

# Three Shageluk Boys in Line For BIA Heroism Certificates

Three Shageluk boys are in line to receive certificates of heroism from the Bureau of Indian Affairs for saving the lives of Tommy Dutchman and his wife Bertha on Sunday November 3, 1968.

Tommy Dutchman had been driving his snow machine with Bertha riding when he apparently misjudged an open river water ahead of him on the Innoko River and the couple's snow machine and sled broke through the ice.

The machine and sled sank immediately and Tommy Dutchman was able to swim and tow his wife to the edge of the ice.

At the moment the Dutchmans were driving toward the open water, two boys, Hamilton Hamilton, Jr., age 11, and Arnold Painter, age 14, were preparing to take a steam bath at the old village site when Hamilton saw Dutchman driving toward the water.

The boys started to race toward the open water just as the Dutchmans broke through the ice and into the water.

Hamilton and Arnold grabbed



**THREE HEROIC BOYS**—Three Sahgeluk native boys, left to right, Arnold Painter, Hamilton Hamilton, Jr., and Harold Wulf, ages 14, 12, and 11 respectively, are in line for certificates of heroism from the Bureau of Indian Affairs for saving the lives of Tommy Dutchman and his wife Bertha after they had fallen through the ice with their snow machine last November on the Innoko River.

Bertha Dutchman as she was being pulled under the ice by the strong river current. Each

boy held Bertha by her arms at the edge of the ice.

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# Heroism . . .

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The third boy, Harold Wulf, age 12, and a son of Bertha, had seen the tragedy in the making from the upstairs window of his home. He ran to the river and helped Tommy Dutchman from the water.

Tommy and Arnold Painter then pulled Bertha out and out of danger.

Principal teacher, at Shageluk, Louis Slattery, in his letter of recommendation for heroism awards for the boys, wrote to Richard Birchell, superintendent of the Bethel BIA agency and said:

"The people in the water would not have been able to get out of the water without the immediate assistance of the three boys. I have attached a sketch of the river, the course the Dutchmans took and relative locations of the boys. You will notice that this rescue included considerable risk to the boys."

S. William Benton, Education Program Administrator, writing for Supt. Birchell stated:

"We are having certificates of heroism made and framed for each boy plus another one to hang in the school at Shageluk."