

METRO

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ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Tiff between Arco, whalers Villagers don't block drilling — yet

By **KIM FARARO**
Daily News business reporter

The North Slope Borough's heated public dispute with Arco Alaska Inc. and the U.S. government started when a federal agency said the oil company could disturb bowhead whales by exploring in the path of their fall migration.

The villages of Nuiqsut and Kaktovik hunt the bowhead during the migration, and subsistence whalers are worried that Arco's noisy exploration at its Kuvlum discovery will make the whales skittish and cause them to roam farther out to sea.

The Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission said Tuesday that it had been negoti-

ating with the company to limit the disruptions and a federal official had assured the commission that the federal government would not grant approval until an agreement had been reached.

But the executive director of the whaling commission, Maggie Ahmaogak, accused Arco of acting in bad faith by pushing for federal approval before an agreement had been reached. She said the federal government broke its promise and caved in to the oil company's requests.

An Arco spokeswoman would not comment on the allegation.

The Anchorage-based federal official who the commission said made the prom-

ise to the whalers, Ron Morris of the National Marine Fisheries Service, could not be reached Tuesday night to confirm the commission's statement. When contacted earlier in the day, however, Morris directed all inquiries to NMFS in Washington, D.C.

The dispute erupted into public view Monday when the borough, which is backing the whalers, threatened to use whaling boats to block Arco's exploratory work. It also threatened to arrest Arco workers who showed up in North Slope communities to "save them from angry and frustrated people."

During the fall migration (through a near-shore corridor), the Kuvlum well can force



Please see Page B-2, **WHALES**

SMALL IN SIZE, BIG IN POPULARITY



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MARVIN FONG / Anchorage Daily News

Linda Spurlin, along with Annie, one of her house dogs, checks her kennel of miniature huskies.

Sled pulling? Not for these huskies

By S.J. KOMARNITSKY
Daily News reporter

They have the same keen eyes, loyal dispositions and distinctive striped faces of their larger, better-known cousins, the Siberian and the malamute. But unlike their 80- to 160-pound counterparts, these full-grown huskies top the scales at a mere 19 pounds.

Linda Spurlin and her husband, Richard, have spent 20 years developing miniature huskies at their Wasilla home. She calls the breed "klee kai," which is derived from a Native

word meaning "little dog."

The AKC turned down a request to register the breed, Spurlin said. The club requires a breed to be in existence for 40 years to recognize it officially, she said. But the refusal hasn't slowed interest in the klee kai.

During the last five years, Spurlin has sold 300 of the dogs to people in nine states. They go for \$250 each, and thanks to stories in local papers, buyers keep showing up at her doorstep. She's even come back to her car at the grocery store to find notes tucked under the windshield wiper

asking about the dogs.

It's the size of the dogs that attracts people, Spurlin said.

"People can take them in the canoe, in their car, in their house, wherever they want to," she said.

Spurlin splits the breed into two categories: Toys weighing up to 12 pounds and miniatures that go up to 19 pounds. Her smallest weighs 7 pounds.

"I don't think I'd want to go much smaller than that," she said.

Please see Page B-2, **HUSKIES**

Mountain View residents

boys, whose names they would not release because of their age. One boy was charged with carrying a concealed weapon and the other two were charged with assault.

One boy was released to his par-

thing else has to be done. Judee Ivey, manager of the Rand R apartment complex, told police they need to provide a show of force again to shoo the drug dealers from the neighborhood.

Evans saw the fox with two balls in mouth. Minutes later Evans passed a fox some and asked if they also had seen fox.

"Seen it? The damn thing stole my right off the fairway," a golfer replied.

HUSKIES: Tip the scales at 19 pounds

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Spurlin said she started developing the breed 20 years ago after an unplanned mating between a Siberian and a neighbor's small dog produced the first pint-sized husky.

Along with her brother-in-law, she spent years experimenting with a number of breeds to reproduce the mini-husky born from that unplanned mating. Most of those attempts were unsuccessful.

Eventually, her brother-in-law moved away and sold his dogs to Spurlin, who was hooked on perfecting the breed.

"Once I got started, I just couldn't stop," she said.

Finally, six years ago, she achieved a dog she could

breed consistently and sell to others as a mini-husky.

She now keeps 30 of the dogs in kennels outside her house and two inside.

And though she describes breeding the dogs as a hobby, in many ways she runs it like a business.

To keep track of the breed over the years, she keeps computer files of every dog she's sold, and owners are required to send height and weight measurements as well as a picture if possible at 6 months old. Those are put into a scrapbook. So that Spurlin can control the breeding of the klee kais, owners must also sign a contract to spay or neuter the dogs and offer them to her if they decide to sell or give them away.

Although many people

have guessed Spurlin used Chihuahuas to produce the miniaturized breed, she refuses to reveal the mix.

"It's grandma's secret recipe," she says, and then adds, "I just did it the usual way — washed them in hot water and put them in the dryer."

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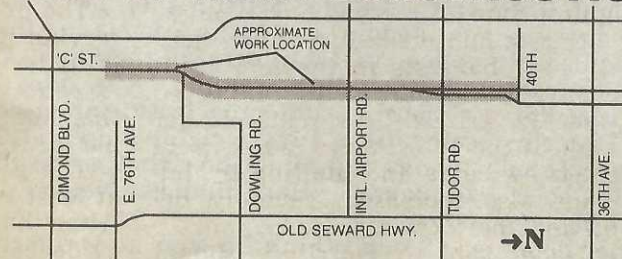
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