

Ralph Kowchee Commissions Paper to Sell Skin Drawing

Ralph Kowchee, an Eskimo artist from McGrath, has commissioned the Tundra Times to sell his most recent skin drawing—one which may illustrate a new breakthrough in skin drawings.

The picture is drawn on the back of a seal skin from an animal caught last fall at Golovin Bay, east of White Mountain. It can be wiped with a damp cloth for cleaning without damaging the drawing.

Obtaining skins is the most difficult part of the drawings, according to Mr. Kowchee, who has sold about 100 pictures, 20 of them on skins.

"Some of my pictures are in the Washington, D.C. area, California," he wrote the Tundra Times, "but 90 per cent of them are here in Alaska. Besides this picture, I have art work displayed at Nome—in a place called the Arctic Trading Post, new owner is Dennis Corrington."

The skin drawing illustrated in this issue is for sale for \$150.00 and can be seen at the Tundra Times office in the Chena Building in Fairbanks. It goes to the first bidder, with a third of the price going to the Tundra Times as a donation from the artist.

Ralph Kowchee is an artist who is very concerned with the situation of those rural Alaskan Eskimos who do art work. The major problems, he says, are art supplies and putting the finished pictures on the market.



RALPH KOWCHEE—An artist from the village of White Mountain, Ralph Kowchee, is shown displaying his artistry at his home at McGrath.

"I would like to see a union or an organization formed," he told the Times, "operated by Alaskan Natives, to act as advisors or even sell the pictures for the natives. This issue may one day be put out in the open, but at the present time, only a very few persons (not necessarily natives) 'know the business'. And believe me this is a very touchy business, in the sense that everyone but the original artist is looking for a profit."

Hopefully, other Native people with talent will be able to find a way to market their work to a public which is now becoming aware of its value.

Asks HEW—

SJC Asks Upward Bound Program

Sheldon Jackson College has applied for Alaska's third Upward Bound Program in a proposal sent to the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

College president, Dr. Orin R. Stratton, said that the two-year institution had made the application at the urging of the Alaska Native Brotherhood and the Southeast Alaska Community Action Program.

Dr. Stratton said, "We are very concerned about the fact that the University of Alaska and the Alaska Methodist University are unable to extend the Upward Bound Program to the students of Southeastern Alaska and I'm sure there are many students here whose potential for college could be profitably developed."

Upward Bound is one of the few educational programs to receive increased funding this year, probably because of its demonstrated ability to lower the number of high school dropouts and to raise the number of students who actually choose to attend college among low income groups.

Upward Bound is designed to increase the motivation of students in the 11th and higher grades through the use of special summer courses on the campus of a boarding college and through special programs in their own high school.

For instance, 70 per cent of those students in the Upward Bound Program go on to college, compared to 8 per cent who normally go to college from the same low-income group.

Further, only 5 per cent participating in the Upward Bound Program have been found to drop out of high school, com-

pared to 35 per cent who normally do so from the same population group.

The Sheldon Jackson College Upward Bound Program is planned for 40 students from the high schools of Southeastern Alaska with a budget of \$71,656.00. If the Upward Bound Program is successful, the program would begin in the summer of 1971.

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Deadline Dec. 31—

Overpayment Refunds

JUNEAU—Commissioner of Labor Thomas J. Moore reminded Alaska workers that December 31 is the deadline for requesting refunds on overpayments into the State's unemployment insurance fund during 1969.

According to Moore, a worker is eligible for a refund if he worked for more than one em-

ployer in 1969 and his total wages exceeded \$7,200.

Refund forms are available at all Department of Labor Manpower Centers, or they may be obtained by writing to the Labor Department, P.O. Box 3-7000, Juneau.

Forms must be filed prior to January 1, 1971.

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