



Simon Koonook works on the handle of a knife he will use to carve a special gift for a special relative. Although Koonook is making this and other knives in the Adult Basic Education program in Point Hope to carve artworks with, another member of the class commented that the knives themselves are works of art.

PHOTOS BY BILL HESS

Evening classes keep Pt. Hope busy

By BILL HESS
Tundra Times

Outside, the temperature is several degrees below zero. A strong wind makes it seem colder yet. Inside, music plays from within a brightly lit room

and a small group of women dance vigorously to its beat. In another room there are women sewing, and in another, men making knives and other small metal instruments.

All those gathered here to-

night in Point Hope are students participating in the North Slope Borough School District's Adult Basic Education Program.

Co-ordinator Patsy Aamoldt, who works out of Barrow is

in town making one of her trips which she makes to all the villages of the North Slope to see how the ABE program is going.

"It's exciting," Aamoldt says of the program, "because the courses are all ones that have been recommended by the facilitators and people in the villages."

Many of those courses center around the subsistence lifestyle. Knives and harpoon heads are made along with other implements in small metals. Courses now being held or scheduled to start in the future include Eskimo dancing, drum making, skin sewing, basket sled making, a baleen class, art and sculpture classes.

Students can also receive a GED diploma, and take such non-subsistence related courses as drivers education and aerobic dancing. Anything, really that the people of the village desire.

"One recommendation by a facilitator in another village was 'Decloning your Blackstock Home,'" Aamoldt recalls with a smile. "Blackstock" has been the contractor for many homes built on the North Slope, all of which happen to look alike.

"A woman went into her neighbor's home by mistake," Aamoldt says of the incident which led to the class. "She was about to take off her

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Patsy Aamoldt models a coat she made in a basic education class, surrounded by other students working in small metals.



Betty Kinneveau oversees the operation of ABE classes in Point Hope.

Aerobic dancing

good for fitness

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jacket when she saw her neighbor. "What is he doing in my house?" she thought, before realizing it was really the other way around.

Now, students in the class will discover different ways to make their homes stand out from the rest.

Elizabeth Kubanyi is expecting a baby soon, and finds aerobic dancing a good way to keep in shape. "It's fun," she says of her class. "When something is fun you do it." There are other ways to keep in shape, but they might not work.

"If it's not fun, you don't do it," Kubanyi explains.

In small metals Chester Frankson, Sr., is making his first knife. With him, he also carries some ivory which he is carving in another class taught by the noted artist, Simon Koonook. "It keeps me busy; I don't stay at home and watch TV," Frankson says of the ABE program. "I make these carvings, and I can also make a little money on the side."