Chistochina Youth Club Lacks Home But Folks Are Working

Chistochina's youth club is a group without a home, but residents Don and Lillian Boston are determined that situation won't last for long.

The Bostons and others in the community, like youth club president Loretta Sanford, are actively trying to gather the funds and materials to make that club home a reality for the small Copper River area community.

Chistochina residents decided to form the youth club early this year, to help the problems of teen-aged drinking. "About March 1st, we talked with the kids and they agreed they would like to have a place to go, to have games and other things," Don Boston said.

Within weeks, the young people held a bake sale, raising $20. The Bostons wrote letters to newspapers too, seeking donations for the building. About $4,000 is needed for materials for the ceiling . . . roofing, plywood, doors and windows.

"And if we could get enough money to get a projector, the kids could make money showing movies," said Lillian Boston. "It would give them a chance to have responsibility too."

Her husband wants to build the youth clubhouse, just as he built the community hall for Chistochina back in 1969. "It's just 30 by 30 feet, but it is used for everything from church services (Pentecostal) to potlatches," he said. Most Athabascans in the area go to that church.

Still, the work on the community hall isn't done. Quarter inch plywood is needed for the ceiling and walls. "The Rural Development Agency promised the plywood, nails and other materials over a year ago, but they haven't arrived yet," he said.

The village of Chistochina was started in the early 1940's. It was a central point from which trap lines were set and close to the Copper River. Now 15 families live there, with many non-Natives moving in along the highway.

"We still live much the same way we have for years," Lillian Boston said. "Hunting and trapping."

What is new in Chistochina is the youth club and the community wants to find it a home, too.