

Basketry Workshop to be held

The Institute of Alaska Native Arts announces that a five day workshop on "Baleen Basketry" will be held in Nome on February 14-18, 1985. The workshop, co-sponsored by Carrie McLean memorial Museum of Nome; Kawerak, Inc.; XYZ Nome Senior Center; and the Institute of Alaska Native Arts, will be taught by Mary Jane Litchard of Nome.

The workshop will introduce to 10 invited artists the preparation of materials and the technique of baleen basketry construction.

Mary Jane Litchard, the instructor, has been studying baleen basketry for a number of years, having learned from Joshua Sakageak of Barrow. In addition to instruction by Litchard, an artist-in-residence, Elijah Attungana of Point Hope, has been invited to do demonstrations and assist students.

Attungana is a whaler and expert baleen basket maker. Both Litchard and Attungana will have their baskets displayed in an

"Alaska Native Basketry" exhibit, sponsored by the Institute of Alaska Native Arts, scheduled to open in the summer of 1985.

Artists in the region have been invited to submit applications to attend to Kawerak, Inc., the non-profit regional corporation, and a maximum of ten students will be selected. Materials, space and instructor preference have limited the number.

According to Molly Lee, author of Baleen Basketry of the North Alaskan Eskimo, baleen basketry was introduced to Inupiaq people in Barrow between

1914 and 1918, when Charles D. Brower, an American whaler and trader and long-time Barrow resident, asked a local man to make a baleen basket by copying a willow-root basket.

Since then people in Barrow, Point Hope, Point Lay and Wainwright have made baskets with baleen, the keratinous substance from the mouths of plankton-eating whales.

The Institute of Alaska Native Arts is a statewide arts organization with not-for-profit status which advocates for Aleut, Eskimo and Indian artists and their work through a number of

programs providing workshops, exhibitions, information, technical assistance, art study funds, conferences, educational materials and a bi-monthly journal.

The Institute is supported in part by grants from the Department of Education, Division of Libraries and Museums, Alaska State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency and private contributions. For more information contact the Institute of Alaska Native Arts at P.O. Box 80583, Fairbanks, AK 99708, phone (907) 479-8473.