

## Women's Work

*By Suzy Hopkins*

The phone rang just as I opened my front door. It was my daughter. I was kidding her that she must have been watching my door. She whispered, "I'm inside the recycle center." Every day she walks for over an hour through an Alaskan swamp and dense woods to get to her job. She sorts and bags the donations, moves them with the forklift to the pallets which are picked up once a week by the county garbage barge. Still whispering she says, "I saw fresh bear tracks and baby bear tracks. A mother bear is considered extremely dangerous."

There are no windows in the center so we stayed on the phone for a half hour so she could listen for any movement outside. She had brought her shotgun but was afraid to aggravate the mother bear by shooting it in the air. She had only two shells so she couldn't afford to miss if she had to shoot the mother.

She hurried home, watching and listening for any sign of the mother bear.

She called me when she arrived safely inside her tiny house. I said, "You should get hazardous duty pay."

The county gave her a raise. I guess the boss agreed.