New home in Bethel. . .

Continued from page 1

here," Haines said.

The new home, donated by Imperial Manufacturing of Portland, Oregon, is an entirely panelized structure, meaning the walls and roof are preconstructed in the factory and joined together on site. Window holes are already constructed into the panels, so no cutting is necessary.

This process is so quick that in only 17 hours of construction, the builders were already putting tar paper on the roof in preparation for the metal roofing. They expect to have the house completely finished by the end of August.

BCS president George Peratrovich has also been visiting the site. BCS provides social services, day care, and mental health services for low income clients, and the physically and mentally disabled. BCS raises money by building low income housing, renting office space and by holding bingo fund raisers.

Petrovich said that Gump's situation was brought to his attention by BCS employers who were working with her. It took several months for BCS to gather enough donations to start plans for the new home.

For Imperial, the project is not only a chance to help out, but introduce their building concept to Alaskans.

Building waste is very low since there is basically no sawing, and there are no nails. The panels are built with a locking device inside that looks like a hook and pin that forms a tight bond.

"The locking device provides flexibility with strength," said Al Zell, Imperial's president, who flew up to help assemble Gump's new home. In the last California earthquake, in neighborhoods where other homes were flattened, Imperial homes remained standing, said Zell.

"If you compare stick frame buildings to this, it doesn't compare. We can control everything at the factory. Everything fits together," Zell said.

Some of the advantages of using this type of structure in rural area like Bethel, Peratrovich said, is that people can transport the pieces up the river to small communities and fish camps. Unlike stick frame buildings, the walls are lighter and fewer people are needed to build it, which means building costs are reduced. All that is needed is one experienced supervisor and a few laborers.

"Local people can install these themselves with supervision and heavy equipment is not required, keeping money in the village," Zell said.

The home is also engineered for extreme climates. Imperial is familiar with extreme conditions as they have built several buildings for use in Antarctica.

The panelized walls, floor, and roof are injected with polyurethane foam after assembly in the factory, resulting in an R-42 rating for insulation. Most homes are only R-24. Also, the insulation also won't hold water like regular fiberglass insulation does.

The house also features what is called a Utilidoor. Under the house, built on pilings, the pipes will be attached to the floor and surrounded by the same type of insulate panels as the rest of the house, protecting the pipes from freezing. The same locking device will be used so if there ever is a problem with the pipes, a panel can simply be unlocked and removed to allow inspection.

"This is a wave of the future building," said Haines. "We would like to have a program similar to Habitat, but its too small right now."

Peratrovich said that besides the new home for Gump, BCS is also working on preparing land in downtown Bethel for offices, developing 7 acres for additional housing units, and hopes to perhaps expand the use of high quality housing by making greater use of Imperial's approach.

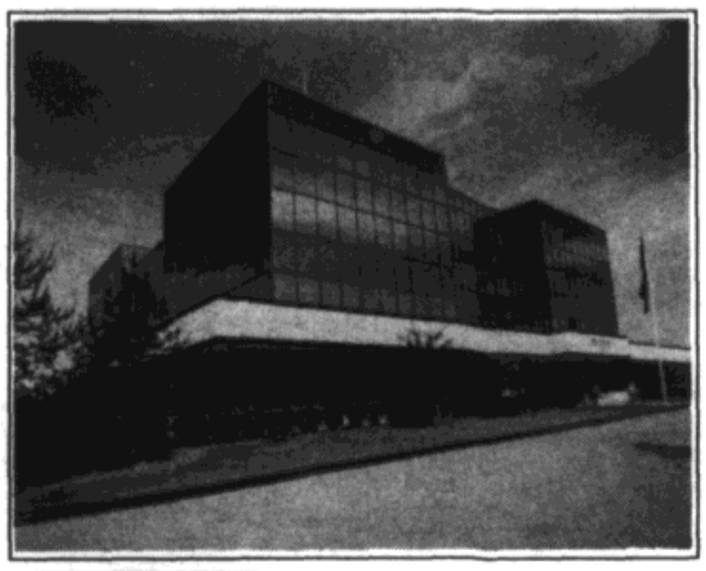
Point Hope . . .

Continued from page 1

volved. But these results are not what one would expect, so it raises flags. What else in the environment could be responsible? We need to continue investigating," he said.

Some Pt. Hope residents suspect leftover radioactive material from Project Chariot experiments is the most likely source of the cancer problem. Even after the cleanup of the Chariot site in 1993, the vast majority of radioactive material brought to the site has never been accounted for, according to borough officials. Borough Mayor George Ahmaogak said he would like to see local people have more control over future research efforts.

Local residents have begun to participate in the research loop, according to NSB spokesman David Harding. After the Chariot revelations, a borough-sponsored committee of scientists recommended installation of an air monitoring station at the village to track any changes in radiation levels. The U.S. Dept. of Energy agreed to fund the equipment and earlier this month, technicians from the Los Alamos National Laboratory installed a monitoring device at the Pt. Hope City Hall. Residents will operate the equipment and data will appear on a local computer at the same time it is transmitted to Los Alamos for evaluation.



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