

Mekoryuk: Tradition in action

We read with interest the recent accounts of the drilling rig Key Singapore which tore loose while under tow off the coast of Nunivak Island.

Fortunately all ended without loss of life or injury and no environmental damage was done.

What we found most interesting – although to us not at all surprising – was the response of the rig's crewmen to their reception in Mekoryuk.

Village residents there opened their homes, kitchens and clothes closets in a manner that is typical and usual for villagers, to the men who came very close to tragedy.

Yet reports of the villagers' hospitality carried a tone almost of surprise, as if no one expected that village residents would open their homes.

This shows once again the basic misunderstanding which many urban residents have of life in rural areas. That misunderstanding often leads to groundless fears. In this case, it was apparent concern that villagers would not help out the hapless crewmen.

We are not at all surprised at the caring welcome given the crewmen. It is in the tradition of the Native people of Alaska.

It's a shame that more people who are new to this state aren't aware of that warm and generous spirit, and that so few make the effort to get to know it.