

Barrow couples get extra marriage gift

September ended happily for many young married couples in Barrow as 67 of them found themselves with new lots to build homes and live upon.

Ronald Brower, Land Manager for Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation, explained that that village corporation reconveyed the land in compliance with a shareholders' directive of 1979.

That directive called upon the corporation to make land available on a priority basis to young married couples. Preference would be given to couples with children, those living with their parents, and those in need of land to build homes upon, according to Brower.

The new owners of the 67 lots, part of a subdivision of 120 lots, were chosen by lottery on Sept. 20.

According to Brower, the lots run 70 X 100 feet and 75 by 100 feet and are considerably larger than most townsite lots. The new owners are required to pay a \$250 administrative fee, and an \$8 recording fee before taking possession of the land.

Many of the couples, said Brower, will be moving homes which they had already put up on their parents land to their new lots. UIC will help interested landowners identify the type of home they want to build, and where and how to go about it.

Although the directive was issued in 1979, the reconvey-

ance was delayed when the City of Barrow sued UIC for approximately 9.6 square miles of land. That suit was settled out of court on March 15 of this year, but the North Slope Borough requested that UIC delay reconveyance until it could get roads into the area. Those roads are nearing completion now, says Brower, and will be followed by gas and electrical lines.

"We now have 67 young and happy couples preparing to build houses," Brower noted. "This is going to relieve a lot of people of some of the burdens they have been carrying for sometime," he noted the housing shortage which has long plagued Barrow.

Brower cautioned those who might be thinking of moving to Barrow in search of work that despite the reconveyance to shareholders, Barrow still faces a severe housing crisis, and chances are small they will find a home to live in.

UIC also has reconveyed approximately three acres to the city for a cemetery, Brower notes, and will be reconveying two lots of the subdivision to Barrow for a daycare center. The remaining 51 lots probably will be leased to the North Slope Borough.

An additional tract will be set aside for an Elders center or children's home, or perhaps a combination of both.