

# Correspondent Gets High School Diploma—

## *Grace Slwooko of Gambell Gets Her Certificate at Age 51*

By GRACE SLWOOKO  
Gambell Correspondent

NOME — This year, right after Christmas, I came to Nome with my kids. I stayed in Nome with my mother and father-in-laws.

All these months I live differently, over here it is city, where there is running water and sewer system and deliveries for the groceries. We even shop by telephone sometimes.

If I was at Gambell, I would be now sewing on all kinds of skin things, like seal skin, mukluks, mittens and socks for the hunting men.

But some women sew more and are very clever with this

kind of work. But me, I just go after this marking thing that tells so much, the school.

I could just pick up my pen and paper and start telling, how good it is to be able to write. I like it so much that I finally got my high school diploma at the age of 51!

Boy, how I feel relaxed, when I heard about my diploma. But any way I got that much done this year. Many, many thanks for the teachers, that help me learn this wonderful thing, writing. It is very hard, but it sure is something good. I'm sure many of my ancestors or my great grandfathers side would just go for this.

But this time of the year, over in Gambell, there is lots of hunting. The men are out early morning. As soon as they know it is suitable weather for seal, walrus or whale hunting, they always hurry around and get out.

On the hard and icy frozen snow, they ran around from the homes to the boats and down to the icy shore. Young men are very much needed for this. So it is very important that young men get their physical training early, as in early teens.

Hunting for life on the ice really calls for strong, alert men. When they are out in the ocean, they would watch for hours, when it is the whale they look for.

As first part of April is when the whales be passing by, they'd be close watch for them. The boats made of walrus hide and wooden frame are very useful for this. There they sail out to watch for whales. As soon as they see one, they would pull the sails down quickly.

Some times they watch for hours, it would be cold in early morning hours and when the young men had to set still and watch, they would get so sleepy. So, long days and short nights in only dim, gray skies in spring time have dreamy slumbers that bring so much memories.

As, soon as the whale is caught and killed, it would mark one good occasion, the ball game on the gravel by the sea. As the waves made smoothly piled dunes of rocks bigger than sand, would make good place to play ball. It is always the place for ball games.

When I was a teenager, there still were many superstitious things. We never were allowed to play ball out doors, before the whale is caught, this occasion is opened. Then every night the girls would bring a little ball to the gravel dunes by the sea and play against the boys for hours. Boy it was so much fun. That was before we begin to go to high schools.