

Substance is many things

Dear Editor:

I would like to share with you a poem rather with all of Alaska. The more I listen to the Radio or watch T.V. or listen to speeches made by politicians the more I get confused about subsistence. I think people distort the word "subsistence" to their own benefit.

Well, here is my version of subsistence. Sometimes it take all these steps to catch a simple fish or more steps to catch an animal. As you can see it's not a simple task. But to a person that doesn't subsist he take only three steps. (1) Work eight to five. (2) go to a grocery store and buy his food. (3) cook his meat and eat it and then pick on his teeth.

The thing I don't understand is that the people who are screaming the loudest don't even know what kind of food we are subsisting on. I hope this will enlighten some people to our Inupiaq ways of subsisting. Taiku!

Sincerely,
Robert Mulluk, Jr.
Kotzebue

SUBSISTENCE

Subsistence is a way of surviving!

Subsistence is knowing what kind of plant to eat.

Subsistence is knowing what kind of animal to kill.

Subsistence is knowing where to find the animal.

Subsistence is knowing how to kill the animal.

Subsistence is knowing how to catch or stalk an animal.

Subsistence is knowing what animal is in season.

Subsistence is knowing which is a bull, young bull, female, or a fawn.

Subsistence is knowing where you could catch the fish.

Subsistence is knowing how to butcher the animal.

Subsistence is knowing what and how many utensils you need.

Subsistence is knowing how to store the food.

Subsistence is knowing your neighbor will share his catch with you.

Subsistence is knowing your rifle will fire.

Subsistence is knowing that you could trade with coastal people for coastal food.

Subsistence is knowing your stomach will soon be filled.

Subsistence is knowing food will be on your table.

Subsistence is knowing you are surviving like your ancestors.

Subsistence is knowing mother nature provides for it's people.

Subsistence is knowing mother nature respects all beings that respects mother nature.

Subsistence is knowing your wishes of (best of luck) to whaling captains works.

Subsistence is knowing you are part of mother nature.

Subsistence is knowing you will survive.

Subsistence is our way of surviving!

- Robert Mulluk, Jr.