us draw on seldom if ever, to maintain one's emotional equilibrium when tasks which were formerly commonplace have become almost insurmountable obstacles.

Also worth considering is the challenge of working at Denali. Like mountain climbing, it's not for everyone. It takes a certain kind of person to handle the jobs

there, from the routine maintenance (increasingly non-routine as the facility gets older and older) to coping with the physical and mental limitations of the clientele.

And Denali poses a challenge for the community at large as well. It's often said that the best assessment of a civilization can be made by examining its prisons. How much more aptly this same observation could apply to our nursing homes. I've done some work in prison settings over the years, and I would not take issue with those who feel that our prison system is in substantial need of drastic revamping. But it's important to bear in mind that most—maybe not all, but most—of the folks in jail did something to put themselves there. Whereas the residents of Denali are there, not by volition, but by the random chance of a genetic disorder, by the sudden happenstance of a crippling auto

accident, or by the inescapable fact that human beings age.

In fact, any of us could find ourselves in Denali Center at any point. It's difficult to place yourself in that position. I'd like to think that, once there, I'd be grateful that the level of care I required was available in a setting that enabled me to stay close to my family without placing impossible demands on them. (Knowing me, however, my guess is that I'd be too torqued off at whatever put me there to feel any gratitude. A simple head cold is enough to turn me into a bear.)

Whatever I felt, I might not be in a position to express my views, one way or the other. Now, many Denali residents are perfectly capable of voicing their opinions, and one runs the risk of incurring their wrath if one assumes otherwise. Many other residents,

DENALI: Climbing a different mountain

From page 3

however, cannot do so; and even those who can may not always find the right person to listen to them.

The point is, if you want to say anything about Denali Center, or do something to make sure it's still there when you, or your parents, or your children, need it to be there, there's no time like the present.

Because the Foundation's reversal of its decision in June presented only a short-term solution to the immediate emergency. We can count on Denali only through next March. Beyond that, Denali's future is up to the residents of the Interior.

The screaming headlines are gone, at least temporarily. It's time for the quiet people in Fairbanks to come out of the woodwork and get the job done. If we don't, we'll be back in the same crisis, same time next year, with more screaming headlines and fewer options.

The Denali Task Force has scheduled a public meeting for Monday, Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. at the McGowan Room at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. That date was just picked on the 11th, which doesn't give much notice to the public at large. But the Foundation's working on a very tight timeline; plans have to be finalized very quickly.

If Denali does have to close, the trauma inflicted on its pa-

tients, the loss to the family members here in the Interior, the loss of jobs to our economy—all would have us kicking ourselves thinking, why the heck didn't we do something about that sooner? Well, right now, it's "sooner," and right after "sooner" comes "too late."

Interior Alaska would simply not be the same without Denali, the mountain. And it would not be the same without Denali, the nursing home, which enables us to be a more compassionate community.

Shipping out its residents is a bad idea. The nursing home is filled with people who are as much a part of Alaska as the mountain. We need to keep them here.

See page 7: DENALI



Alaska State Legislature
House of Representatives
 COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION
 AND SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: February 19, 1991

PLACE: Capitol Room 106

SUBJECT OF MEETING:

HB 18 Marriage and Family Therapists
 *HB 6 Approp: Long Term Care Facility
 Fairbanks-11 Million

NAME	REPRESENTING	BUSINESS/PERSONAL MAILING ADDRESS	ZIP	(H) PHONE	(W) PHONE	DO YOU WANT TO TESTIFY?		WHAT SUBJECT/ WHICH BILL?
						Y	N	
(DO YOU WISH TO TESTIFY?)		(FILL OUT COMPLETELY!)				Y	N	
Barbara Gabriel	Dept of Commerce + Economic DVP.	P.O. Box D Juneau Ak	99811		465-3262	Y	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	HB 18
✓ Helen Haynes	Tarana Chief	T.C. 123 First Ave Fairbanks, AK	99701		452-8251	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	HB 6
Kim Busch	HSS				465-3355	Y	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N	HB 6 + HB 18
NEWTON CHASE	" "	FACILITIES SECTION P.O. H-01-A	99811		465-3089	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	HB 6
						Y	N	
						Y	N	
						Y	N	
						Y	N	
						Y	N	
						Y	N	