

on our planet, and all five of them as the station's director. Sidorov started in the Arctic back with SP-4, he celebrated his sixtieth birthday on SP-26, and is now establishing the Thirty-First SP. For his outstanding contributions to Arctic and Antarctic development, Visilii Semenovich was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour.

- SP-31 is not the end, is it?

- I think the time has come to wind down. Something has to be left for the young.

- Won't the Arctic be dull without Sidorov?

- But it won't be left without a Sidorov. My middle son has already wintered at Kotel'nyi and on Zhokhova Island. And just recently, when we were unable to recruit a hydrologist for our SP, the head of staff said: "What about inviting Aleksander Vasil'evich?". My "Who is that?" was answered with "Your son". I knew that Sasha had been dreaming of an SP for a long time, but he did not want to be selected on the strength of my prestige. Under the circumstances there could be no doubt that he had earned it.

We are carrying mail for SP-30 - letters, newspapers and parcels. The only way to deliver it is by dropping it from the airplane, because right now there is nowhere in the whole Arctic Ocean for a plane to land. So when we took off, it had to be decided what to do first - search for the ice-floe or make the drop. "First to the SP", ordered Sidorov. "That is a sacred task."

And now we are coming up to SP-30. All the letters, periodicals and parcels, together with fresh