

# Many people, few jobs, few homes

Once again, hello from Barrow!

On the first Wednesday of every month, the social service agencies in Barrow gather round in discussion of ideas and/or problems, and one of the hot items that is "plaguing" (so to speak) is the number of people coming to Barrow with hopes of finding well-paying jobs and a place to settle down in for a spell.

This we know is happening to greater and greater extents in rural communities and in the cities of Alaska as well. It happened in the early '70's when the gas pipeline was under construction; it is happening now.

All this could be well and good — people seeking work to support themselves and/or their families — would it not be for the lack of available jobs and, overwhelmingly, the lack of available housing.

It is becoming more and more difficult to secure a job — everywhere — and, here on the Slope, it is not practical for one to believe that housing will be readily available. (The wait can be as long as three years for Borough housing).

Arctic Women-in-Crisis is concerned about the influx of job-hunters in general — how it is affecting Barrow, rural communities, and Alaska. However, a more specific concern is for women.

Many women have come to Barrow seeking the same chance for a new start as others, only to find little or no housing. A number of women have then been referred to AWIC for shelter, yet Women-in-Crisis is for victims of Domestic Violence and Sex-

ual Assault, and we are not set up to provide shelter for the growing numbers who have come into the community.

And it is just a plain fact that it is more difficult for a woman to find housing and a job in some areas of Alaska.

The cost of living in Barrow and other bush communities is high. In coming to Barrow, a person with \$500.00, may expect that he/she would have enough money to last a good amount of time. However, in reality, this same \$500 would last perhaps 4 to 5 days, with hotel costs averaging \$90 to \$110/day, and costs of food high.

Our message: If you are seeking a new start . . . a new job . . . if you have heard that the pickings are good in Alaskan communities . . .

## STOP — — THINK !!! KNOW THE FACTS!

- there is not sufficient housing
- there are not unlimited jobs waiting
- there are few agencies who will be able to help you out if you get stuck

If you decide to come anyway, be prepared with a round-trip ticket so that you will have a way to return to your original place of departure.

And, look before you leap!

In other news, Patsy George is attending the course sponsored by the alcohol program and entitled "Introduction to Counseling." This course is out of the University of Fairbanks.

Patsy and Helen did attend and had a good time at the Alaska Native Women's Conference held in Anchorage in early September.

We had wanted to send someone to the Violence Conference in Anchorage, however, things just did not work out for that.

There have been a number of teleconferences held through the Legislative Information Offices, these including meetings for the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and the Commission on the Status of Women.

The AWIC staff is deciding which villages they would like to travel to first. We have sufficient funds so that two staff members can travel to two of the villages together. Barter Island, Wainwright, and Atkasuk may be among the first travelled to for this year.

These trips are for community awareness, and we would

hope to get the film, "No Word for Rape" out into each of the villages, to show at community gatherings and/or the schools.

AWIC continues to seek funds for a fifth position in the shelter, this funding possibly coming from city municipal aide funds. And the Arctic Women-in-Crisis Volunteers are nearing the completion of the North Slope Cookbook, readying it to send in to the publishers.

We just had our AWIC Volunteer's Rummage and Bake Sale on October 30. We advertised that people could come in and find their Halloween costumes, and this drew some people, but our bake sale seems to always be the big thing.

The rummage and bake sale netted AWIC Volunteers about

\$450.00, which was not as good as last time, but will indeed give some assistance in funding the cookbook.

A hearty thank you goes out to all the volunteers who helped to make the rummage and bake sale a success!

Just one more thing . . . As Arctic Women-in-Crisis has a new phone just for client's use, the 852-4357 number will be freed up for use in emergencies only. Call 852-4357 if there is a crisis in your life — rape, abuse in the home, suicide . . .

If you need to call the shelter for other purposes, please call information for the new phone number, and help AWIC keep the crisis phone line number open for women who need to call the Shelter in an emergency.

Quyanaq! Thank you!



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PHONE:  
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crisis phone