

# Barges save walrus pups, taken to Sea World

On August 11, a female walrus pup weighing 122 pounds was picked up out of the Chukchi Sea off the coast of Barrow and taken aboard the barge "Michelle."

Three more walrus pups were caught in Elson Lagoon the evening of August 21. One was a female weighing 96 pounds, another female weighing 162 pounds and the third was a male weighing 154 pounds.

Joe Baumgartner, Arctic Marine Freighters in Prudhoe Bay, caught another female

pup after she swam ashore. This pup weighed 148 pounds.

All five pups were taken to Sea World, San Diego, California due to support from the North Slope Borough Mayor's Office, Health and Social Services Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Sea World. Wien, United and Western airlines were most helpful with the transport. The primary problem encountered was hyperthermia or overheating. Ice and refrigeration were provided at all plane changes.

A mature female walrus gives

birth about every three years. The pups are born weighing over one hundred pounds and are dependent upon their mothers for a minimum of twelve to eighteen months.

At Sea World, they will be bottle fed for approximately eight months at which time the weaning process will begin. They will be maintained on public display.

Photo by Sonya Leavitt



Dr. Les Dalton and three walrus pups