

**Our your safety batteries fully charged?
Test smoke detectors; replace old batteries**

Newsletter of the Interior Regional Housing Authority

MERRY CHRISTMAS ❁ ❁ ❁ GOODWILL TO ALL

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

Vol. V, Issue 3

Serving the Native People of the Doyon Region, Alaska

December 2008

Catalone named to succeed Ketzler in CEO position

Irene Catalone has been named by the board of commissioners as the new CEO of IRHA, replacing Bear Ketzler. Catalone comes to the position after a career in public and private employment in Alaska. Her experience in labor and training are a good fit for IRHA.

Irene's parents are Nick and Nellie Demientieff; the family's people came from the Holy Cross and Anvik region. Irene was born in Fairbanks; she has one son.

As a student, Irene's formal education progressed from boarding school in Glennallen to universities in Anchorage, San Francisco and Chicago. In the world of work, Irene moved from x-ray technician and medical transcriber to positions of increasing responsibility.

As the director of Cooperative Employment Training Act (CETA) in Fairbanks in the early 1980s, Irene was managing a multi-function training and employment program that was part of a national effort to revitalize communities.

On the heels of CETA, Irene came to see the larger training and employment picture when she began work with State of Alaska's department of commerce and economic development. With the job came the need to travel extensively across the region, to see firsthand the level of need in rural Alaska.

Irene's background includes helping rural communities organize themselves in order to create government structure. She brings a keen eye to procedure and regulation. Villages and cities across the state have benefited from her lessons in Roberts Rules of Order, by-law creation, election process and certification.

As a local government specialist, Irene looks with satisfaction at her role in the incorporation process of the Denali Borough. Working in TCC's health section increased her scope to include the economics and operation of water systems.

Irene's scope of the challenge, particularly in partnership with municipalities and tribes, helps assure people that they can do it. Irene says that once the problems are identified solu-



In her office at IRHA, Irene Catalone shares a moment with a visitor. She's working long days as she acquaints herself with the corporation's most pressing challenges.

tions often arrive from the goodwill and cooperation of all involved.

Over the years, Irene has served on corporate boards. Her primary focus was to assure that policy reflected the need and how best to assure villages remain healthy and active places. She's given time as a member of TCC's executive board, serving in the same capacity at Deloycheet, Holy Cross' corporation.

Irene brings a lifetime of experience to the job of CEO of IRHA. She intends to use that experience to manage IRHA's assets within the regulations as defined by HUD, sound accounting practices and common sense.

With barely more than a month on the job, Irene is busy learning the regulations, meeting with staff, HUD officials and local legislators.

"It's important work," she said recently. "I aim to see that we are legal and transparent, that we meet our mission statement, that we build homes we are proud of."

IRHA Board of Commissioners

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Ruby, Tel: 907-468-4407

Daisy Northway, Vice-chair
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Teisha Simmons, Sec/Treasurer
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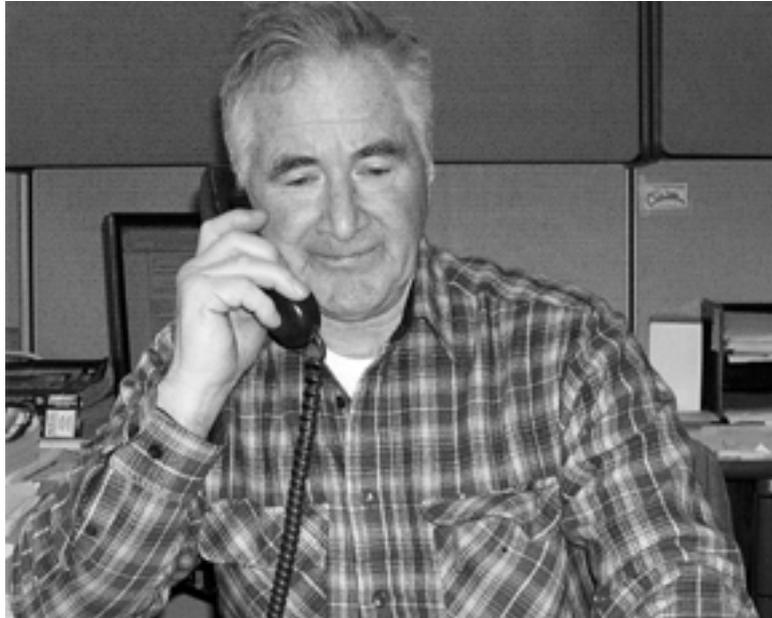
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Galena Senior Center update, a progress report

Following an inspection of all parties (owners, architect, and builders) in late October, the project was agreed to be 64 percent complete. A review of the timeline indicated that the project is only three weeks behind schedule.

Carl Hoffman, IRHA's construction supervisor, reports in early December that the Galena crew was working on the building's interior. Door and floor trim (3.5 tons of white maple) along with kitchen casework, countertops and other details will begin to give the place a finished look.



Carl Hoffman is IRHA's lead estimator and materials specialist. He's also an accomplished musician with several CDs to his credit.

Plumbers and electricians are working on the fire sprinklers and looking forward to having their end of the project signed off by state inspectors. Once fire protection is complete, the sheet-rock crew will return to complete the interior shell.

Hoffman anticipates and has plans to equip the Galena center with a wood-gasification system, similar to the one Tanana uses in its water plant and washeteria. Tanana's experience, along with that of others, confirms the practical value of these systems. The alternative system is contingent on a grant from the Alaska Energy Authority. According to con-

tacts at the agency, IRHA's grant was well received and made the first cut. Look for more news about this in the next issue.

The exterior will be sided with cedar, a wood that weathers well and has a reputation for longevity. It will be put up this spring, or as Hoffman says "pending seasonal cooperation."

Carlo takes the lead in weatherization

Kim Carlo recently joined IRHA as the head of our weatherization office. Kim is from Fort Yukon. Her grandparents are Eva and Richard Carroll and Poldine Carlo and the late Bill Carlo. Her parents are Karen Carlo and Kenny Carlo. Kim has three children. Tessa is 15; Thea will be five in January and Nations is two the same month.

Kim moved to Fairbanks in 2000 to attend the University of Alaska. After graduation, she took a position at Tanana Chiefs in the employment and training department. Later, she joined TCC's housing department, quickly gaining seniority before joining IRHA.

Growing up in Fort Yukon, Kim has first-hand experience with the quality of rural housing. When she learned that IRHA was going to staff an office devoted to weatherizing Doyon Region houses, Kim knew it was a challenge she wanted to be part of.

"To be able to get this department off the ground and be able to improve conditions for people in the villages makes me excited," says Kim. "It's going to be a big challenge, but we can do it."

Now in the process of hiring staff who will assess how each home will be weatherized, Kim is looking forward to getting them trained and sending them to the villages.



Weatherization Assessor Training in Fairbanks

Session I: January 13 - Jan. 23
Session II: February 9 - Feb. 13

Minimum Qualifications:
6 months documented experience,
or training in:
Residential Construction
Residential Energy Efficiency

List professional and trade references,
training certificates.

Formally agree to attend all meetings
and complete training. Must be willing to
work in remote, rural areas of Alaska.

In order to apply for this training, candidates
must currently reside in rural Alaska.

To learn more, contact Kimberly Carlo
at Ph: 1-800-478-4742 ext. 160.
Email: kcarlo@irha.org

**Houses are built to live in, and not to
look on: therefore let use be preferred
before uniformity.**

— Francis Bacon, 1561–1626

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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Irene Catalone, Chief Executive Officer
Eli James, Chief Financial Officer
Paul Snow, Acting Construction Coordinator
Annie Silas, Acting Community Planning Manager
Tiffany Sweetsir, Housing & Properties Manager
Kim Carlo, Weatherization Administrator

Leal heads inspection team, Required by HUD regulation

According to IRHA regulations, we must conduct inspections of homes under our management and/or those within our loan program. IRHA has no leeway in following the requirements of the regulations that guide our operations. We must abide by the rules.

The inspections are not designed to be intrusive. We are only concerned with the maintenance of the structure and how it affects health and safety issues.



Brian Leal

Later this winter and spring, inspections will occur in Ruby, Eagle, Kaltag, McGrath, Nikolai, and Takotna. Before an IRHA inspector arrives in a village, this letter (see below) is sent to homeowners. It details what we do and why.

We re-print it here for everyone's information. Thank you for everyone's cooperation.

To learn more about the inspection program, contact Brian Leal in Fairbanks. Ph: 452-8315 ext. 163, or via email: brian@irha.org.

Workmen secure scaffolding at the Galena Assisted-Living Center Commons area looks out on Yukon River and Alaska Range



Elders in Galena and in surrounding villages, their families and others, are looking forward to the completion next year of the assisted-living center. It's the biggest and most complicated project that IRHA has taken on.

Dear Homebuyer:

This letter is to inform you as a homebuyer that a total interior and exterior inspection will be performed on your home. This inspection is intended to reveal any health and safety deficiencies as well as any maintenance responsibilities that have not been performed.

To ensure that safe, sound and sanitary conditions exist in each of the homes of our Homeownership Opportunity Program, the Interior Regional Housing Authority has established an inspection schedule to ensure that maintenance is being performed according to the Homeownership Opportunity Program Agreement. The homebuyers have responsibilities to the IRHA under terms of this agreement. It is the responsibility of the IRHA to ensure that the homebuyer is in compliance with the maintenance responsibilities and obligations. If the homebuyer is not in compliance, it is the responsibility of the IRHA to have the homebuyer correct the deficiencies. If the deficiencies are not corrected in a timely manner, it is the responsibility of the IRHA to issue a Notice of Termination in accordance with the Homeownership Opportunity Program Agreement and the IRHA's Collection and Eviction Policy.

As stated in your Homeownership Opportunity Program Agreement, the homebuyer is responsible for all maintenance and care of the home, including all repairs and replacements (including those necessitated by damage from any cause). If outside workmen or contractors are needed to make necessary repairs, it shall be the responsibility of the homebuyer to obtain and pay for these services.

During the inspection the IRHA's inspector may advise the homebuyer on proper techniques, energy consumption, preventative maintenance measures and information on fire and safety. After the inspection is completed the IRHA's inspector and the homebuyer will sign the inspection form. If any deficiencies are found, it will be documented and a list will be given to the homebuyer to have corrective measures done. Once again, if corrective measures are not taken and deficiencies are not fixed in a reasonable amount of time, it is the responsibility of the IRHA to issue a Notice of Termination in accordance with the Homeownership Opportunity Program Agreement and the IRHA's Collection and Eviction Policy.

In closing, the IRHA inspector is not there to tell the homebuyer how to run their home. The inspector is there to find health and safety problems that may have an adverse effect on your family. It is in your best interest to work with the inspector, as they are there looking out for the safety of your home and family. Please, feel free to ask questions about anything that you may not understand. If you don't agree with the assessment of the findings by the inspector, you have the right to file a grievance with the Interior Regional Housing Authority. This should be done in accordance with the IRHA Grievance Policy. The inspector does not make the final decision, but is making a judgment based on their professional opinion, in complying with the Homeownership Opportunity Program Agreement.

Your inspection is scheduled for the following time and day:

_____ and _____
TIME DATE

If you are not going to be available at the time stated, you may call the IRHA (1-800-478-4742) and ask for to have the inspection rescheduled.

Weatherization: Questions and Answers

Kim Carlo helps us understand how the weatherization program will work. She answers the following questions.

What is weatherization; why is it important?

Weatherization services makes homes more energy efficient. The more efficient a home is the less money it takes to operate it.

When a home weatherization assessment is completed, the entire home is inspected and tests are performed. From the initial assessment, a work order is created which includes a variety of measures, giving priority to those things that provide the highest savings for a homeowner. Some work orders include air sealing, adding insulation to the home, and replacing doors and windows. Ventilation is also addressed.

The weatherization program is not simply a door and window replacement program or a woodstove program. Each assessment and work order is individualized to the home that was assessed. The work order is based on the findings of the assessment.

Our overall goal is for the homeowner to use less energy while maintaining comfort and safety. In the process, the durability of the structure increases.

Explain the differences between an energy rater and an assessor.

The difference between an energy rater and
Q and A CONTINUED on Page 4

a weatherization assessor is an energy rater performs home audits. A weatherization assessor completes an audit and performs other tests and then creates a work order based on the assessment and tests performed.

How do people get the training to become active in this area?

A majority of the training is provided by Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. People can learn about the program online. Visit: www.ahfc.us. On this site you'll find a training list for people who work for a weatherization service provider and a list of workshops for the general public.

IRHA recently received a grant from the Depart. of Labor to host weatherization training. There will be two multi-day sessions. These trainings will begin in mid-January and mid-February. (See Page 2 for details.)

After the participants successfully complete the training, they will earn a certificate designating them as "envelope" specialists. The envelope is the shell or skin of a building.

If you are interested in enrolling in this program, please contact me for an application. We expect to have 15 participants enrolled soon. The training will be held in Fairbanks.

Additional information about becoming an energy rater can be found at the Alaska Building Science Network. Visit: www.absn.com.

How does your office assure that weatherization is done properly?

Before any weatherization work is started a pre-assessment is completed on the home and a work order is written by the assessor. The work order is then signed by the applicant agreeing to the scope of work. Not all the items on a work order may be completed; some work may require additional planning and will be dependent on funding.

Once the weatherization work is complete, the client will sign off on the work order stating that the work was finished and the assessor will perform a post-assessment making sure the work was completed correctly. In this way, IRHA and the weatherization program is protecting your interests and our state dollars.

How many homes will your staff weatherize in the coming year?

We intend to complete 15 units this year. Our first project will be the Meda Lord Center, a senior housing facility in Nenana. Then we plan on moving the program to Huslia and Hughes. Professional weatherization programs don't happen overnight; it takes planning and cooperation on many levels. While we can't get to everybody at the same time; we won't miss anyone either.

Exterior view of the Galena Assisted-Living Center



The project is long anticipated in Galena; the building is likely to become a focus in the community. It encloses about 9,000 feet of floor space; contains nine apartments; a kitchen and a manager's residence.

**IRHA projects are learning laboratories for apprentices in the trades
Working with journeyman carpenters, young workers learn from best**



Christopher Stanley, Nulato and Percy Lolnitz, Koyukuk.



Romeo Stickman, Nulato.

CARLO CONTINUED From Page 2

The first people to enjoy the benefits of weatherization will be the residents at the Meda Lord center in Nenana. All 15 units are slated for upgrade during the coming construction season.

Huslia and Hughes are scheduled for assessments this spring. The program will include pre-assessments, an analysis of the house's furnace, inspection of the attic and floor and a blower-door test. Data from the inspection is then fed into a computer, telling the experts where we need to concentrate the weatherization work.

Once a house's report is complete, each homeowner will be given a scope of work that details what needs to be done. When the homeowner signs off on the plan, the work is then cleared to begin.



Mark Huntington, Galena and Kevin Sanders, Kaltag.