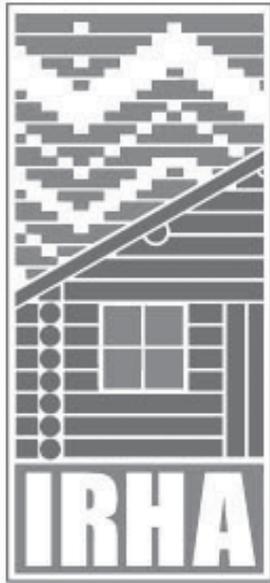


**Now's the time to locate cold spots;
Heat leaks cost fuel dollars**



Newsletter of the Interior Regional Housing Authority

Merry Christmas, Peace on Earth

Safe Housing for Tribes through the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act

Vol. IV, Issue 4

Serving the Native People of the Doyon Region, Alaska

December 2007

Rehabbing older houses produces results in comfort and dollars

Edna Nathaniel lives in Fairbanks in an old log house. It's in a quiet neighborhood near Noyes Slough. She shares the house with her son and daughter. The house was built in 1958, survived the flood of 1966, but has not had much care in the intervening years.

Edna purchased the house in 1993, knowing it needed work. The windows were drafty because the logs had shrunk and settled, opening a gap under the windows. With the price of fuel oil climbing, Edna knew that the drafty windows were costing her money.

There were other problems too, but she didn't know to proceed. She mentioned the problem to a co-worker who suggested she check with IRHA.

IRHA's rehab program was designed for the sorts of issues that arise in homes like Edna's. We know they hold a lot of value and that it's often possible to rehabilitate them.

As with the new houses we build, our goal is to provide safe and affordable houses to all our members. Our rehab program is designed to address problems in older houses, particularly those whose maintenance and upgrade are beyond the ability of the homeowner.

The rehab program is growing in popularity as energy costs increase. Air leaks of all sorts, inadequate insulation, improper door jambs, underrated windows, poorly performing furnaces. These housing problems can no longer be ignored. They are costing everyone big money. In total they conspire to rob homeowners of heating dollars that might otherwise been spent on food, clothes or education.

On a recent Saturday morning, the aroma of pancakes filled Edna's kitchen. Breakfast dishes had been washed and she was chatting with Martha McKeown, an auntie from Chalkyitsik. Edna's family is from Circle. Christmas decorations on the table and walls added cheer to the sunlight coming in from a south-facing window. Edna's kitchen was warm and



Edna Nathaniel and Martha McKeown in Edna's kitchen. Nathaniel's 50-year-old house was recently rehabbed by IRHA. Nathaniel says the house is quieter, more comfortable and is saving fuel dollars.

engaging.

After working for years at Chief Andrew Issac Health Center, Edna now devotes time as a food bank volunteer, working through her church to coordinate food box deliveries. At church, she leads song with a strong, clear voice.

When asked by a visitor about IRHA's rehab of her home, she said, "Let's start at the beginning. A fellow came in and he inspected the house and listed all the problems and told me what they would do."

On a tour of the house, Edna pointed out all the changes and improvements. They include 14 window replacements, one door and dead bolt, new toilets, new kitchen sink piping, repair a unit heater in garage, snake the basement drains, a new external fuse box, close off unused fireplace, clean and tune the furnace,

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Grayling, Tel: 907-453-5128

Paul Williams, Sr.
Beaver, Tel: 907-628-6213

NATHANIEL Continued on Page 2

Financial team adds Huntington as controller

LaVern L. Huntington is excited to join IRHA's staff as the controller. She'll assure that our financial and accounting activities follow legal requirements and the policies laid down by the Board of Commissioners.

LaVerne intends to work closely with all staff, to become an effective team player. One of her goals is to learn as much as she can to help achieve great to perfect audits for the organization.

LaVern is the daughter of Marion *LaVern Huntington* Huntington of Koyukuk and the late Jimmy Huntington of Huslia. Her children are Sid, Shalene, and the late Stewart Huntington.

Her past experience as the finance director for the Yukon Rive Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, assistant business manager for the Galena City School District, and tribal accountant for Loudon Tribal Council will help her achieve this goal and many others.

As a graduate of the Doyon Management Training III, LaVern discovered that she can do anything she sets her mind to. Besides her responsibilities at IRHA, she is currently a full time student at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and expects to receive an associate degree in May 2008. She says she'll then pursue a B.S. degree in business administration.

LaVerne expresses gratitude to those who have provided positive influences in her life. In her spare time, she enjoys volunteering or helping others, practicing cultural awareness and subsistence activities, setting a good example by living a clean and sober lifestyle, and offering encouragement and a smile to others.



LaVern Huntington

Vanessa Cruger picked for human relations post

Vanessa Kruger has joined IRHA as its human relations generalist. She says the position is a good fit after building employment experience for a decade in Anchorage.

"I'm looking forward to serving the company, its clients and learning about the home construction industry. This position allows me to advance my career while serving the people of the Doyon region," she says.

Vanessa was born in Tanana to Ruby and Gordy Cruger, but she was raised in Galena, and graduated high school there. Her grandparents are the late Charlie and Mary Carlo of Ruby, and the late Edgar Nollner, Sr. and Ann Jean Nollner of Galena.

In Anchorage, Vanessa worked for several subsidiaries of Doyon Limited, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, and the state's Department of Corrections. She recently returned to Fairbanks to further her career in the human relations field. She also wanted to be closer to family and friends.



Vanessa Cruger

At IRHA Vanessa will manage hiring and payroll procedures, assist other managers and investigate complaints.

She has four-year-old daughter, Kaiya, who keeps her busy and on her toes at all times. When she's not working, Vanessa's first priority is being a mom. After that she reads, mostly thrillers and mysteries, goes snowmachining, watches movies, and enjoys time with family and friends.

NATHANIEL Continued From Page 1

and remove an abandoned boiler.

Settled again in the kitchen, Edna said, "We're waiting on a final window in the upstairs bathroom. I really appreciate what they've done; it would have cost a lot if I had to do it myself."

The work itself took two men two weeks, working steady. "I liked the way they worked. At quitting time, they cleaned up the place and took waste to the dumpster."

"I didn't know IRHA fixed up people's homes. I knew they fixed village houses, but not in Fairbanks. I'm thankful I heard about it, so it was a blessing that they fixed my place."

Now that winter has closed in Edna says she can tell the house is tighter, that it's quieter, more comfortable. She knows the work is saving fuel and making for a safe, more affordable home.

To learn more about IRHA's rehab program, visit the web site or call the office.



In a rehab project, Edna Nathaniel's kitchen window was replaced with a more efficient one.

IRHA

The Interior Regional Housing Authority is the Tribally Designated Housing Entity of the tribes of the Doyon region. It works in partnership with the tribes that have, by certification and resolution, agreed to be part of the Indian Housing Plan. It is legally constituted under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 to promote safe housing and self-sufficiency.

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Bill Duquette.....Warehouse & Purchasing Manager
Robin Johnson.....Housing & Properties Manager

Board of Commissioners approves planning document, IRHA steers path toward greater independence

Under the leadership of a highly engaged Board of Commissioners, Interior Regional Housing Authority recently confirmed a strategic planning initiative to set the course for a dynamic and successful future for your housing authority.

A formal off-site, two-day visionary business planning meeting was recently conducted with 100 percent participation by the board and executive staff. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a structured process in which participants aligned around a common vision. They designed a blueprint for success based on implementing the company's strategic goals.

Team leaders and the board set out to establish effective accountability in their roles and ways of working together to best provide safe and affordable housing.

Foremost among the group's concerns were developing tactics to help address the associated challenges of excessive costs of energy and infrastructure in rural Alaska.

The plan that was created strategically aligns and organizes day-to-day activity while bolstering efforts in our constituent villages and the leadership team.

The company is gaining momentum generated by this planning initiative and is focused on results and sustainability in the face of funding obstacles.

IRHA management and staff wish to express our appreciation to the Board of Commissioners for their leadership. Board support and commitment empowers IRHA to grow in service, create positive results and truly make a difference in the lives of our clients.

Rehabbing projects target homes that need energy tuneups IRHA inspectors offer expert analysis and repair



The Nathaniel property in Fairbanks is a classic example of a home that clearly benefited from a rehab project. A combination of underrated windows leaking air under the sills and a poorly performing furnace can be costly to the homeowner. Adjustments to safety and security offer the homeowner additional benefits.

New rules govern Fairbanks rehab program

Are you considering using the rehab program to improve your home and your bottom line? In order to accommodate everyone who applies and because funding is based on shrinking dollars, we've made some changes to the program.

Homeowners needing extensive repair and upgrade will no longer be offered a 100 percent grant, forgiven after five years.

The 2008 round of rehab work will limit the grant portion. It may not exceed \$15,000, with a cap of \$25,000. Any costs over \$15,000 will be written as a one percent interest loan, paid back over ten years. The grant portion will be forgiven over 10 years, instead of five.

Additionally, in order to assure that IRHA's deeds of trust are recorded properly, title reports will be required for each project. If the rehab costs are different than the original estimates, the deeds will be amended to reflect actual costs.

**Where we spent housing funds
2007 Construction Season Summary**

Alatna.....	2 new homes
Beaver.....	various rehabs
Circle.....	1 new home
Eagle.....	community/office building
Grayling.....	5 rehabs
Holy Cross.....	3 new homes
Koyukuk.....	1 self-help new construction
Manley.....	4 rehabs
McGrath.....	3 rehabs, 1 self-help rehab
Nikolai.....	10 rehabs
Stevens Village.....	2 new homes
Takotna.....	1 rehab
Telida.....	1 rehab
Tetlin.....	17 rehabs

Open house success

During AFN week in Fairbanks, IRHA staged an open house for delegates and others. We wanted people to see our facilities and to meet the people who work at the company.

In one office, we had a slide show of our most recent work while in another people were enjoying moose soup. Door prizes included an Energy Detective, a high-tech device that shows homeowners where electricity is being used, and an IRHA jacket.

The event was well attended by people from across the region. In addition to delegates, other visitors included representatives from the Alaska Energy Authority, the federal Dept. of Energy, the Denali Commission and members of the Alaska Legislature. Both Rep. Woodie Salmon and Sen. Al Kookesh toured the complex and visited with our staff.

Mendone Subdivision ready for self-help buyers

IRHA is pleased to announce the Mendone Subdivision is now open to prospective buyers. For several years we've been working on the details of this North Pole-area project. Mendone (early morning sunrise) is located off Persinger Dr. and Pleasure Dr. When fully completed, it will encompass 145 acres.

The first phase of the project consists of 19 lots, each approximately 2 acres in size.

Mendone is a Self-Help New Construction Program. It was created to assist eligible applicants who have the talent, ability and/or resources to build their own home, with IRHA providing materials. We have five different house designs (3-4 bedrooms) available.

Seven requirements apply to Mendone

1. Assistance limited to \$75,000 for construction materials.
2. House is the primary residence of the owner.
3. Must be a single family residence.
4. Applicant must not own other real property.
5. If owned and occupied for 20 years, loan forgiven. If sold before 20 years, loan must be repaid.
6. Homeowner must carry insurance on property until loan is forgiven.
7. House complete in 2 years, once material delivered.

Prospective buyers are welcome to inspect the lots; clearing is complete, roads are open. Applications to purchase a lot are available on IRHA's web site or at the office. Construction will start in 2008. We look forward to discussing this opportunity with you.

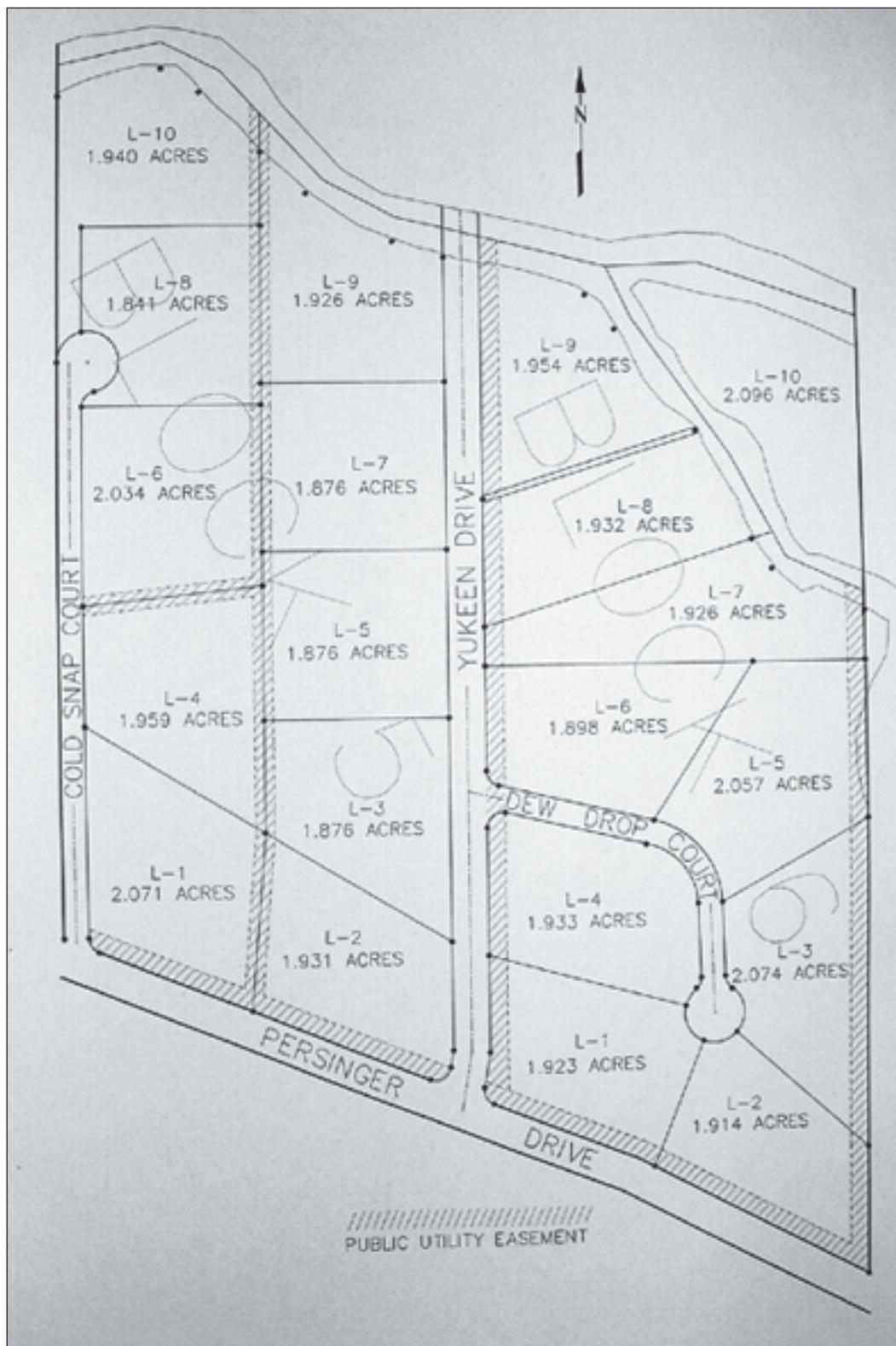
Energy workshops aim to conserve and inspire new ways of thinking

Daisy Northway, a longtime member of the Board of Commissioners from Tok, has been appointed a board advisor to the energy program. As an intensive liaison between the board and the villages, Daisy's oversight will add a critical element to the program's success.

Energy-related workshops are getting underway this month and next. Tiffany Simmons and Joy Schockley will visit a number of villages, sharing new ways to think about energy.

Major topics will include assessing local energy production and consumption. Additional focus will be placed on behavior changes related to energy use as well as new technology to do more with less electricity. As energy costs increase, IRHA is planning more solar applications and other innovations such as LED lighting.

Mendone Subdivision, First Phase



Planning is underway for coming construction season Here's where we intend to build in 2008

Beaver.....	1 new home, various rehabs
Grayling.....	2 new homes, various rehabs
Hughes.....	1 new home
McGrath.....	planning for new community/office building
Nikolai.....	various rehabs
Shageluk.....	2 new homes
Takotna.....	1 rehab
Galena.....	Assisted Living Center